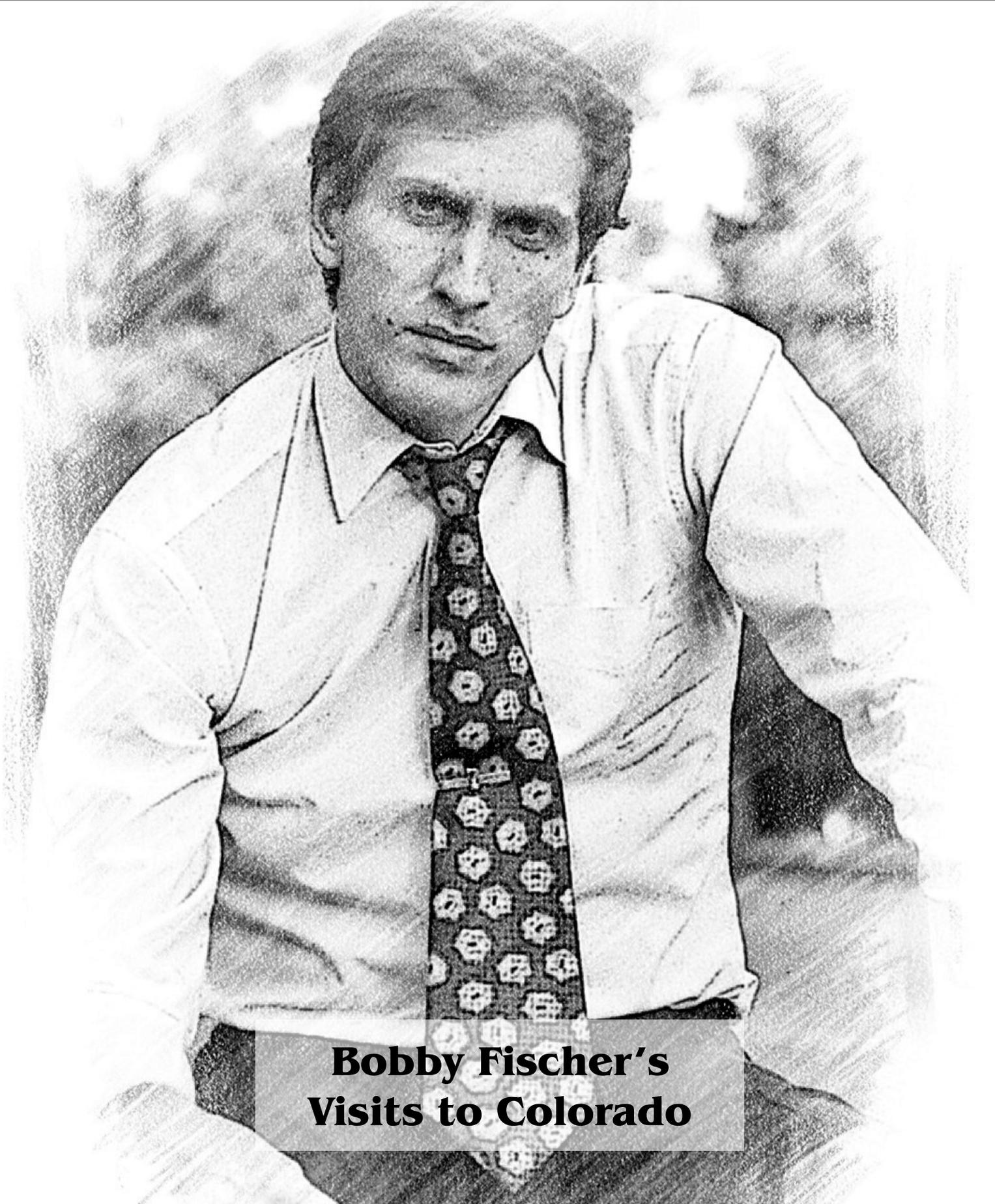


# COLORADO CHESS INFORMANT



**Bobby Fischer's  
Visits to Colorado**

## **COLORADO CHESS HISTORY - BOBBY FISCHER'S VISITS**

*by National Master Todd Bardwick*

This supplement to the *Informant* is an attempt to give a detailed historical account of Bobby Fischer's visits to Colorado for current and future generations. I have written many articles about it in the *Rocky Mountain News* over the 17 years I wrote for the newspaper. (To find those articles, you can go to [www.ColoradoMasterChess.com](http://www.ColoradoMasterChess.com) and click on the **Articles** link.)

