The History of Organised Chess in Barbados (1877 – 1985)

Ву

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# **PREFACE**

It is surprising that Chess, one of the oldest games brought to Barbados by the English settlers, has not been formally documented. Attempts to reconstruct its past have been tedious but amazingly revealing. Chess still remains a minority sport in Barbados. Nevertheless, its major importance has been that it has touched and probably shaped the social lives of many influential persons in Barbadian Society. If for no other reason than this, it ought to command our attention and perhaps our literary skills.

Of course, the writer's personal involvement and interest in the sport, as a player and as an administrator, further motivated the writing of this research paper. It is hoped that this study will be of benefit to persons who are interested in the sports history of Barbados and particularly that of Chess.

Michael B. Forde

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# **ABBREVIATIONS**

1.	B.C.C.	refers to Barbados Chess Club
2.	B.C.F.	refers to Barbados Chess Federation
3.	B.G. – B.W.I.	refers to British Guiana and British West Indies
4.	B.M.L.A.S.	refers to Barbados Mutual Life Assurance Society
5.	B.S.C.A.	refers to Barbados School Chess Association
6.	C.X.C.	refers to Caribbean Examination Council
7.	F.I.D.E.	refers to Federation Internationale des Eches
8.	I.Q.	refers to Intelligence Quotient

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### **CHAPTER 1**

#### **ORIGINS OF ORGANISED CHESS**

Organised Chess made a niche in Barbadian Society in 1877, when Public Librarian, Rev. J. Evans Walcott assisted a cadre of chess players in establishing the first Barbadian Chess Club on the ground floor of the Masonic building in Spry Street. Prior to this, chess was played under a system in which chess players met at each other's homes alternatively. However, this system proved irksome as it imposed upon the privacy of homes. Consequently, Rev. Walcott was deputed by the players to approach Mr. John Glasgow Grant of the Savings Bank, to invite him to form an official club with permanent premises and to become its president.

Grant readily accepted the honour conferred upon him and thus the first chess club in Barbados was established. Under his Presidency, meetings were regular and the club thrived. Besides the strict playing of chess, there was much frolicking and amusement, with the "President's Gin Julep" being the main attraction. During the period the club reflected a zealous spirit of comraderie, as was shown when the affable President won a memorable tournament and was cheeringly presented with a solid gold ring with an inverted castle.

But around 1890, the foundation of the club was shaken when the Masons declared their need for the room. Alternative premises were secured at the fine buildings of the Barbados Mutual Life Assurance Society (B.M.L.A.S). There "a goodly number of players gathered together". This new club became "The Bridgetown Chess and Whist Club". Mr Horace Deighton, M.A. then Headmaster of Harrison College, became President with Walcott as Vice-President and Mr. Lambert Phillips as Honorary Secretary (see Appendix 1

fig. 1 for founding of Chess Club in Barbados).

During this period, the President and other wealthy individuals served as sponsors to chess. In a Handicap Tourney, Mr. Silvanus, an Assistant Master of Harrison College took Deighton's prize. While Walcott took Mr. Sinderby Bowen's Prize. Mr. George Dillon, a strong local player, won the first prize.

Naturally then, in 1897 both Dillon and Walcott were selected to represent Barbados at the Inter-Colonial Tournament in Trinidad. This tournament was held to mark the Centenary Celebration of Britain's occupation of Trinidad. In this Inter-Colonial Tournament, two Chess Tourneys were organized. One for the representatives of Trinidad, British Guiana and Barbados and the other for all residents in the British West Indian Colonies. Both Dillon and Walcott played in the first mentioned tourney. The first prize in this tourney went to a Barbadian, Mr. Reece, who played for Trinidad, while Walcott won the second prize.

But on the return of both players, the club was beset by adverse circumstances. This was engendered by the increasing of the rents by the B.M.L.A.S. The club vacated the premises and temporarily relocated itself at the prestigious Ice House. Later, it established a more permanent residence at Messrs. Bailey in Broad Street. Associated with the Club during this period were such eminent persons as Sir George F. Hardy, then Actuary of the B.M.L.A.S., Rev. T. Sutton Moxly, Chaplain of the Garrison troops, Dr. T. Law Gaskin, Member of Parliament, Mr. Fred Bowen, Organist and Architect, Mr. Arthur Somercocks, classical master at Harrison College, Rev. Willoughby Moore and Mr. John

Hoad, Merchant. 1

The members constituting this Chess Fraternity shared many common features. Not only were they exclusively male and white, but they were also wealthy and influential. The only distinction among them seemed to be in their nationality. Most of them were European whites with strongly entrenched European values, attitudes and beliefs.<sup>2</sup> The others were creole whites who anxiously imitated European standards. It was not without reason, that Barbadians proudly referred to Barbados as "Little England".<sup>3</sup> A notable absence from this gathering were the blacks who constituted the majority of the population.

There is no evidence to indicate that members of the Chess Fraternity then attempted to spread chess beyond their narrow clique or even to their womenfolk, far less to the black masses. It seems that they played chess strictly for recreational purposes among members of their race and social class.<sup>4</sup>

And, if the view of that ardent chess player and "goodly" Reverend, Moxly, can be taken to shed light on the attitudes of chess players towards blacks, at least then one may easily glean why blacks may have been excluded. Moxly, in his book <u>An Account Of A West Indian Sanatorium and A Guide To Barbados</u>, was quick to pontificate that:

"on the whole, as far as my experience goes, the Barbadian negro does not improve on closer acquaintance and a year's residence a in the island will go far to evaporate any enthusiasm for the 'Brotherhood of Man', aroused by speeches or literature of the type known at 'Exeter Hall'! For notwithstanding some remarkable exceptions,

the general verdict passed upon the negro as he appears in the island must be that he is a creature of a low type of humanity, whether his present condition be one of arrested development or of retrogression from a higher a state, nobler faculties having, through the force of the circumstances surrounding his forefather in the distant past, been extirpated by disuse."<sup>5</sup>

It was probably such mouthings and trends of thought that stirred the Anglican Bishop, John Mitchinson into denouncing such members of the white oligarchy in Barbados. Thus, in his now brilliantly acclaimed repartee, Bishop Mitchinson held out that such whites lacked:

"that higher culture which develops breath of thought and largeness of view and the absence of which exhibits itself in an almost odious self-complacency or narrow prejudice, the offspring of besotted ignorance."

### He further likened them to the:

"White snails of Hans Anderson who living under burdock-leaves upon which the rain drops pattered, flattered themselves that the world consisted of white snails and that they were world."

But other political, social and economic conditions would have combined to thwart the spreading of chess to blacks. During this period, the political arena was dominated by a white male oligarchy whose primary objective was to maintain the status quo. That meant keeping the blacks at the bottom of the social ladder.<sup>7</sup> This was evidenced in whites' reluctance to mass education for blacks. They probably believed it would train blacks to

plan strategy and to appreciate and implement tactical manoeuvres against them. Indeed, such a view was expressed by a white planter who proclaimed in the local newspaper that education only helped the negro to become smarter in burning the cane-fields without being detected.<sup>8</sup>

It is noteworthy though, that amidst this clamour for "cut backs" in mass education, there was a dissenting voice ringing in the wilderness. It came from the ardent chess player, Dr. T. Law Gaskin, when he rose in Parliament to dissociate himself from the repressive policy of restricting mass education. In a futile but an impassioned plea, he highlighted the need for better treatment of the lower classes. He therefore pointed out that they were neglected in recreation and health while calling for efforts to sustain mass education.

Now, if Mr. Nikolai Krogius is correct in his assessment that:

"a high general culture helps to develop chess playing ability in a remarkable way"<sup>10</sup> then the whites, in refusing to provide mass education and other social amenities for blacks, inadvertently prevented the spread of chess to the black masses. In real terms, the absence of mass education meant a high illiteracy rate among blacks which naturally culminated in most blacks being unable to learn the rules of chess from books. And with a chess player like Moxly advocating further social distance between blacks and whites, there seemed little chance of chess spreading to the black masses. This "distancing" of whites from blacks may also have resulted in most blacks not knowing of the game far less being interested in playing it.<sup>11</sup>

But even if chess players were receptive to blacks presence, then the economic situation would have reinforced blacks absence from organised chess. During the latter part of the Nineteenth Century, Blacks could hardly garnish the basic necessities in life far less indulge in abstract and "unwelcomed" activities which had little or no apparent relevance to their immediate survival. This becomes apparent when one considers that between 1894 and 1898 there was massive unemployment coupled with abject poverty among blacks.

This was occasioned by the drop in sugar prices which led to planters laying off blacks. But if that was not enough, the situation worsened when the sugar industry experienced drought in 1894 with attacks from fungoid diseases and pestilences. The result was that poor harvests and falling prices drove planters to bankruptcy; which in turn, severely jeopardised the livelihood of blacks in a predominantly agricultural society.<sup>12</sup>

Naturally then, by the turn of the Nineteenth Century, organised chess was on the decline. This resulted from the constant dwindling of membership due to death, emigration, loss of interest and the probable effects of hard financial times. The paying of rents for the use of a club was proving to be an ordeal. At the same time, the inability of the chess fraternity to reproduce itself - that is to attract new members - signalled its death knell.

By 1910, remnants of the chess club were therefore attempting to keep the lamp of Caissa burning by indulging each other in a few friendly weekend games at the Carnegie Hall.<sup>13</sup> But the winds of change were beginning to blow. Their full blast would be felt in 1921.

