

**August 2020 Delegates Meeting**  
**Report of the Events Department**  
**Boyd Reed, Director of Events**

*NOTE: This report aggregates the reports between the August 2019 EB meeting and now. It is presented in chronological order, starting with the August 2019 report, to provide context.*

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**August 2019 Executive Board Meeting**

***NATIONAL EVENTS***

This section covers national events that are directly organized by US Chess.

**RECENTLY COMPLETED NATIONAL EVENTS**

**2019 United States Open Championship**

Rosen Centre Hotel, Orlando, Florida, August 3-11

**Chief TD** – NTD Anand Dommalapati

**Floor Chief** – NTD Myron Thomas

**Chief Arbiter, Invitationals** – NTD Jon Haskel

**Backroom Chief** – NTD Joseph Yun

**Number of Entries** – 357

**NOTES:**

- This US Open continued a recent trend of this event drawing under 400 players in Florida.
- The live stream analysts were IM Konstantin Kavutskiy and IM Eric Rosen. Pete Karagianis, Assistant Director of Events, coordinated the stream.
- The site received a high number of compliments from attendees. The very friendly deal we had with Rosen Centre helped offset some of the negative effect from low attendance.
- The hotel did well on its food concessions.
- Rosen Centre has expressed an interest in hosting the 2025 US Open.

**UPCOMING NATIONAL EVENTS**

**2019 National K-12 Grades Championship**

Disney's Coronado Springs Resort, Lake Buena Vista, Florida, December 13-15

**Chief TD** – NTD Wayne Clark

**Floor Chief** – NTD Jon Haskel

**Backroom Chief** – NTD William Buklis

**Number of Entries** – 459 (as of November 5)

NOTES:

- The livestream analysts will be GM Fidel Corrales Jimenez and WGM Jennifer Yu. Only rounds 5-7 will be broadcast.
- We will be offering 27 team rooms. That is the absolute maximum available – we have every ballroom and breakout room that DCS has. I was able to convince the hotel to give me a few additional rooms that were not in the original contract.
- With the addition of the NSTOC to the list of invitationals, that group of four tournaments now requires two assistant arbiters, not just one.
- The first early entry deadline is still two weeks out, and we traditionally get about 65-70 percent of our entries by then. My current attendance estimate is 1,800 players. We will be issuing an email blast next week to advertise the event.

### **COMPLETED SCHEDULING OF FUTURE NATIONAL EVENTS**

No events have been contracted and added to the National Events Calendar since the June meeting.

### **FUTURE NATIONAL EVENTS UNDER ACTIVE DISCUSSION**

**Post-2022 US Open** – We had held off on siting US Opens after 2022, in the hopes that the Executive Director and Executive Board might be able to find common ground on possible restructuring of the event to make it a more attractive draw for players. This doesn't appear to be happening, so I have resumed site searches.

The current clubhouse leader for the 2023 US Open is DeVos Place and Amway Grand Plaza Hotel, in Grand Rapids, MI. I've been working on the hotel rates for this site, and we are now down to \$139/night. Once some contractual details are hammered out, I expect to present a contract to the Executive Director for her review and approval.

The current clubhouse leader for the 2024 US Open is Sheraton Norfolk Waterside Hotel, in Norfolk, VA. The primary point of contention here is the hotel rate, which I continue to work on with my contacts at the Sheraton. I don't think we're too far off from where we want to be, and the hotel has undergone an impressive renovation since we were last there in 2017.

I encourage the Executive Board to strongly consider possibilities for reformatting the US Open. Starting points for discussion would include increasing the prize fund (or at least guaranteeing 100% of the current prize fund), offering an “Open” section with cash prizes and larger entry fees and an “Amateur” section with smaller entry fees and smaller prizes (either cash or awards), and shortening the playing schedule so the traditional schedule is a maximum of seven days, and compressing the Delegate Workshops and/or Delegates Meeting.

I’m not necessarily advocating any or all of the measures in the previous paragraph, but we need to acknowledge that the world has changed since the US Open’s halcyon days of a two-week, 12-round event. People have less vacation time than they used to have. Hotel and airfare costs are high, and not going down. Finally, more people are working later in life, which means that the number of seniors available to attend has dwindled. We need to adapt the event so we can be more attractive to a more diverse set of sites (the US Open currently eats up two consecutive weekends of ballroom and meeting room space, which makes us a non-starter for many potential sites in July/August, and causes higher room rates from those who do respond positively to our requests for proposals).

