



Trinidad and Tobago Chess Champion Christo Cave (Fide Elo 2261)

Trinidad and Tobago National Men's Championships Finals begins

Twelve (12) of the top Trinidadian chess players will play a round robin tournament to determine the National Champion for 2005. The event, which is sponsored by the New India Assurance Limited will take place at RHAND Credit Union in down town Port of Spain, begins on Saturday 17th and will continue each weekend for the next 6 weeks.

The finalists in this year's championships are: Sean Perryman, Yogendranath Ramsingh, FM Mario Merritt, FM Ryan Harper, FM Frank Yee, FM Michael Pouchet, Ravishen Singh, David Christopher, Cecil Lee, Eddison Chang, Hayden Lee and Christo Cave (defending champ).

In his weekly chess column "Double Rooks" in the Trinidad Guardian Newspaper, the well known journalist Carl Jacobs wrote the following:

With all the qualifiers in, the big question now emerges: Will Christo Cave continue his domination of the national chess arena for yet another year? Already Cave has established a record of victories that may never be equalled. Over the last 15 years, the burly chessplayer has won the title a remarkable 13 times, with Anderson Gordon and Ryan Harper breaking his amazing run in 1994 and 2002 respectively.

When Fred Sabga scored a hat-trick of wins in the national championships, from 1970 to 1972, his feat was not only unprecedented but was also regarded as a decisive triumph of his aggressive and combinational style of play. While his all-round skill was equal to the best of his day, Sabga revelled in chess violence, finding great delight and satisfaction in sacrificial attacks on his opponent's castled king. Because of this dominance, many thought that Sabga's feat was unlikely to be matched and his hat-trick record would stand for ages.

But along came Christo Cave in 1990 who not only eclipsed Sabga's achievement but, with seemingly remarkable ease, has virtually made the title his very own. Will his hegemony ever end? Will the 'king' be dethroned this year? We will have to wait and see, but I hardly think anyone would actually want to bet on it.

Still, the coming final contest promises to be a tremendous affair, filled with exciting chess reflecting the impact that sophisticated and comprehensive computer technology has had on the game and the skill level of our leading players.

Yogendranath Ramsingh has returned to the national arena with renewed vigour. FIDE masters Ryan Harper, Mario Merritt, Michael Pouchet and Frank Yee have attained the standard of champions. So too has Ravishen Singh. Former champion Cecil Lee, a veteran and perennial qualifier, certainly has the skill and confidence to return to winner's row. Edison Chang can also rise to the occasion while the youthful and adventuresome Sean Perryman is not to be underrated. Newcomers to the finals, David Christopher and Hayden Lee are quite capable of becoming dangerous dark horses.

Against such an array of competitors, Cave now faces his greatest challenge. Whether or not he retains his title, we can surely look forward to some fascinating games in this year's finals.



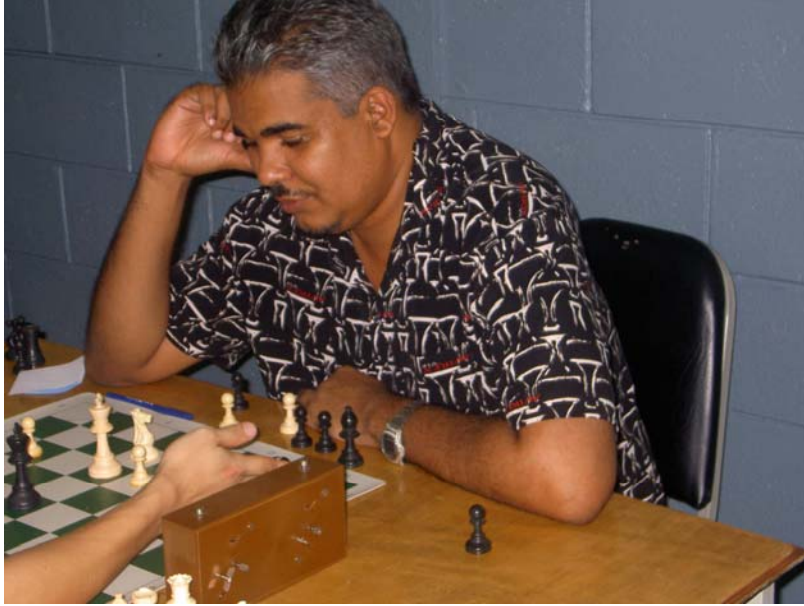
FM Frank Yee (Fide Elo 2099)



FM Ryan Harper (Fide Elo 2230)



FM Mario Merritt (Fide Elo 2142)



FM Michael Pouchet (Fide Elo 2165)



Cecil Lee (Fide Elo 2009)



Yogendranath Ramsingh (Fide Elo 2178)



Eddison Chang



David Christopher



Ravishen Singh (Fide Elo 2110)



Hayden Lee (Left)



Sean (Daddy) Perryman