This became a much bigger project than I originally anticipated as the list of people to talk to grew. It became a real life "Searching for Bobby Fischer", just 47 years later.

My research on the subject started back in the early to mid 1990s while visiting John Howell. John's contributions to Colorado chess as an organizer were monumental. I realized that the stories he told were of huge historical significance to the history of Colorado chess. Today, I wish my notes of our conversations were even more detailed and, looking back, there is a lot more I would like to ask him. John passed away on March 7, 2000 at the age of 88.

Cathy Howell, John's daughter, recently helped me to fill in some of the blanks, provided a copy of some of the notes from John's diaries (he kept a detailed diary for most days of his adult life!), and gave me chess articles and photos from his files dating back into the 1960s which are posted on the History Section of the *Colorado State Chess Association* website.

Thanks to the many others who shared their experiences with Bobby Fischer when he was in Denver: Wesley Koehler, Patrick Mahoney, Vic Traibush, Vance Aandahl, Bob Ascher, Curtis Carlson, Brian Wall, Steve Yamamoto, Jeff Maguire, Ken Cowin, Brad Lundstrom, Martin Deschner, Frank Mezek, Royal Franklin, Dwight Sehler, and Alan Bardwick.

IM John Donaldson recently completed a five kindle book series on Fischer. Ironically, he was looking for stories of the Fischer-Larsen match about the same time I started writing this. We compared notes and helped each other out with the story.

You will notice on some of the details, there are some minor conflicting memories. All those I talked to said that they weren't 100% sure on everything, after all, this occurred almost 50 years ago and we all aren't getting any younger.

Of course, other details may be added to this history as memories are jogged and others I don't know about or couldn't reach pop up.

So let me begin with the...

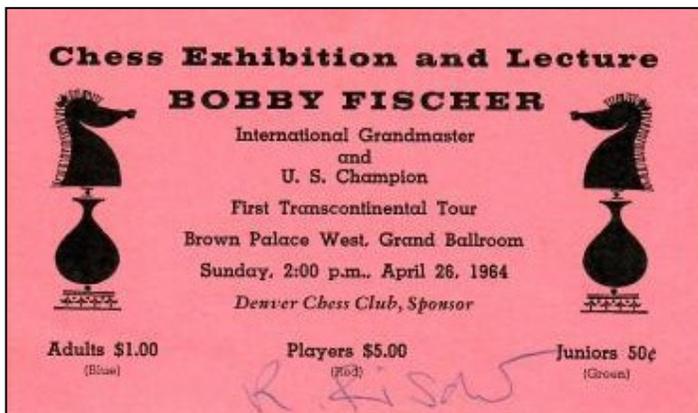
## 1964 Simultaneous Exhibition

Bobby Fischer first visited Denver in 1964 and gave a simultaneous exhibition and lecture in his only national tour against 55 players on April 26 at the Brown Palace Hotel.



The Brown Palace and its then-new annex tower, seen in 1964.  
- Wikipedia

And here is a scan of an admission ticket to the event, signed by Bobby Fischer.



Wouldn't it have been great to play against Fischer for only \$5?

In Fischer's Denver exhibition, he won fifty games, drew four, and lost one – to Wesley Koehler, the Colorado State Champion in 1965, 1966, and 1971.

Koehler's victory made him the only player to ever defeat Bobby Fischer in the state of Colorado.

In early 2004, I received a letter from Wesley Koehler where he summarized his observations from Fischer's play:

“His (Fischer's) great knowledge of the game enabled him to outplay his opponents unless he made some kind of tactical miscue, and his losses on tour (in the simul) showed that even a player on his level would make a certain number of blunders under tour conditions, often in winning positions. I happened to be the recipient of his blunders in this exhibition, although not

until after he had missed the sharpest line and I had been able to hinder the advance of his queenside pawns long enough to bring my king up and neutralize most of his advantage.”

