



MID-SOUTH CHESS ADVOCATE

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HOT SPRINGS REVISITED

The major surprise had to be Ken Smith's appearance at this year's Arkansas Open. Even more surprising was his withdrawal after one near loss that was finally drawn after a long arduous battle. Ken is just getting over some serious surgery and illness that may have something to do with his less than usual showing this year.

The DeSoto Hotel in Hot Springs, evidently has seen better days, but for good chess in a prime tourist town at reasonable rates, it can't be beat. The only sour note concerned the poor lighting which caused the room to appear in a dark London fog half the time, but aside from that, forty people enjoyed one of the best tournaments this author has seen since the King Cotton or the Lucky Open. - Art Hager

'FISH' TOOK THEIR TOLL AT DYERSBURG

In the first round D. Jollay was overcome by James Patterson and Eulis Moody had to concede to Art Hager in a hard fought battle. In round two Art Hager again proved that ratings aren't everything when he won over Robert E. Garner. The fourth round proved to be the decisive game when James Wright met and won from his long-time rival, John Hurt. The tournament, while only attended by 26 people, proved to be one that many people will be sorry they missed.

Aside from the reportedly poor third round lighting, the Holiday Inn again proved to be an excellent playing site. The atmosphere, food and management were more than adequate and contributed greatly to a successful tournament. If you are looking for a relaxing, small tournament with lots of action, don't miss the Dyer County Fall Open in September.

THE LONG 'HOT!' SUMMER

The MCC Summer Rating was a 'tournament of surprises', the first being the more than usual number of entrants which included the cream of the top-notch MCC players. With 32 entrants, the organizers were forced to go to a 5th round for what had been planned as a quiet 4-round Swiss.

Early in the tourney, top-rated John Hurt, current Memphis City Champion, was surprised and upset by the pre-4th of July fireworks of Jack Smith. John's comment was, "How could I loose, I was two pawns up?" State Champion Ken Thomas was upset by Jim Rackley who steered time control close to the brink of forfeit before turning the table and forcing Ken to overstep time control. Jim had in the previous round upset third placed Robt. Holyfield in decisive combative play. Ken Thomas came back in the 5th round and dealt a stunning victory to the tourney leader Mahlon "Scott" Smith, when Ken executed and properly recorded 10 moves in 2 minutes to overcome a time forfeit and force Scott into a blunder-prone position, gaining the victory, but loosing the trophy to Scott on tie-breaks anyway.

Another eye-opening surprise was the strong collective performance of the unrated players. All of them stole rating points from the more experienced players. And even when saddled with lost positions the unrated players forced their opponents to prove themselves worthy of the win. Lastly, the biggest surprise of all--at least to himself--was that Dan Mayes, in his first time at bat as tournament director, managed to keep his directing errors to a minimum.