

## **THE PARMA CHESS CLUB: FIFTY YEARS OF HISTORY**

Compiled by Bob Basalla

### **Introduction**

In human terms, fifty years is a long time. In our disposable age most things are not even meant to last that long. Think of items around most homes. Other than antiques and a maybe a few keepsakes, what stuff there has been around more than half a century? The same goes for businesses and other social institutions. The vast majority of them come into existence, run their course and disappear in a span of less than fifty years. This is especially true of volunteer organizations such as clubs. Most of the time the inertia of even a promising beginning eventually wanes, only to be kept going by one or a few zealots until they, too, peter out. Then it is crash and burn for the club. Rare indeed are organizations that can survive and thrive through several generations. One of these rare birds we are celebrating here in 2004: the Parma Chess Club, now in its 50<sup>th</sup> year.

### **Beginnings**

Oral tradition (and some early records) has it that the Parma Club was founded by four intrepid individuals, Justin Niemira, Albert Plack, John Hoit, and Emerich Roth, in the late fall of 1954. A notice in *The Cleveland Chess Bulletin* of the time (11/16/54) pinpoints the date as Thursday, November 4<sup>th</sup>. It only credits two members of the Parma Recreation Board, Leslie A Morgan and Robert Kane, with its formation, along with the assistance of the Cleveland

Chess Association, a group already in existence since 1943. Perhaps this is where the four canonical founders come into the story. Another interesting item: to show how things evolve, at this early stage the club was originally known as the Parma Chess *and Checker Club*. It is not known when the devotees of that other board game took their leave. In any case, only the chess folk proved their staying power over the long haul. The very first meeting was held at Parma Schaaf Junior High School at West 54<sup>th</sup> Street and Redfern Avenue and drew a turnout of twenty-three, many of them chess players from the Cleveland Chess Association sponsored Industrial League. Vic Ravas and Henry Ostroske were there along with two “Old Timers,” Charles Bielecki and William B. Szabo, the latter being elected the club’s first President. Other officers included A. R. Fretcher as Vice President, and Harry F. Ross as Treasurer.

From this standing start the club was off and running. And I do mean running. By December 1st it was reported the Parma Club already had a membership numbering fifty. It was then that Fortune intervened to give the fledgling group a tremendous additional boost. The Cleveland Chess Association was in the process of planning a “Chess Week” schedule of events for January 9<sup>th</sup> to January 15<sup>th</sup> 1955. The big draw they hoped to bring to these landmark festivities was none other than Dr. Machgielis “Max” Euwe, a doctor of mathematics and World Chess Champion from 1935-37. Dr. Euwe would visit for several days, affording the opportunity for a couple of appearances. Amazingly, the Parma Chess and Checker Club, barely a month old, was chosen as the site for Dr. Euwe’s first appearance and lecture!

What other brand new club, anywhere, anytime, could boast of such a coup?

And on January 13<sup>th</sup>, 1955, that is just what happened. After a very laudatory introduction by President Szabo, Dr. Euwe took the stage, so to speak, before a mixed crowd of juniors and adults. The gracious Euwe immediately took stock of the situation and adapted his presentation accordingly. He lectured in what was described as “typical school master fashion,” inviting questions especially from the eager juniors. Reportedly, the youngsters were anything but shy. Still, their brash queries were rewarded with patient and direct answers from the gentlemanly Grandmaster. After 8:30 PM, with most of the young ‘uns off to bed, Dr. Euwe and what must have been a demonstration board regaled the crowd with examples of strategy and tactics, endgames, and entire contests, along with a great number of personal anecdotes from his international experience. All in all the evening was a great success for everyone involved, but most of all for the host Parma Club.

By the fall of 1955 the Parma Club was ready to field a team of its own in the Western Division of the Cleveland Chess Association’s Club League 1955-56 season. The line-up for this first foray into team chess included R. Becker, W. Szabo, A. Plack, J. Niemira, V. Ravas, E. Aring, and E. Nitschke. The cellar dwelling outcome must have been disappointing, but all involved agreed it was jolly good fun. So a Parma presence in the Club League was here to stay -- and they would not always remain also-rans.

### **Parma Club Eras**

Parma Chess Club history can be sectioned into eras roughly corresponding to decades. After the formative years of the 50’s the 1960’s clubs survived and persisted due to a smallish cadre of committed players. If the club was ever in danger of folding this would have been the period. Next came the transition times of the 1970’s. After Parma Schaaf Jr. High School, the club had taken up residence in the downstairs of the Brooklyn YMCA on West 25<sup>th</sup> over by the Denison Bridge. When that was no longer viable the now somewhat nomadic club secured space downstairs at the old Ukrainian Chess Club, 4440 State Road next to Downing School. Thanks go to Dr. Zenon Wynnysky of the Ukrainians and CCA Club League Director, for those digs. Then, through the efforts of student (and soon to be Parma C. C. President) James Synk, the club moved to and met in a Padua Franciscan High School (6740 State Road, Parma) classroom (Room 120, West Wing) for a couple of seasons. This period of wandering ended, perhaps forever, when in September of 1978 the Parma Chess Club moved into the great site it still enjoys at the German Central Organization, 7863 York Road in Parma. Dynamic leadership from club Activities Coordinator (and active member since 1972) Immanuel “Jim” Halm and newcomer President David Kowalczyk parlayed this new site into a “Golden Age” for the club. (More about this later.) Finally, due to the demise of the Cleveland Chess Association and its Club League in the mid-90’s and the rise of the Internet chess option, attendance to outside chess clubs, including the Parma Club, fell off somewhat from the heights of the 1980’s. Still, to this day a solid core of players continues to meet

and compete every Tuesday evening. The stable set of officers for the Modern Era: Club Coordinator Jim Halm, Treasurer Ludvig Barta, Tournament Director William B. Wright, Assistant Tournament Director Robert W. Basalla, Secretary Tamara Halm, Sergeant at Large Dale Johnson, Sergeants at Arms Karol Jaremko and Konstantine "Gus" Dimitrov.