**Post-2025 National K-12 Grades** – Gaylord National Harbor has expressed an interest in holding this event in 2026. Rosen Shingle Creek has expressed an interest in possibly a multi-year deal, starting in either 2026 or 2027. Our attendees love Shingle Creek, and I think people will greatly enjoy the 2022 K-12 in National Harbor as well.

**Various events in Nashville** – Gaylord Opryland is simply off the table for the foreseeable future. Despite discussions with senior sales manager, the general manager of the hotel, and Marriott corporate sales executives, this facility is now priced out of our range. The minimum hotel rate they’re willing to quote for a National Elementary or SuperNationals is now around \$230-240 a night. The growth of Nashville as a residential and tourism center means Marriott simply projects they can sell their rooms for far more than we’re willing to charge our attendees. It’s unfortunate, but also likely a blessing in disguise – Nashville’s not the easiest place to get into or out of, and it’s best to start looking at establishing long term relationships with other sites now. Which segues neatly into...

**Various events in Columbus** – We appear to be on the verge of creating a long-term, sustainable partnership with Experience Columbus, the Greater Columbus Convention Center and the attached hotels (particularly the Hyatt and Hilton).

**SuperNationals IX** – Columbus wants to have the 2027 National Elementary and SuperNationals IX as a package deal. Of note: as of right now, we are the only game in town for April 2029, which would permit us to specify the space we want in the convention center, and get the room blocks we need locked down with the amenities (wi-fi, hard Internet lines, guarantees

about neighboring events, etc.) we would like. The sticking point right now has to do with hotel rates.

Attached to this document is the current hotel grid being proposed by Columbus for SuperNationals IX. The hotel rates (particularly the Hilton) are a bit high – but I think it’s close enough that, if I sit down with the general managers of the hotels in person, we can get a deal done. I think \$179-189 is a reasonable hotel rate, even 10 years out. The Hilton is currently at \$192, if we give back the \$7 rebate they proposed (which is not needed for offsetting expenses). They are also proposing to provide regular shuttle service between the GCCC and all non-attached hotels for the event, free of charge.

I’m going to Columbus later this month to see if we can’t get them to \$189 or below for at least the four attached hotels (which are the ones that would have 80% cumulative attrition). If we can, I would strongly recommend approving this deal, as Columbus is a known quantity, very family friendly, very accessible by air or land, and has drawn excellent reviews from parents and kids alike for years.

The Orange County Convention Center (Orlando, FL) is interested, and is willing to give us the same deal and weekend we accepted for SuperNationals VIII in 2025. However, we would very much like to avoid Mother’s Day weekend if possible (which is the 2025 schedule).

Fortunately, we still have some time for 2029, but the time to work on possible deals for that is now. The event is so big that we often need most, if not all, of the meeting space and hotel rooms a facility and its immediate environs can offer. Waiting too long – which, in this case, is 5-6 years in advance – opens the door for another event to book some of the space we need, which then removes that venue from the running altogether.

## ***INTERNATIONAL EVENTS***

This section covers international events where we send a formal delegation and paid coaches/captains, as well as any new titles confirmed since the last EB meeting.

### **UPCOMING INTERNATIONAL EVENTS**

**No upcoming events before January 2020 EB meeting.**

### **COMPLETED INTERNATIONAL EVENTS**

**2019 Pan-American Youth Championship**

Guayaquil, Ecuador, July 20-27

**Head of Delegation:** FM/FST Aviv Friedman

**Assistant Head of Delegation:** GM/FT Elshan Moradiabadi

**US Chess Representative:** Pete Karagianis, Assistant Director of Events

**Total number of players who received coaching:** 41, including 7 paid

Event summary is here: <https://new.uschess.org/news/us-takes-gold-2019-panams/>

### **2019 World Cadet Championship**

Weifang, China, August 20-September 2

**Head of Delegation:** FM/FST Aviv Friedman

**Assistant Head of Delegation:** GM Sergey Kudrin

**US Chess Representative:** Grant Oen, FIDE Events Manager

**Total number of players who received coaching:** 27, including 7 paid

Event summary is here: <https://new.uschess.org/news/newsflash-liran-zhou-alice-lee-earn-gold-china-bronze-li-yan/>

