



## THE EARLY YEARS 1939 – 1959

---

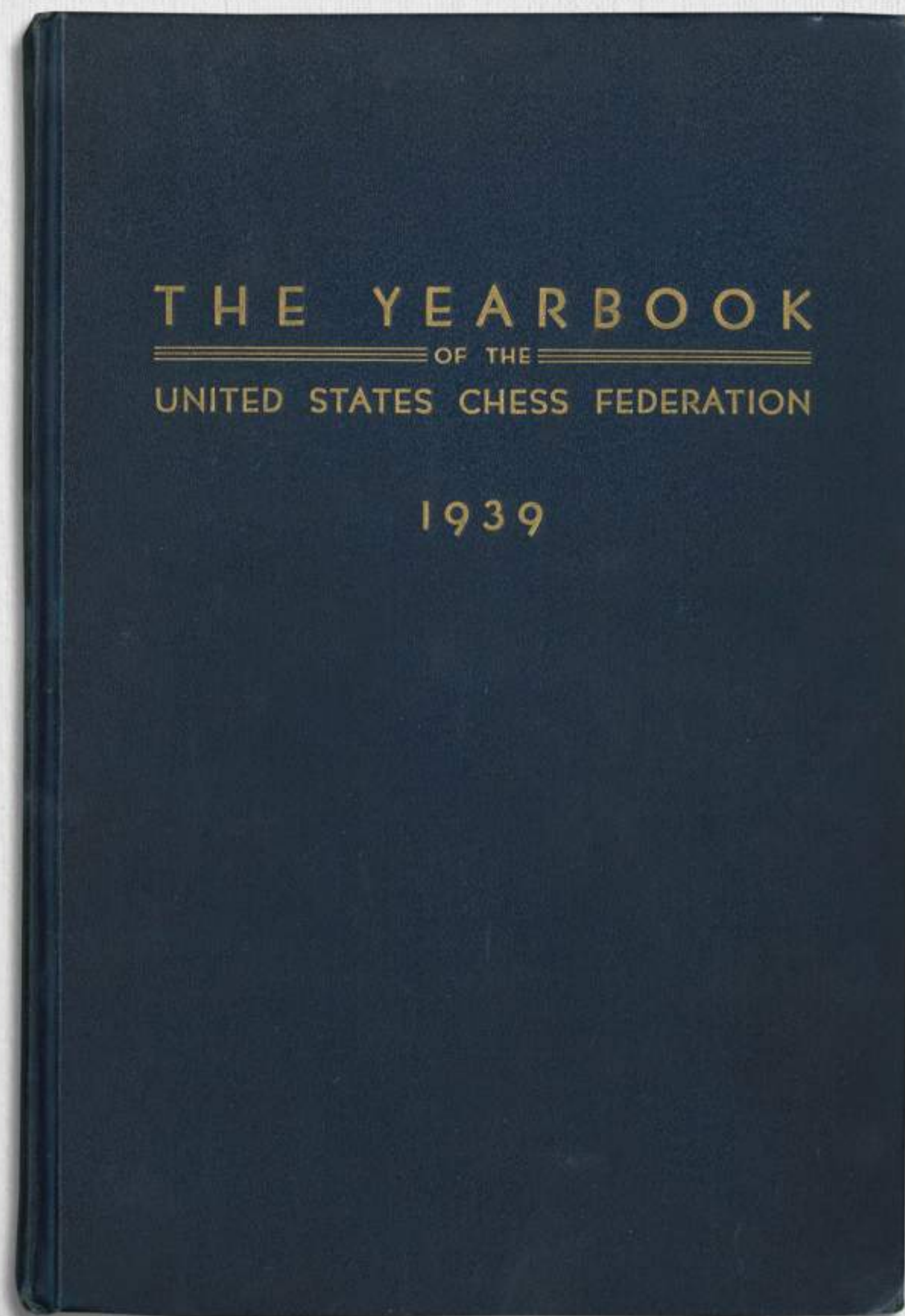
During its first decade, the US Chess Federation (US Chess) experienced a period of quiet growth. The organization started a magazine (*Chess Life* in newspaper format); established relations with the international governing body of chess—World Chess Federation (*Federation Internationale des Échecs* or FIDE); and set up the system of governing officers, delegates and state affiliates which exists to this day. Membership growth, however, was modest. At US Chess's first administrative meeting, which was held during the U.S. Open Chess Championship in Dallas, TX, in August 1940, the organization reported its membership at approximately 1,000. This figure barely rose over the next decade.



## THE EARLY YEARS 1939 – 1959

---

The 1950s marked a decade of change. Under President Jerry Spann (1957–60), membership more than doubled in three years. The decade also witnessed the emergence of a new generation of American stars. Nineteen-year-old Larry Evans won the 1951 U.S. Chess Championship, and six years later, William Lombardy became the first American to win the World Junior Chess Championship. Near the end of the decade, Bobby Fischer became the youngest U.S. chess champion at age 14, and the following year he repeated his victory, qualifying for the Candidates Tournament.



*The Yearbook of the United States Chess Federation* (1939)

Collection of the World Chess Hall of Fame, gift of Bill Merrell

## 1939

---

### September 5

The American Chess Federation and the National Chess Federation merge to form the United States Chess Federation. George Sturgis is elected president of the newly-formed organization and serves in that position until his death in 1944.

Yearly dues are \$1 and membership includes a copy of the annual *The Yearbook of the United States Chess Federation*.

### September 18

U.S. Women's Chess Champion Mona May Karff finishes fifth in a field of 20 participants in the Buenos Aires, Argentina, Women's World Championship.

Reigning Women's World Chess Champion Vera Menchik successfully defends her title.

### September 19

The United States' streak of four consecutive victories in Chess Olympiads (1931, 1933, 1935, and 1937) ends when it fails to send a team to Buenos Aires due to financial difficulties.

# 1940

---

President: George Sturgis

## April 27 - May 19

Samuel Reshevsky finishes a half point ahead of Reuben Fine in the U.S. Chess Championship, which is held in New York City. Adele Rivero wins the concurrently-held U.S. Women's Chess Championship.