### **Club League Success**

As mentioned previously, the Parma Club's forays into the Cleveland Chess Association's Club League were not initially too successful. The guys were having fun though, so teams continued to be fielded, sometimes just one team, other times a team for each of the League's divisions. In 1959, persistence paid off when a Parma squad broke through big time and won First Place in Division II. A Third Place in Division II followed in 1961. It wasn't until 1968 before another Parma team struck pay dirt, a Third Place in the recently formed Division III. 1970 was the first season that two Parma teams took honors in the same season, seconds in both Division II and III. Three teams broke through in 1973 when the League expanded to four divisions. Only one mountain remained unclimbed: a medal in Division I where the big boys played.

Early in the "Golden Era" this final barrier, too, fell by the wayside. In the 1981 season the Division I team, captained by club co-founder and long time treasurer Emerich Roth, reached the summit of Cleveland team chess, capturing first place with a group featuring four-time Ohio Champion Thomas Wozney, along with Joe McCarty, Steven Hrop, Justin Niemira, Edward Kirkham, Adam Zachlin, James

Michels and Club President Richard Gedeon. The next year two Parma based teams in Division I battled to the finish with the no-star Parma Granites prevailing 3-2 in a thrilling last round match to snatch the title from the Parma Panzers despite the latter team adding International Master Dumitru Ghizdavu to Wozney et. al. for this final contest. (By now the Parma Club was fielding so many teams in the various divisions old style designations such as Parma I and Parma II did not sufficiently delineate which was which. Teams began adopting more distinctive, even playful, monikers such as the Parma Knights, Parma Bad Bishops, Parma Lakers, Parma Executioners, Parma Paladins, Parma Cro-Magnons, Parma White Sox (a take off on the long time association of Parma with ethnic Poles), Parma Woodpushers, Parma Misfits, Parma Whozits, Parma No Names, Another Parma Team, Seward's Folly – Parma, Parma Busters, Parma Panthers, Parma Survivors, and my biased personal favorite, the punny Parma Granites.) From then on it was a constant battle for Division I top honors between one of the Parma teams and a strong core squad based out of the East Side club meeting out of John Carroll University, the results being about a 50-50 split. Within this span the 1993 Parma Survivors achieved an unprecedented feat by posting a perfect match record in Division I (10-0-0). A likely individual performance record was also set during this period when Robert Basalla played 24 consecutive matches over several seasons without losing.

Players on these championship contender teams often became tight knit and fiercely loyal to their mates. The ultimate anecdote in this regard occurred in 1989 when Thomas Ellison, former

*Cleveland Plain Dealer* chess editor, recently returned to competition after a many year absence, broke his leg in an accident at home. As he was taken off to the hospital Tom's wife reported that the most important thing on his mind, almost the only thing, was to make sure that his Parma Survivor teammates would be informed that he would be unable to attend that evening's chess match! Sadly, Tommy did not survive the operation later that day. He was a consummate team player to the end.

Throughout the 1980's and into the 1990's great numbers of Parma C. C. teams found their way into the winner's circle. In 1982 the all-time record was set when **eight** Parma teams took trophies in the four divisions. A couple of other seasons saw seven Parma teams do the same. Eventually teams from the Parma Club had won more awards than any other club in League history, more than twice that of their nearest rivals, the German-American Club. Clearly, Parma had become the New York Yankees of organized Cleveland chess! Some of the other, smaller clubs grumbled a bit at this dominance. None of them, however, had complained all those earlier years when Parma teams were often tail-enders. Such is the nature of success. (See a more complete list of Parma team honors at the end of this compilation.)

### **Chess Association Officers**

Over the years, and especially during the "Golden Era," members of the Parma Chess Club assumed various posts in the hierarchy of the Cleveland Chess Association. Surprisingly, the first CCA President from the Parma Club was way back in the 1959-60 season when Soren Korsgaard was top man. James W.

Michels held the presidency for 1970-71, and Leo Mann took the reigns from the 1986-87 to the 1988-89 season. David Kowalczyk was the longest running officer from Parma, holding the Vice-President's job for nine of the ten years from 1978-79 to 1987-88, this while being Parma Club President for most of those years as well! Parma Club denizens assumed control of the long running (since 1943) *Cleveland Chess Bulletin* in the 1981-82 season. Don Collins ran the publication for three seasons, Robert Basalla for the next eight, and William B. Wright for three more. Many awards were bestowed upon the magazine by the Chess Journalists of America during this period, including Best Club Bulletin and Best Chess Humor on several occasions each. (Consult the more complete list of Parma Club CCA officers at the end.)

### **Club Champions**

Besides participating in Cleveland Chess Association sponsored events the Parma Chess Club not surprisingly held in-house activities as well, chief among these the Club Championships. Though there may have been Club Championships from the beginnings in 1954-55, the first tournament recorded (on the trophy in the case at the Parma Club!) for the title was in 1959, won by Soren Korsgaard. Long timers Emerich Roth and Albert Plack took the next two championships, followed by the most dominant string so far: four out of the next five titles went to James Michels. The all time champ of champs though, must go to William B. Wright, winner or sharer of the Parma Championship a record seven times – all since 1992! Other multiple winners: Emerich Roth, James Michels and Robert W. Basalla (5

titles each); Soren Korsgaard, Joseph McCarty and James Harkins, Jr. (3 titles); and Steve Hrop (2 titles). The keenness of competition for this honor is proved by the fact that nobody has yet captured three championships in a row!

As further proof of the desirability of copping a Parma Chess Club Championship consider the story of Dr. Zbigniew Kuberczyk, a long time Parma Club member who finally achieved his oft-stated and long sought goal by winning it all in 1977. He passed away shortly thereafter, doubtless happy and fulfilled. (By the way, it was Dr. Kuberczyk who held out the longest against Bobby Fischer in his perfect simultaneous performance in Cleveland 3/18/1963.)