# **CHAPTER II**

# THE EARLY DEVELOPMENT OF CHESS 1921 – 1950

In 1921, the founder of the "Girwood Chess Club" in Port-of-Spain, Trinidad, Mr. C.B. Franklin came to Barbados on his annual visit. During his stay he arranged a "social Chess Meeting" at the Ocean View Hotel, where he was staying. This meeting attracted many of the chess players and there it was resolved to form a new chess club. The Bridgetown Chess Club, with a membership of thirty persons therefore came into being with premises at the Y.M.C.A. Hall.<sup>14</sup>

During this period the club was managed by Rev. Walcott with J.S. Sainsbury (Judge) as Vice-President. Later, Mr. Charles Chenery (Editor of the Advocate), Rev. Francis Godson M.B.E. and Mr. Victor Southwell, B.A., were elected Vice-Presidents. 15 Other eminent members of the club between 1922 and 1950 were Mr. John Whyatt (Attorney- General), Mr. J.W.B. Chenery (Lawyer, Judge and Politician), Mr. Peter de Verteville, LLD, Mr. George Farmer (Lawyer), Mr. J.K.C. Grar (Merchant), Professor H.F. Boyce (Lecturer at Codrington College), Mr. E.J. Browne (Businessman), Mr. St. Clair Hunte, F.C.I.S., F.I.P.s (Commercial Chartered Secretary, Director of Da Costa and Company Ltd.), Mr. Paul Sheldon (Major in U.S. Army) Rev. B. Crosby, Mr. Samuel Corbin, (Teacher and later Permanent Secretary), Mr. H. Green (Comptroller of Customs), Mr. Sidney Inniss (Senior Clerk in the Barbados Savings Bank) and Mr. Haskell Eastmond (Cashier in the Savings Bank). Patrons of the Club were the Governors, M.S. Young, G. Grattan and H. Blood, with Chief Justice R.H. Furness. 16

A social analysis of the membership of the chess fraternity during this period indicates that it was predominantly white with most of its members being from the intelligentsia of the upper middle classes of society. The only black members of this group were Inniss, Eastmond, Sealy and Stoute. These black players represented a small set of the few privileged blacks who were able to secure an education at Combermere School, these players, upon finishing school, enhanced their status by obtaining jobs in the Civil Service.

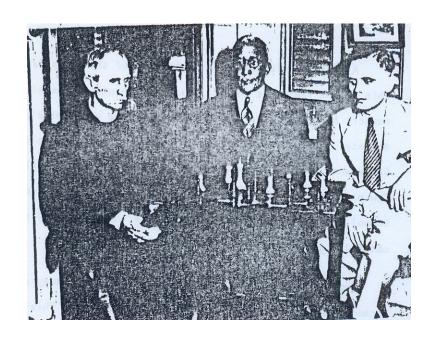
Inniss, (whose father was Manager of T.S. Garraway and Company Ltd.) became Senior Clerk of the Barbados Savings Bank.<sup>17</sup> This was an important achievement for a black man in those days. Similarly, Eastmond (Husband of former M.P. Gertrude Eastmond) worked as a cashier with the Savings Bank in Bridgetown. Corbin, another Combermerian, returned to Combermere to teach.<sup>18</sup>

From all reports, it seems that these black players enjoyed the company of the white club members immensely. For them it was an opportunity to learn and observe "new ways" in which local white people interacted. They noted and assimilated certain codes of behaviour in order to facilitate future interactions with whites.

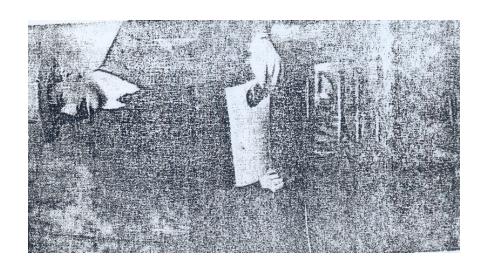
Indeed, these blacks were proud to be in this gathering as they could be seen in the company of the "big shots" of society. Most of them seemed to believe that this association more than anything enhanced their prestige, if not their purses.<sup>19</sup>

Therefore, it appears that blacks perceived their membership of the club as a means

# "THE HUMANITARIANS"



L – R. Rev. F. Godson, Mr. S. B. Inniss and Mr. C. B. Gilkes Taken at Admiral Grant's Sailors Rest.



of social mobility, although this does not rule out the fact that a few of them may have joined in order to recreate with persons of similar Interests, tastes and perceptions.<sup>20</sup>

The acceptance of the presence of blacks into the chess club was facilitated by the growing "humanitarian spirit" within the club, coupled with the social and economic benefits blacks derived from their education and professions. Between 1921 and 1950, the chess club attracted a cadre of liberal-minded persons who were not only prepared to make positive social changes relating to blacks in the society at large but also within the confines of the club. This was evidenced by the social achievements of such chess club members, as Chenery, Godson and Hunte.

At a societal level, it appears that Chenery stood resolutely for the rights of all men against the monopolisation of these rights by a few. To this end, he dedicated the "Advocate Newspaper", which was to be an independent custodian for the public welfare. Additionally, he urged the implementation of old age pensions, compulsory education and the abolition of child labour.<sup>21</sup>

Similarly, Godson, a man with a social conscience, lobbied for the setting up of the first pension scheme and an unemployment agency in the island. He successfully secured a weekly half-day holiday for assistants in shops and stores. His major achievement however, was the raising of large sums of money to feed the poor and destitute in Barbados.<sup>22</sup>

Within the club, these "humanitarians", with the support of other club members such as Gilkes, Walton, Judge Sainsbury and others adopted a view contrary to that of Moxly. This was reflected in the fact that Godson was often heard urging blacks to join the club.<sup>24</sup> Similarly, Hunte issued open invitations to all and sundry to join or visit the club, even though it may have meant him having to pay for their membership fees.<sup>25</sup>

But despite the urgings and inducements only the educated blacks rose to the occasion. This may have been a direct result of their Eurocentric education which fostered things European. By then, they were most prone to absorb and assimilate the white middle class values, attitudes and beliefs which pervaded the club.<sup>26</sup> Meanwhile, their adoption of these traits aided their integration within the club as the homogeneity in behaviour, reduced chances of social friction.

In real terms then, the class structure within the club had not changed only its racial composition. The whites held the administrative posts while the blacks stood passively back and followed. Nonetheless, these blacks now had the chance to match wits with white chess players. Inniss would prove to be slightly more than their equal in that respect.<sup>27</sup>

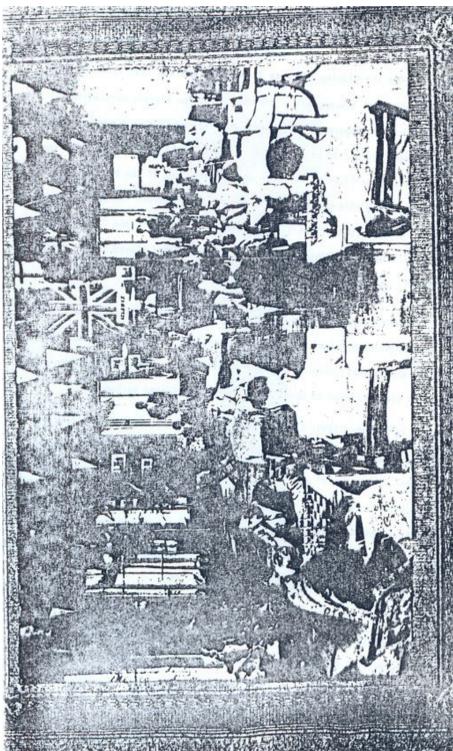
From as early as 1923, the club started to hold Chess tourneys. Between 1924 and 1926, two tournaments were played, the Franklin Handicap and the Chess Club Championship. The Chess Club Championship was the first attempt at producing a national chess champion in Barbados. Between 1924 and 1926, Inniss won this tournament while Godson won the Handicap between 1923 and 1925. Mr. M. T. Mayers won the Handicap in 1926. See Appendix 1, fig. 2 for all chess champions in Barbados between 1923 and

1985).

But the playing of Chess in Barbados was not restricted to local play and local tournaments. Whenever Barbadian players were abroad, they took the opportunity to engage in play and to give a good account of themselves and Barbados. Thus, in November 1932, Godson visited the "Girwood Chess Club" in Trinidad and defeated one its of best players. <sup>29</sup> It was during this period that Barbadian chess players indulged in various forms of chess activities. They played "Cable Chess" and "Simultaneous Chess". They held "Inter-Colonial Tournaments" and played "Consultation Chess" against regional territories.

The first evidence of "Cable Chess" occurred in 1930 when the club invited the British Guiana and Trinidad to contest a cable match each in June and December respectively. Both games were drawn. In a return cable match with Trinidad in April 1923, Trinidad defeated Barbados.<sup>30</sup>

In November 1949, Barbadian Chess players got their first opportunity to play against a former world chess champion, Dr. Max Euwe. He played against twenty-two of them in a simultaneous exhibition which included the Attorney-General, J. Whyatt and his wife. Out of twenty-two games, Dr. Euwe won twenty-one while the other was drawn with Hunte.<sup>31</sup> While this was probably the greatest chess event in Barbados, Barbadian chess had also known greater moments of glory overseas.