## August 19 - 28

Reuben Fine wins the U.S. Open Chess Championship in Dallas, TX, with a perfect score and Herman Steiner finishes second.

The publication of the US Chess flagship magazine *Chess Life* is still in the future, but members of the organization follow its activities through an annual yearbook and regular letters from President George Sturgis. The tradition of yearbooks, started in 1935 by the American Chess Federation and continued after the merger with the National Chess Federation in 1939, lasts until 1946.



Competitors in the 1941 Saint Louis, Missouri, U.S. Open Chess Championship

Photographer Unknown (1941)

Collection of the World Chess Hall of Fame, gift of John Donaldson © Sievers Photo

# 1941

---

President: George Sturgis

## May 4 - 29

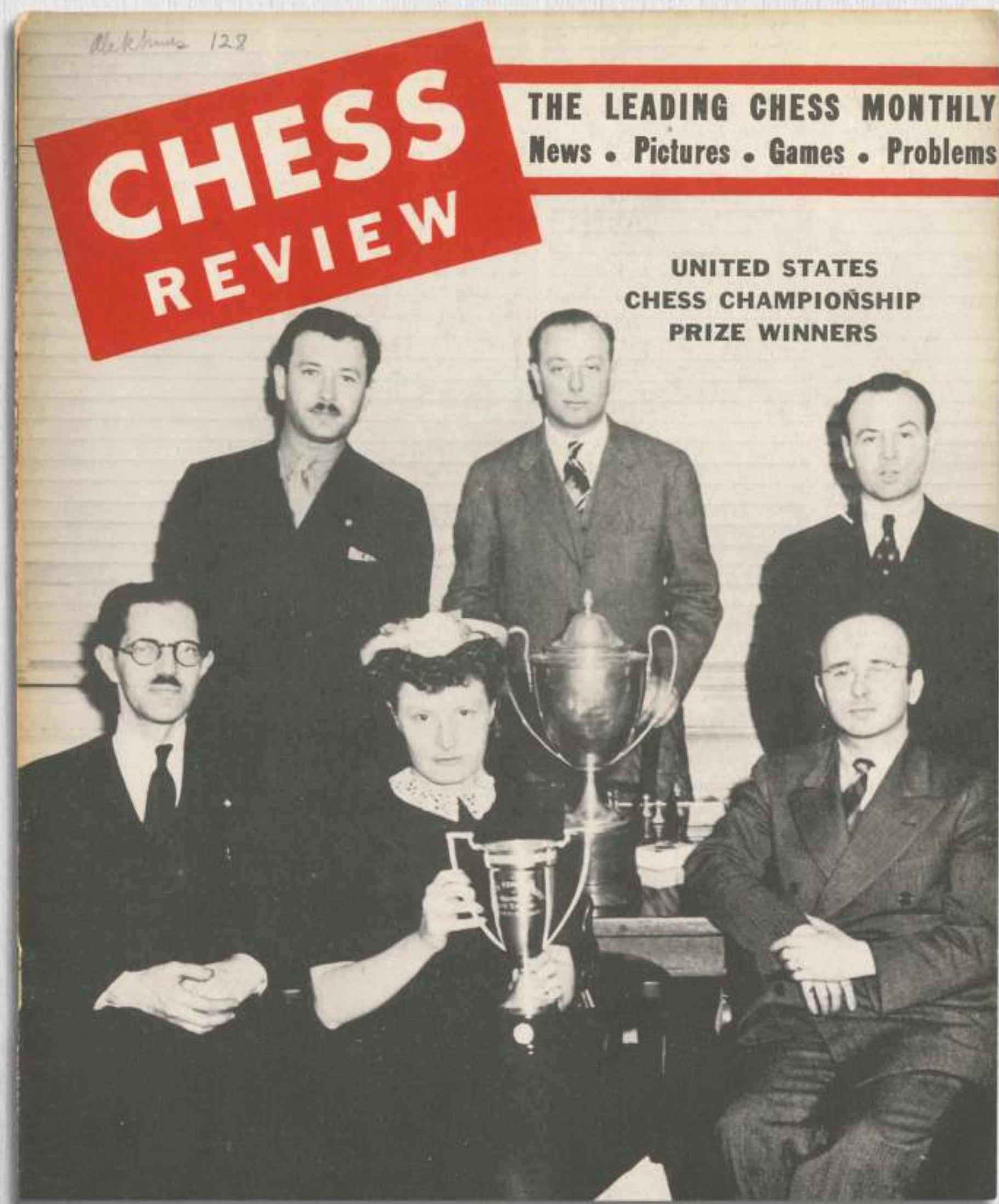
Samuel Reshevsky defends his U.S. chess championship title in a match against I.A. Horowitz and wins by a score of 9½-6½. Horowitz was unable to play in the 1940 U.S. Chess Championship the previous year because he was still recovering from injuries sustained in an automobile accident. This is the first U.S. Championship match held since Frank Marshall-Edward Lasker in 1923 and is sponsored by the US Chess Federation in the "off" year between the 1940 and 1942 championships.

## July 17 - 27

Reuben Fine repeats his performance of a year earlier by winning the U.S. Open Chess Championship. Herman Steiner is once again second in the event, held at the Hotel DeSoto in Saint Louis, Missouri.

## November 16 - December 7

Mona May Karff wins her second of what would eventually be seven U.S. Women's Chess Championships by defeating Adele Belcher (formerly Rivero) 5-1 in a match held at the Marshall, Manhattan, and Queens Chess Clubs.



*Chess Review* Vol. 10, No. 5 (May 1942)

Collection of the World Chess Hall of Fame

## 1942

---

President: George Sturgis, Elbert Wagner

### April 10 - 30

Isaac Kashdan and Samuel Reshevsky tie for first in the U.S. Championship held at the Hotel Astor in New York City. Later in the year the two play a match to break the tie, and Reshevsky prevails 7½-3½.