As membership ballooned beginning in the late 1970's, the Parma Club instituted a "B" Championship tournament to separate second tier players from the "sharks." Jeff Deucher became the first "B" section winner in 1977.

In 1980 a "C" section was added as well, the first winner here being Steven Seward, who would progress up the ranks to mastership and become overall Club Champion in 1991. (Incidentally, Steve was the artist who created the most famous (infamous?) design for official Parma Chess Club T-shirts and sweats.)

At season's end in the spring the Parma Club began running Speed (5 minute) Chess Championships, one tournament for club members only, and often another Open Speed Championship on a different day. (Rosters of all the club and speed champions are listed at the end.)

### **Simultaneous Performances**

Another activity the Parma Chess Club has offered to its members and guests from time to time is the simultaneous exhibition wherein a strong player, generally a top master, takes on many players at once. Over the years the club has hosted a number of these performances, some by local bigwigs (Tom Ellison, Arthur Keske, International Master Calvin Blocker), and others by internationally recognized outside masters. This latter group includes Grandmasters Dmitry Gurevich, Alex Yermolinsky, and Gregory Serper and International Masters Igor Ivanov and Dumitru Ghizdavu. Ghizdavu, an émigré from Romania in the mid-1970's, was arguably the strongest player to ever be a member of the Parma Chess Club. He performed many simuls around the Cleveland area, many of them for Parma. (See simultaneous exhibition list for more details.)

### **Grudge Matches**

In 1977 the Parma and German-American Chess Clubs set up a regular rivalry match apart from CCA competition, sort of like an Ohio State vs. Michigan football game. A rotating trophy would be held by the winning club, until defeated. A challenge could be made at most once each year, but a match did not necessarily have to occur annually. The initial match in the series was won by the then stronger German-Americans by the narrow score of 6.5-5.5. A 1978 rematch also went to Parma's nemesis team, this time by 5.5 to 1.5. The next three years no records exist as to whether the match was held. In any event, the German-Americans had their name inscribed on the trophy for each year, whether by victory or default. Jim Halm in particular wanted to get



those guys and put that prize in Parma's trophy case. By 1982 the German-Americans were still a good club, but the Parma Club was a colossus. And in a twenty-board match held at German Central, revenge was finally exacted by the convincing score of 14.5 to 5.5. Next year a chastened German-American Club declined to issue a challenge. The same went for the year after, and so on. And the Parma Club, now in what appeared to be permanent possession of the trophy, had it inscribed with their name each year (turnabout is fair play!) until 1992 when the ritual was abandoned as a pointless exercise. You can still see this artifact in the club trophy case.

### **The Golden Era**

As mentioned earlier, the 1980's and early 1990's represented the most active and successful era in club history. In my mind there were two main reasons for this sudden blossoming. The first is the German Central site itself, nearly ideal with spacious playing areas and good lighting. And what other club can boast of a working bar right in the tournament/skittles room!

The second reason for success were the organizers the club was blessed with in this period. Jim Halm, volunteering for Parma Club duties since he was steered to the club by chess columnist Tom Ellison back in 1972, continued his hard work and steady influence, as did club regular Richard Gedeon as Vice-President. First Steve Danelishen, then James Burns ably took over the Treasurer's task from a retiring Emerich Roth. But a lion's share of the accolades must go to the club president for most of this era, David Kowalczyk, who made it a personal crusade to turn the Parma

Chess Club into his vehicle for transforming Cleveland chess as we knew it. Catering to mainly the rank and file player, in other words the great majority of players, Kowalczyk increased membership to untold heights. Ramping up in the late seventies, ninety-plus players joined in the 1981-82 season. The next year saw the club break 100 members for the first time at 102. 1984-85 surpassed that total with 104, only to be bested in 1987-88 at 110. High water mark was 1989-90 when 116 members signed on. This made the Parma C. C. easily the largest chess club in the Cleveland area, and often the entire state as well – even the Midwest by some reckoning.

With its great site as a draw the club played host to many a significant event. The Parma Open was instituted in 1980 and quickly became an important tournament on the local calendar. The CCA sponsored Cleveland Open was held at the Parma Club a number of times, once with a record turnout of 211 players. This event brought in a number of name players such as Grandmasters Yehuda Gruenfeld, Dimitry Gurevich, Sergei Kudrin, Anatoly Lein, and Miguel Quinteros, International Masters Brian Hartman, Igor Ivanov and David Glicksman.

On many occasions in the 1980's the club hosted the opening night festivities for the Cleveland Chess League.

Many a rank and file event graced the Parma Club's schedule as well. Kowalczyk held several weekend Swiss system tournaments strategically spaced out during the year to prop up interest. Inexpensive and popular quadrangular events (quads) were also begun every Tuesday after the club championships were concluded, and continued until the club shut down for the summer.

(Nowadays the club meets essentially year round.) Occasionally more unusual tournaments were held. A couple of times the summer Swiss was held outdoors. The Parma Class Championships were run a few times in the early 1990's. And club member Dale Johnson's unique "Skins Game" tourney format was experimented with. It was a noble attempt to escape the usual tired pairing and prize conventions.

For all his efforts in this period David Kowalczyk won recognition from the United States Chess Federation in the form of a Volunteer Award given out to only the top local chess promoters.