### Bobby Fischer - Wesley Koehler

April 26, 1964

Brown Palace Hotel / Denver, Colorado

1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 d6 3.d4 cxd4 4.Nxd4 Nf6 5.Nc3 a6 6.Be2 e6 7.f4 b5 8.Bf3 Ra7 9.Be3 Rc7 10.0-0 b4 11.Na4 Bb7 12.c3 Nxe4 13.cxb4 Nd7 14.b5 Qa8 15.bxa6 Bxa6 16.Re1 d5 17.Rc1 Rxc1 18.Qxc1 Bb4 19.Rd1 0-0 20.Qc6 Ndf6 21.a3 Bd6 22.Qxa8 Rxa8 23.Rc1 Rc8 24.Rxc8+ Bxc8 25.b4 Bd7 26.Nb6 Be8 27.Nb3 Kf8

### Wesley Koehler



### Bobby Fischer

28.a4? (A rare mistake by Fischer, blundering away a pawn. White had an advantage here with the outside passed pawns. It is easy to occasionally make mistakes when playing quickly against 54 other opponents!) 28...Bxb4 29.Be2? (Also losing the a-pawn.) 29...Nc3 30.Bd3 Nxa4 31.Nxa4 Bxa4 White Resigns.

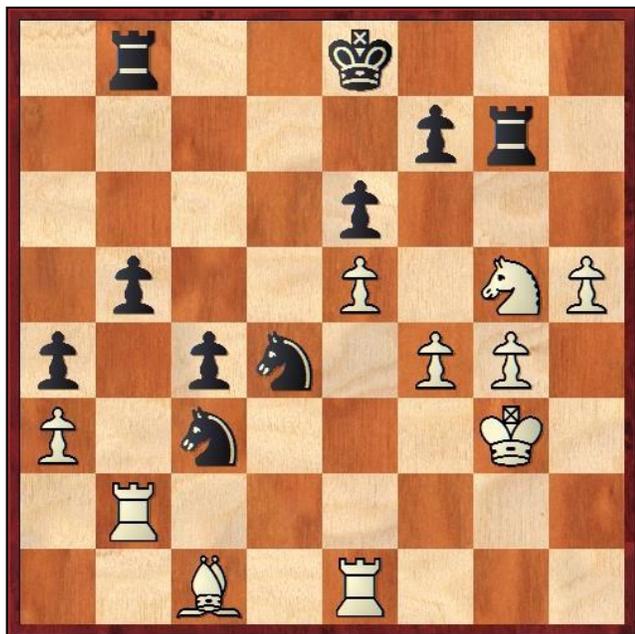
Here are the game scores of two of Fischer's other games from the Simul.

### Bobby Fischer - M. Haskins

April 26, 1964

Brown Palace Hotel / Denver, Colorado

1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5 3.Nc3 Bb4 4.e5 a5 5.a3 Bxc3+ 6.bxc3 c5 7.Qg4 Ne7 8.Qxg7 Rg8 9.Qxh7 Qc7 10.Qd3 b6 11.Nf3 Ba6 12.Qd2 cxd4 13.cxd4 Bxf1 14.Kxf1 Nf5 15.g3 Qc4+ 16.Kg2 Nc6 17.c3 a4 18.Rb1 b5 19.Re1 Na5 20.Qe2 Rb8 21.Qxc4 dxc4 22.Ng5 Rg7 23.g4 Nb3 24.f4 Ne7 25.h4 Nd5 26.Kg3 Nxc3 27.Rb2 Nxd4 28.h5

**M. Haskins****Bobby Fischer**

28...b4 29.h6 Rg8 30.Rxb4 Rxb4 31.axb4 Nce2+ 32.Kf2 Nxc1  
33.Rxc1 a3 34.Rxc4 a2 35.h7 Rh8 36.Rc8+ Kd7 37.Rxh8 a1Q  
38.Rd8+ Kxd8 39.h8Q+ Kd7 40.Ne4 Qb2+ 41.Kg3 Qb3+  
42.Kh4 ½-½