### **2019 World Youth Championship**

Mumbai, India, October 1-13

**Head of Delegation:** GM/FT Elshan Moradiabadi

**Assistant Head of Delegation:** IM/FST Armen Ambartsoumian

**US Chess Representative:** Carol Meyer, Executive Director

**Total number of players who received coaching:** 15, including 1 paid

Event summary is here: <https://new.uschess.org/news/kolay-finishes-fourth-world-youth/>

### **2019 World Youth U-16 Olympiad**

Corum, Turkey, October 28 – November 6 (in progress as of this writing)

**Captain:** IM Andranik Matikozyan

**Team:** Justin Chen, Balaji Daggupati, Ivan Ke, Martha Samadashvili, Josiah Stearman

## **NEW FIDE TITLES**

IM – Christopher Yoo

IM title applications are in process for Abhimanyu Mishra, Carissa Yip and Annie Wang.

## January 2020 Executive Board Meeting

### ***NATIONAL EVENTS***

This section covers national events that are directly organized by US Chess.

#### **RECENTLY COMPLETED NATIONAL EVENTS**

##### **2019 National K-12 Grades Championship**

Disney's Coronado Springs Resort, Lake Buena Vista, Florida, December 13-15

**Chief TD** – NTD Wayne Clark

**Floor Chief** – NTD Jon Haskel

**Backroom Chief** – NTD William Buklis

**Chess Control Manager** – Michelle Martinez

**Number of Entries** – 1,759

##### NOTES:

- The live stream analysts were GM Fidel Corrales Jimenez and WGM Jennifer Yu. Pete Karagianis, Assistant Director of Events, coordinated the stream.
- The site improved on its food service from two years ago, and added hotel rooms as well. Disney was difficult to work with in terms of site setup, though.
- The hotel did very well on its food concessions, as did the food trucks they contracted.
- T-shirt revenue was down, despite a central location at the site.
- This was the first national event where individual awards were medals. There were both positive and negative reactions. However, on balance, the move is a net positive in many areas. So, it will be continued for the spring events.

#### **UPCOMING NATIONAL EVENTS**

##### **2020 National High School (K-12) Championship**

Greater Columbus Convention Center, Columbus OH, April 3-5

**Chief TD** – NTD Myron Thomas

**Floor Chief** – NTD David Hater (tentative)

**Backroom Chief** – NTD William Buklis (tentative)

**Chess Control Manager** – Michelle Martinez (tentative)

**Number of Entries** – 9 (as of January 6)

##### NOTES:

- We are still over six weeks away from the first early entry deadline. My estimate is 1,500 players.

**2020 National Junior High (K-9) Championship**

Hyatt Regency Jacksonville-Waterfront, Jacksonville FL, April 24-26

**Chief TD** – NTD Jon Haskel

**Floor Chief** – NTD Jeff Wiewel (tentative)

**Backroom Chief** – NTD Joe Yun (tentative)

**Chess Control Manager** – Kim Cramer (tentative)

**Number of Entries** – 5 (as of January 6)

NOTES:

- We are still over ten weeks away from the first early entry deadline. My estimate is 1,200 players.

**2020 National Elementary (K-6) Championship**

Gaylord Opryland Resort & Convention Center, Nashville TN, May 8-10

**Chief TD** – NTD Jeff Smith

**Floor Chief** – NTD Susan Breeding (tentative)

**K-1 Chief** – NTD Betsy Zacate (tentative)

**Backroom Chief** – NTD Joe Yun (tentative)

**Chess Control Manager** – Kim Cramer (tentative)

**Number of Entries** – 5 (as of January 6)

NOTES:

- We are still over ten weeks away from the first early entry deadline. My estimate is 1,200 players.

