



17th Susan Polgar Foundation National Open for Girls & Boys



October 22-23, 2022

Seattle Marriott Bellevue: 200 110th Ave NE, Bellevue, WA 98004

SPFNO 2022

By SPFNO Organizers | November 13, 2022

Bellevue, WA – The 17th Annual Susan Polgar Foundation National Open for Girls and Boys was held at the Bellevue Marriott October 22-23, 2022. Scholastic chess players in grades K-12 participated from throughout North America, from states including Washington, Oregon, California, British Columbia, Texas, Missouri, and New Jersey! The 2-day chess festival was co-hosted by the Susan Polgar Foundation and the Washington Chess Federation. SPF Founder Grandmaster Susan Polgar and SPF co-Founder Paul Truong were the guests of honor, travelling all the way to Bellevue from Europe, along with their camera crew, especially for this event! A total of 402 players competed across ten sections separated by grade level and rating: K-1 U800, K-3 U800, K-3 Open, 4-8 U900, 4-12 Open, K-5 Girls, K-5 Open, K-8 Open, K-12 Girls, and K-12 Open.

Along with the 1-day Scholastic and 2-day Championship sections, several fun side events enhanced the immersive weekend chess experience. Saturday's events included a Parents and Coaches Seminar, Game Review + Analysis with 2-time WA State Champion Megan Lee, All Comers Blitz with Megan Lee, SPFNO Puzzle Solving Competition, SPFNO Blitz Championship, and a Magic Show! Then on Sunday were the Susan Polgar Book Signing, SPFNO Girls Workshop, and Susan Polgar Simul. The organizing team of WCF President Josh Sinanan (Chief Organizer), Jacob Mayer (Chief Tournament Director), Ben Radin (Registration and Pairings Director), and Eddie Chang (Events Manager) oversaw the proceedings and orchestrated the chess extravaganza. Amazing photographs were taken throughout the event by photographer extraordinaire Meiling Cheng. An all-star team of dedicated volunteers, judges, and tournament directors included Rekha Sagar, Ani Barua, Detective Cookie, Larry Greenawalt, Karen Schmidt, Vijay Sankaran, Lane Van Weerdhuizen, Dhanashree Kale, Duane Polich, Meiling Cheng, Megan Lee, Chouchan Airapetian, Angela Aгаian, Araz Aгаian, Liang Shi, Valentin Razmov, Gabriel Razmov, Sanjana Medikurthi, Sridhar Seshadri, Aryan Deshpande, Olin Martin, Siva Sankrithi, Wayne Xiong, Michael Xiong, Melina Li, Ojas Kandhare, Jerry Fan, Xuan Lin, Elliott Zackrone, Magician Rich Waters, and many others. Throughout the weekend, a film crew was on site filming footage as part of a chess documentary that will be released over the next few years!

The organizers were blown away with the 400+ player turnout and are already looking for a bigger and better site to host the event in future years! The 2-day Championship sections, which featured both Open and Girls divisions, attracted several strong local players, including NM

Daniel Shubin, Austin Liu, Nikash Vemparala, Yiding Lu, Stephen Willy, Ted Wang, and CM Owen Xuan. Top seeds in the Girls sections included Varnika Jammalamadaka, Sophie Szeto, Angela Chen, Kate Wong, Miranda Meng, Selina Cheng, and Zoe Xu. On the line in both the Open K-12 and Girls K-12 Championship sections were scholarships to Webster University, each valued at over \$50,000!

Special congratulations to the following 2022 SPFNO winners:

K-1 U800: 1st Place – **Daniel Zhu** (5/5!!)

K-3 U800: =1st/2nd Place – **Aaron Zhang & Agnivesh Chaudhuri** (5/5!!, Co-Champions!)

K-3 Open: =1st/2nd Place – **Kevin Zhu & Neevan Reddy Saddi** (4.5/5!, Co-Champions!)

4-8 U900: 1st Place – **Mac Chen** (5/5!!)

4-12 Open: 1st Place – **Odbayar Yondon** (5/5!!)

K-5 Girls: 1st Place – **Selina Cheng** (5.5/6!!)

K-5 Open: 1st Place – **Arjun Yadav** (5.5/6!!)

K-8 Open: 1st Place – **Skylor Chan** (5.5/6!!)

K-12 Girls: 1st Place – **Iris Zhang** (5.5/6!), Top-finishing High School player – **Krishna Khandelwal** (4/6!): **Webster University Scholarship Winner!**

K-12 Open: 1st Place – **Daniel Shubin** (5.5/6!!): **Webster University Scholarship Winner!**

Parents and Coaches Seminar:

The first side event to kick off the weekend's action-packed schedule was the Parents and Coaches Seminar, which took place in the Redmond Ballroom on Saturday, October 22 from 10:30-11:30am. The 1-hour seminar, which was led by Susan Polgar, provided an opportunity for parents and coaches to learn how to effectively guide children on their chess journey. Participants were able to ask questions and hear tips from Grandmaster Susan Polgar, who is herself a chess parent and former coach of the successful Webster University Chess Team.