**Bobby Fischer - Barry Kraft**

**April 26, 1964**

**Brown Palace Hotel / Denver, Colorado**

1.e4 Nf6 2.e5 Nd5 3.d4 d6 4.c4 Nb6 5.exd6 cxd6 6.Nc3 g6  
7.Bd3 Nc6 8.Nge2 Bg7 9.Be3 Bd7 10.0-0 Nb4 11.b3 Nxd3  
12.Qxd3 Bf5 13.Qd2 Nd7 14.h3 h5 15.Rad1 Nf6 16.d5 Qd7  
17.Bd4 g5 18.Qxg5 0-0-0 19.Bxa7 Bh6 20.Qh4 Rdg8 21.Ng3  
Bg5 22.Qd4 Bxh3 23.Na4 Qg4 24.Qxg4+ Bxg4 25.f3 Bh4  
26.Ne2 Bd7 27.Nb6+ Kc7 28.Nxd7 Kxd7 29.Bd4 Rh6 30.b4 e5  
31.dxe6+ fxe6 32.a4 Ne8 33.c5 e5 34.Bxe5 Re6 35.f4 Reg6  
36.g3 Bxg3 37.f5 Bh2+ 38.Kh1 Rg2 39.Bxh2 Rxe2 40.f6 Rgg2  
41.Bg1 Rg4 42.Rd4 Rxd4 43.Bxd4 1-0 (*Chess Life, June 1986,*  
*page 63 - has this game with Kraft's annotations.*)

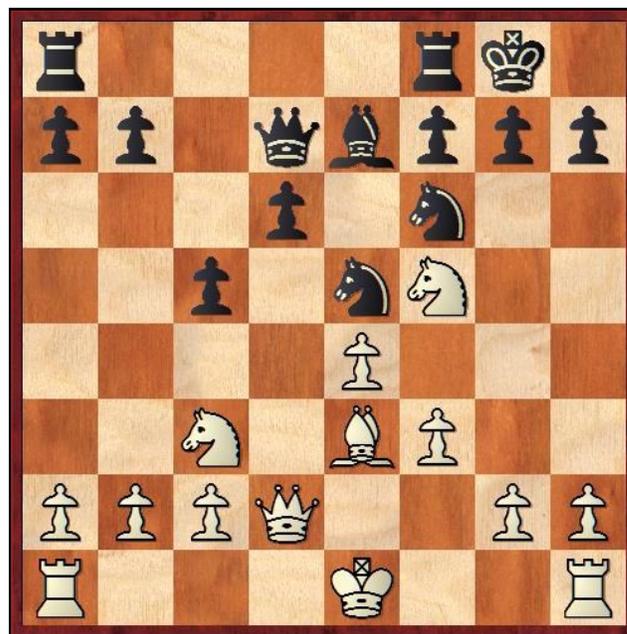
On April 28th Bobby Fischer traveled down to Colorado Springs, Colorado to play a Simul there - going +31, -0, =1. The following game is against Juan Reid who at the time was with the directory of alumni affairs at Colorado College. He was also the first President of the *Colorado State Chess Association* from 1958-1961.

**Bobby Fischer - Juan Reid**

**April 28, 1964**

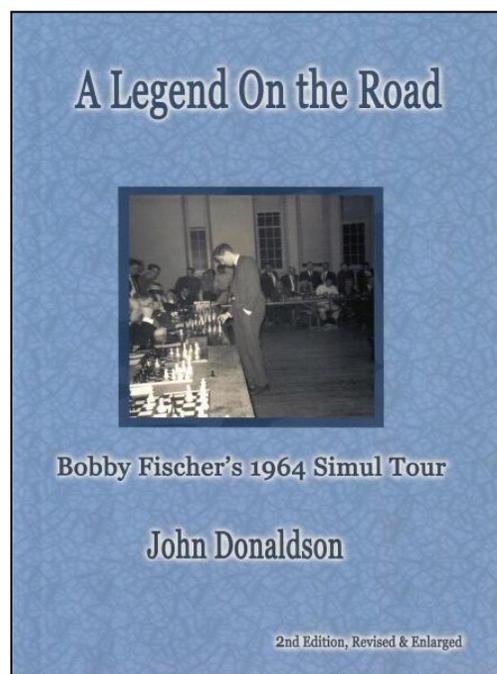
**Broadmoor Hotel / Colorado Springs, Colorado**

1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 d6 3.d4 Nf6 4.Nc3 exd4 5.Nxd4 Be7 6.f3 Nbd7  
7.Be3 Ne5 8.Qd2 c5 9.Bb5+ Bd7 10.Nf5 0-0 11.Bxd7 Qxd7

