

CalChess Scholastics 2008 Status Report

Posted by sazhar on Wednesday, October 24 @ 11:07:16 CDT



I love this game!

Executive Summary

This is the first report on CalChess Scholastic States. The main items covered here are:

1. A summary of the approval process
2. The budget is projected at a **loss of \$1,787**.
3. Contact with **Josh Waitzkin, Chessmaster**, and Chesspark for participation. (I am looking for other individuals and companies for possible participation as well)
4. A call for parents and coaches to serve as volunteers or as tournament directors.

5. An update on hotel and other organizational arrangement.

Approval Process

On 15 July 2007, Salman submitted a proposal to organize 2008 State Scholastic Championship based on encouragement from many people who witnessed his tournaments in Santa Clara. The President postponed discussion until he submitted an alternative proposal on 28 July 2007. Salman worked with the President to integrate all his feedback over a period of about four weeks and then resubmitted the proposal with the President's support. The proposal passed by the new board 4-1 with 2 absentees (Aigner, Garbe) and 1 abstention (me). The summary of the terms is as follows:

1. Salman Azhar is the organizer who will act based on a budget approved by the board.
2. If there is a loss, CalChess would bear the loss.
3. The organizer serves as a volunteer and would not be paid for his time. He can claim reimbursement for any expenses supported by receipts that are within the budget.
4. If there is a profit, the profit will be split between CalChess and a charitable organization of the organizer's choice.
 - a. (FYI: Two of the last three State Scholastics ran at a loss and I am planning to run this to breakeven on a minimum expected entries).
5. The timeline of the main activities is
 - a. Budget [Proposed by organizer by 9/30; Approved by CalChess before 10/15]
 - b. Application and Entry Form [Proposed by organizer by 10/15; Approved by CalChess before 10/31]
 - c. TLA [Proposed by the organizer by 11/15; Approved by Chief TD before 11/30]
 - d. Trophy order [realistic estimate in the budget; Finalize quotes by organizer before 12/31; Place order through CalChess by 1/31].

Status as of 9/1/07

We had had a site contract in place for the same site as 2006 State Scholastics plus one additional conference room for 17-18 May 2008. That is the good news. The bad news is that the site costs us more than it did in 2006 and that we did not have a hotel room block reserved at discounted rates. Due to an orthopedic conference in the same convention center, the hotel rooms in the downtown area are scarce (even though it is good to know that there is expert help available onsite for the aching bodies of the tournament staff). I urge the CalChess board to start the process for 2009 tournaments now.

Status as of 10/12/07

Hotel

I am in deep negotiations with the hotel sites in the area. I was able to manage at the late stage was a nightly rate of \$99 leveraging some of Dr. Kirshner's connections. This is much lower than the options of about \$129 that I inherited.

Budget

I have submitted a draft budget to the board for their consideration and will be working with them to address their concerns, incorporate their suggestions within reason, and gain their approval by October 15. Due to higher costs of the site, the entry fees are likely to go up in order to balance the budget. I will work with Success Chess for scholarships so that the money does not stand in the way. I urge the board to open the bidding for 2009

State Scholastics in 2007 so that we can have better choice of venue at a better price.

Format

The format will largely remain the same except for a couple of possible modifications:

1. I will discuss with board representatives a new section for K-3 unrated and perhaps K-6 unrated to alleviate the unbeaten players who do not get a the first place trophy and the complexity of running a large section.
2. I will also discuss staggered rounds so that we can establish a systolic algorithm to pipeline the award ceremonies and reduce waiting time. For instance, we may start the 4th round of some sections at the same time as the 5th round of the other sections. Hence, the award ceremony of these sections will be timed with less wait.

Status as of 10/19/07

Staffing and Sponsorships

I am working to invite Josh Waitzkin, Chessmaster, and Chesspark for sponsorships. I am open to other suggestions. I am also working to recruit Me'ko Gaborski for Staff Supervisor. TDs John McCumiskey (Chief), Tom Langland (Associate Chief), Frisco Del Rosario, Fred Leffingwell, Ted Castro, David Lee, Jacob Green, Shadeed Salem, are confirmed subject to the approval of Chief TD. Volunteer Nuzhath Quadri is confirmed.

Budget and Application

This report was submitted to the CalChess board for consideration and CalChess webmaster for posting but was not posted in a timely manner. At this point I do not have an approval from CalChess board for the budget. Based on the application review, I had to reduce the entry fee to make it more affordable. At this time budget is running at a loss of \$1,787 based on expected number of 1,100.

Upcoming Activities

Next week, I have to chase the hotel salesperson to negotiate the details and sign the contract, start working on the trophy order hoping to get a call back from less expensive vendors, recruit TDs and functional volunteers (read play phone tag and plead with people), wait for the board to approve the budget and the application, and so many other things with the entertaining background music from the spectators. I had a precious few minutes to re-evaluate my commitment and I did so... I do this for none of the current or former board members but for the children and their parents. That is the reason I am organizing the States this year and whoever does it the following year will quickly learn that. Despite family plans, I am stopping by at Weibel Quads just to remind myself of the real reason.

Help Needed

If you can help with the States, please email me at salman@bayareachess.com. If you can't, please find someone who can.

Respectfully Submitted,

Salman Azhar, Ph.D.