## COMPLETED SCHEDULING OF FUTURE NATIONAL EVENTS

### **2026 National High School (K-12) Championship, March 27-29**

Sheraton Grand Chicago

301 E. North Water St.

Chicago, IL 60611

(312) 464-1000

HR: \$179 single/double/triple/quad

### **2027 National Elementary (K-6) Championship, April 30-May 2**

Playing site: Greater Columbus Convention Center

450 N. High St.

Columbus, OH 43215

Event hotels: Hyatt Regency Columbus, Hilton Columbus Downtown, Crowne Plaza Columbus-Downtown, Drury Inn & Suites Columbus Convention Center

NOTE: Generally speaking, we are not looking to schedule more national scholastic events at this time. The National Elementary is now booked through 2027, the National Junior High is now booked through 2025, the National High School is now booked through 2027, and the National K-12 Grades is now booked through 2025.

## FUTURE NATIONAL EVENTS UNDER ACTIVE DISCUSSION

**Post-2022 US Open** – We had held off on siting US Opens after 2022, in the hopes that the Executive Director and Executive Board might be able to find common ground on possible restructuring of the event to make it a more attractive draw for players. This appears to be a more distinct possibility now, so I have pressed “pause” on the next two unbooked years for this event, pending possible event structure changes.

The current clubhouse leader for the 2023 US Open is DeVos Place and Amway Grand Plaza Hotel, in Grand Rapids, MI. I’ve been working on the hotel rates for this site, and we are now down to \$139/night. Although we have a contract offer from them, I’ve advised my contacts that we may need to significantly change the terms, based on structure changes to the US Open that may be forthcoming. The site has stated they will wait for the outcome of this meeting, and will work with us on any necessary changes to the contract.

The current clubhouse leader for the 2024 US Open is Sheraton Norfolk Waterside Hotel, in Norfolk, VA. The hotel rate is now down to \$144. Although we have a contract offer from them, I’ve advised my contacts that we may need to significantly change the terms, based on



structure changes to the US Open that may be forthcoming. As with Grand Rapids, the site has stated they will wait for the outcome of this meeting, and will work with us on any necessary changes to the contract.

**Post-2025 National K-12 Grades** – Gaylord National Harbor has expressed an interest in holding this event in 2026. Rosen Shingle Creek has expressed an interest in possibly a multi-year deal, starting in either 2026 or 2027. Our attendees love Shingle Creek, and I think people will greatly enjoy the 2022 K-12 in National Harbor as well.

**SuperNationals IX** – As seen earlier, we've signed a deal with Columbus for the 2027 National Elementary. This was done with the full intention of booking SuperNationals IX there as well. That deal is imminent, but there is an eight-hotel package coming with it, so that makes the contracts more complicated. However, the GCCC is holding convention center space for the event, and we do expect to have all relevant contracts ready by the end of this month. I have negotiated all the attrition deals down to \$179/night, which is a good number 10 years in advance.

Attached to this document is the current hotel grid being proposed by Columbus for SuperNationals IX. The hotel rates (particularly the Hilton) are a bit high – but I think it's close enough that, if I sit down with the general managers of the hotels in person, we can get a deal done. I think \$179-189 is a reasonable hotel rate, even 10 years out. The Hilton is currently at \$192, if we give back the \$7 rebate they proposed (which is not needed for offsetting expenses). They are also proposing to provide regular shuttle service between the GCCC and all non-attached hotels for the event, free of charge.

I'm going to Columbus later this month to see if we can't get them to \$189 or below for at least the four attached hotels (which are the ones that would have 80% cumulative attrition). If we can, I would strongly recommend approving this deal, as Columbus is a known quantity, very family friendly, very accessible by air or land, and has drawn excellent reviews from parents and kids alike for years.

We still have interest from the Orange County Convention Center (Orlando, FL). They are still willing to give us the same deal and weekend we accepted for SuperNationals VIII in 2025. However, we would very much like to avoid Mother's Day weekend if possible (which is the 2025 schedule).

## ***INTERNATIONAL EVENTS***

This section covers international events where we send a formal delegation and paid coaches/captains, as well as any new titles confirmed since the last EB meeting.

It would be appropriate here to thank the Executive Board for approving the new scholastic invitational requirements before the first of the year. The new requirements should make life easier on families trying to understand them, as well as US Chess staff working to enforce them.