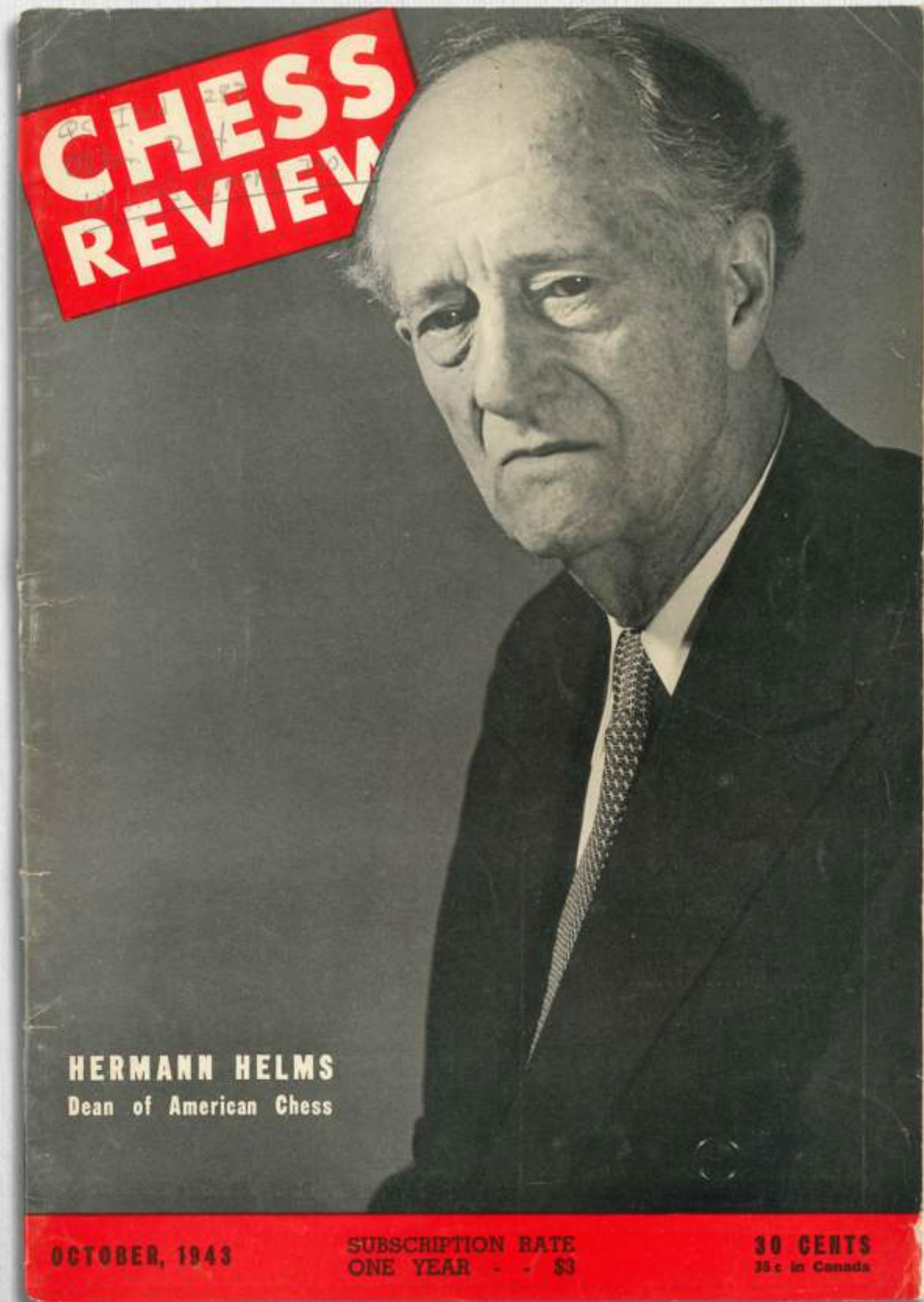
Mona May Karff dominates the U.S. Women's Chess Championship, winning all eight games to finish two points ahead of Nancy Roos and Adele Belcher (formerly Rivero).

### August 22 - 30

Herman Steiner of Los Angeles and Abe Yanofsky of Winnipeg tie for first in the 43rd U.S. Open Chess Championship held in Dallas with scores of 16-1. I.A. Horowitz is a half point back.

### October 29 - November 8

Edward S. Jackson Jr. of New York wins the inaugural U.S. Amateur Championship held at the Manhattan Chess Club.



*Chess Review* Vol. 11, No. 8 (October 1943)

Collection of the World Chess Hall of Fame

## 1943

---

President: Elbert Wagner

### August 12 - 24

I.A. Horowitz wins his third and final U.S. Open Chess Championship by taking top honors in Syracuse. His score of 14-1 puts him half a point ahead of Anthony Santasiere.

### November 11 - 27

Dr. Ariel Mengarini wins the U.S. Amateur Championship held in New York City with a score of 11-0.

Hermann Helms is named "Dean of American Chess" by George Sturgis at a banquet in Syracuse, NY. Helms is the founder, publisher, and editor of the *American Chess Bulletin* and a chess writer for the *Brooklyn Eagle* and the *New York Sun*. Additionally, Helms serves as a tournament director.

### December 31

The *American Chess Bulletin* reports US Chess currently has 533 members.





Nancy Roos

Gisela Gresser and Arnold Denker at the 1944 New York City, New York, U.S. Chess Championship (1944)

Collection of the World Chess Hall of Fame

# 1944

---

President: Elbert Wagner

## April 15 - May 7

Arnold Denker wins the U.S. Chess Championship with a score of 14½-1½, which places him a point ahead of Reuben Fine, whom he defeated in their individual game. Samuel Reshevsky, who had held the title since 1936, was unable to participate. At the same time, Gisela Gresser wins the first of her record nine U.S. Women's Chess Championships with a perfect score, half a point ahead of defending champion Mona May Karff. Both events are held at the Hotel Park Central.