Naturally, since the 1980's when news organizations took their rare notice of the local Cleveland chess scene it was the Parma Chess Club that most often came to their minds. Consider: on January 6, 1983, the *Parma Sun Post* did a fairly lengthy profile of chess organizer David Kowalczyk complete with a large photo. Grant Segal of the *Cleveland Plain Dealer* (February 6, 1986) a piece on the Parma Chess Club entitled "I think, therefore I have fun," featuring interviews with club members Chris Meyers and John Nichols among others. The photo spread included Nichols and Jim Halm literally bellying up to the bar to play chess, with another picture showing artist Laszlo Dus pondering his next move. Then in 1993, during the hype for the chess movie "Searching for Bobby Fischer," *Plain Dealer* reporter Karen Sandstrom came to the Parma C. C. to interview club regular Bob Basalla about chess in general and local chess in particular. An appended photo at the club showed a typical top quad of the period: members William Wright vs. Pappu Murthy, with Kevin Smith and Osama Sarsam

squaring off behind them. The article also profiled fourteen year old Victoria Gyori, one of the few female members the club has had over the years. Such articles, along with frequent mentions in Curtis Garner's Sunday *Plain Dealer* chess column, where in 1993 he opined that Parma was "Cleveland's most important chess club," has kept the Parma Chess Club at the forefront of the local chess consciousness for more than a generation.

### **Volunteerism**

Not everything the Parma Club has done involves chessboards and men. In the summer of 1983 and again the following year member Rich Jarden arranged for the Parma C. C. to be one of the groups manning the phone banks during WVIZ-TV, the local public network affiliate's fund raising promotion.

The club also participates in the annual Spring Clean-up at German Central as partial thanks for the great facility they have provided us, not to mention the fluorescent lighting installed downstairs in the 1980's chiefly for the benefit of the chess players. A dozen players or more routinely turn out for this yearly ritual of leaf raking, trash picking and general freshening up of the grounds.

### **Good-byes**

As stated before, fifty years is a long time. In the game of life, many friendships are opened, many memories gathered along the way. But checkmate comes to even the best of players. Loyal Parma Club members such as Dr. Zbigniew Kuberczyk and Thomas Ellison may have played their last pawn, but they will not be forgotten. Neither will those more recently passed from us:

the sly and droll Marc Blackey, Dr. Alex Juguilon, active Parma Club member for 39 years, amiable curmudgeon William Nimylowych, and the always friendly Harold (Tom) Rulong. May their boards be reset in a better place.

### **Lists Section**

#### **Life Members**

The following individuals have achieved Lifetime Membership status in recognition of their contributions in various capacities to the Parma Chess Club.

Ludvik Barta  
James Burns  
Michael Fenjac  
Immanuel Halm  
Richard Jarden  
Karol Jaremko  
Dale Johnson  
David Kowalczyk  
Justin Niemira  
Emerich Roth  
William B. Wright

#### **Most Loyal Members**

The following individuals have logged at least ten years as members of the Parma Chess Club. Due to incomplete records, there may be others from the early years that could be accorded similar status.

James J. Adam  
Louis Adams  
Walter Arth  
Ludvik Barta  
Robert Basalla  
Marc Blackey  
Wayne Blue

James Burns  
Gerald Clough  
Anthony Debe  
Konstantine Dimitrov  
Laszlo Dus  
Joseph Erjavec, Jr.  
Michael Fenjac  
Richard Gedeon  
Scott Glass  
Immanuel (Jim) Halm  
James Harkins, Jr.  
Steven Hrop  
John Jakopak  
Richard Jarden  
Karol Jaremko  
Dale Johnson  
Dr. Alexander Juguilon  
Soren Korsgaard  
David Kowalczyk  
Dr. Zbigniew Kuberczyk  
Edward Madaczky  
Jeffrey Martin  
Joseph McCarty  
Edward McDermott  
Jack McGee  
James Michels  
Ivan Nacinovic  
Victor Nasvytis  
Justin Niemira  
William Nimylowych  
Richard Noel  
Virgil Parvenescu  
Albert Plack  
Helmut Poehlmann  
George Ponomarenko  
Michael Puls  
Anthony (Tom) Rezak  
Emerich Roth  
Frank D. Russo  
George Schnur  
Dr. Raul H. Seballos  
Peter Selenoi  
Steven Seward  
Frank Shiba  
Dale Stech  
Thomas Sudik



George Ulmicher  
Anthony Vondrus  
Larry Waite  
William B. Wright  
Clifford Ziegler

### **Parma Club Champions**

1959 – Soren Korsgaard  
1960 – Emerich Roth  
1961 – Albert Plack  
1962 – Soren Korsgaard  
1963 – Emerich Roth  
1964 – Emerich Roth  
1965 – James Michels  
1966 – James Michels  
1967 – Arthur Keske  
1968 – James Michels  
1969 – James Michels  
1970 – Soren Korsgaard  
1971 – Justin Niemira  
1972 – James Michels  
1973 – Emerich Roth  
1974 – Emerich Roth  
1975 – J. Schweitzer  
1976 – George Ponomarenko  
1977 – Dr. Zbigniew Kuberczyk  
1978 – Adam Zachlin  
1979 – Richard Gedeon  
1980 – Dr. Raul Seballos  
1981 – Steven Hrop  
1982 – Andrew Zebrowski  
1983 – Timothy McCarthy  
1984 – Edward Kirkham  
1985 – Steven Hrop  
1986 – Pappu Murthy  
1987 – Robert W. Basalla  
1988 – Joseph McCarty  
1989 – Joseph McCarty  
1990 – Robert W. Basalla  
1991 – Steven Seward  
1992 – William B. Wright  
1993 – Sri Rahm  
1994 – William B. Wright  
1995 – James Harkins, Jr.  
William B. Wright

1996 – James Craft  
1997 – William B. Wright  
1998 – Robert W. Basalla  
1999 – William B. Wright  
2000 – James Harkins, Jr.  
2001 – James Harkins, Jr.  
2002 – William B. Wright  
2003 – William B. Wright  
Robert W. Basalla  
2004 – Robert W. Basalla