### **UPCOMING INTERNATIONAL EVENTS**

**No upcoming events before next EB meeting.**

### **COMPLETED INTERNATIONAL EVENTS**

**No completed events since last EB meeting.**

### **NEW FIDE TITLES**

**No new titles since last EB meeting.**

### **SPECIAL NOTE**

Chris Bird, FIDE Events Manager, traveled to the LA Chess Club last month to investigate possible irregularities in a norm event being held there. What he uncovered was sufficient for us to deny any norms made in the event. Attached to this report is an email that should explain the situation.

The reason I am adding this to the report is that there are likely many events, both FIDE and non-FIDE, that are committing serious rule or policy violations. There really is no position in US Chess that specifically addresses this problem. By default, these concerns have been routed to the Director of Events. However, US Chess did at one point have a Technical Director. I think there should be consideration given to reinstating that position.

## **August 2020 Executive Board Meeting**

### ***INTRODUCTORY NOTES***

There is no report for the following events, all of which were cancelled due to COVID-19:

- 2020 National High School (K-12) Championship
- 2020 National Junior High (K-9) Championship
- 2020 National Elementary (K-6) Championship
- 2020 US Open Championship

This report must also sorrowfully reflect the extended medical leave, retirement, and sudden passing of Susan Kantor. Susan was a major part of the Events Department operation. I had held several conversations with the Executive Director, in fact, about changing her title to something that might encompass the swath of duties she assumed without taking up multiple lines on a business card. Even with the reduced national event activity, there has been a void in our processing ability, due to the number of functions Susan covered, coupled with the Events Department's greatly increased online engagement. Korey Kormick is currently covering some of those duties on a part-time contract basis and helping us to catch up on a large backlog of issues.

Pete Karagianis, Assistant Director of Events, has been deeply involved in the shift to online play. He was primarily responsible for the US Chess end of organizing one friendly match, as well as the US Open Championship Qualifier, which will be covered below. He was also the US Chess liaison for the US Chess/ChessKid Online Elementary Championship. This event did not award any national titles. However, with over 2,100 entries, it was quite successful as both a tool for engagement and for US Chess finances. Finally, Pete has been creating online content through his "Chess Underground" podcast.

Chris Bird, FIDE Events Manager, has kept quite busy as well. He launched "The TD Show", a regular Twitch stream with various high-level TDs around the country, covering many basic and advanced topics of interest to directors, players, and organizers. In addition, he has started the Morning Membership Events, a series of low-cost, early-morning tournaments designed to give people a chance to play online-rated chess in a low-pressure environment (the only prizes are membership extensions, drawn at random from the players). He has also continued to manage the selection processes for the Online Nations Cup and the FIDE Online Olympiad.

### ***NATIONAL EVENTS***

This section covers national events that are directly organized by US Chess.

## RECENTLY COMPLETED NATIONAL EVENTS

### **2020 US Open Invitationals (Denker, Haring, Barber, Rockefeller, Senior TOC) and Weeramantry Blitz (July 24 and July 31)**

Chess.com, July 25-26 and August 1-2

**Chief TD** – NTD Jon Haskel

**TD Staff** – John Rockefeller, Daniel Rohde, Christina Schweiss, Judit Sztaray, Eric Vigil, Brian Yang, Joseph Yun

**Number of Entries** – 214 (main events), 96 (blitz)

#### NOTES:

- The Executive Board approved these events to be held online as national championship events on a one-time basis, just for 2020.
- There were numerous live stream analysts through Chess.com, thanks to the help of Sunil Weeramantry and IM Daniel Rensch, CEO of Chess.com. Pete Karagianis, Assistant Director of Events, coordinated the stream for US Chess.
- There were three potential fair-play violations encountered at these events. These are still being reviewed as of this writing.

## UPCOMING NATIONAL EVENTS

### **2020 National K-12 Grades Championship**

Rosen Shingle Creek, Orlando, December 11-13

**Chief TD** – TBD

**Floor Chief** – TBD

**Backroom Chief** – TBD

**Chess Control Manager** – TBD

**Number of Entries** – not opened for entries yet

#### NOTES:

- As of this writing, no decision has been made as to what to do with this event. The preference is to hold the event in person if at all practicable. That may not be the case, but one thought is to try holding the event with a cap on attendance. However, there are many logistical details that would have to be addressed.
- Rosen Hotels (the owner of the site) has assured US Chess, in writing, that there will be no attrition penalty if the event is held and does not meet previously contracted room night sales. This provides critical flexibility in being able to plan the event for reduced attendance if the decision is made to hold it in-person.
- There will likely be no decision made about whether to hold this event until mid-October.