WY LE

In 1938, Barbados was invited to the first Inter-Colonial Chess Tourney of this period. Other participants were, Trinidad and the host country British Guiana. At the end of the contest, Gilkes of Barbados brought honour to his country when he was declared joint Caribbean Champion with Mr. D.B. Robinson of British Guiana.<sup>32</sup>

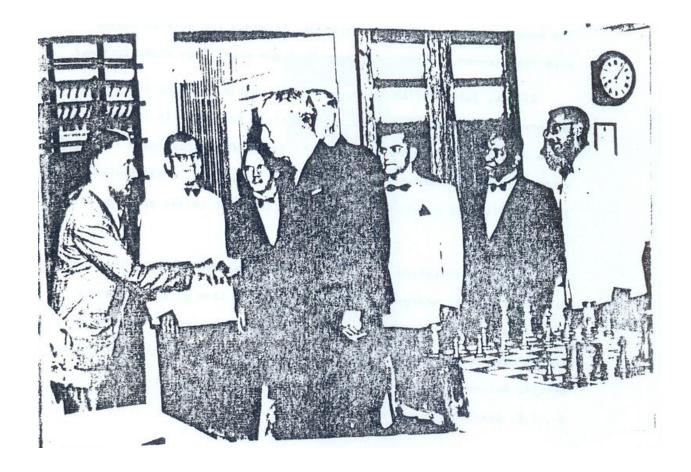
The Second Chess Congress which was scheduled to be played in I940 was preempted by World War II. Thus, the British Guiana and British West Indies (B.G.- B.W.I.) Chess Federation which was formed in 1938, was only able to host the Second Chess Congress in 1946.<sup>33</sup> The venue was Trinidad again Barbados, Trinidad and British Guiana were represented. At this Congress Barbados experience mixed fortunes.

Gilkes, joint Caribbean Champion, was unable to match the sterling performance that had gained him a joint claim to the title in 1938. His title went to the Trinidadian, Dr. M.G. Sturm who masterminded Trinidad's victory. Trinidad emerged with a score of 15 ½ points, while Barbados followed with 13 ½ points. British Guiana took the cellar position with 11 points.

In the Consultation Match, Barbados won against both Trinidad and British Guiana to emerge winners. The Barbados team at this Congress comprised of Walton, Captain, Eastmond and Gilkes, while Trinidad was represented by Sturm, Captain, Mr. J.S. Quashie and Mr. George Stanford. British Guiana was represented by Mr. G.F. Hopkinson, Captain, Mr. F.E. Brassington and Robinson.

At the prize giving ceremony, three silver placards were presented to the members of the Barbados team for winning the Consultation Match. Trinidad took the B.G. - B.W.I. Trophy and the bulk of the other prizes.<sup>34</sup> At the end of the Chess Congress, Hunte of Barbados was unanimously elected President of the B.G. - B.W.I. Chess Federation. He was therefore given the responsibility of organising the Third Chess Congress in Barbados in 1948.<sup>35</sup>

# IF YOU ARE BLACK YOU STAND BACK?



1948 Inter-Colonial Tournament at Hastings Hotel, Barbados.

L – R N. Osbourne shaking Governor Blood's hand, Grannum, (President of B.C.C.) Gilkes, Brassington, Quashie and Barker.

In October 1948, Hunte lived up to his charge when the Third Chess Congress was opened by Governor Sir Hilary Blood at the Hastings Hotel. Once again, Trinidad dominated the opposition with their team-mate Stanford taking the coveted B.G.-B.W.I. Trophy. British Guiana won the Consultation Match and Hunte was re-elected President of the B.G.-B.V.I Chess Federation.<sup>36</sup> His new charge would be the holding of the 1950 Inter-Colonial Congress.

But his illness in 1950 and subsequent death naturally meant that he could not carry out the mandate of hosting the fourth Inter-Colonial Chess Congress. And with no one around with his dynamism and prestige, the days of inter-Colonial Chess Congresses had drawn to a close. Hunte's death also severely affected chess activities in Barbados. During his active years he was the chief administrator, sponsor and liaison officer with the Business Community and with other regional chess bodies for the club. His loss therefore, struck an almost lethal blow to the club. It was probably in the area of finance and Public Relations that his absence was most felt.<sup>37</sup>

Few persons in the club could have equalled his literary and administrative skills.<sup>38</sup> During his early life he was educated privately and later at Combermere. On completing his education, he served as Director of Da Costas and Company Limited as well as Secretary of the Barbados Shipping and Trading and the West India Biscuit Company Limited. His wide range of talent naturally led him further afield. This was demonstrated by him being Dean of Commercial Studies at the Barbados Evening institute.<sup>39</sup> During his later life, it was apparent that Hunte was a man of substance. This was reflected by him being always

# THE MAIN-STAY OF ADMINISTRATIVE CHESS IN THE 1930s - 1940s



Mr. Hunte (Son of Simeon Hunte & Son Ltd)

chauffeur-driven in an age when to own a donkey cart was an achievement! His attire was always immaculate. This may have been attributed to the fact that he owned some of the best suits in town while being the son of the owner of Simeon Hunte and Son. Ltd.

But despite his indulgences in the above luxuries, Hunte was a generous man. On some occasions he paid the membership fees of certain players who were unable to meet their commitments. At other times, when recalcitrant members either forgot or chose not to pay their fees, he willingly consented to pay the rents for the club. His loss therefore left the chess club being unable to pay rents at the Y.M.C.A. Thus it was not long before the club was forced to take to wandering.

### **CHAPTER III**

#### THE NOMADIC YEARS - 1950 -1979

Between 1950 and 1975, the Barbados Chess Club wandered from place to place seeking a permanent site. From the Y.M.C.A. it moved to a small room on top of a drugstore in Victoria Street and Bolton Lane. From there, it moved to an even smaller room situated in Coleridge Street which was opposite the Central Police Station. This room was rented by the lawyer and chess player, Mr. Oswald Moseley.<sup>41</sup>

During the 1950s and 1960s, the club was headed by Gilkes and Sealy. By then the membership had dwindled to less than fifteen. Its social composition still remained middle class although the membership was now mainly black and coloured. Up until then, no consistent and organized effort was made by chess club members to teach chess to the lower class, although Corbin and Eastmond made sporadic attempts to teach chess at Combermere and Dodds industrial School respectively. These efforts were short-lived and therefore did not result in a continuous inflow of membership to the Chess Club. Probably the absence of tournaments for beginners with incentives to play made such a venture even more futile, especially when most lower-class persons preferred to view chess with awe while commenting that it was for a special type of person other than themselves.

It was in this sphere that Mr. Hilton Vaughan was to make an invaluable contribution to chess, when he urged many blacks to play the game while at the same time instilling in them the importance of a positive self concept. Although his advice may not have been initially heeded, it now serves as a demarche from which many successful black chess

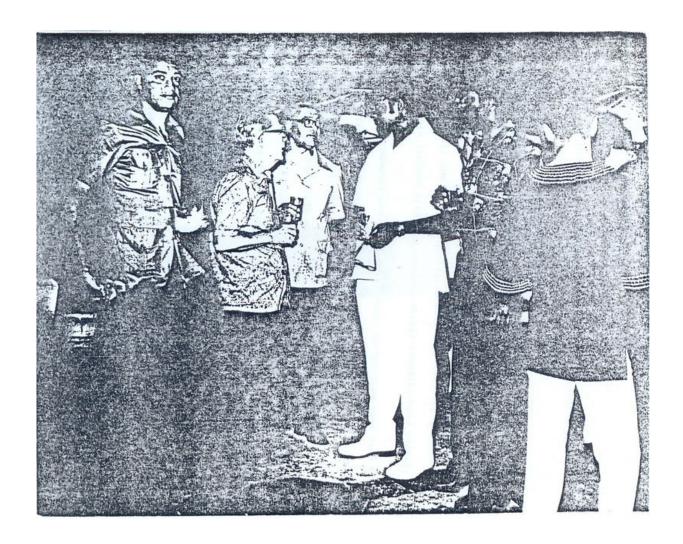
players venture forth.43

1972 was a bleak year for chess in Barbados. Local chess had degenerated to such a level that Barbados could not accept an invitation to send a team to the first Caribbean Chess Championship in St. Lucia.<sup>44</sup> It was tragic that Barbados, once a leader in regional chess had now fallen into obscurity. Nonetheless, by 1973, a rounding up of the old chess players allowed Barbados the opportunity of being represented at the Second Caribbean Chess Championship in Trinidad. But little could have been expected from the "Motley Crew"; it was not surprising that Barbados lost.<sup>45</sup>

By 1974, the club had moved to the adjoining office of the lawyer and chess player, Moseley. He was an influential member of the chess community and during that period he took a very active role in the administration of chess. He was ably assisted by Mr. Terry Sealy and Gilkes. The club then was also assisted by the German Mr. Rolf Weigan. Weigan furnished the club, by providing it with chairs and tables from his factory. But friendly relations became strained when Weigan and other club members could not gain access to the club when they desired.

This irksome situation was ultimately remedied when several members left the club in protest in order to establish another club at Windsor Arms Hotel. The break away faction which was headed by Weigan never lasted long. And while most of its members were reabsorbed into the older club, some of the previously dissenting members continued to stay away.

# **BAJANS IN GUYANA – 1975**



Prime Minister Comrade Burham entertaining Bajan Chess Players at Pegasus Hotel, Georgetown, Guyana L-R: P. King, C.B Gilkes, O.Moseley, Prime Minister Forbes Burnham.

The invitations of Barbados to the Third Caribbean Chess Championship in 1975 served to stimulate interest in chess but only for a while. A qualifying tournament was held in order to select a team. Messrs. Gilkes, Trotman, Moseley, Fergusson and King qualified to make the team. However, the inadvertent arrival of Mr. Philip Corbin sent shock waves through the small chess community. Corbin was rated by some British Chess Authorities as being a promising player. Also, from practice games with club members it was apparent that he was ahead of them in tactical skills and probably in positional skills as well. It seemed a waste that he could not be included on the team. Efforts to include him nonetheless led to controversy.

This was engendered by the Captain, Moseley, when he proposed to have a second qualifying tournament in which fourth and fifth places on the team would be contested for again. The first sign of dissent came from Fergusson and other players who were debarred. Fergusson reasoned that no places should be assigned, but rather that everyone should have to return to open contest. But Moseley would have none of it; so Fergusson and others were left with little alternative but to sever their memberships while vowing never to return.

