



MICHIGAN WINS STATE CHAMPION OF CHAMPIONS TITLE IM Andrei Florean takes online U.S Championship Qualifying Spot!

Seattle – December 7, 2005 – The America's Foundation for Chess and Internet Chess Club are pleased to announce that, after a very close competition, IM Andrei Florean of Michigan has won the second State 'Champion of Champions' event, and will now go forward to the 2006 U.S. Chess Championship to be held 1-12 March, at the NTC Promenade in San Diego.

50 State champions from Alaska through California to Hawaii, and from Maine through to New York and Florida battled it out in four zonal groups, held on the weekend of 19-20 November on the ICC (www.chessclub.com); the four winners of which, then went forward to contest the Finals Weekend, 3-4 December, also on the ICC.

The four zonal winners were:

Western Conference: IM Dmitry Zilberstein, North California, and IM Mark Ginsburg, Arizona. **Eastern Conference:** IM Andrei Florean, Michigan, and Bradley Denton, Mississippi

The Eastern Conference zonal final went to a tiebreak after Florean and Denton won a game apiece in the G/60 match-up, with Florean going through 2.5-1.5 after winning the Blitz playoff. In the Western Conference zonal final, Zilberstein beat Ginsburg 1.5-0.5.

The resulting East vs. West showdown thus proved to be a testament to the reliability of Prof. Arpad Elo's rating system, with the two highest-rated players in the competition making it to the Final and the deciding U.S. Championship qualifying spot. And in that final, the match went down to a fifth and deciding 'Armageddon' game, with both players tied at 2-2 after winning their white games in the G/60 matches and Blitz matches, as Florean (with the advantage of Black, and thus only needing to draw) took the title 3-2.

This unique event demonstrates that online chess and over-the-board chess can indeed be a perfect mix – even for one of the world's most famous national championships. First, each player in the tournament had to prove themselves OTB by winning (or scoring highly in) their relevant State championship to be invited, then they had to play online on the ICC (both double-round all-play-all Blitz in the 4 zonal groups, and then Game 60 (proctored) in the finals), with the player being crowned State Champion of Champions going forward to the U.S. Championship next March in San Diego.

For more information about the U.S. Chess Championships or the events surrounding the 2006 games, please visit www.uschesschampionship.com

America's Foundation for Chess

Founded on the hope of making chess a subject taught in every school in the United States, AF4C, www.af4c.org a nonprofit organization, is committed to making chess a larger part of America's cultural fabric — accessible in schools and in popular culture. AF4C hopes to elevate the profile of chess in America so that it will soon become a regular part of every child's classroom experience.

Internet Chess Club

Founded in 1995 in Pittsburgh, the for-profit ICC (www.chessclub.com) is one of the first premium sites on the Internet with a club house that's open 24/7. Now in its 11th year, the ICC is regarded as the premier online chess service, with over 30,000 members, 400 Grandmasters, more volunteers, and more loyalty from its members than any other classical game service on the Internet.

About NTC Foundation

The NTC Foundation, a 501[c][3] nonprofit organization, is responsible for the renovation of the 26 historic buildings on 28 acres at the former San Diego Naval Training Center in Point Loma into a new arts, civic and cultural district called NTC Promenade. NTC Promenade will be the permanent home for the U.S. Chess Championship.

Contacts:

John Henderson, US Championship Coordinator & Press Relations,
206.229.9233, info@uschesschampionship.com

Joel Berez, ICC President & CEO,
847.440.7628, joel@chessclub.com