- Potential alternate scenarios, including some form of an online event, are being considered.

**2021 SuperNationals VII**

Gaylord Opryland Resort & Convention Center, Nashville TN, May 7-9

**Chief TD** – TBD

**Floor Chief** – TBD

**Backroom Chief** – TBD

**Chess Control Manager** – TBD

**Number of Entries** – not opened for entries yet

NOTES:

- Given the size of this event, decisions regarding it may have to be made a bit sooner than normal. However, my current thinking is that we will need to see where things stand with the site and the pandemic as of January 2021 prior to making any decision.

**COMPLETED SCHEDULING OF FUTURE NATIONAL EVENTS**

No changes since January 2020 EB meeting.

**FUTURE NATIONAL EVENTS UNDER ACTIVE DISCUSSION**

No changes since January 2020 EB meeting.

## ***INTERNATIONAL EVENTS***

This section covers international events where we send a formal delegation and paid coaches/captains, as well as any new titles confirmed since the last EB meeting.

The Executive Board canceled US Chess participation in the following events due to COVID-19:

- Pan-American Youth Championship
- World Cadet Championship
- World Youth Championship

## **UPCOMING INTERNATIONAL EVENTS**

**No upcoming events before next EB meeting.**

## **COMPLETED INTERNATIONAL EVENTS**

### **USA vs. Ireland Friendly Match**

Chess.com, June 27

Pete Karagianis organized this 12-board match with the Irish Chess Union. I came up with the idea for this match in concert with IA Gerry Graham of Ireland. The USA team narrowly defeated a very evenly matched Irish team, 6.5-5.5. Here is a link to the article on this match: <https://new.uschess.org/news/us-chess-defeats-irish-chess-union-match-play>

### **USA Youth vs. Romanian Youth Friendly Match**

Playchess.com, July 11

I organized this 30-board, two-round match with the Romanian Chess Federation, upon the suggestion of Michael Khodarkovsky, our FIDE Delegate, working with Ion Serban, vice president of the Romanian Chess Federation. There does not appear to have been a summary of this match written anywhere. However, the USA Youth team did win, 32.5-27.5. Our team captain was NTD/FA Joseph Yun.

### **FIDE Online Nations Cup**

Chess.com, May 5-10, 2020

**Team:** GM Fabiano Caruana, GM Hikaru Nakamura, GM Leinier Dominguez, GM Irina Krush, GM Wesley So, GM Anna Zatonskih

**Captain:** IM John Donaldson

The USA team finished second in this event after drawing the Chinese team 2-2 in the superfinal (China had draw odds due to superior scoring in the round-robin preliminary).

A full treatment of the event was written by Peter Doggers for Chess.com, and is available for reading here: <https://www.chess.com/article/view/fide-chess-com-online-nations-cup>

A special thanks to our FIDE Events Manager, Chris Bird, for investing extra time working to smooth over technical issues for the USA team.

### **FIDE Online Olympiad**

Chess.com, July 24 – August 30

**Team:** GM Wesley So, GM Ray Robson, GM Sam Shankland, IM Carissa Yip, GM Jeffery Xiong, IM Annie Wang

**Captain:** IM John Donaldson

This event is in progress as of this writing. However, due to the US's top-five finish in the Gaprindashvili Cup (combined open and women's team standings) in the previous Olympiad, our team has qualified straight through to the Top Division of this event, which does not begin play until August 21. A regularly updated account of the Online Olympiad, including a more detailed explanation of the event, may be reviewed here: <https://olymp.fide.com/>.

The team was chosen using the July 2020 US Chess invitational rating list. Some players declined their invitations, but all players were invited in rating order. We are grateful to the St. Louis Chess Club for its sponsorship of the Olympiad team.

### **NEW FIDE TITLES**

**No new titles since last EB meeting.**