

November 27, 1967

Dr. Anthony Saidy
670 Veteran Ave., #3
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Dear Tony,

The Swedish Chess Federation's reply to my letter of October 17 arrived today. Politely and at length they explained the difficulty of attaining FIDE Category 2b for their Erik Olson Memorial Tournament while still inviting five Swedish national players. With what seems to be genuine regret they pointed out that all foreign players had to have valid FIDE titles in order to make Category 2b possible. In other words, they "cannot offer Dr. Saidy a place" in this year's tournament, while at the same time they hold out hope of an invitation to some future event.

Good news with what might otherwise have seemed bad! Also in today's mail came the latest letter in an exchange I have established with Mr. Gian Carlo dal Verme of the Italian Chess Federation. As a result of this very cordial contact, the Italian Chess Federation has formally extended to the United States Chess Federation an invitation to the Reggio Emilia Tournament, December 27, 1967, through January 7, 1968. Mr. dal Verme has asked that the USCF select a representative and understands that we intend to send a U.S. Master to seek a FIDE title.

Tony, this is really a great opportunity for you. The Swedish event is struggling to maintain Category 2b; Hastings is very much up in the air; but there is no doubt about Reggio Emilia. It is very firmly Category 2b, possibly even 2a or 1b. There will be either 12 or 14 players, mostly International Masters and some Grandmasters. In all likelihood the U.S. representative will be the only non-Italian in the tournament who does not already possess a FIDE title. Last year, Reggio Emilia was a 12-player event. Ciocaltea (IM), Ciric (IGM), Kozma (IM), Honfi (IM), Damjanovic (IGM), and Bobotsov (IGM) were the top six; there were a couple of other IM's and four Italian national masters. For this year, dal Verme writes that four IM's are already definite: Canal (Peru), Ciocaltea (Rumania), Kurajica (Yugoslavia), and Navarovsky (Hungary). Likely, he says, are IM's Bertok (Yugoslavia), Sliwa (Poland), and Tatai (Italy); plus IGM Damjanovic (Yugoslavia). Like everyone else these days, they are also trying to bring Larsen in. In any event, it will be a great field, well worthy of your mettle.

I've replied to Mr. dal Verme this evening, confirming U.S. acceptance of his kind invitation. The sooner I hear from you the better, in order to facilitate the actual designation of the American player. Please try to write by Friday so that your reply will reach Newburgh not later than Monday, December 4. This gives us little enough time to make all final arrangements.

Naturally, you will have to take care of your passport and immunizations as soon as possible if you are going. All expenses in Italy are underwritten by the tournament organizing committee, all I have to do is raise your round-trip air fare (\$699.20 excursion, Los Angeles-Rome). You must fly on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, or Thursday to take advantage of international excursion rates. All contestants are requested to be at Reggio Emilia by noon on Tuesday, December 26. You can probably make it by departing Los Angeles early on Christmas Day, Monday, December 25; depart Rome for home on Monday, January 8. Or, if you don't mind spending Christmas in Italy, perhaps you should consider departing L.A. on Thursday, December 21. Think this one over and let me know as part of your reply (assuming that you do wish to go). Also, let me know whether you'd like to make your own reservations or whether I should make them with the next-door travel agent and have your tickets mailed to you. Perhaps arrangements would be more satisfactory to you if you made your own reservations and simply received a check to cover.

I've just had a third-hand telephone report that you won the American Open. If so, congratulations--a good omen for your international tournament debut!

Write soon,



E. B. EDMONDSON
Executive Director

Information copies to:

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