

Robert Byrne & Pal Benko Win 1966 United States Open Championship

By Buz Eddy from September 1966
NORTHWEST CHESS LETTER

201! The third largest U.S. Open, and the eighth largest chess tournament ever conducted in the United States was held last month in Seattle.

The 1966 U.S. Open was won by two grandmasters, **ROBERT BYRNE**, and **PAL BENKO**. The **USCF** does not break first place ties, and the two players are United States Open Co-Champions. Byrne and Benko each scored 11 - 2 in the thirteen round event. **Byrne** was undefeated, but was held to four draws in his games with Arthur **Bisguier**, Anthony Saidy **Durican Suttles**, and Co-champion Benko. Benko was upset in round four by **Californian** master Peter **Cleehorn**, and drew with Byrne and Suttles.

Duncan Suttles took a clear third place in the tournament with a 10- 3 record, losing two games to William **Lombardy**, and 'Anthony Saidy; and drawing each of the champions.

• A six way tie developed for fourth place in the 9.5-3.5 score group. In order of tie-breaking Anthony Saidy, Arthur Bisguier, Peter **Cleghorn**, **IVARS DALBERGS**, **Touradj Saidi** and Ronald Gross. Saidy won the top, expert award.

Seven players Finished the event with 9- 4. records. They were William Lombardy, **Edwarr' Formanek**, **Andre Kalotay**, Jerome **Hanken**, **Viktors Pupols**, James **McCormick**, and **Viestur.s Seglins**. This group included three experts, and 2nd expert prize money was pooled. with the 9th thru 15th prize money with each of the players', regardless of rating receiving an equal share.

The class "A" competition was closely contested, and when the smoke cleared at the conclusion of round 13, no less than nine players were tied at 8 - 5 for first "A". **ROBERT HOLZINQER**, 'won the title on tie-breaking. **Holzinger** won five of his- first six games, posting wins over expert Jerome **Hanken** James **McCormick**, and master **Elod Macskasy**.

The class "B" competition was a walk-a-

way for Robert **Erkes**, of Baltimore Md., as he posted a 8.5-4.5 record a point and a half ahead of his nearest competition.

Micheal Murray of Missoula, **Vince Gillis** each posted a 7.5-5.5 record to share top class "C" money. Murray took the trophy on tie breaking

The turn out of 201 at this event must be considered an overwhelming success, and yet we might have done considerably better had it not been for two uncontrollable occurrences. The airline strike apparently held many eastern players home, and the fact that the **Paitogorisky** Cup Tournament was still in progress as our tournament began held nearly a dozen L.A. players away as they were busy supporting that event. But the success of any tournament is not the outside draw, but the local support it receives. In this the 1966 U.S. Open stands alone. 96 of the participants were from the state of Washington. Never in the history of this tournament has there been such a large representation from a single state.

The tournament itself was quite successful as U.S. Opens go, as no major complaints were registered at any time, and the tournament committee received numerous compliments on the preparations and arrangements.. The excellent playing conditions were reflected in the fact that the tourney suffered only ten drop-outs, again a record for the Seattle U.S. Open.

The northwest representation in the upper eschelons did extremely well in the tournament, taking five of the top sixteen places. Suttles, expectedly, led the N.W. contingent taking third'- place. **Ivars Dalbergs** placed seventh, and **Viktors Pupols**, James **McCormick**, and **Viesturs Seglins** were 14th, 15th, and 16th respectively. In the 8.5- 4.5 three more northwest players, Dr. **Elod Macskasy**, **Elmars Zemgalis** and Peter O'Gorman. **McCormick** got off to a very bad start scoring only 3.5 out of the first six rounds, but came back with 5.5 in

in the final seven rounds, including a final round draw with Arthur Bisguier to finish in the money. Pupols played steady sharp chess throughout the event, although clipped for an early draw by Greg Kern, of Portland, and upset by young Dennis Fritzinger, of San Francisco. His famed Latvian luck did not make its appearance until the final round when his opponent, Alex Panayotu, of Vancouver, failed to fill in his 30th move on his scoresheet and mistakenly thought that he had completed the required 50 moves when he had in fact only completed 49.- Panayotu, thinking he had made time-control, let his flag drop in a reportedly won position.

The struggle for first place developed into an interesting strategic battle, as R. Byrne went into the final round a .5 point ahead of the field. Byrne needing only .5 point to cinch a first place tie played for and offered Suttles an early draw, hoping Lombardy would hold Benko to at least a draw. Suttles neither accepted nor rejected the offer immediately, but simply watched the other games develop; for if Benko could be held to .5 or less a win against Byrne would give him a share of first place. But Benko was not to be stopped. In the 11th round he beat Saidy, in the 12th he beat Bisguier, and in the final round he needed a win against Lombardy. with the black pieces, Benko played a sharp line of the Sicilian and emerged victorious. As Suttles saw the win for Benko developing he accepted Byrne's draw offer taking a clear third.

The tournament was directed by George Koltanowski, of San Francisco, Calif. He handled the event very well, and no major disputes arose during the run of the event. In acting as assistant T.D. your writer was able to watch the intricacies of Mr. Koltanowski's work, and was much impressed with the efficiency with which he handled the tremendous job. We found that we held divergent philosophies in regard to recording moves in competitive chess. In this event no recording was actually required, whereas in any event directed by your writer record-

ing is mandatory as each move is played.