49 Subsequently, Fergusson's place was taken by Corbin while Mr. Anthony Bowen replaced Trotman.

In March 1975, the Barbados team arrived in Guyana where they were met by Prime Minister of Guyana Mr. Forbes Burnham at a specially held reception. They were hosted at the Pegasus Hotel and like all invitees, each member was provided with pocket money for the duration of the tournament. <sup>50</sup> Barbados' performance in the tournament however, was

abysmal. The best point results came from Corbin and Bowen. Gilkes performed creditably especially when one took his age into consideration and moreover the calibre of players he was matched against. By then he was well over seventy years, yet he played with unflagging resolution and purpose. His game with the Cuban international Master, Eldis Cobo, won the warmest congratulations of the Master and undoubtedly his respect. Although Gilkes lost the game by time, he could have been justly proud of his standard of play.<sup>51</sup>

Unfortunately, Moseley and King did not fare so well. They often found themselves in positions analogous to "flying fish in Sharkland". Thus at the close of the tournament, Corbin had 3 ½ points, Bowen 2 points and Gilkes 1 ½. While Moseley and King never opened their account. Overall, Barbados finished sixth with Cuba taking first place.<sup>52</sup> It was obvious that Barbadian chess needed a tonic.

That tonic came in 1979 when the club recognised that it could no longer afford to present chess to the general public as a game for the middle-class intelligentsia. But between 1975 and 1979, the club was embroiled in a spate of personality conflicts, the culmination of which was the withdrawal of certain members from the club both physically in extreme cases of conflict and psychologically in less extreme cases.<sup>53</sup> The crux of the matter seemed to have been, that there were too many heads for the mere body in the absence of a "grund norm" to establish order.<sup>54</sup>

During this period the club left Moseley's room in Coleridge Street and had now taken up permanent residence in a room at Cathedral House in St. Michael's Row. The free acquisition of this compound was made possible by the generosity of Dean Crichlow who himself is still a keen chess player. This gesture was a significant achievement for the "nomadic" club. It meant that present and future membership ought not to be constrained by the paying of rents.

Nonetheless, up until 1979 the composition of the club remained middle and upper class, despite the fact that membership was becoming increasingly black and coloured. However, this provided a stark contrast to the white middle and upper class membership of the 1940s, not only in racial terms but in attitudinal terms as well. During the 1970s leading club member's sought to undermine each other with the aim of getting administrative control. On achieving such control they often abused it in pursuit of personal gains. Naturally, this resulted in bickering and disunity within the club. Such behaviour however, was apparently unheard of in the club during the 1940s and 1950s.

In the meanwhile, the white chess players had graduated to squash and bridge and were enjoying the privileges of another white middle class setting.<sup>58</sup> Nonetheless, their escapes were made futile by the relentless pursuit of the "eligible" blacks in the club, who found themselves looking around to query "the exodus of the whites"!

By 1978, it was clear to the club's administrators, namely, King and Crichlow, that the time had come for some "young blood" to be injected into the chess movement. This meant a veering away from the traditional manner in which they presented chess to the

public.<sup>59</sup> The first sign came in September 1978 when King and Crichlow organised a chess match between ten year old Jason Herbert and nine year old Brian Small.<sup>60</sup> This effort was met with increasing public interest and probably resulted in the notable increase in young membership within the club. But it would have taken more than a single chess match between two green horns to raise the standard of chess. Efforts to revitalize chess in Barbados would inadvertently open the door for lower class membership.<sup>61</sup>

# **CHAPTER IV**

# THE GROWTH OF CHESS IN BARBADOS 1979 - 1985

#### THE GLIMMER OF HOPE

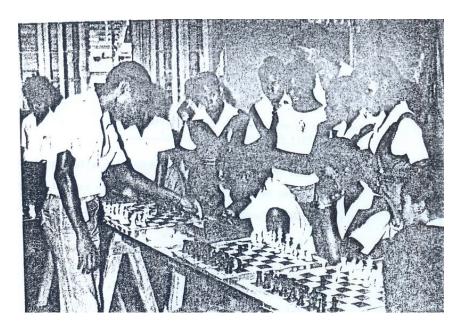
The Founding and the Rise of the Barbados Schools' Chess Association (B.S.C.A.)

In 1979, the Barbados Schools' Chess Association was formed with the young Allan Herbert as its President. With support of some members of the Barbados Chess Club, this young body grew, its objectives were:

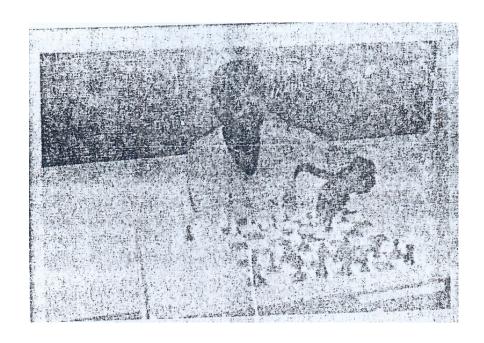
- (a) to create an interest in school chess, in order to attract a large number of players;
- (b) to assist in promoting School Clubs and keep them functioning; and
- (c) to promote inter-school chess with the aim of creating a national team of school players to compete against school boys of other islands.<sup>62</sup>

During 1979, Mr. Frank Jordan was instrumental in solving some of the many problems which were hindering the development of inter-school chess. He introduced greater planning and co-ordination in matches played between schools. Moreover, he served as Tournament Director in these matches while bringing an air of officialdom to them. During the year, chess clubs were established at Combermere, Harrison College, St. Leonard's Boys, Lodge, Alleyne and the Barbados Community College. By 1980, eleven teams were playing. The newcomers were Queen's College, Garrison Secondary, St. James Secondary, Community High, Ellerslie Secondary and St. Lucy Secondary.

# **LADIES IN CHESS**



Leroy Harper giving a Simultaneous Exhibition at St. Michael's School



Women's National Champion Margaret Prince At the Chess Board

It was in that year that their Vice-President, Mr. M. Forde was able to negotiate an important sponsorship for the B.S.C.A. from the Barbados Union of Teachers (B.U.T.). This sponsorship was used for the running of a series of tournaments for the schoolboys. It also initiated a longlasting and amicable relationship between the B.S.C.A. and the B.U.T. Even up until today, B.S.C.A. still uses B.U.T. Headquarters to run tournaments. Other chess bodies would later follow suit.<sup>65</sup>

As early as 1980, Forde, teacher and Corbin, Electrical Engineer were assisting in the teaching of youngsters to play. In addition to teaching chess theory, they and others such as David Jordan, son of Mr. C. Jordan, Director of the Barbados Telephone Co., Peter Dawson, son of Mrs. J. Dawson, teacher of Westbury School and L. Harper, Bank Clerk, indulged the youngsters in Simultaneous Exhibitions.<sup>66</sup>

Naturally then, by 1981 Barbadian Schoolboys were unprepared to countenance any shoddy play over the board. This was demonstrated clearly by the results in a simultaneous exhibition between the then Trinidadian Chess Champion, Mr. Cecil Lee and the Schoolboys. Of the twenty-six games played, Lee could only win eleven and draw four.<sup>67</sup>

These Simultaneous Exhibitions were designed to give young, aspiring chess players a chance to test their strength and to improve their play against stronger players while highlighting chess to the general public. On some occasions, the B.S.C.A. used these exhibitions as a means of fund raising. But the development of chess required other "ingredients" in association with the coaching programme.

# **CHESS AND THE YOUTH**



L - R. Front Row: S. King, A, Tudor, K. Hackett Back Row: L. Bellhouse, P.R.O. B.S.C.A. K. Daniel and A. Spencer

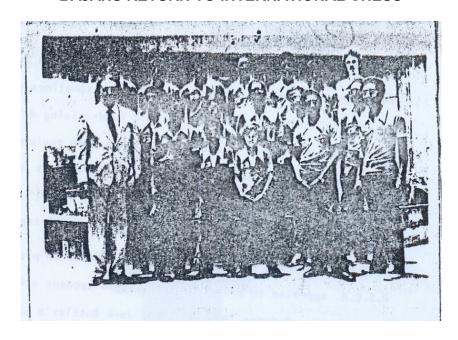
Chess students needed sets, chess books, and sometimes chess clocks. To acquire equipment the B.S.C.A held fund-raising drives and appealed to sponsors for money in order to purchase such equipment. In some cases the equipment was given freely to school clubs and on other occasions, it was sold at a discount.<sup>68</sup> This was all done to stimulate interest in chess while making the players as well-trained as possible.

In an attempt to further motivate students to play chess, the B.S.C.A. appealed to private enterprise to sponsor school chess tournaments. Between 1979 and 1981, Ju-C Bottler's Limited responded to this appeal by providing exclusive funding to school chess in 1979 and joint funding with B.U.T. in 1980. Since then, sponsorship has been taken up mainly by United Insurance which now is the largest sponsor of chess in Barbados - and by many other companies.<sup>69</sup>

The money from these sponsorships was used to provide winning and promising chess players with trophies, chess clocks and chess sets. (See Appendix 1, fig 3). On other occasions, some of the money was used to assist Barbadian junior chess players at tournaments abroad, and for providing food and accommodation for invited foreign players at Barbadian tournaments.<sup>70</sup>

These policies however, could not have been realised without the establishing of a meaningful relationship with the news media. It was therefore important to highlight School Chess and its achievements to the public. This served two functions. Firstly, it gave School Chess a credibility which would enable it to acquire greater sponsorship from private

## **BAJANS RETURN TO INTERNATIONAL CHESS**

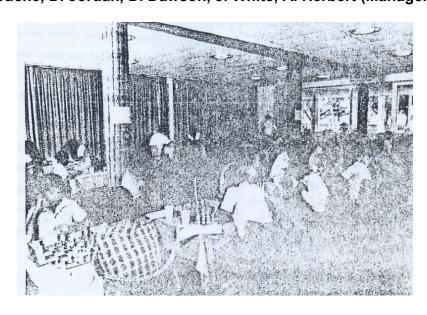


Barbados Junior Team to Trinidad in 1980.