## June 25

Reuben Fine once again demonstrates his unchallenged superiority at rapid chess (ten seconds a move), winning the U.S. Lightning Tournament, scoring 10-1 in the final. I.A. Horowitz is second at 8½ followed by Alexander Kevitz at 8 and Samuel Reshevsky at 7½.

## July 29 - August 10

Samuel Reshevsky easily wins the U.S. Open Chess Championship held in Boston, scoring 15½-1½ to finish three points ahead of Anthony Santasiere. The revelation of the tournament is the performance of 17-year-old Robert Steinmeyer of Saint Louis, who ties for third.

# 1944

---

President: Elbert Wagner

## July 29 - August 10 (con't)

During its annual meeting, the US Chess initiates a club affiliation program. The Washington Chess Divan of Washington, D.C., is the first to sign up. Among those listed in *The Yearbook of the United States Chess Federation 1944* was the Downtown Y Chess Club of Saint Louis, located at 16th and Locust Streets.

## September 30

The September-October 1944 issue of the *American Chess Bulletin* reports US Chess membership is up to 1708 as of the end of September. California, led by Herman Steiner's efforts, had the most members of any state with 536. Missouri has seven members.

## December 20

US Chess President George Sturges dies at the age of 53 and is succeeded by Elbert Wagner Jr.



Wallace  
George Sturgis Memorial Trophy (c 1945)  
Collection of the World Chess Hall of Fame

## 1945

---

President: Elbert Wagner

### June 24

Reuben Fine is once again victorious in the annual US Lightning Tournament (ten seconds a move), scoring 10-1 in the finals with George Shainswit, a future member of the 1950 U.S. Chess Olympiad team, who finishes second with 9 points.

### July 9 - 21

Anthony Santasiere wins the U.S. Open Chess Championship held in Peoria, Illinois. Frederic S. Anderson of Saint Louis is second.

### September 1 - 4

The USA-USSR. radio match, two years in the planning, sees the Soviets crush the United States 15½-4½. This result is surprising, as the Americans had won four Chess Olympiads in the 1930s and the Soviets are unknown internationally besides Mikhail Botvinnik. The only bright spot for the United States is the performance of Herman Steiner, who scores 1½ out of 2 against Igor Bondarevsky.

*The Yearbook of the United States Chess Federation* for 1945 devotes six pages to the organization's Chess for the Wounded Program, an early philanthropic effort that aims to aid wounded veterans in hospitals in the United States.



*Chess Review* Volume 14, No. 7 (August-September 1946)  
Collection of the World Chess Hall of Fame

## 1946

---

President: Elbert Wagner, Business Manager: Montgomery Major

### May 5 - 19

Arnold Denker successfully defends his U.S. championship title in a match against Herman Steiner.

### July 1 - 6

Larry Friedman wins the first U.S. Junior Open Championship (then known as the National Junior Chess Championship Tournament). The competition is held in the ballroom of the Lawson YMCA in Chicago, IL, and includes two future U.S. Chess Hall of Fame inductees, Hans Berliner and Larry Evans.

### July 8 - 20

Herman Steiner wins the U.S. Open, which is held in Pittsburgh, PA.

### September 5

The first issue of *Chess Review* is published. The first editor is Montgomery Major, and in the second issue, he would write about what needed to be done to improve American chess. The publication, originally a bi-monthly newspaper, reports on activities of clubs as well as national activities.



*Chess Review* Volume 14, No. 7 (August-September 1946)

Collection of the World Chess Hall of Fame

## 1946

President: Elbert Wagner, Business Manager: Montgomery Major

### September 9 - 12

The Soviets win the USSR-USA match held in Moscow with a score of 12½-7½.

### October 26 - November 16

The U.S. and U.S. Women's Chess Championships are held in the Chanin Auditorium in New York City. For the first time, competitors in the U.S. Chess Championship qualify through a series of regional tournaments so that all areas of the U.S. can be represented. These competitors face off against the seven seeded competitors. Samuel Reshevsky wins the U.S. Chess Championship, and Mona May Karff is victorious in the U.S. Women's Chess Championship.

### November 20

US Chess announces the formation of a National Chess Radio League in Chess Life. "The primary purpose of the league is to provide competition between distant teams of nearly equal strength and arrange for matches between all clubs desiring to participate in radio chess."



## 1947

---

President: Elbert Wagner, Business Manager: Montgomery Major

### January 5

US Chess names February National Chess Month, coinciding with its annual membership drive. Herman Steiner later wins the top honors in the National Chess Month Awards by bringing the most new members into the US Chess (67).

### April 5

Future U.S. Chess Hall of Fame inductee Fred Reinfeld begins a column for *Chess Review*.

### June 30 - July 12

The second U.S. Junior Open Championship is held in Cleveland, OH. Larry Friedman defends his title, while future U.S. Chess Hall of Fame inductee Larry Evans takes second place. Participants in the tournament toured the John G. White Chess Collection at the Cleveland Public Library.

*Chess Review* Vol. 15, No. 8 (August 1947)

Collection of the World Chess Hall of Fame



*Chess Review* Vol. 15, No. 8 (August 1947)

Collection of the World Chess Hall of Fame

## 1947

---

President: Elbert Wagner, Business Manager: Montgomery Major

### August 11 - 23

The U.S. Open Chess Championship is held in Corpus Christi, TX. The tournament draws a then-record 86 competitors. Among them are leading American chess players like Isaac Kashdan and Herman Steiner as well as Mary Bain. Players represent 17 states as well as Mexico, Canada, Colombia, Puerto Rico, Cuba, and New Zealand. Isaac Kashdan wins the tournament. At the annual business meeting, United States territories are given the same rights as states in US Chess. Arpad Elo becomes head of the Committee on the Rating of Tournament Players.

### September 15

Play begins in the United States Correspondence Championship.

### December 26 - 30

Robert Byrne wins the United States Intercollegiate Chess Championship at Columbia University, an event sponsored by US Chess.