**Juan Reid****Bobby Fischer**

12.0-0-0 Nc4 13.Qe2 Nxe3 14.Qxe3 Rfd8 15.g4 Bf8 16.e5 Ne8  
17.Ne4 Qc7 18.exd6 Nxd6 19.Nexd6 Bxd6 20.Nxd6 Rxd6  
21.Rxd6 Qxd6 22.Rd1 Qxh2 23.Qe7 Qb8 24.Rd7 Qf4+ 25.Kb1  
g6 26.Qe2 b6 27.a3 a6 28.Qd3 b5 29.Qd5 Re8 30.Ka2 Re5 ½-½

If you are interested in reading more about Fischer's 1964 Simultaneous Tour, may I recommend "*A Legend on the Road*" (second edition) by IM John Donaldson, copyright 2005. In the book you will find coverage of Bobby's visit to Colorado with analysis of the above games.

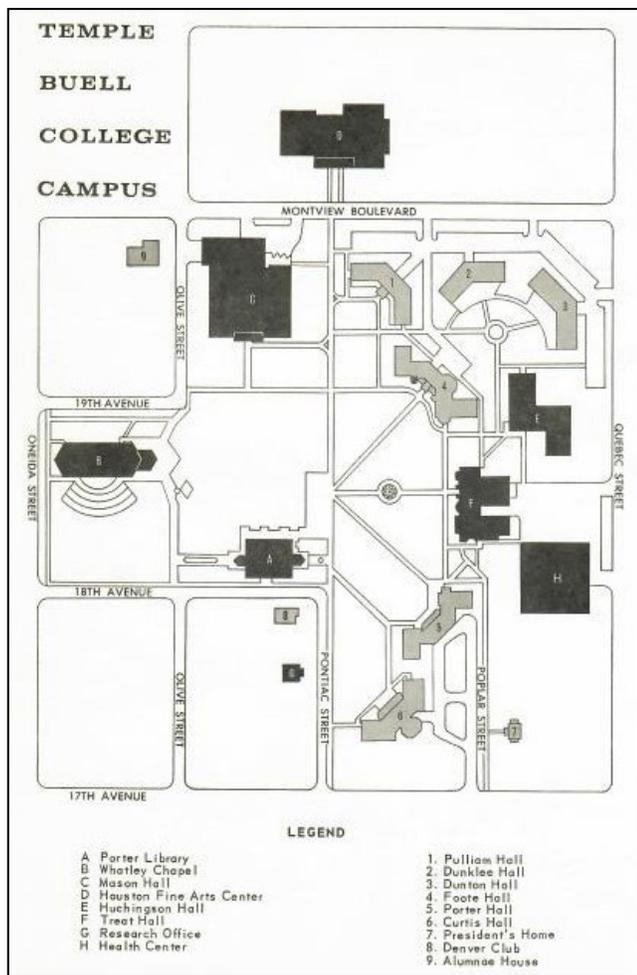


## Bobby Fischer - Bent Larsen Quarter Final World Championship Match

The road to the World Championship came through Denver as Fischer returned in 1971 to play against GM Bent Larsen of Denmark in the quarter-final world championship match. The match took place at Temple Buell College in the Houston Fine Arts Center, 7111 Montview Boulevard, Denver, Colorado.



