

How to proceed establishing leagues this fall, winter, spring of 2005-2006 throughout the Washington State area. There has been a long history of the Puget Sound Chess league mostly involving the Puget Sound area from Olympia to Everett. There have been other league formations as well. I would like to recommend, but I leave the final implementation to the body of active participants, that we heed that traffic in our region has become more congested, and that players seem to have many other interests competing for their time, that we form if possible several leagues, each comprising a smaller geographic area, and featuring perhaps shorter time controls, than may have been used in the past.

If some large sites that some players know about, are readily available and convenient for several matches to be conducted simultaneously, we should try to utilize them. But if not, and the way that I see it, we need to secure the participation and location of several sites, and form teams of players who feel some kind of ready association or affiliation with the sponsoring site. We need to work on this part as soon as possible. As I see it, these would be businesses that you already frequent, and forming the chess teams and these chess leagues would just be an extension of your business there. As the visionary businessman, Ron Sher, of Crossroads Mall and other properties(He is the man behind the large chess sets and tables at which to play in at least two of his malls, the other being in Lake Forest Park) says: There are third places.. important places of interaction, different from our homes and workplaces, but offering an array of activities, where people come together.

We would be enriching our communities' tapestry offering this league, as well as pleasing ourselves to get new players into our activity. I can easily foresee getting some beginners chess classes going from this.

I am very pleased that Eric Tangborn, Mark Ryan, and Chris Kalina are ready to roll out some good teams into this league or leagues. We need some players to participate in the overall organizing of the league, and scheduling, and competition aspects and details. Rusty Miller has already offered some historical rules of the Puget Sound League. But we need the vast majority of those who are interested to use this as an opportunity to reach out to friends who may have been reluctant to sink big amounts of their time into tournament play to get their feet wet for the first time in OTB chess, and share in the camaraderie from belonging to a team, and we definitely need to generate places to play. That is a salesmanship task that some will be better at it than others. But we need to try to get this started rather than just nod in assent.

Please contact me here through the NW Chess website, and please share your views and news through the NW Chess Center Forum. I have been expressing my views on this mostly as a longtime lover of tournament chess. This year though I accepted the position of WCF tournament coordinator and I see working on this as one of the most important ways I can contribute to the Chess federation in our state.

Sincerely,

H. G. (Hanniegn) Pitre