Program from the 1948 U.S. Open Chess Championship in Baltimore, Maryland (1948)

Collection of the World Chess Hall of Fame, gift of John Donaldson

## 1948

---

President: Elbert Wagner, Paul Giers, Business Manager: Montgomery Major

### January

Preliminary rounds begin in the first open tournament held in Puerto Rico. Miguel Colon wins the tournament, placing ahead of Rafael Cintron. Cintron had held the title of Puerto Rican chess champion for 23 years.

### February 20

*Chess Review* announces that George Koltanowski will begin covering international chess news in a column titled "Chess Life Abroad."

### March 5

*Chess Review* announces that Herman Holenweg has won the 7th Grand National Correspondence Chess Championship. Holenweg, who lived in the Milwaukee area, did not learn to play chess until age 26.

### July 5 - 17

The U.S. Open Chess Championship is held at the Lord Baltimore Hotel in Baltimore, MD. The U.S. Women's Open Chess Championship, which had been suspended when the U.S. Women's Championship was established in 1940, is held concurrently. Weaver Adams wins the U.S. Open, while Mona May Karff wins the U.S. Women's Open and the Helen Cobb trophy.



Program from the 1948 U.S. Open Chess Championship in Baltimore, Maryland (1948)

Collection of the World Chess Hall of Fame, gift of John Donaldson

## 1948

---

President: Elbert Wagner, Paul Giers, Business Manager: Montgomery Major

### July 20

US Chess Pres. Elbert A. Wagner Jr. announces the National Chess Coordination Plan following the Annual Congress of US Chess. The program aims to more effectively organize US Chess.

### July 19 - 24

The Third Annual U.S. Junior Open Championship is held in the "Atomic Capital of the World," Oak Ridge, TN. George Koltanowski serves as tournament director. Arthur Bisguier wins the competition, narrowly defeating Frank Anderson, one of several Canadians who competed in the tournament.

### August 11 - 30

Herman Steiner wins the U.S. Chess Championship, which is held in South Fallsburg, NY. Samuel Reshevsky, the reigning champion, had declined to defend his title.

### August 23 - 31

Gisela Gresser wins the U.S. Chess Championship, which is held in South Fallsburg, NY. She finishes ahead of her rival, Mona May Karff.

### December 26 - 30

The U.S. Intercollegiate Team Championship is won by the City College of New York. The team consists of Howard Harrison, Richard Einhorn, Isidore Rothman, Richard Vogel, Eugene Shapiro, Richard Klugman, and Kevin Plesset.



## 1949

---

President: Paul Giers, Business Manager: Montgomery Major

### July 11 - 23

The U.S. Open Championship is held in Omaha, NE, at the Fontenelle Hotel. Albert Sandrin wins the championship.

### July 25 - 30

The U.S. Junior Open Championship is held in Fort Worth, TX. Arthur Bisguier wins the championship.

### December 26 - 30

The U.S. Intercollegiate Individual Championship is held at Rutgers University in New Brunswick, New Jersey. Paul Luther Dietz from the University of Pittsburgh wins the championship.

*Chess Review* Vol. 18, No. 8 (August 1949)

Collection of the World Chess Hall of Fame



Kenneth Harkness' Notebook  
Date Unknown  
Collection of the World Chess Hall of Fame

## 1950

---

President: Paul Giers, Business Manager: Montgomery Major

### January 5

An announcement for the beginning of a rating system for local and national events in the U.S. appears in *Chess Review*.

### April 5

A new U.S. championship system that will span three years, with a national championship occurring on the third year in the cycle, is announced. The first year will feature state or regional competitions, and the winners will then compete in a candidates tournament the next year. The final year will be the U.S. Chess Championship, after which the process will start over again.

### July 10 - 22

The U.S. Open Chess Championship is held in Detroit, MI. Arthur Bisguier wins the tournament.



Kenneth Harkness' Notebook  
Date Unknown  
Collection of the World Chess Hall of Fame

## 1950

---

President: Paul Giers, Business Manager: Montgomery Major

### July 11 - 18

The U.S. Women's Open is held in conjunction with the U.S. Open. Mona May Karff and Lucille Kellner are co-champions.

### July 24 - 29

The U.S. Junior Open Championship is held in Milwaukee, WI. James Cross wins the championship.

### November 20

The first US Chess rating list, covering events through July 31, 1950, and calculated by Kenneth Harkness, appears in *Chess Review*.

### December 26 - 30

Columbia College wins the U.S. Intercollegiate Team Tournament held at Columbia University in New York City.



Mary Bain with Jacqueline Piatigorsky at the 1951 U.S. Women's Chess Championship (1951)

Collection of the World Chess Hall of Fame, gift of the family of Jacqueline Piatigorsky

# 1951

---

President: Paul Giers, Harold Phillips, Executive Director: Kenneth Harkness

## January 5

An explanation of the new rating system, along with reactions and criticisms of the new system, appears in *Chess Review*.

## February 5

An article is written about the integration of chess programs into prisons and the benefits it has on their rehabilitation.

## March 5

A growing number of cities offer chess programs for children. An article highlights the Boys and Girls Club in Salt Lake City, UT, and their plans for children's chess.

## July 9 - 21

The U.S. Open Championship is held at the Hotel Texas in Fort Worth, TX. Larry Evans wins the tournament.

## July 23 - 28

The U.S. Junior Open Championship is held at the Franklin Institute in Philadelphia, PA. Saul Wachs wins the tournament and the Milwaukee Journal Trophy.

# 1951

---

President: Paul Giers, Harold Phillips, Executive Director: Kenneth Harkness

## August 4 - 19

The U.S. Chess Championship is held in New York City at the Empire Hotel. Larry Evans wins the first of his titles.

## September 5

A children's hospital in Chicago, LaRabida Sanitarium, integrates chess into the the hospital as a hobby that children are able to do with their treatments. The idea is inspired by a Chess for Veterans program at other Chicago-area hospitals.