Megan Lee Game Review + Analysis & All Comers Blitz:

On Saturday afternoon from 12:30-4:30pm, we were treated to a special appearance by two-time WA State Chess Champion Megan Lee, who conducted game review and analysis from 12:30-2pm followed by All Comers Blitz from 3:00-4:30pm in the Redmond Ballroom! Several kids eager to pick up some tips and strategies from the State Champ had their games reviewed and analyzed by WIM Megan Lee, who just recently returned from playing in the US Women's Championship in St. Louis. After a short break, players and parents had a chance to challenge Megan Lee to a thrilling game of 5-minute Blitz Chess! Megan had several tough games, but she remained undefeated throughout the afternoon.

Chess-inspired Artwork on display:

Local artist and Seattle Chess Club member Gabriela Osias was on-site on Saturday from 12-4pm to display some of her chess-inspired artwork! Players and parents had a chance to check out some samples on her Instagram (https://www.instagram.com/gosi_creates/). Gabriela's work is notable for its novelty and fine craftsmanship and makes the perfect gift for any chess enthusiast!

SPNFO Blitz Championship:

The 2022 SPNFO Blitz Championship attracted 40 players and took place on Saturday, October 22 at 6:30pm in the Seattle Ballroom. The 7-round Single Swiss in two sections, K-5 and 6-12, was directed by Jacob Mayer. Games were US Chess Blitz Rated with a time control of game in 5 minutes with no delay. In the K-5 section, Vidip Kona, a 4th grader from Redmond, emerged victorious with a perfect 7/7 score! Other top finishers included Michael Xiong (6.0 – 2nd Place), Odbayar Yondon (4.5 – Tied 3rd Place), and Zachary Chua (4.5 – Tied 3rd Place). In the 6-12 section, Sammamish 7th grader Stephen Willy reigned supreme with 7 points from 7 games. Four place shared 2nd-5th Place honors with 5 points apiece: Vihaan Jammalamadaka, Nikash Vemparala, Owen Xuan, and Edward Cheng. Congratulations to the winners!

Special Appearance by Magician Rich Waters:

On Saturday evening from 7-9pm, kids and adults gathered nearby the blitz playing hall on the Bellevue Marriott Foyer to witness a tricky and exciting exhibition! Local Magician Rich Waters performed some close-up magic tricks and balloon twisting, much to the enjoyment of a mesmerized audience! This was a big hit, and we will be sure to bring back the Magician in future events. Many thanks to Karen Schmidt for connecting us with Rich, who she met at the recently opened Detective Cookie Chess Park in Seattle!

Susan Polgar Book Signing:

The Susan Polgar Book Signing occurred on Sunday, October 23 from 10-11am in the Redmond Ballroom. GM Susan Polgar, who has authored several books throughout her playing and teaching careers, was on site to autograph books and take pictures. A variety of books written by Susan Polgar and well suited for all levels of players were available for purchase: [Learn Chess the Right Way, Vols. 1-5](#) and [A World Champion's Guide to Chess](#).

SPFNO Girls Workshop:

The SPFNO Girls Workshop was held on Sunday from 11:30am-12:30pm in the Redmond Ballroom. Susan Polgar and other local female chess leaders including WCF Women's and Girl's Director Chouchan Airapetian, Detective Denise "Cookie" Bouldin, Karen Schmidt, and WCF Scholastic Director Rekha Sagar hosted the special 1-hour workshop that focused on empowering girls through chess. The girls attending enjoyed the presentation and learned how Susan Polgar broke through gender barriers on her way to becoming the first woman to earn the Grandmaster title!

Susan Polgar Simul:

The Susan Polgar Simul took place on Sunday afternoon from 1-4pm in the Redmond Room, which was the site for most of the side events. 18 brave scholastic chess players took their seats with the black pieces against GM Susan Polgar. For most of the contestants, it was their first time even playing against a Grandmaster! After only 2.5 hours play, all games had finished in favor of Susan Polgar, a clean sweep! Although, no wins or draws were achieved this time, the last man standing was **Vihaan Pai** (1172), who lasted 60+ moves! Congratulations to the fearless young players who took part!

Puzzle Solving Competition:

43 brave contestants were given a maximum of 30 minutes to solve 20 checkmates puzzles. Scoring was based on speed, accuracy, and completeness. Congratulations to the winners!

Last Name	First Name	Rating	Score	Time (mins)	Prize
Vemparala	Nikash	2043	20	15.50	1st 1000+
Jammalamadaka	Varnika	1726	20	20.34	2nd 1000+
Jammalamadaka	Vihaan	1813	20	25.50	3rd 1000+
Condit	Noah	1558	19	29.43	4th 1000+
Kona	Vidip	1976	19	30.00	5th 1000+

Last Name	First Name	Rating	Score	Time (mins)	Prize
Winter	Kayne	865	16	30.00	1st U1000
Khandelwal	Krishna	unrated	15	29.43	2nd U1000
McCallum	Elliot	unrated	15	30.00	3rd U1000
Laughlin-Koch	Beowulf	993	13	29.56	4th U1000
Chen	Mac	unrated	13	30.00	5th U1000

Congratulations to all players and chess families who contributed to this year's SPFNO. We look forward to continuing to grow this evening in the coming years!

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 2020-2023. 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 organization supported by charitable donations. The Foundation was established by GM Susan Polgar – Hall of Famer, the Winner of 4 Women’s World Chess Championships, 12 Olympic Medals (5 Gold, 4 Silver, 3 Bronze), and the first woman in history to break the gender barrier in chess. Since the foundation was started in 2002, many tournaments have blossomed and become the benchmark events for young girls and boys throughout North America.

Contact

To learn more about this event, please contact:

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