*Denver School of the Arts today.*



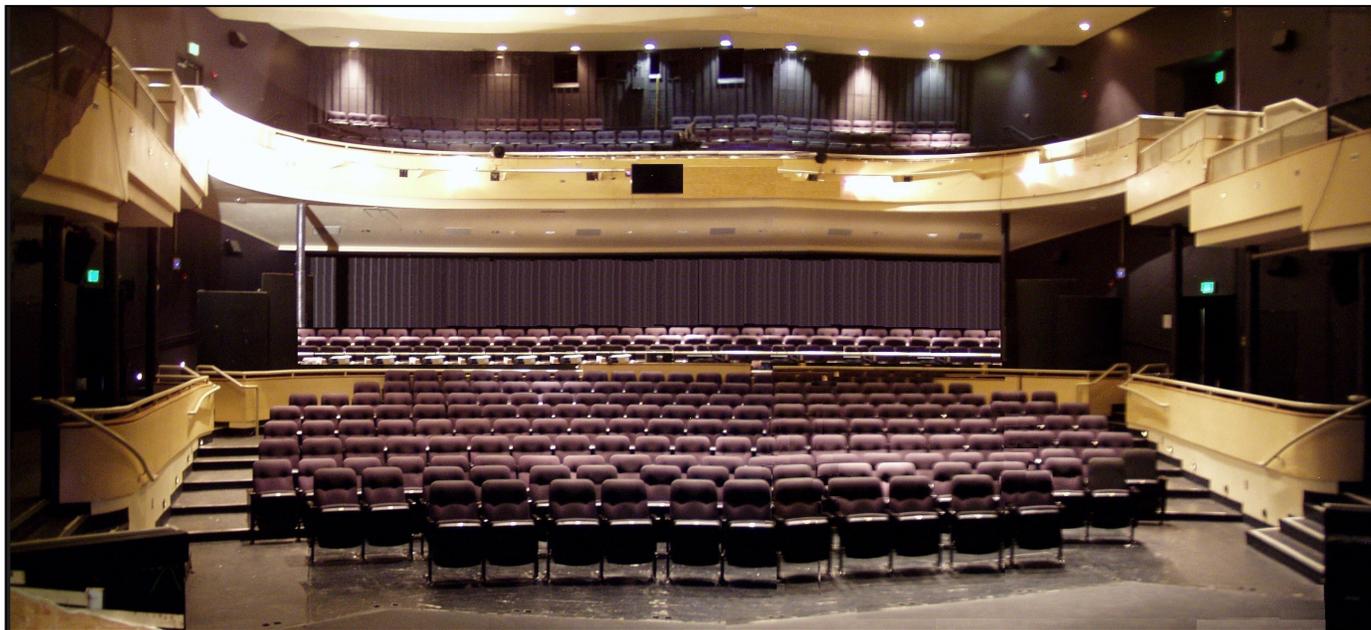
Temple Buell has been bought out several times and changed names since 1971. Today the auditorium where the Fischer - Larsen Match took place is the Kay Schomp Theatre in the Denver School of the Arts. The auditorium was called Foote Music Hall back in 1971.

I couldn't find any photos of the players during the Match - Fischer did not allow cameras in the playing area as they would distract him. The auditorium hasn't changed much according to all the eye witnesses who attended the match. Here are photos of the Kay Schomp Theatre today. Witnesses all agree that the spectators sat in the balcony. Some recall spectator seating was also available directly under the balcony. Fischer didn't want spectators to sit within at least the first 15 rows.