## October

The Pennsylvania Chess Federation votes to begin the Veterans' Chess Program in hospitals. This includes sending books and magazines, as well as hosting classes, lectures, exhibitions, and competitions.

## October 20

The U.S. Women's Championship is held at the Marshall Chess Club in New York. Mary Bain wins the tournament.

## December 26 - 30

The U.S. Intercollegiate Championship is held in Houston Hall at the University of Pennsylvania. The winner is James Sherwin of Columbia University.





*Chess Review* Vol. 20, No. 9 (September 1952)  
Collection of the World Chess Hall of Fame

# 1952

President: Harold Phillips, Executive Director: Kenneth Harkness

## March

Los Angeles County Chess begins a program for teenagers in conjunction with the City Department of Education and the City Department of Recreation. They will host preliminary tournaments that qualify players for a city-wide championship on March 15. They will also have a city-wide open tournament to encourage the development of clubs in the high schools.

## July 14 - 25

The U.S. Open Championship is held in Tampa, FL at the Hotel Floridian. Larry Evans wins the tournament. The then-largest U.S. Women's Championship is held at the same time.

## August 1

Kenneth Harkness is named US Chess's first business manager (this position is later called executive director) and serves until August 1959. US Chess also opens its first office at 93 Barrow Street in New York City.

## August 18 - 23

The U.S. Junior Open Championship is held at the Rome Hotel in Omaha, NE. Curt Brasket wins the tournament.

## December 26 - 30

The U.S. Intercollegiate Championship is held at John Jay Hall at Columbia University in New York, NY. Columbia University wins their second championship.



Latvian-American Chess Players at 1953 US Open, Milwaukee, Wisconsin (1953)

Photographer Unknown

Collection of the World Chess Hall of Fame, gift of John Donaldson

# 1953

---

President: Harold Phillips, Executive Director: Kenneth Harkness

## January 1

Following approval at the business meetings of the 1952 U.S. Open Chess Championship, US Chess begins a promotional plan to promote membership by increasing the benefits for Federation members to include rated team play, membership dues (both state and national), and discounts for chess books and supplies bought through the organization. Members can save money by purchasing multi-year memberships.

## March 5

A new style of *Chess Review* is released. There are more articles and commentary written by players and many of the same columns as before.

## August 3 - 8

The U.S. Junior Open Championship is held at the YMCA in Kansas City, MO. Saul Yarmak wins the Junior Championship and the Milwaukee Journal's Challenge Trophy.

## August 10 - 21

The U.S. Open Chess Championship is held in Milwaukee, WI, at the Eagle's Club. Donald Byrne beats Max Pavey in the final round to win the championship. Eva Aronson wins the U.S. Women's Open Chess Championship.

# 1953

---

President: Harold Phillips, Executive Director: Kenneth Harkness

## September

Willa White Owens writes an op-ed in *Chess Review* following the tournament calling for women chess players to participate more in the tournaments. She lists some of the then-current and prominent women chess players and women's chess clubs as evidence of the interest in women's chess.

## September 11 - 20

The U.S. Candidates' Championship is held in Philadelphia, PA, in the Jefferson Ballroom of the Hotel Adelphi.

The U.S. Championship is restructured to consist of 14 players: the top three rated players, the top six players from the Candidates Championship, and the top five players from the U.S. Open Chess Championship.

## December 5 - 19

The U.S. Women's Chess Championship is held at the Marshall and Manhattan Chess Clubs in New York. US Chess believes that by having a prominent women's tournament they can generate more interest for chess among women. Mona May Karff wins the championship.

## December 26 - 30

The U.S. Intercollegiate Championship is held at Columbia University in John Jay Hall. Albert Weissman from New York University wins the individual championship.



Mona May Karff (left) and Gisela Kahn Gresser (right) at the U.S. Women's Open Championship (August 5, 1954)

Photographer Unknown

Collection of the World Chess Hall of Fame

# 1954

---

President: Frank Graves, Harold Phillips, Executive Director: Kenneth Harkness

## January

US Chess offers new alternatives to the structure of the U.S. Open Chess Championship because the size of the tournament has grown to uncontrollable numbers. The options presented are grouped-finals open, controlled pairings open, or a classic open.

## May 29 - June 13

The U.S. Chess Championship and Zonal Tournament is held at the Marshall Chess Club in New York. The top two finishers will represent the U.S. at the 1955 Interzonal Tournament. The top three players will qualify for the next U.S. Chess Championship. Arthur Bisguier wins the tournament.

## June 16 - 24

A team from the USSR arrives in New York to compete in a week-long match against some of the top American chess players. The eight-board, four-round match ends in a 20-12 Soviet win. The event is held in the Grand Ballroom of the Hotel Roosevelt in New York City.

# 1954

---

President: Frank Graves, Harold Phillips, Executive Director: Kenneth Harkness

## June 30 - July 9

The U.S. Junior Open Championship is held in Long Beach, CA, at the Lincoln Park Chess Club. Ross Siemms wins the championship.

## August 2 - 14

The U.S. Open Championship is held in New Orleans, LA, at the Roosevelt Hotel. The U.S. Women's Open Chess Championship is held concurrently, and the top two finishers advance to represent the U.S. at the Women's World Championship Candidates Tournament in 1955. Larry Evans wins the U.S. Open. Gisela Kahn Gresser wins the U.S. Women's Open.

## December 26 - 30

The U.S. Intercollegiate Championship is held at John Jay Hall at Columbia University. Fordham University wins the championship.



Jacqueline Piatigorsky in Action against Mona May Karff in the 1955 U.S. Women's Championship (1955)

Photographer Unknown

Collection of the World Chess Hall of Fame, gift of the family of Jacqueline Piatigorsky



# 1955

---

President: Frank Graves, Executive Director: Kenneth Harkness

## February 5

US Chess stays in Manhattan but moves its office a short distance from 93 Barrow Street to 81 Bedford Street.

## May 20 - 22

The U.S. Amateur Chess Championship is held at the Mohegan Country Club in Lake Mohegan, NY. This is the first amateur championship in nine years. Clinton Parmelee wins the tournament, and Kathryn Slater wins the women's tournament that is held concurrently.

