



15th Susan Polgar Foundation National Open for Boys & Girls

Saturday-Sunday, October 10-11th 2020

Online via 



SPFNO 2020

By SPFNO Organizers | October 15, 2020

Seattle, WA – The 15th Annual Susan Polgar Foundation National Open for Girls and Boys was held online via Chess.com over National Chess Day weekend October 10-11, 2020. At a time when many local and national events have been cancelled due to COVID-19, the Susan Polgar Foundation and Washington Chess Federation collaborated to host the SPFNO online in a virtual 2-day chess festival. Chief organizer Josh Sinanan orchestrated the weekend's festivities, which included a live stream, parents and coach's seminar, girl's workshop, puzzle solving competition, and blitz championship! Online chess TD extraordinaires Judit Sztaray and Rekha Sagar directed the 2-day sections, while popular local TD Jacob Mayer ran the 1-day sections on Saturday. The official SPFNO Twitch live stream, hosted by Seattle-based chess coach Tim Moroney, contributed to the event's prestige with a star-studded cast of special guest speakers including former World Champion GM Susan Polgar, WA State Champion WIM Megan Lee, WCF President NM Josh Sinanan, WCF Scholastic Coordinator Jacob Mayer, and Tennessee-based chess coach Epiphany Peters!

In total, 159 players competed across 10 sections, which included both a 1-day, 5-round schedule and a 2-day, 6-round option for more experienced players. This year's field was comprised of a diverse mix of junior players from throughout North America, including parts of Washington, Oregon, British Columbia, California, Arizona, Indiana, Wisconsin, Virginia, Pennsylvania, Mississippi, Missouri, Georgia, and Ontario! The 2-day Championship sections, which featured both Open and Girls-only divisions, attracted several strong titled players, including NM Andrew Hemstapat, NM Rushaan Mahajan, WFM Minda Chen, and WCM Ashley Pang. No doubt they were attracted by the generous scholarships to Webster University awarded to the winners of the K-12 Open and K-12 Girls sections, each valued at over \$50,000!

Hosting an event of this magnitude *online* presented several logistical challenges and was only possible thanks to the tremendous efforts of the SPFNO Organizers and the participating chess families. All competitors played their games from home over the internet using their own Chess.com accounts. Zoom video conferencing, which was available throughout the event for players to communicate with the TD and report their results, was mandatory to monitor players in the 2-day Championship sections. Pairings and standings were created by the TDs using SwissSys and posted on a shared spreadsheet shortly before each round.

To ensure honest play and fair games, each player signed a Fair Play Agreement before the start of the tournament in which they promised to play their own moves without outside assistance. A systematic three-pronged approach consisting of Chess.com analysis, engine analysis, and human analysis was used to check all suspicious games for fair play violations. Upon

completing our review with the help of a world-renowned computer chess expert, we are delighted to announce a completely clean event free from any fair play violations! Huge thanks to all players for playing with integrity and displaying great sportsmanship.

After 442 games in over 20 hours of play, only the most heroic chess warriors endured the marathon weekend! Special congratulations to the following SPFNO Champions:

K-1 U800: **Kunal Jayadevan**

2-3 U800: **Ethan Low**

K-3 Open: **Vincent Liu, Shashwat Pranav Iyer, Sanjay Urali, & Hunter Choi**

4-8 U900: **Ashvath Krishnan**

4-12 Open: **Gaurang Pendharkar**

Girls K-8: **Yu Han (Veronica) Guo**

Girls K-12: **Minda Chen** – *Webster University scholarship winner!*

Open K-5: **Michael Lin**

Open K-8: **Atharva Joshi**

Open K-12: **Andrew Hemstapat** – *Webster University scholarship winner!*

Congratulations to all players who have contributed to this historic event!

About SPFNO

The prestigious annual Susan Polgar National Open Championship for Girls and Boys (SPFNO) was created in 2006 and is sponsored by the Susan Polgar Foundation (SPF) to give more opportunities to young chess players. The event rotates throughout the United States and will be co-hosted by the Susan Polgar Foundation and Washington Chess Federation from 2020-2022. For more information, please visit: <http://www.spfno.com/>

About Susan Polgar Foundation

The Susan Polgar Foundation, Inc. is a 501(c)(3) non-profit corporation supported by charitable donations. The Foundation was established by GM Susan Polgar – the Winner of 4 Women's World Chess Championships, 10 Olympic Medals (5 Gold, 4 Silver, 1 Bronze), and the first woman in history to break the gender barrier in chess. Since the foundation was started back in 2002, many events have blossomed and become the benchmark events for young girls and boys across North America.

Contact

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