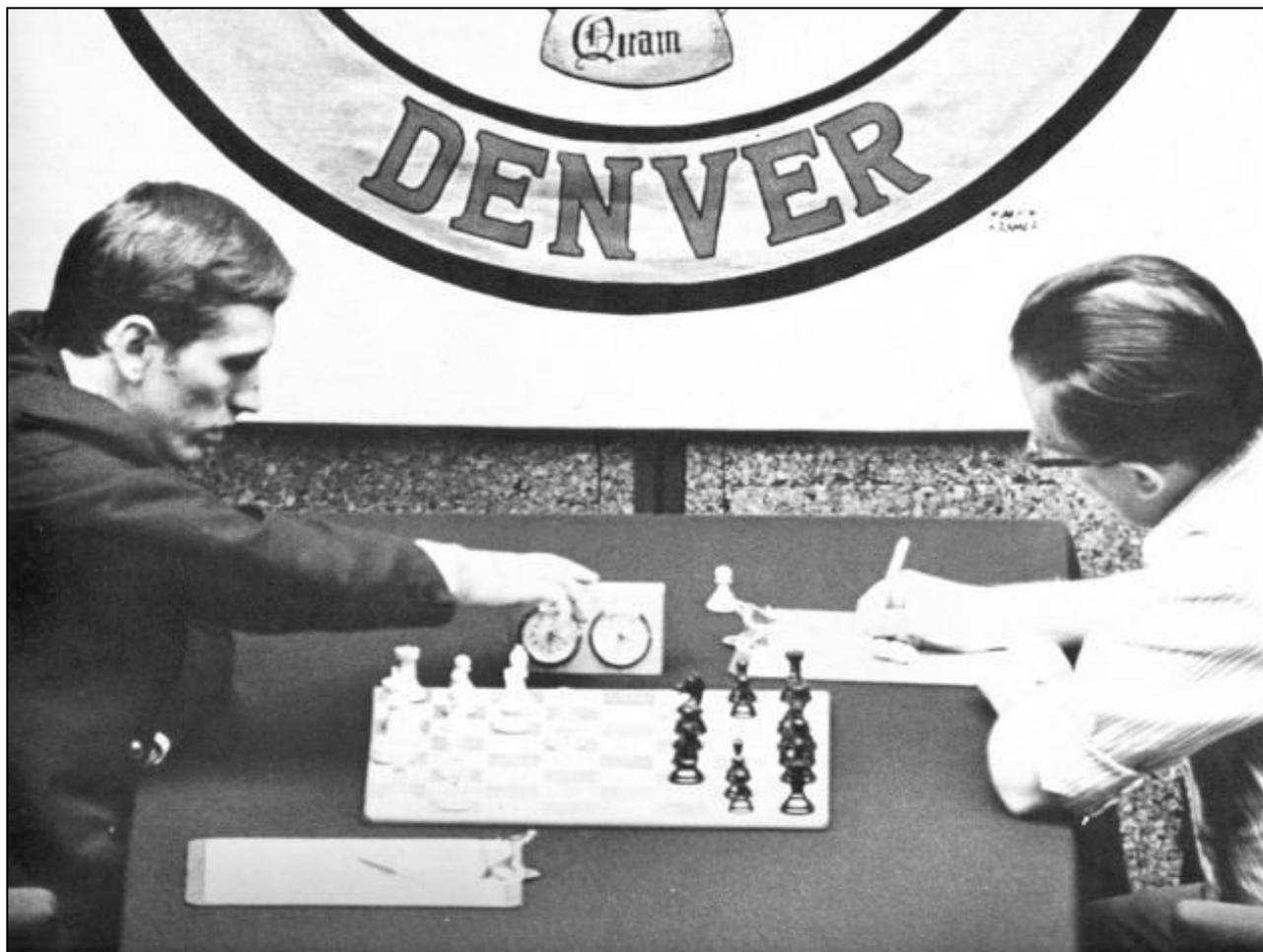


*Views from the balcony.*

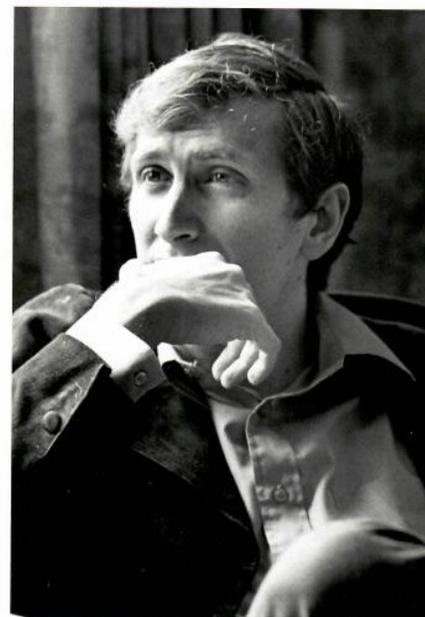
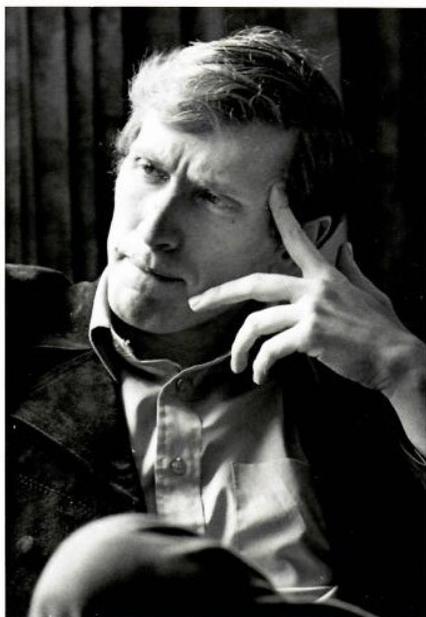