## July 15 - 24

The U.S. Junior Open Championship takes place in Lincoln, Nebraska at the YMCA. At age 15, Charles Kalme becomes the youngest person to win the tournament.

# 1955

---

President: Frank Graves, Executive Director: Kenneth Harkness

## August 8 - 20

The U.S. Open Chess Championship is held concurrently with the U.S. Women's Championship in Long Beach, CA. Nicolas Rossolimo wins the tournament, and Sonja Graf-Stevenson wins the women's tournament. She is an immigrant and a past contender for the Women's World Chess Championship.

## August 23 - September 5

The U.S. Women's Chess Championship is won by Gisela Gresser and Nancy Roos in New York.

## December 26 - 30

The U.S. Intercollegiate Individual Championship is held at John Jay Hall at Columbia University in New York. Edward Mednis from New York University wins the championship.

# CHECKMATE!

MONTHLY BULLETIN OF THE HIGHLAND PARK CHESS CLUB

Vol. 1, No. 1

Woodhaven-Cypress Hills, New York

September 1956

## UNITED STATES CHAMPION COMING TO HIGHLAND PARK

ARTHUR B. BISQUIER  
WILL TAKE ON ALL IN  
SIMULTANEOUS PLAY

The Highland Park Chess Club, which meets in the Men's Game Room of the YMCA at 570 Jamaica Avenue, Cypress Hills, Brooklyn, is starting off its second year with just about the most interesting and attractive evening of chess a local club could conjure. No less than the Champion of the United States is coming to our own local club to play against all players who wish to challenge him.

Arthur B. Bisguier, United States Chess Federation Champion, will play in a simultaneous exhibition on Wednesday evening, September 12th at 8 p.m. He will take on all comers, whether they are members of Highland Park or not. There will be no admission or charge of any kind.

Bisguier, who not only is the USCF champ, last month won the United States Open Championship at Oklahoma City. Last January he was the co-winner (along with Larry Evans) of the annual Rosenwald Tournament held in New York. He has played on the United States team against the Soviet Union in Moscow. In the last few years he has been very successful in simultaneous exhibition tours throughout Europe.

In recent years Bisguier has held the United States Junior Championship, the Pan-American Championship, the Eastern States Championship, the Intercollegiate Championship and the Manhattan Chess Club Championship.

As a sidelight, a hand-sculptured metallic chess set created by Rita DeLieto will be on exhibit for the evening by Ruth Hilton Modern Furniture of Forest Hills.

The games will start promptly at 8 p.m. and all players are requested to bring their own boards and sets.



Picture above, taken in 1952, shows Arthur Bisguier then a Pfc. in the American Army, playing Germans in a simultaneous exhibition at Burstadt/ Hessen.

## 1956

President: Frank Graves, Executive Director: Kenneth Harkness

### May 25 - 27

The U.S. Amateur Chess Championship is held at the Monterey Hotel in Asbury Park, NJ. John Hudson wins the tournament. The U.S. Women's Amateur Championship is held concurrently, and Kathryn Slater wins the championship for the second year in a row.

### July 1 - 7

The U.S. Junior Open Championship is held in Philadelphia, PA. Bobby Fischer wins the tournament and becomes the youngest champion at age 13.

### July 16 - 28

The U.S. Open Chess Championship is held at the Biltmore Hotel in Oklahoma City, OK. Arthur Bisguier wins the tournament, and Sonja Graf Stevenson wins the U.S. Women's Chess Championship for the second year in a row.

*Checkmate!* (September 1956)

Collection of the World Chess Hall of Fame, gift of Arthur Bisguier

# CHECKMATE!

MONTHLY BULLETIN OF THE HIGHLAND PARK CHESS CLUB

Vol. 1, No. 1

Woodhaven-Cypress Hills, New York

September 1956

## UNITED STATES CHAMPION COMING TO HIGHLAND PARK

ARTHUR B. BISQUIER  
WILL TAKE ON ALL IN  
SIMULTANEOUS PLAY

The Highland Park Chess Club, which meets in the Men's Game Room of the YMCA at 570 Jamaica Avenue, Cypress Hills, Brooklyn, is starting off its second year with just about the most interesting and attractive evening of chess a local club could conjure. No less than the Champion of the United States is coming to our own local club to play against all players who wish to challenge him.

Arthur B. Bisguier, United States Chess Federation Champion, will play in a simultaneous exhibition on Wednesday evening, September 12th at 8 p.m. He will take on all comers, whether they are members of Highland Park or not. There will be no admission or charge of any kind.

Bisguier, who not only is the USCF champ, last month won the United States Open Championship at Oklahoma City. Last January he was the co-winner (along with Larry Evans) of the annual Rosenwald Tournament held in New York. He has played on the United States team against the Soviet Union in Moscow. In the last few years he has been very successful in simultaneous exhibition tours throughout Europe.

In recent years Bisguier has held the United States Junior Championship, the Pan-American Championship, the Eastern States Championship, the Intercollegiate Championship and the Manhattan Chess Club Championship.

As a sidelight, a hand-sculptured metallic chess set created by Rita DeLieto will be on exhibit for the evening by Ruth Hilton Modern Furniture of Forest Hills.

The games will start promptly at 8 p.m. and all players are requested to bring their own boards and sets.



Picture above, taken in 1952, shows Arthur Bisguier then a Pfc. in the American Army, playing Germans in a simultaneous exhibition at Burstadt/ Hessen.

## 1956

President: Frank Graves, Executive Director: Kenneth Harkness

### October 5

US Chess office moves from 81 Bedford Street to 80 East 11th Street, where it will remain until late 1967.

### December 26 - 30

The U.S. Intercollegiate Team Championship is held at the Franklin-Mercantile Chess Club in Philadelphia, PA. The University of Chicago wins the championship.