### **Parma “B” Champions**

1977 – Jeff Deucher  
1978 – Paul Brandt  
1979 – T. Abrams  
1980 – Immanuel Halm  
1981 – Kevin Smith  
1982 – William Nappi, Jr.  
1983 – Clifford Ziegler  
1984 – Dr. Valery Raitsis  
1985 – Robert Chase  
1986 – Frank Russo  
1987 – Justin Niemira  
1988 – Todd Taylor  
1989 – Alex Burmistrenko  
1990 – Helmut Poehlmann  
1991 – Keith De Gardeyn  
1992 – Keith De Gardeyn  
1993 – Jeff Kish  
1994 – D. Patterson  
1995 – Chris Wrabel  
1996 – Anthony Kiefer  
1997 – Edward McDermott  
1998 – Chris Wrabel  
1999 – Robert James  
2000 – P. D. Collins  
2001 – Fred Tandoc  
2002 – Victor Nasvytis  
2003 – Anthony Rotella  
2004 – Michael Krosky

### **Parma “C” Champions**

1980 – Steven Seward  
1981 – David Kowalczyk

1982 – George Schnur  
 1983 – Karol Jaremko  
 1984 – Mitchell Collins  
 1985 – Jack McGee  
 1986 – Michael Fenjac  
 1987 – Jeff Martin  
 1988 – Robert Heatherly  
 1989 – Dale Johnson  
 1990 – P. Doermann  
 1991 – Ludvik Barta  
 1992 – S. Helms  
 1993 – Frank Shiba  
 1994 – O. Dubyna  
 1995 – D. Smolinski  
 1996 – Karol Jaremko  
 1997 – Karol Jaremko  
 1998 – Jack McGee  
 1999 – Jack McGee  
 2000 – J. K. Longrich, Jr.  
 2001 – E. Anderson  
 2002 – Damian Rucker  
           A. Rucker  
 2003 – Konstantine Dimitrov  
 2004 –

### **Parma Open Speed Championship**

1981 – Robert Burns, Jr.  
 1982 – Robert Burns, Jr.  
 1983 – Pappu Murthy  
 1984 – Wilson Gibbins  
 1985 – Robert Miller  
 1986 – Joe McCarty  
 1987 – Calvin Blocker  
 1988 – Ross Sprague  
 1989 – Steven Seward  
 1990 – Thomas Ward  
 1991 – Ross Sprague  
 1992 – David Allen  
  
 2003 – Robert W. Basalla

### **Parma Closed Speed Championship**

1978 – Adam Zachlin  
 1979 – Adam Zachlin

1980 – Kevin Smith  
 1981 – William Nappi, Jr.  
 1982 – Andrew Zebrowski  
 1983 – Andrew Zebrowski  
 1984 – Robert W. Basalla  
 1985 – Naum Hoolin  
 1986 – Joseph McCarty  
 1987 – Ross Sprague  
 1988 – Robert W. Basalla  
 1989 – Robert W. Basalla  
 1990 – Pappu Murthy  
           Ross Sprague  
 1991 – Pappu Murthy  
 1992 – Ross Sprague

Note: both events above were held at times after these listings end. Recalled results are sketchy.

### **Simultaneous Exhibitions Sponsored by the Parma Chess Club**

The following list is almost certainly incomplete, but represents all information available to me.

1/6/1955 – Thomas Ellison (+13 –1 =1)  
 2/3/1955 – Richard Kause (+15 –0 =0)  
 12/13/1978 – IM Dumitru Ghizdav  
 (+18 –0 =4)  
 3/27/1979 – IM Dumitru Ghizdav (+38  
 –9 =11)  
 7/28/1979 – IM Dumitru Ghizdav (+46  
 –4 =8)  
 1/26/1980 – IM Dumitru Ghizdav (+42  
 –3 =6)  
 1/24/1981— IM Dumitru Ghizdav (+35  
 –1 =2)  
 4/6/1984 – IM Igor Ivanov (+25 –4 =3)  
 4/12/1985 – GM Dmitry Gurevich (+15  
 –0 =2)  
 1984? – IM Calvin Blocker  
 2/20/1996 – GM Alex Yermolinsky  
 3/25/1997 – GM Gregory Serper

### **CCA Club League Champions**

1959 – Parma, Division II, First Place

Dick Kontra  
Soren Korsgaard  
Gil Greytack  
Gil Granger  
Ralph Lewis  
Albert Plack  
Emerich Roth  
William Trimmer  
Joe Bakies  
Jack Bogdan

1961 – Parma, Division II, Third Place

1967 – Parma, Division III, Third Place

1968 – Parma, Division II, Second Place

1969 – Parma II, Division III, Third Place

1970 – Parma, Division II, Second Place

1970 – Parma, Division III, Second Place

1971 – Parma, Division II, Second Place

1971 – Parma, Division III, Third Place

1972 – Parma, Division III, Second Place

1973 – Parma, Division II, Third Place

T. Graske (Captain)  
Soren Korsgaard  
Anthony Vondrus  
Emerich Roth  
G. Gamin  
K. Messerly

1973 – Parma, Division III, First Place

Immanuel Halm (Captain)  
Phil Frate  
John Katona

Michael Thomas

Robert Way  
Anthony Zubko

1973 – Parma, Division IV, Third Place

1977 – Parma, Division II, First Place

Richard Gedeon  
Immanuel Halm  
James Synk  
Michael Puls  
Joseph Erjavec, Jr.  
Paul Brandt  
Nelson

1978 – Parma, Division III, Third Place

Joseph Erjavec, Jr. (Captain)  
Paul White  
Edward Yerger  
Edward Kulak  
Jeffrey Deucher  
Paul Brandt  
Jim Erjavec

1979 – Parma, Division III, Second Place

Joseph Erjavec, Jr. (Captain)  
Paul White  
Edward Kulak  
Jeffrey Deucher  
Paul Brandt  
Edward Yerger  
Joseph Biancardi

1980 – Parma, Division IV, First Place

David Kowalczyk (Captain)  
Ray Iannicca  
Leo Mann  
Gary Sikon  
M. Messer, Jr.  
Daniel Thomas  
J. Moore  
R. Trojan  
Virgil Parvenescu

