

Presidents Report

Mark Kaprielian: President: 1995-2016, 2020-Present

2023-05-31

This year is the 40th anniversary of the MetroWest Chess Club. I'm very happy to be able to say that we are ready to re-open after three years of hibernation due to Covid.

The club halted play in March of 2020 with the hope of re-opening soon, but "soon" never arrived. After several months it became clear that both the facility and the club would not be able to resume activity for some time, so we relinquished our rental agreement. You may have also noticed that since we went into hibernation mode, we regularly pushed out our estimate of when we might re-open.

In January of 2023, we felt we had a reasonable prospect of re-opening in the spring and began preparations. We first had to evaluate the past and current chess conditions. By this I mean, if we expect to have 20 players, the preparation is very much different than 60 players and again very different for 80 players. Among the factors we had to balance were expected attendance, the mix of ratings and age of players, weeknight play, sections, prizes, and time control which not only impacts who may decide to play but what we will have time to play based on the facility. Also, rental cost, reliability of holding onto the facility, parking, location, and TDs (Tournament Directors) are crucial to the health of any club that provides USCF rated chess.

For close to twenty-years we managed to have a pool of very dedicated TDs. As some TDs became unavailable, we trained new volunteers to fill the gap. On average we had five TDs and several key volunteers through most of those years. With focus on consistency, we were able to reliably register about 70 people standing in line with cash or check in the twenty-minutes prior to the close of registration and then make announcements. Pairings would then be posted in the next ten minutes to start the round on time without any mistakes. It is true that a few times we did start ten minutes late, usually due to sudden printer problems.

In planning the re-opening of the club, we realized we would have to do more with fewer people. It is always difficult to find people who will commit to being present at the club to make every night run smoothly every time. We also realized that this would be the right moment to make improvements and re-cast the club.

Here are key points about our re-opening:

- Using an online registration system that provides instant confirmation of entry to events.
 - The ability to view tournament registrants, results, standings, and projected pairings.
 - Eliminating the need to physically be present to enter, even when entering at the last minute.
 - The ability to join the club online.
 - Payment by PayPal or credit card. Cash not accepted.
- Three Sections:
 - Open
 - U1700
 - U1400
- No Prizes
- Updating of the Club website
 - Primary landing pages first, historical information over time

Regarding Covid: Even though most restrictions have now been dropped nationwide, we urge you not to play on a night if you are experiencing Covid-like symptoms **or** have been in recent close contact with anyone who has. We hope you appreciate that this is for the health and safety of all our players.