*Checkmate!* (September 1956)

Collection of the World Chess Hall of Fame, gift of Arthur Bisguier



Nancy Roos

Co-Champions of the 1957 U.S. Women's Championship:  
Sonja Graf-Stevenson and Gisela Gresser (November 1957)

Collection of the World Chess Hall of Fame, gift of Richard Kashdan

## 1957

---

President: Frank Graves, Jerry Spann, Executive Director: Kenneth Harkness

### June 7 - 9

The U.S. Amateur Chess Championship is held at the Monterey Hotel in Asbury Park, NJ. Harry Lyman wins the tournament, and Rosalia De Serrano wins the Women's Amateur Chess Championship.

### July 8 - 14

The U.S. Junior Open Championship is held in San Francisco, CA, in the auditorium of the Spreckles-Russell Dairy Company. Bobby Fischer wins the tournament.

### August 5 - 17

The U.S. Open Championship is held in Columbus, OH, in the Main Ballroom of the Manger Hotel. Bobby Fischer wins the tournament on tiebreak over Arthur Bisguier and is the youngest player to win the Open Championship at age 14. The U.S. Women's Open is held concurrently and Sonja Graf-Stevenson is the champion.



Nancy Roos

Co-Champions of the 1957 U.S. Women's Championship:  
Sonja Graf-Stevenson and Gisela Gresser (November 1957)

Collection of the World Chess Hall of Fame, gift of Richard Kashdan

## 1957

---

President: Frank Graves, Jerry Spann, Executive Director: Kenneth Harkness

### November 5

As reported in the November 5, 1957 issue of *Chess Review*, the Texas Chess Association (TCA) begins the promotion of chess in schools by dividing the state into districts and reaching out to principals to ask for chess to be added as an option for extracurricular activities. Volunteers from TCA teach lessons at the schools. In November, the TCA meets with legislators to lobby for chess to be considered a competitive sport.

### November 3 - 16

The U.S. Women's Championship and Zonal takes place in Los Angeles, CA, at the Herman Steiner Chess Club. Gisela Gresser and Sonja Graf-Stevenson tie for first in the championship.

### December 17, 1957 - January 8, 1958

The U.S. Chess Championship is held at the Marshall Chess Club in New York. Bobby Fischer wins the event and at age 14 is the youngest ever champion, a record he still holds.

### December 17, 1957 - January 8, 1958

The U.S. Chess Championship is held at the Marshall Chess Club in New York. Bobby Fischer wins the event and at age 14 is the youngest ever champion, a record he still holds.



Ilmars "Elly" Didrichsons  
Raymond Weinstein vs. Pal Benko at the 1959 U.S. Open Chess Championship, Omaha, Nebraska (1959)  
Collection of the World Chess Hall of Fame, gift of John Donaldson

# 1958

---

President: Jerry Spann, Executive Director: Kenneth Harkness

US Chess implements a membership drive with a goal of increasing membership from 2,000 to 6,000. At the Board of Directors meeting in August, they decide to form the Membership Committee. There is a chairman from each state on the committee plus local committees in areas with large populations.

The USCF Armed Forces Committee is established to promote chess to members of the armed services. Members of this committee are volunteers who are veterans or currently serving and will send bi-weekly reports about local chess events.

## January 26

A record breaking number of students in Florida compete in the Dale County Interscholastic Tournament. Players compete individually by grade level and as teams from their respective schools.

## May 10 - 11

The U.S. Intercollegiate Open Team Championship is held at the Michigan Union in Ann Arbor, MI.

## May 30 - June 1

The U.S. Amateur Championship is held at the Monterey Hotel in Asbury, NJ. Dr. Erich Marchand wins the tournament.



# 1958

---

President: Jerry Spann, Executive Director: Kenneth Harkness

## July 7 - 11

The U.S. Junior Open Championship is held in Homestead, FL, at the National Guard Armory. Raymond Weinstein wins the tournament.

## August 4 - 15

The U.S. Open Championship is held in Rochester, MN, at IBM facilities. E. Cobo-Arteaga wins the championship.

## August 5 - September 12

Bobby Fischer ties for 5th in the Portoroz, Yugoslavia, Interzonal and advances to the Candidates tournament.

## August 6

US Chess President Jerry Spann announces that the U.S. Chess Championship will now be a yearly event held in conjunction with the American Chess Federation's Rosenwald Trophy Tournament, making it a joint US Chess/ACF event. Invitations will be sent to the defending U.S. champion, the current U.S. Open champion, the U.S. Junior champion, and consideration will be given to champions from strong regional championships.

## December 26 - 30

The U.S. Intercollegiate Team Tournament is held at the Case Institute of Technology in Cleveland, OH. The defending champions, the team from the University of Chicago, wins the championship.



## 1959

---

President: Jerry Spann, Executive Director: Kenneth Harkness

### December 18, 1958 - January 4, 1959

The 1958/59 U.S. Chess Championship is held at the Manhattan Chess Club in New York City. Bobby Fischer wins the tournament.

### May 29 - 31

The U.S. Amateur Tournament is held at the Monterey Hotel in Asbury Park, NJ. L. Russell Chauvent wins the championship, and Lisa Lane wins the U.S. Women's Amateur Championship.

### July 13 - 18

The U.S. Junior Open Championship is held in Omaha, NE, at the Hotel Rome. Robin Ault wins the tournament.

*Chess Review* Vol. 27, No. 2 (February 1959)

Collection of the World Chess Hall of Fame



## 1959

---

President: Jerry Spann, Executive Director: Kenneth Harkness

### July 20 - August 1

The U.S. Open Chess Championship is held in Omaha, NE, at the Hotel Sheraton-Fontenelle. This is the 60th U.S. Open, which began as the Western Open and ran until 1938 then changed to the U.S. Championship from 1939 to present. Arthur Bisguier wins the tournament.

### November 30 - December 12

The U.S. Women's and International Zonal Championship is held in New York City and West Orange, NJ. Lisa Lane wins the championship.

*Chess Review* Vol. 27, No. 2 (February 1959)

Collection of the World Chess Hall of Fame