1981 – Parma I, Division I, First Place

Emerich Roth (Captain)  
Thomas Wozney  
Joe McCarty  
Steven Hrop  
Justin Niemira  
Edward Kirkham  
Adam Zachlin  
James Michels  
Richard Gedeon

1981 – Parma, Division II, Second Place  
David Kowalczyk (Captain)  
Michael Puls  
Andrew Zebrowski  
Julius Zimmnicki  
James Antoline  
James King  
William Nappi, Jr.  
Daniel Thomas  
Steven Seward  
Peter Prigodich

1981 – Parma IV, Division III, First Place  
Ray Iannicca  
James King  
Leo Mann  
M. Messer  
J. Needham  
M. Petrulak  
Gary Sikon  
J. Smith

1982 – Parma Granites, Division I, First Place  
Robert Basalla (Captain)  
Robert Burns, Jr.  
Wilson Gibbins  
Timothy McCarthy  
Kenneth Fiore  
Norman Petterson  
Thomas Sudik

1982 – Parma Akronites, Div. I, Second Place  
John Randolph (Captain)

Calvin Blocker  
Andrew Martin  
M. Morris  
Steve Stevanovich  
John Vehre  
John Voelker  
Thomas Ward  
Chris Zielke

1982 – Parma Connection, Division II, First Place  
William Nappi, Jr. (Captain)  
James King  
Tommy Lee  
Leo Mann  
Dan Meyo  
M. Petrulak  
Steven Seward  
Gary Sikon  
Kevin Smith

1982 – Parma Veterans, Division II, Third Place  
Emerich Roth (Captain)  
Joseph Gilchrist  
James Michels  
Justin Niemira  
Albert Plack  
George Ponomarenko  
Frank Russo  
Adam Zachlin

1982 – Parma Survivors, Division III, Second Place  
Immanuel Halm (Captain)  
Anthony Debe  
Michael Fenjac  
Ronald Fischman  
T. Flemming  
Steven Leverich  
M. Messer  
G. Sheehen

1982 – Parma Mustangs – Division IV, First Place  
J. Kozik (Captain)

B. Hansen  
M. McDonald  
E. Simner  
J. Strang, Jr.

1982 – Parma Knights, Division IV,  
Second Place  
E. Kulak (Captain)  
T. Dillinger  
R. Feichtner  
Paul Giordano  
R. Heatherly  
David Jividen  
R. Musson  
J. Needham  
Marion Pawlowski  
C. Spatzek

1982 – Parma Trappers, Division IV,  
Third Place  
Richard Jarden (Captain)  
James Lasalvia  
Edward Madaczky  
Virgil Parvenescu  
Colin Primrose  
George Schnur  
Dr. Raul Seballos

1983 – Parma Executioners, Division I,  
Second Place  
David Kowalczyk (Captain)  
Dumitru Ghizdavu  
Thomas Wozney  
Pappu Murthy  
Joseph McCarty  
Steven Hrop  
Donald Collins  
Michael Puls

1983 – Parma Granites, Division I, Third  
Place  
Robert Basalla (Captain)  
Timothy McCarthy  
Kenneth Fiore  
Edward Kirkham  
Daniel Meyo

Thomas Sudik  
Norman Petterson

1983 – Parma Survivors, Division III,  
First Place  
Immanuel Halm (Captain)  
Ronald Fischman  
Steven Leverich  
Robert Murnan  
G. Sheehen  
T. Fleming  
Michael Fenjac  
Jeff Martin

1983 – Parma, Division IV, First Place

1983 – Parma Bishops, Division IV,  
Third Place  
James Lasalvia (Captain)  
Richard Jarden  
George Schnur  
Dr. Raul Seballos  
Colin Primrose  
Edward Madaczky  
Virgil Parvenescu  
Mitchell Collins

1984 – Parma Executioners, Division I,  
Second Place  
David Kowalczyk (Captain)  
Ross Sprague  
Pappu Murthy  
Joe McCarty  
Naum Hoolin  
Steven Hrop  
Larry Waite  
Michael Puls  
Richard Gedeon

1984 – Parma Survivors, Division II,  
First Place  
Immanuel Halm (Captain)  
Ron Fischman  
Steven Leverich  
Leo Mann  
Gary Sikon



Robert Murnan  
Jeff Martin  
G. Sheehen  
Michael Fenjac

1984 – Parma, Division III, First Place  
Justin Niemira (Co-Captain)  
Emerich Roth (Co-Captain)  
Anthony Debe  
Joseph Gilchrist  
William Nappi, Jr.  
M. Petrulak  
Albert Plack  
George Ponomarenko  
Frank Russo

1984 – Parma Knights, Division III,  
Second Place  
John Nichols (Co-Captain)  
J. Strang, Jr. (Co-Captain)  
Paul Brandt  
Alex Burmistrenko  
A. Fowles  
Robert Hessler  
David Jividen  
Alan Kolbe  
Marion Pawlowski

1984 – Parma Bishops, Division IV,  
Second Place  
George Schnur (Captain)  
Mitchell Collins  
Konstantine Dimitrov  
Richard Jarden  
Karol Jaremko  
Alex Kanenberg  
James Lasalvia  
Colin Primrose

1985 – Parma Seward's Folly, Division  
I, First Place  
Steven Seward (Captain)  
Ross Sprague  
Pappu Murthy  
Joe McCarty  
Naum Hoolin

Steven Hrop  
Richard Noel  
Donald Collins  
Michael Puls

1985 – Parma Paladins, Division II,  
Second Place  
Justin Niemira (Captain)  
Robert Chase  
T. Fleming  
Joseph Gilchrist  
Robert Murnan  
William Nappi, Jr.  
George Ponomarenko  
Emerich Roth  
Thomas Sudik

1985 – Parma Knights, Division III,  
Second Place  
John Nichols (Captain)  
Marc Blackey  
Alex Burmistrenko  
M. Harkacz  
Richard Jarden  
Alan Kolbe  
Marion Pawlowski