L - R. Front Row Prime Minster and Patron of B.S.C.A. J.M.G.H. "Tom" Adams, G. Green, R. Buckmire, J. Herbert, H. Tudor, M. Forde (Coach)

Middle Row: N. Gibson L. Harper (Capt.) F. Marshall, St. Gittens, F. Jordan.

Back Row: D. Adams (Son of Prime Minister), R. Prescod, N. LaTouche, D. Jordan, D. Dawson, J. White, A. Herbert (Manager)



enterprise. Secondly, the publishing school boy achievements further encouraged players to continue while it motivated others to learn to play.<sup>71</sup>

It was in this area of public relations that Mr. Lyndsey Bellhouse has done admirable service for the B.S.C.A.. His: consistent and relentless efforts at promoting B.S.C.A. are praiseworthy, especially when few wanted to be burdened with such a delicate and heavy responsibility. There can be little doubt that the popular and sensational reporting of chess in the newspapers, radio and television served to convince some businessmen that they stood to gain by sponsoring chess, especially when their companies could be advertised along with the chess reports.<sup>72</sup>

Thus in 1980, a Barbadian junior team was able to tour Trinidad and Tobago while the B.S.C.A. hosted teams from Trinidad and Tobago, Guyana, Jamaica and Antigua in 1981. These tours facilitated a rapid growth in chess in 1982, both in quality and the numbers of players as well as in the number of tournaments and in the opportunities to represent Barbados at home and abroad.<sup>73</sup>

In 1982, the Inter-School Open Chess Championship attracted a record number of thirty-nine teams in three divisions, a far cry from the six teams of 1979.<sup>74</sup> During 1982, Barbados achieved victories over Trinidad and Tobago, Guyana and Jamaica in the Caribbean Chess Championship. Junior players like Buckmire, Small and J. Herbert were able to hold their owd in any chess forum. This was exemplified when Buckmire and Herbert received invitations to participate in the British Open Chess Championship.<sup>75</sup>.

Buckmire played unbeaten in the under 14 age group, thus finishing in third position they promptly invited him, to stay on for the Under 18 Division the Lloyd's Bank sponsored tournament in this tournament, a Buckmire won three and drew two of his seven matches thus making his trip to England an outstanding success.<sup>76</sup>

It was in this same year that junior chess player; Peter Dawson became the National Chess Champion. He succeeded his twin brother, David, who had won it the previous year. But Barbadian chess was not a dominated only by males. In 1982, seven schools included girls in teams for the inter-school tournament whilst the B.U.T. Chess Championship attracted many girls.<sup>77</sup>

By 1983, the United Insurance Inter-School Tournament was attracting 39 teams. In that Tournament, Community College emerged champions in Division One, while Lodge School finished first in Division Two. This tournament saw the emergence of strong female players in Amanda Tudor;. Claudia McCarthy, Regina Buckmire, Galle Cadogan, Kathy-Ann Hackett, Kim Devonish, Donna Codrington and Donna Miller.<sup>78</sup>

During that year, the B.S.C.A. did not send a representative team overseas. Nonetheless, in the Barbados Open Junior, which attracted eight foreign players from England, Guyana and Trinidad and Tobago, the Barbadians were able to give a good account of themselves. In the Boys' Under 20 Division, Kenneth Shovel of England came first, with Buckmire of Barbados in second place. Third place went to Yogendranath Ramsingh of Trinidad and Tobago.<sup>79</sup> In the Boys' Under 16 Division, Buckmire emerged as

Champion with Earl John and Amar Sanrah of Trinidad and Tobago and Guyana placing second and third respectively. A total of fifty players participated in this tournament.<sup>80</sup>

In 1984, Junior Chess in Barbados had reached greater heights although in the Barbados Junior, the Englishman Chris Ward took first place with Buckmire of Barbados again coming second; Tony Hanoman of Guyana was third. In the girls Under 20 Division, Tudor, Miller and Eucalene King of Barbados came first, second and third respectively. The same countries represented in 1983 were present in 1984. But the total number of players increased to fifty-four.<sup>81</sup>

In April of 1984, the B.S.C.A. sent a combined schools team to Trinidad and Tobago. This team lost two matches to one, against the Trinidadian National Junior Team. In August of the same year, a second rate Barbadian Junior team attended the Guyana Open. The highest position gained by the Barbadian players was fourth. It went to P. Dawson. This team however, defeated Monarch's Chess Club of Guyana six matches to zero, while losing three matches to two to the Guyana National Junior Team. These performances were reasonable especially when one considers that this team did not include junior chess stalwarts such as Buckmire, Kelvin Denny, D. Jordan or Sidney Skinner.

Instead, Denny was playing in the British Championship at Brighton, while Buckmire was engaged in the world Junior in Finland. Both performances were encouraging although not flattering. Buckmire finished 47<sup>th</sup> after gaining five points out of a possible thirteen. This performance was almost, on par with earlier results of some British players who later became Grand Masters! Foremost among them would be Grand Master John Nunn.<sup>84</sup>

By 1985, School Chess was well entrenched. The total number of players participating in the Barbados Open Junior was sixty-one. This was a marginal increase from the fifty-four of the previous year. Barbados won first and second places in the Under 20 First Division, while Guyana took third place. These positions were taken by Denny, Victor Blunt and Tony Hanoman respectively.<sup>85</sup>

But during this tournament, Buckmire was playing in the British Championship, where he finished 44<sup>th</sup> out of 76 players. His performance won the recognition and commendation of British Chess Trainer and Grand Master, Raymond Keen, when Buckmire defeated Britain's former chess olympic representative Mr. O. Hindle.<sup>86</sup>

By 1985, Buckmire's dominance could hardly be contained. When he attended the New York Open, he won US\$4,500.00 on coming first in the under 2000 rated category. Similarly, in the World Open in Philadelphia, he won a further US\$6,304.03 for winning in a similar category. Senior player, Dr. P. Corbin also won US\$800.00 on coming joint 4<sup>th</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup> in the same tournament.<sup>87</sup> By then Barbados was becoming known in the international chess media. Both Buckmire's and Corbin's games were being published in chess literature. Indeed, Corbin's game was said to reflect the quality of Grand-master play.<sup>88</sup>

Naturally then, by the end of 1985, Barbados had emerged as leaders in Caribbean Chess. This was further legitimised at the Caribbean Chess Championship which was held in Jamaica during the summer. At this contest Barbados emerged victors with Denny becoming the Under 20 Caribbean Champion.<sup>89</sup> Thus, within six years the B.S.C.A. had successfully produced young talented chess players from all races, classes and sexes.

This paved the way for an expansion in Senior Chess membership. The Barbados Chess Club was the principal outlet for the absorption of these new players.

## The Growth of Senior Chess Bodies in Barbados (1979-1985)

As early as 1981, efforts were being made by some members of the Barbados Chess Club to encourage School boys to become members of the club, despite the fact that there was a growing ambivalence toward the increasing role of B.S.C.A. in National Chess. Some members of the Chess Club believed that the administration of inter-regional chess tournaments ought to remain exclusively under the umbrella of the Club.<sup>90</sup>

But with A. Herbert, Chairman of the Ratings and Tournament Committee and Forde, Public Relations Officer of the club, any attempt to thwart junior chess could only precipitate a serious schism within the Club. Therefore by 1982:

"the Barbados Chess Club had restructured its organisation under the Chairmanship Mr. Michael Forde, to cope better with the influx of members" of all social strata. 91

The reconstruction however, only resulted from the resounding success of the Caribbean Chess Championship which was held in Barbados. This tournament was mainly organised by Herbert, Bellhouse, Forde and F. Jordan. The teams invited to participate were Trinidad and Tobago, Guyana, Antigua, Jamaica and Barbados. This was the first Caribbean Chess Championship which included junior and senior divisions. <sup>92</sup>

Trinidad and Tobago won this Championship overall with Guyana and Barbados coming second. Jamaica and Antigua came third and fourth respectively. In the individual tournament, Broomes of Guyana won the Over 20 Division while Gibson of Barbados took the Under 15 Division title.<sup>93</sup>

This tournament which was mainly sponsored by United Insurance demonstrated to disgruntled members that indeed the administration of chess was better left to the B.S.C.A. and to younger members of the Club. Thus Forde and A. Herbert were given a free hand to map the course of chess in the B.C.C. and the B.S.C.A. respectively.

By 1982, the Management Committee of the B.C.C. had added other tournaments to the formerly rigid schedule. The I.N.A.C.B. Gilkes Tournament was added while weekly Half-an-Hour tournaments were introduced. An annual Human/Computer Tournament was incorporated into the Club's tournament calendar. Blitz Chess tournaments were also no organised on Bank Holidays at popular beaches around the island. These tournaments were provided with trophies. The B.C.C. Championship was organised and held promptly in the month of December. The offering of expensive prizes to players of different ranges led to an increase in membership of the club and naturally to the rejuvenation of the Club.

