

From: Fred Cramer  
Assistant to the President,  
United States Chess Federation  
2422 East Bradford Avenue  
Milwaukee 11, Wisconsin

October 4, 1963

To: Major Edmund B. Edmondson, Jr.  
President, United States Chess Federation  
210 Britton Way, Mather AFB, California

Dear Swampy:

Organized chess needs wide support in our colleges and universities, where tremendous opportunity exists for our organization and our game. Concurrently, these institutions, which are striving mightily to develop recreation, need chess.

Thus your first assignment for your new assistant is a happy one. It was indeed a timely mission to meet October 2 at Urbana Illinois with the Recreation Committee of the Association of College Unions, representing some 770 institutions of higher learning, each having some sort of union, with a recreation program, with a place for chess.

The Committee is composed of 11 Regional Recreation Advisors, one from each of the 11 ACU Regions, plus 6 Tournament Directors, one for each of the six games (men's bowling, women's bowling, billiards, bridge, table tennis, and chess) in which they promote competition nationally.

Each member of the committee is a Union Director on his campus, and they are a pretty competent lot, very well versed in organizational finesse, case-hardened administrators. They are well pleased with chess, with its potential service for their recreational purposes, and with the success last year of the tournament, the first for ACU. We have many good friends on this fine committee, particularly its chairman Earl Finder (Illinois) and its chess tournament director William Fuller (Penn State). The hospitality shown me was just magnificent.

The committee is dedicated to amateur status, for all participants in all games. They feel the presence of "pro's" as competitors may adversely affect incentive and participation of the large majority. They publish a detailed and rigorous definition of amateur status, which forbids to the amateur many things including even participation in any money-prize tournament, whether or not the amateur participates in the money.

The fundamental objective of the committee, of course, is development of wholesome recreational activity, supplementary to the campus life. The committee's success has required a flexible and realistic approach to many problems, problems varying from campus to campus, from game to game.

Questions which they put to me and to Mr. Fuller eventually made it apparent that chess would suffer -- in a way no other game would suffer -- if the experienced nucleus of tournament players were excluded. The committee then voted, 13 to 2, that for chess purposes the definition of an amateur would be that official and traditional for chess: that an amateur is a player below the rank of master. Master is to be defined as one with a USCF-rating over 2200.

USCF letter, Fred Cramer to Ed Edmondson, Oct. 4, 1963, page 2

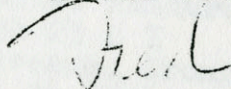
Thus our tournament players are now eligible to participate in the campus and the regional tourneys, where their experience will contribute greatly to the education and inspiration of the others. Exclusion of the few rated masters will serve the purpose for which "pro's" are excluded from other ACU games.

But for these masters, new opportunities are opening up as simultaneous exhibitors or lecturers. See my letter to Mr. Fuller, attached.

As I promised the committee, all USCF officers and members should aid in every possible way in the development of chess on the campus. This is a new program, with administrative problems developing as it grows, but it is a sound program, meeting a basic human need, and backed by competent people who want it to move. And move it will: much, I can assure you, will be heard of this in the immediate future.

Very sincerely yours,

UNITED STATES CHESS FEDERATION



Fred Cramer  
Assistant to the President

PS: Because of the wide distribution this letter is to get, I am also inclosing a memorandum on "Chicago," which may be of interest to most of the addressees. --FC

Inclosures: Copy of letter to W F Fuller  
Chicago memo

Copies to: Each member of ACU Recreation Committee  
Each player named in letter to Fuller  
USCF officers and others on "Dear Confreres" mailing list