1985 – Parma Panzers, Division IV, First  
Place  
David Kowalczyk (Captain)  
Dale Johnson  
Laszlo Dus  
Virgil Parvenescu  
John Ratica  
V. Vondrasek  
Corny White

1985 – Parma Pawnpushers, Division  
IV, Second Place  
David Kowalczyk (Captain)  
E. Allard  
Joseph Erjavec, Jr.  
Michael Fenjac  
David Jividen  
R. Krute  
Dane Peshe

Albert Plack  
A. Wolf  
G. Zbiegen

1985 – Parma Bishops, Division IV,  
Third Place  
Edward Madaczky (Co-Captain)  
George Schnur (Co-Captain)  
Mitchell Collins  
Karol Jaremko  
Alex Kanenberg  
James Lasalvia  
U. Spatzek

1986 – Parma Survivors, Division I,  
First Place  
Immanuel Halm (Captain)  
Dumitru Ghizdavu  
Robert Basalla  
John Randolph  
Bruce Fortado  
Farhad Tabaddor  
Thomas Ellison  
Kevin Smith  
Steven Leverich

1986 – Parma Seward's Folly, Division  
I, Second Place  
Steven Seward (Captain)  
Ross Sprague  
Pappu Murthy  
Joseph McCarty  
Naum Hoolin  
Steven Hrop  
Richard Noel  
Michael Puls

1986 – Another Parma Team, Division  
II, Third Place  
Jeffrey Martin (Captain)  
Leo Mann  
Richard Gedeon  
Alan Kolbe  
Thomas Sudik  
Roland Koch  
Robert Chase

Gary Sikon  
Frank Russo

1986 – Parma Knights, Division III, First  
Place  
John Nichols (Captain)  
Marc Blackey  
Robert Hessler  
V. Savescu  
Chris Myers  
Dane Peshe  
Emerich Roth

1986 – Parma J. D.'s, Division III, Third  
Place  
Dale Johnson (Captain)  
Jack McGee  
Justin Niemira  
Helmut Poehlmann  
George Ponomarenko  
Laszlo Dus  
John Ratica  
W. Rose  
Mark Wintering  
Mitchell Collins

1986 – Parma Internationals, Division  
IV, Second Place  
Edward Madaczky (Captain)  
George Schnur  
Alex Burmistrenko  
Wells Gladding  
Boris Kipnis  
Karol Jaremko  
Alex Kanenberg

1986 – Parma Ethnics, Division IV,  
Third Place  
David Kowalczyk (Captain)  
Albert Plack  
Michael Fenjac  
T. Mural  
G. Murray  
Steven Danelishen  
M. Kozak

1987 – Parma Survivors, Division I,  
Second Place

Immanuel Halm (Captain)  
Dumitru Ghizdavu  
John Randolph  
Thomas Ward  
Robert Basalla  
Farhad Tabaddor  
Steven Leary  
Thomas Ellison  
Steven Leverich

1987 – Parma Executioners, Division I,  
Third Place

Michael Puls (Captain)  
Ross Sprague  
Pappu Murthy  
Joseph McCarty  
Steven Seward  
Richard Noel  
Kenneth Panzel  
Donald Collins

1987 – Parma Lakers, Division II,  
Second Place

Leo Mann (Captain)  
Kenneth Fiore  
Clifford Ziegler  
Thomas Sudik  
John Nichols  
Marc Blackey  
Justin Niemira  
George Ponomarenko  
James King  
Dan Meyo  
Louis Ihasz

1987 – Parma Bad Bishops, Division III,  
Third Place

David Kowalczyk (Captain)  
Wells Gladding  
Dane Peshe  
Michael Fenjac  
V. Savescu  
Helmut Poehlmann  
Alex Burmistrenko

Steve Martin  
I. Vargo

1987 – Parma Internationals, Division  
IV, First Place

Edward Madaczky (Co-Captain)  
George Schnur (Co-Captain)  
Boris Kipnis  
J. Wills  
M. Harkacz  
Karol Jaremko  
Dr. Raul Seballos  
Alex Burmistrenko  
R. De Luca  
Marion Pawlowski

1987 – Parma Panzers, Division IV,  
Third Place

Frank Dull (Co-Captain)  
David Kowalczyk (Co-Captain)  
Thomas Hontz  
R. Ray, Jr.  
Richard Jarden  
Albert Plack  
Steven Danelishen

1988 – Parma Survivors, Division I,  
Second Place

Immanuel Halm (Captain)  
Dumitru Ghizdavu  
John Randolph  
Thomas Ward  
Robert Basalla  
Farhad Tabaddor  
Steven Leary  
Steve Stevanovich  
Steven Hrop  
Kenneth Panzel  
F. Nekoogar

1988 – Parma Gamblers, Division II,  
First Place

Richard Gedeon (Captain)  
Mark Glinski  
Richard Tiedman  
Roland Koch

Adam Zachlin  
Alan Kolbe  
Robert Hessler  
James Opalek

1988 – Parma Lakers, Division II,  
Second Place  
Leo Mann (Captain)  
Dan Meyo  
Thomas Sudik  
James King  
Michael McDonald  
Boris Kipnis  
Leo Bonnell

1988 – Parma No Names, Division III,  
Second Place  
John Nichols (Captain)  
Justin Niemira  
J. Wintering  
George Ponomarenko  
Robert Chase  
Dale Johnson  
Laszlo Dus

1988 – Parma White Sox, Division III,  
Third Place  
Jeff Martin (Captain)  
V. Savescu  
D. Zimmer  
Lary Rust  
Steve Martin  
Alex Burmistrenko  
Michael Fenjac  
P. Griffin  
Frank Russo

1988 – Parma Woodpushers, Division  
IV, First Place  
Edward Madaczky (Captain)  
J. Nemes  
Jack McGee  
Tom Eckert  
Karol Jaremko  
R. Thomas  
Cornel Osadsa