But the large numbers of school boys pouring into the B.C.C. in 1983 could not be assimilated, as there was a shortage of space. This circumstance led to the formation of the Royal Knights Chess Club. It was presided over by F. Jordan and during the year some of its members made a tour to Jamaica where they met with mixed fortunes. <sup>96</sup> On their return, Royal Knights performed creditably to take second place in the Team Chess League, despite the fact that its existence continues to be threatened by the absence of a permanent base. <sup>97</sup>

The rebirth of the Barbados Chess Federation (B.C.F) in 1983 seemed to be significant if only in securing affiliation with the Federation Internationale des Eches (F.I.D.E.). During its first year, major strides were made in co-coordinating activities for chess members. The B.C.F. increased the number of adult tournaments with two new events, namely the Team Chess League and the Barbados Swiss Tournament. The B.C.F. also undertook the running of the Barbados National Championship, which was traditionally held by the B.C.C. <sup>98</sup> This in itself led to greater contention between Senior B.C.C. members who questioned the effrontery of the B.C.F. as the B.C.C. had acquired Federation Status since l95I when it became affiliated to F.I.D.E. <sup>99</sup> By 1984, feelings between the respective chess bodies were running high. <sup>100</sup>

In that year, Dr. Ronald Moseley, former President of the B.C.F and Forde, Vice-President chose not to seek re-elections while the hard-working A. Herbert, a former committee member was not in the final gathering of the newly established Management Committee.<sup>101</sup> The new Committee was therefore comprised of a cadre of inexperienced chess players who knew little about chess organisation. Only Bellhouse and F. Jordan had any fore experience. Naturally, then, one would have expected these persons to bring a measure of responsibility and accountability to the B.C.F., irrespective of their personal motives.<sup>102</sup>

But unfortunately, this Management Committee which was headed by Robert Taitt, provoked controversies. Foremost among those was the exclusion of Skinner from the Barbados National Championship after it was apparent that he had qualified. This matter

was further exacerbated when Moseley and Campbell were invited to play in the same national finals after these persons did not play in the qualifying prellmlnary tournaments. <sup>103</sup> Indeed, these antics seemed to be glaringly irregular, if not totally unfair.

It was not surprising therefore, that the Management Committee of 1984 could not raise a quorum to elect a Management Committee for 1985. Nonetheless, Taitt and his motley crew undoubtedly interpreted this as a clue to wield de facto authority right up to the end of 1985; despite the rapid decrease in financial members.<sup>104</sup>

But all was not gloomy between 1983 and 1985, as the addition of another chess club to the chess fraternity in Barbados further illustrated the growth of Chess (See Appendix 1, fig. 3 for chess population and playing strength). This club Deacons is the only community based chess Club in Barbados. It is situated at Deacons Farm, St. Michael with its members coming form the immediate vicinity. Its founding members are P. Dawson and D. Dawson and S. Fergusson. This club has held two open championships. The first was won by Buckmire in 1984 and the second by J. Herbert in 1985.<sup>105</sup>

In view of all that has been stated, it seems reasonable to conclude that chess in Barbados generally has grown not only through the increase in the number of players and clubs but also in their playing strengths. (See Appendix 1, fig. 4). But all of this could not have been achieved without generous funding of chess by private enterprise. This becomes patently clear when one analyses the degree of sponsorship between 1976 and 1985 (See Appendix 1, fig. 3).

## SPONSORSHIP IN CHESS



Presentation of prizes for the 1985 Inter-School and B.U.T. Tournaments L - R. H. Clarke, Sports Director, B.U.T., A.N. Herbert, President B .S.C.A., A. Burgess, Director Sports Council and A. Sealy, Representative of United Insurance



Presentation of Cheque to send players to N.Y Open. L-R: T. Greaves, M. Forde
President of B.C.C., R. Buckmire National Champion

Between 1976 and 1976, chess was principally funded by "555". They offered Bds\$500.00 in 1976 and 1978 but Bds\$400.00 in 1977. By 1979, there was a marked increase in the number of sponsors and also in amount of money provided. In 1979 chess was funded with Bds\$1,550.00 while in 1980 funds increased to Bds\$3,000.00. There was a marked increase in 1981 to Bds\$6,000.00. This was attributed to the hosting of the Caribbean Chess Tournaments. Thus sponsorship fell to Bds\$5,500.00 in 1982 and rose to Bds\$8,600.00 in 1983. In 1984, funding fell by a hundred dollars while in 1985, sponsorship reached Bds\$10,000.00.<sup>106</sup> This is the largest amount given so far and it comes at a time when Barbadian chess is at its peak.

It is noteworthy that the Government, acting through the National Sports Council, started assisting in the funding of chess from I81 to 1985. The money was used for purchasing chess equipment, chess trophies and for sending chess teams overseas. Indeed the funding of chess by private enterprise and Government ought not to be seen as the mere spending of valuable resources on a small sector of the population, as the benefits to be derived from the playing of chess are innumerable not only to the individuals but to the society as a whole (See Appendix 1 fig. 4-amounts funded on chess).

## **CHAPTER V**

#### THE SIGNIFICANCE OF CHESS TO BARBADIAN SOCIETY

"The Chessboard is the world, the pieces are the phenomena of the Universe: the rules of the game are what we call the laws of nature." 107

## Thomas Huxley

While European philosophers have freely resorted to chess in order to propound models relating to language, law and social structure, <sup>108</sup> Barbadian intellectuals have been less enthusiastic about such pursuits and prefer instead to use cricket as their medium of expression rather than chess. <sup>109</sup> This is understandable as cricket is a more popular game in Barbados than chess.

Nonetheless, chess in Barbados has some social, economic and political significance for Barbadian Society. During its earlier presence (1877-1921), chess came to be perceived as a game for the middle and upper class persons. This was probably due to the fact that the chess community was comprised mainly of European and Creole intellectuals who were eminent persons within the society. These Europeans naturally reflected their values, attitudes and beliefs while playing the game. While such customs could hardly be understood and appreciated by the distant masses, they were closely embraced by the creole whites. Thus, the hushed and pensive atmosphere which was broken by a rising and shaking of hands with a curt thank you after each game, more reflected European temperament than the ever increasing crescendo and tumult which characterised Barbadian activity. The society of the content of the cont

In short, chess in its earlier phase became one of the ashy conduits through which European values, attitudes and beliefs were transmitted to Barbadian society via its white creoles. In view of this, it is not surprising that even today, most elderly middle class chess players still hang on to the old customs of demanding that chess be played in a stoic atmosphere while pointing out that "it is a game for gentlemen". This was graphically illustrated when an influential member of the B.C.C. posted fourteen rules of good chess manners on the walls of the B.C.C. This was done in an attempt to reform lower class chess players who 'stormed' the club in the 1980's. Of course, few of them doubted the origins or designs of the middle class European rules.<sup>112</sup>

It was only it since 1980, that chess in Barbados seriously became a medium for Barbadian cultural expression. Barbadian chess players no longer sit passively at a chess board "twiddling their fingers" while soaking in foreign customs. Instead, they often dramatise events on the chessboard by gestures, antics and vivid expressions which largely capture the Barbadian personality.<sup>113</sup>

On the Chessboard, Barbadian chess players reflect their naturally aggressive nature. They are not content with quiet willy-nilly manoeuvres. Instead they are primarily concerned with subtle manoeuvres and long-winded combinations which entail a series of aggressive manoeuvres and brutal sacrifices which culminate in the "catspraddling" of the King. At present, one of its leading advocates, P. Corbin, is compiling a book on his popular exploits. He refers to this brand of chess as "Calypso Chess". Indeed, many of his games fall well within this description and are nothing short of master pieces.

But chess is more than a medium for social expression. It may be used as an Incentive system to accelerate Intelligence quotient (I.Q.). A recent empirical study conducted in Venezuela indicates that:

"Chess if taught methodically is an incentive system sufficient to accelerate the increase of I.Q. in children of both sexes, with primary level education, at all sociologically different strata levels." <sup>115</sup>

This study also found very interesting results, regarding the transfer of chess thinking to other areas of study, which were further substantiated by findings of the U.S.S.R. Academy of Sciences.

They found that chess players who were being compared to non-chess playing subjects, were found to have highly developed, dynamic qualities of concentration and reasoning. Additionally, they found that chess players develop such skills as self-control, the ability to integrate one's thoughts, disciplined determination, foresight and alertness. The capacity to calculate things and improved memory. The research also found that chess-players thinking were rich in vividness and creativity. Indeed, these traits facilitate the learning of the sciences and arts as well as providing significant insights into many other disciplines such as cybernetics, mathematics and computer science.

In view of the fact that these findings are universal, it seems reasonable to conclude that chess in Barbados, especially within the schools, accelerates I.Q., while developing positive personality traits which enhance the performance of students in subjects on the curriculum and subsequently in their work situation.

At a regional level, Barbadian chess has served to forge a spirit unity, co-operation and friendliness among peoples of the Caribbean. This was mainly achieved through the Inter-Colonial Congresses which occurred from 1938 to 1948 and the Caribbean Chess Championships which were held between 1961 to 1985.

While inter-regional chess no longer celebrates British occupation of any Caribbean territory as was done in Trinidad in 1897, it now promotes a spirit of independence and inter-dependence among regional sovereignties. In this respect chess now ceases to support any form of political hegemony in the Caribbean, although it should be noted that Barbadian chess acting through the B.G.-B.W.I Chess Federation, was a fore runner to the political federation of the British West Indian islands. This must indeed be considered to be of some significance to the political development of the Caribbean and later CARICOM, as it demonstrated that the peoples of the region can have a symbiotic relationship with each other.

Finally, although chess is not played professionally in Barbados, there are some avenues overseas in which a few local players may secure a little income. During 1985, Buckmire won Bds\$21,000 from playing in two tournaments. Such achievements by Buckmire assist in providing further recognition of Barbados in a sphere in which she has largely been unknown.

## **CHAPTER VI**

### RETROSPECT

In tracing the history of Chess in Barbados, the path was as rugged as the actual chess history itself. The game has changed immensely within the past hundred and eight years. These years have witnessed revolution in membership along lines of sex, colour, social class, numbers, playing strengths and financial support. Chess activities have also changes as well as administrative policies towards chess.