The most vociferous objector during the tournament turned out to be Dr. Anthony Saidy. Saidy was in a more or less make or break situation. He could only gain a slot on the U.S. team with a win of this tourney. The morning following his draw with Byrne, Saidy came to Koltanowski's room at about 8:00 AM. "It's your fault!" said the good doctor, "If you would have given me white instead of black I would have beaten Byrne. If I'd have beaten Byrne I would have gone on to win this tournament. If I won this tournament Spann would have no choice to pick me for the U.S. team. If I played on the team I would have won 22 games and become an international grandmaster, and then gone on to win the World Championship."

"And," said the indomitable Mr. Koltanowski, "if your Aunt had four wheels she'd be a cable earl"

The tournament brought many of our former northwest players back for a visit. Jack Nourse and Robert Edberg came up from California to play in the event. Ted. Warner and Sgt. Robert Karch stopped by for visits. (Karch is on leave, and will be in the NW for about a month and a half before departing for Viet Nam.)

All in all your writer, and apparently every participant, enjoyed himself completely. Our particular high point was at the awards banquet the morning following the tourney. Working straight through the night before computing tie breaking we found ourselves in rare form, handing out awards and barbs with equal vigor.

Games and further reports of the tourney will be available in months to come. But we will close this first summary with a salute to the volunteer help that made this event the success that it was. Thanks to Bill Gillette, Pete Olson, Fat Hickey and others for the fine set of board numbers, to Chris Oder, Cherie Mathewson, Kathy Eddy, & Linda Sweetman for the fine work on the desk. coffee, and admissions. To Jerold Phillips for his all around tournament room help. To Blaine Walgren and others helping with the book sale. And a very special thank you to Miss Susan Ford, tournament secretary.

1966 U.S. OPEN - Seattle, Washington

PRIZE WINNERS

Award	Name	Home	Score	Cash Award	Trophy
Champion	Robert Bryne	Indianapolis, Indiana	11- 2	\$800.00	""
Champion	Pal Benko	New York City, New York	11- 2	\$800.00	""
3rd Place	Duncan Suttles	Vancouver, B.C.	10- 3	\$300.00	""
4th thru	Anthony Saidy	San Francisco, California	9.5-3.5	\$110.00	
8th Places	Arthur Bisguier	New York City, New York	9.5-3.5	\$110.00	
	Peter Cleghorn	Anchorage, Alaska	9.5-3.5	\$110.00	
	Ivars Dalbergs	Portland, Oregon	9.5-3.5	\$110.00	
	Ronald. Gross	Compton, California		\$110.00	
9 TH Thru	William Lombardy	New York City, New York	9-4	75.70	
15th	Edward Formanek	Berwyn, Illinois		\$75.70	
Places	Andrew Kalotay	Toronto, Canada		\$75.70	
(with.2nd	Jerome Hanken	Los Angeles, California		\$75.70	
expert	Viktors Pupols	Seattle, Washington ,		\$75.70	
added,) .	James McCormick	Seattip, 'Washington		\$75.70	
11	Viesturs Seglins	Seattle, Washington		75.70	
1st Expert	Touradj Saidi	Compton, California	9.5-3.5	\$160.00	""
1st	Robert Holzinger	.Seattle, Washington	8-5	\$23.34	""
Class	Dennis Fritzingar	San Francisco, California	8-5	\$23.34	
"A"	Kent Pullen	Seattle, Washington	8 - 5	\$23.34	
"	Bruce Haisfield	Silver Spring, Maryland	8 - 5	\$2-3.34	
"	Joseph Kaltenecker	Port Alberni, B. C.	8-5	\$23.34	
"	Terry Nelson	Seattle, Washington	8 -5	\$23.34	
"	Jerry 'Woife	Seattle-, 'Washington	8-5	\$2.3.34	
"	G. Alan Clark	Seattle, Washington	8 - 5	\$23.34	
n	Jim Targan	Sherman Oaks, Californiarnia	8-5	\$23.34	
1st "B"	Robert Erkes	Baltimore, Marylpnri	8.5-4.5	\$120.00	""
2nd "B"	William Lyons	Seattle, Washington	7-6	\$15.00	
"	W. Dobrich	Toronto, Canada	7-6.	\$15.00	
"	Thoedore Day	Seattle, Washin^ton	7-6	\$15.00	
11	Gerad IStilless	Saettle, ashington	7-6	l\$15.00	
1st "C"	Michael Murray	Missoula, Montana	7.5-5.5	;\$75.00	"
""	Vincent Gillis	Seattle, Washin ^ton	7.5.-5.5	\$75.00	
1st UNR	Norman Abrahamson	Sepftle, Washington	7.5-5.5	\$100	"
2 nd UNR	Charles Griffiths	Seattle, Washington	7-6	\$10.00	
	Chris CorWin	Seattle , Washington	7-6 .	\$10.00	
	Kenneth Shinn	Billings, . Montana	7-6	\$10.00	
	Frank Alexandro	Houghton, Washington	7-6	\$10.00	
n	John Meller	Everett, Washington	7-6	\$10.00	
1st 'Wioman	Mary Bain	New York City, New York	7-6	\$200.00	"
2nd Woman .	Greta Olsson	Los Angeles, California	6.5-6.5	\$100.00	
1st Junior	Leroy Jackson	St. Louis, Missouri	8.5-4.5	\$15.00	books
2nd Junior	Walter Browne	New York City, New York	8.5 - 4.5	\$10.00	books
3rd Junior	Salvatore Matera	New York City, New. York	8-5	\$5.00	books