M. Harkacz  
J. Marshall

1988 – Parma Panthers, Division IV,  
Third Place  
David Kowalczyk (Captain)  
Richard Jarden  
Albert Plack  
Victor Nasvytis  
J. Venero  
Steve Danelishen  
Marion Pawlowski  
Bruce Parisi

1989 – Parma “Give Um Steel”,  
Division I, Second Place  
Steven Seward (Captain)  
Ross Sprague  
Richard Noel  
Donald Collins  
Larry Waite  
Joseph McCarty  
Pappu Murthy

1989 – Parma Survivors, Division I,  
Third Place  
Immanuel Halm (Captain)  
John Randolph  
Thomas Ward  
Robert Basalla  
Farhad Tabaddor  
Thomas Ellison  
James King  
Steven Hrop  
Thomas Fisher

1989 – Parma Lakers, Division II, First  
Place  
Leo Mann (Captain)  
Gary Sikon  
Alan Kolbe  
Robert Chase  
Michael McDonald  
Boris Kipnis  
P. Reyes  
Thomas Sudik

R. Conway

1989 – Parma White Sox, Division III,  
Second Place

Jeffrey Martin (Captain)

Steven Martin

S. Savescu

Frank Russo

Helmut Poehlmann

Roland Koch

Alex Burmistrenko

Michael Fenjac

D. Zimmer

1989 – Parma Whozits, Division III,  
Third Place

John Nichols (Captain)

Justin Niemira

Marc Blackey

Steven Lester

George Ponomarenko

Thomas Eckert

James Opalek

1989 – Parma Poles, Division IV, First  
Place

David Kowalczyk (Captain)

Steven Danelishen

Richard Jarden

Albert Plack

Victor Nasvytis

Karol Jaremko

Tom Rezak

B. Warren

1990 – Parma Lakers, Division I, Second  
Place

Leo Mann (Captain)

Ross Sprague

Steven Seward

Joseph McCarty

Pappu Murthy

Andrew Zebrowski

Donald Collins

Richard Noel

Gary Sikon

1990 – Parma Survivors, Division I,  
Third Place

Immanuel Halm (Captain)

John Randolph

Robert Basalla

Farhad Tabaddor

Thomas Ellison

James King

Steven Hrop

Robert Murnan

Thomas Fisher

1990 – Parma Busters, Division III,  
Second Place

Richard Jarden (Co-Captain)

Steven Danelishen (Co-Captain)

William Nimylowych

Alex Burmistrenko

Michael Conway

T. Powell

Helmut Poehlmann

Steven Lester

Leo Mann

Marc Blackey

James Opalek

1990 – Parma Misfits, Division IV,  
Second Place

David Kowalczyk (Captain)

Tom Rezak

Edward Madaczky

P. Kennedy

Paul Brandt

Thomas Eckert

Scott Glass

Michael Fenjac

J. Venero

1991 – Parma Survivors, Division I,  
Second Place

Immanuel Halm (Captain)

John Randolph

Steven Seward

Richard Noel

Robert Basalla



Farhad Tabaddor  
Pappu Murthy  
Steven Hrop  
Joseph McCarty  
Ross Sprague  
Donald Collins  
James King  
Daniel Meyo

1991 – Parma Cro-Magnons, Division II,  
First Place  
Richard Gedeon (Captain)  
Gary Loar  
Mark Glinski  
Thomas Sudik  
Richard Tiedman  
Doug Lawson

1991 – Parma 107<sup>th</sup> Cavalry, Division  
III, First Place  
Mike Conway  
Marc Blackey  
Leo Mann  
William Nimyłowych  
Steven Lester  
Steven Danelishen

1991 – Parma Misfits, Division IV, First  
Place  
Thomas Eckert  
Richard Harmon  
Jeffrey Kish  
Paul Brandt  
Frank Fogg  
Scott Glass  
Edward Madaczky  
A. DeGardeyn

1991 – Parma Browns, Division IV,  
Second Place  
R. Ray  
P. Kennedy  
Victor Nasvytis  
P. Doermann  
Thomas Hontz  
Jack McGee

Dale Johnson  
D. Caramell

1992 – Parma Survivors, Division I,  
First Place  
Immanuel Halm (Captain)  
Ross Sprague  
John Randolph  
Robert Basalla  
Joseph McCarty  
Steven Seward  
Farhad Tabaddor  
Richard Noel  
Alois Starlinger  
Steve Stevanovich

1993 – Parma Survivors, Division I,  
First Place  
Immanuel Halm (Captain)  
Ross Sprague  
John Randolph  
Steven Seward  
Robert Basalla  
Farhad Tabaddor  
Richard Noel  
Donald Collins  
Larry Waite

1993 – Parma White Sox, Division II,  
Second Place  
Jeffrey Martin (Captain)  
Mark Glinski  
Richard Tiedman  
Thomas Eckert  
Robert Chase  
Dennis Helmuth  
Steven Lester  
Frank Russo

1996 – Parma Cro-Magnons, Division II,  
First Place  
James Adam  
Doug Lawson  
Thomas Sudik  
Immanuel Halm  
W. Zakrewski

M. Schoen

**Cleveland Chess Association Officers  
from the Parma Chess Club**

CCA President

1959/60 -- Soren Korsgaard

1970/71 -- James Michels

1986-89 – Leo Mann

CCA Vice President

1977-86 and 1987/88 – David  
Kowalczyk

Second Vice-President

1968-70 – James Michels

Fourth Vice-President

1971/72 – James Michels

Editor of *Cleveland Chess Bulletin*

1981-84 – Donald Collins

1984-92 – Robert Basalla

1992-94 – William B. Wright

Scholastic League Director

1979/80 – Michael Puls

1984/85 – Mica Green

Ratings Statistician

1982/84 – Andrew Nicola

1984/85 – Mitchell Collins

1985-87 – Frank Dull

1987-90 – Richard Jarden

Club League Director

1984/85 – Andrew Nicola

To be continued...into the next 50 years.