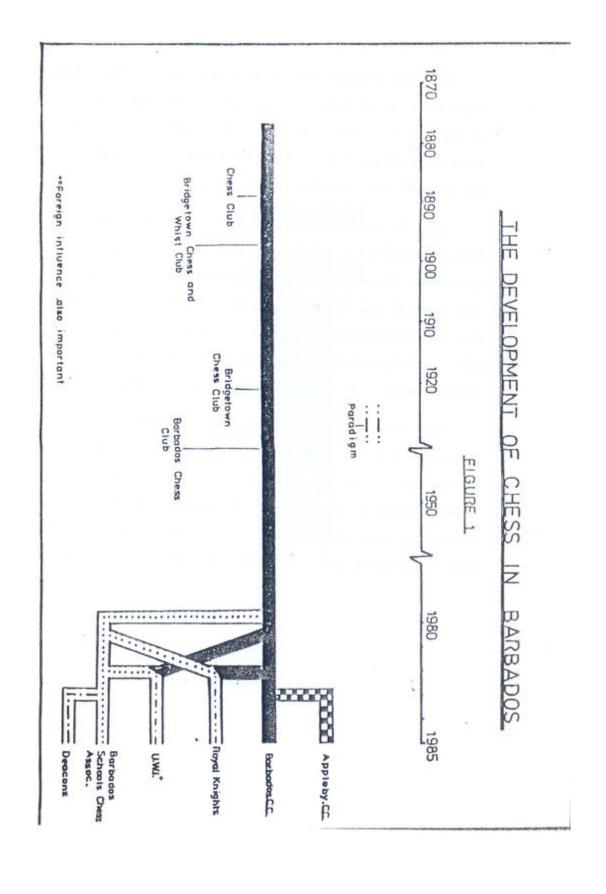
While chess players in the colonial period were mainly male, white, middle and upper class and moreover of the intelligentsia, by 1985, persons of both sexes and of all races and classes were playing chess in Barbados. Nonetheless, chess continued to be a minority sport reserved for the educated and those being educated, although the numbers have increased marginally from thirty persons in 1922 to well over one hundred and thirty eight actively rated chess players in 1985.

But despite the marginal increase in numbers, the playing strengths of Barbadian chess players increased significantly. They are now the Caribbean Champions and the top players are invited to top international tournaments, while they are occasionally mentioned in important chess bulletins to F.I.D.E. The increase in playing strength between 1975 and 1985 was matched by an increase in financial support. Sponsorship increased from \$400.00 in 1975 to \$10,000.00 in 1985.

Chess has also evolved from being a slow recreational game, without the use of chess clocks in the colonial days to a fast moving game with use of chess clocks and chess computers! While Cable Chess, Chess Problems and Consultation Chess characterized the colonial days, Blitz Chess now proliferates.

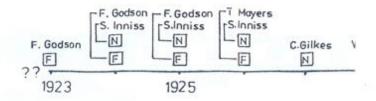
Chess is now geared towards competition rather than recreation. This was evidenced by a marked increase from two annual tournaments of the colonial days to several tournaments between 1979 and 1985 (See Appendix 1 fig. 2) but these changes could not have been accomplished unless there were drastic changes in the policies of those administering chess. By 1982, most chess administrators in Barbados were young persons in their twenties. 122

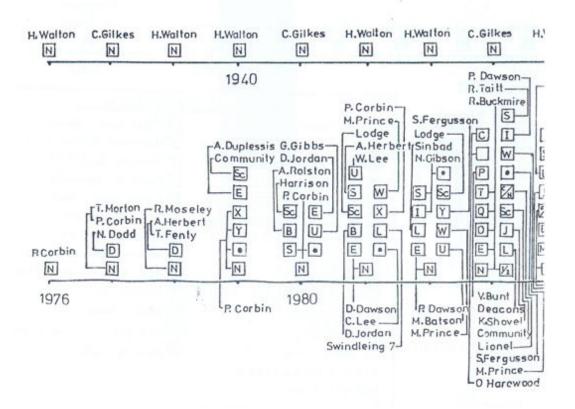
They brought a new, liberal and dynamic approach to chess. This was evidenced by the formation of new chess clubs and associations. Although petty rivalries enveloped some of these bodies, there still remained a general commitment towards chess. In short, chess in Barbados has experienced a spurt in growth between 1975 and 1985, which is analogous to the new flush that characterises spring.



## NUMBER OF CHESS TOURNAME

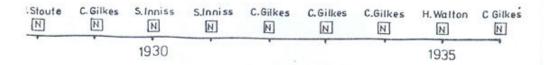
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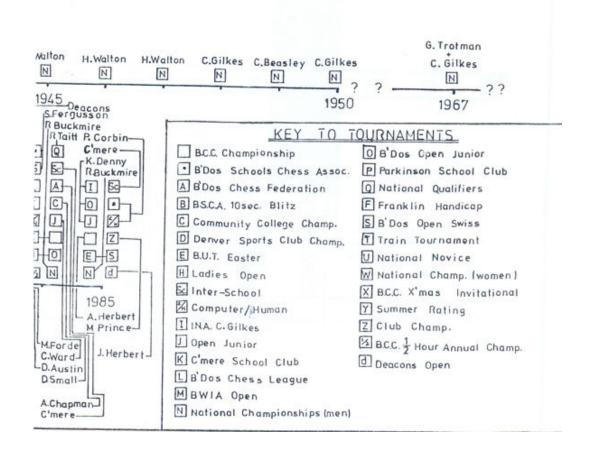




## NTS AND WINNERS BY YEARS

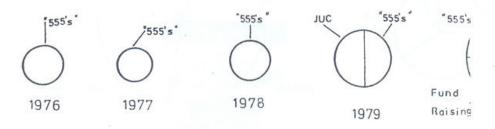
GURE 2

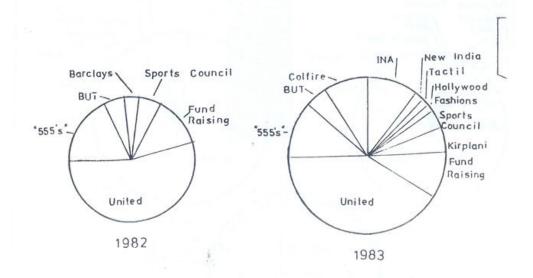




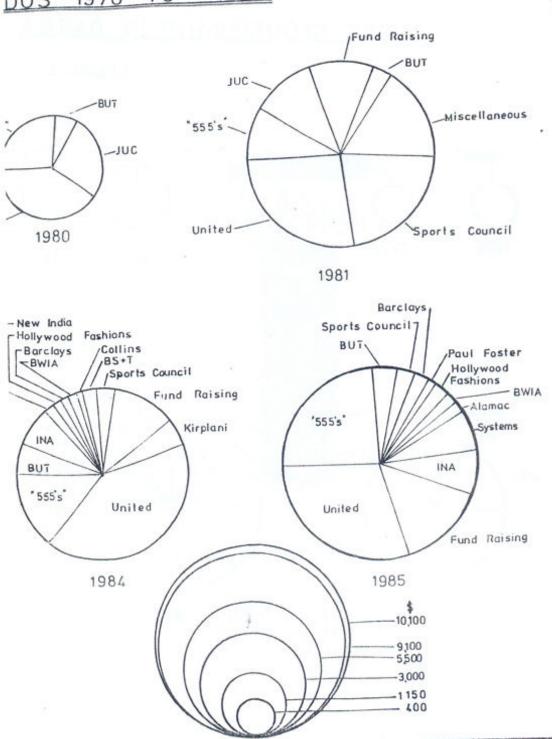
## CHESS SPONSORSHIP IN BARBA

## FIGURE 3





# DOS 1976 TO 1985



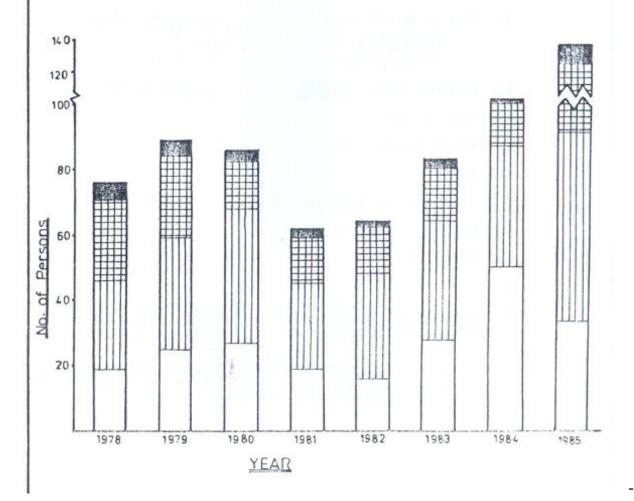
# CHESS POPULATION BY YEAR AND RATING

FIGURE 4

SCORE

0 - 1200 1500-1800

1200-1,500 >1,800



#### NOTES

- 1. <u>Advocate</u>. Special Edition. 1926, Tercentary Christmas Number p. 43. The preceding information comes from the same source.
- 2. F.A. Hoyos, Our Common Heritage, pp. 66-68 and pp. 99-103.
- 3. W.W. Marvin, <u>Political Development in the Mini-State Caribbean: A Focus on Barbados</u>. (Doctoral Thesis) University Missouri, 1972. pp. 100-123

Advocate. op cit., p. 44

- 4. <u>Advocate</u>. op. cit., pp. 43-44
- 5. Rev. J. H. Sutton Moxly, <u>An Account of A.W.I Sanatorium And A Guide to Barbados</u> (Bridgetown, 1886) p. 135.
- 6. F.A. Hoyos, op. cit., p. 59
- 7. Ibid, p. 61 F.A. Hoyos: <u>A History from the Amerindians to Independence</u>. (Hong Kong, 1978). p. 154
  Also see F.R. Augier and S.C. Gordon
  Sources of West Indian History, pp. 187-188.
- 8. Kortright Davis, <u>Cross and Crown in Barbados</u>; p. 102
- 9. Ibid. p. 103
- 10. Nikolai Krogius, Psychology in Chess, p. 4
- 11. See 5.
- 12. F.A. Hoyos, <u>Barbados our Island Home</u>, pp. 138-140
- 13. Advocate. op cit., p. 43
- 14. Ibid. p. 44
- 15. Ibid.
- 16. <u>Barbados Yearbook and Who's Who</u> (Bridgetown, 1935). p. 75. <u>Barbados Annual Review</u>: Dec. 1942-Nov. 1943 p.102.

