

First State Chess Camp – a local alternative!

Did you miss it?

Twenty-six children helped the inaugural edition of First State Chess Camp to an incredible start!

The mastery class was tailored by FM David Gertler to its 5 participants. During the course of the week, most of the registrants played 7 USCF rated games to showcase what they learned (and I'm sure to highlight areas of needed improvement! Teachers are always doing those kinds of things ...) Covering all areas of the chess game from the opening to the endgame, the reaction of the students was overwhelmingly positive!

The proficiency class brought a disciplined method of learning to 8 local talents who added an impressive array of tactical arrows to their quiver. Richard Martin not only organized the chess learning in a novel way, but also threw in some history on the great players of our game ... and not a few bad jokes (I'm told). They practiced playing some of the weirdest chess I've ever seen!

The foundations class exposed its thirteen participants to notation (Notation is to chess what dribbling is to basketball ... without it you can't get anywhere!), basic checkmates, and basic tactics (the pin, fork, and skewer ... or shish-ke-bab). Instructor Robert Wilder also directed a tournament for his crew – the crosstable is posted at <http://bear.delawarechess.org/Crosstable.htm>.

The First State Chess Camp came into existence August 21, 2004 when founder Richard Martin sent an email around to some local chess organizers exploring the interest in a camp. We commenced monthly meetings in September with 5 people – and that eventually dropped to 4 because of time commitments. You can't put together an enterprise like this without an incredible amount of help from a lot of people, and we'd like to publicly acknowledge some of them here:

Primarily of course to the parish and staff of St. John the Beloved, and Father Kavanaugh. Without their gentle encouragement and generous donation of a facility we would have been able to do nothing. The children and staff signed a chessboard for Father Kavanaugh in gratitude for his support!

A generous gift of a **New in Chess** Yearbook (one of the premier tools of grandmasters everywhere) to each participant in the mastery class was made possible by New in Chess, American Division; the Prison Committee of the USCF (United States Chess Federation); The Pennsylvania State Chess Federation (PSCF), and IA Ira Lee Riddle who was the person coordinating all the efforts. Thanks to you all!

Marianne Fitch for the lavish pizza party the last day! That was an incredible gift!

Margy and John Hughes, and Josephine Fish for being the on-site coordinators of **everything** while the camp was in session.

Mrs. Hughes and Mrs. Shermeyer for the baked goods and candy (and whoever else was responsible for the ruination of my diet that last day!)

Michelle Pergeorelis and Josephine Fish who worked together tirelessly to bring a mom's perspective to everything we did. Michelle also did the design work for the t-shirts, and Josephine brought a huge amount of research to the camp; and without Josephine's administrative skills everything would have come together like mush at the end. Thank you both for doing so much legwork since that fateful email!

Ken D'Aurizio for being a founding member of the committee and helping us get started.

David Gertler for taking our camp up about 17 notches with his skill and expertise.

Richard Martin for giving up a week's vacation to again donate his time and energy to the chess-playing children of Delaware (and Boothwyn!).

And to all you parents who supported us by bringing your children every day (and picking them up on time!)

Reach us at FirstStateChessCamp@yahoo.com; and visit our web page at <http://bear.delawarechess.org/camp.htm> for news!