Dec. 1944-Nov. 1945 p.149 and p.150.

- 17. Private interview with H. Eastmond former national player, St. Michael, Barbados. Dec. 14, 1985. Information also verified by Miss Constance Inniss (Sister of S.B. Inniss).
- 18. Ibid.
- 19. Private interview with K. Sealy, Secretary B.C.C., St. Michael, Barbados. Dec. 10, 1985.
- 20. Ibid.
- 21. F.A. Hoyos, Our Common Heritage, op cit., pp. 109-113
- 22. Rev. Godson, <u>A Half Century of Ups and Downs in the Eastern West Indies:</u>
  Reminiscences of Rev. F. Godson, MBE. See also Rev. G. Godson, <u>Studies in Poor Relief</u>. Mar. 1944
- 23. Private interview with C.B. Gilkes, former President of B.C.C., St. Michael, Dec. 8, 1985. See 5 for Moxly's view.
- 24. Private interview with K. Sealy, op. cit.
- 25. <u>Barbados Yearbook and Who's Who</u> (Bridgetown 1935) p. 75.
- 26. Private interview with K. Sealy, op. cit.
- 27. A Shield in the B.C.C. still bears testimony to this fact. This shield records the exploits of Mr. Inniss and others.
- 28. Ibid.
- 29. <u>The Sporting Chronicle Souvenir Annual</u>. (Port-of-Spain 1932, 12<sup>th</sup> Edition), p. 89.
- 30. Barbados Yearbook and Who's Who op. cit.
- 31. The Barbados Yearbook Annual Review (Dec. 1948-Nov. 1949)
- 32. <u>The Port-of-Spain Gazette</u>, Thursday October 24, 1946. See also <u>Trinidad</u> <u>Guardian</u>, Tuesday October 29, 1946.
- 33. The Port-of-Spain Gazette, op. cit.

- 34. <u>Trinidad Guardian</u>: op cit. Information in the two preceding paragraphs were taken from the same source.
- 35. The Barbados Annual Review (Dec. 1947-Nov. 1948 Bridgetown) p. 147.
- 36. Advocate, October 16, 1948 p. 1.
- 37. Private interview with C.B. Gilkes, op. cit. and with K. Sealy, op. cit.
- 38. Ibid.
- 39. Barbados Yearbook and Who's Who (Bridgetown 1951). p. 201.
- 40. Private interview with C.B. Gilkes, op. cit. and with K. Sealy, op. cit.
- 41. Private interview with C. Trotman, St. Michael. Jan. 3, 1986.
- 42. Private interview with H. Eastmond, op. cit.
- 43. Private interview with K. Sealy, op. cit. Information in the preceding paragraph was taken from the same source.
- 44. Private interview with G. Trotman, op. cit.
- 45. Ibid.
- 46. Private interview with former national player, P. King, St. James. Feb. 15, 1986. Information in the two preceding paragraphs came from this source.
- 47. Mr. Corbin had won a brilliancy prize in England after playing a splendid game which involved many sacrifices.
- 48. Mr. Corbin showed the writer a record of some of his games which were against the leading Barbadian players then. He not only won them, he won convincingly.
- 49. Private interview with P. King, op. cit. and also private interview with A. Herbert, President of B.S.C.A. and B.C.F. St. Michael. Feb. 14, 1986.
- 50. Private interview with P. Corbin, St. Michal. Dec. 29, 1985.
- 51. Private interview with P. King, op. cit.
- 52. Personal notes from P. Corbin to M. Forde, Dec. 29, 1985.

- 53. Private interview with P. King, op. cit.
- 54. See J.W. Harris, <u>Legal Philosophies</u>, p. 67 for discussion on the grund norm or basic norm. This norm is necessary for the securing of order and stability.
- 55. Private interviews with P. King and A. Herbert, op. cit.
- 56. Private interview with P. King, op. cit.
- 57. Private interview with C.B. Gilkes, op. cit.
- 58. Private interview with A. Herbert, op. cit.
- 59. Private interview with P. King, op. cit.
- 60. Nation. Sept. 15, 1978, p. 12.
- 61. Private interview with A. Herbert, op. cit.
- 62. <u>Advocate</u>. Mar. 4, 1980, p. 18.
- 63. Private interview with A. Herbert, op. cit.
- 64. Advocate. Apr. 11, 1983, p. 16.
- 65. Advocate. July 14, 1982, p. 15.
- 66. <u>Junior Nation</u>. November 16 to 29, 1981 p. 16.
- 67. <u>Advocate</u>. Apr. 5, 1983, p. 14. See also <u>Sunday Sun</u>. Mar. 27, 1983, p. 19.
- 68. Private interview with A. Herbert, op. cit.
- 69. Personal notes from A. Herbert to M. Forde, Nov. 11, 1985.
- 70. Private interview with A. Herbert, op. cit.
- 71. Private interview with J. Campbell, St. James, Feb. 15, 1986.
- 72. Private interview with A. Herbert, op. cit.
- 73. Sunday Advocate. June 21, 1981. p. 14

- 74. <u>Advocate</u>. Dec. 5, 1982, p. 10.
- 75. Ibid.
- 76. Ibid.
- 77. Ibid.
- 78. Sunday Advocate. Nov. 27, 1983. p. 13..
- 79. <u>Nation</u>. Jul. 21, 1983. p. 13
- Advocate. July 14, 1983, p. 13. Also
   Nation. July 26, 1983, p. 22
- 81. Private interview with A. Herbert, op. cit.
- 82. Ibid.
- 83. Ibid.
- 84. Ibid.
- 85. Personal notes from A. Herbert to M. Forde, Nov. 11, 1985.
- 86. <u>FIDE Congress, Graz. 1485.</u> Report of the Commonwealth Chess Association. Annex. 26, p. 102.
- 87. Chess Life, Oct. 1985, p. 20.
- 88. Ibid.
- 89. Private interview with A. Herbert, op. cit.
- 90. Private interview with P. King, op. cit.
- 91. <u>Sunday Advocate</u>. Dec. 5, 1982, p. 10.
- 92. Orrin. Tosingh. Chess Bulletin of Jamaica. Vol. XI, Jul. 1981, p. 14.
- 93. Ibid.
- 94. Taken from Minute of B.C.C. November 29, 1982.

- 95. Ibid.
- 96. Private interview with A. Herbert, op. cit.
- 97. Ibid. Sunday Sun. Jul. 22, 1983. p. 15.
- 98. Ibid. Also private interviews with P. King and J. Campbell, op. cit. There was an attempt at forming a Federation in the 1970s but it soon collapsed as a result of lack of participation.
- 99. Private interview with P. King, and see Barbados Yearbook 1951, p. 131 for affiliation to F.I.D.E.
- 100. Ibid.
- 101. Private interview with A. Herbert, op. cit.
- 102. The writer is not convinced that these persons tried their best. In an interview with Mr. Herbert it was pointed out that Mr. Jordan did not present a financial statement to the Management Committee. Also, he spoke about a breakdown in communication between the Public Relation Officer and the tournament committee. This resulted in tournaments not being adequately advertised.
- 103. Private interviews with J. Campbell, P. King and A. Herbert.
- 104. Ibid.
- 105. Private interview with A. Herbert, op. cit.
- 106. Personal notes from A. Herbert to M. Forde.
- 107. Harry Golombek. Encyclopedia of Chess. p. 202.
- 108. Ibid. pp. 202-203.
- 109. Prof. W.K. Marshall, demonstrated this in a lecture at the Queens Park Steel Shed in Feb. 1985.
- 110. See 1.
- 111. This was clearly so when the writer was President of the B.C.C.
- 112. These rules were taken from a book called Breviary of Chess by Savielly Tartakower. Tartakower was Polish by birth.

- 113. Again, this has been the personal experience of the writer.
- 114. Personal interview with P. Corbin, op. cit.
- 115. <u>F.I.D.E. Report, Bulletin on Commission for Chess in Schools</u>. Annex. 13(1) p. 74.
- 116. Nikolai Krogious, op. cit. p. 3.
- 117. Ibid.
- 118. The Port-of-Spain Gazette, Sunday Nov. 3, 1946.
- 119. Advocate. Oct. 2, 1948. p. 1.
- 120. See 105.
- 121. Private interview with J. Campbell, op. cit.
- 122. Private interviews with P. King and A. Herbert.

## **GLOSSARY OF TERMS**

Blitz Chess: A Chess game in which each move must be made within

five moves or ten seconds.

Cable Chess: A match played by telegraph.

Chess Congress: Any large event which contacts more than one tournament and

in which competitors from more than one location or club are

eligible to participate.

Consultation Chess: A game in which there are two or more players on one or both

sides who jointly, deciding their move out of earshot of their

opponents.

Chess Clock: A device to record the exact time taken by each player during

the game. It is made up of two clocks. At any time only the clock of the player whose move it is will be ticking. The player moves and presses a button or lever on the top of his clock,

which stops it and sets his opponent's clock in operation.

Handicap Tourney: A special type of Tournament in which the stronger players are

required to give up a piece to the weaker player or to allow him

the advantage of a couple of piece moves.