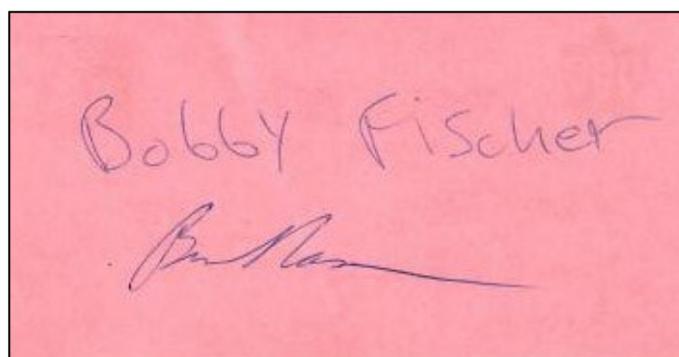
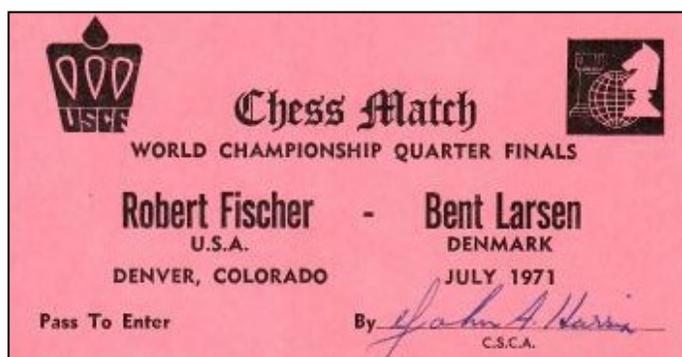
*View from the stage from where Fischer and Larsen sat.*



*Photograph from the front cover of the September 1971 Chess Life & Review.*



*Rocky Mountain News photos of Fischer*



*Here is a scan of the front and back (autographed by both Fischer and Larsen) of an admission ticket to the match.*

The games were played on July 6, 8, 11, 13, 18, and the 20th. 5.5 points were needed for victory. Fischer won 6-0.

Below are all the stories I could find on the match from various chess players I interviewed at different times. I'll fill in the blanks as best I can.

Match Co-Chairman, John Howell, kept a detailed diary throughout his life (John worked for himself as a "Landman" in the oil and gas industry dealing with properties and mineral rights. His diary was very small and it is often hard to read). His daughter, Cathy, looked up the dates around the Fischer - Larsen match. Here are his entries: (My notes are in [ ]s.)

**July 2, 1971** - John arrived from out of town on business at 11:00.

**July 5, 1971** - Dinner at Mr. G's [a fancy steakhouse] in Denver with Bent Larsen, Caswell Silver, Isaac Kasdan, and Paul Kline [The Chief Arbiter from Ecuador].

**July 9, 1971** - Ice and oranges for Fischer. John then had to leave to go to Wyoming on business.

**July 14, 1971** - Called and said game scheduled for Thursday, July 15 was postponed.

**July 15, 1971** - John returns late at night.

**July 16, 1971** - Afternoon/evening with Paul Kline & chess at

Gates with Edmondson and Kline. [Gates Rubber Company in the 1960s - early 1970s is where chess players met for fun games on Friday nights.]

**July 17, 1971** [Saturday] - M.K. at home with Silver, Harris, and Edmondson at 1:30. Delivered \$1560 to Charitable Trust. Silver has \$1800(?) in cash. Gave Harris \$90 for USCF memberships. Played chess with Edmondson until 8:15pm.

**July 19, 1971** - Leaves Denver for Wyoming. [Returns on July 25.]

**July 27, 1971** - Dinner with Silver, Art Underwood [1952 Colorado Champion], and Larsen at Petroleum Club.

**July 31, 1971** [Saturday] - Picked up Fischer at Celebrity [Celebrity Sports Center] at 10:45pm. Arrived at Kavalek Simul at 11:00pm. Steak and meeting with Kavalek at Duffy's - \$10.25 cash - bowling until 4:00am. [Probably at Celebrity Sports Center.]



*Celebrity Sports Center, 888 South Colorado Boulevard, Glendale, Colorado (photos are circa 1971).*

**August 1, 1971** - Fischer taped CBS [Channel 7 at the time] TV interview. Conference with Cas [Caswell Silver] regarding Fischer and the USCF moving to Denver.

**August 3, 1971** [Tuesday] - Lunch with Art Underwood and Bobby Fischer at "21" [a club or restaurant?]. Tour through the U.S. Mint and check library at *Rocky Mountain News* with Bobby - ordered 3 pictures - \$10 cash.

**August 4, 1971** - Fischer left today at 3:00pm. Fischer taped NBC interviews on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday.

**August 19, 1971** - Fischer on Today Show.

During a conversation with Pat Mahoney on September 6, 2004, he told me that he was the technical director of the Fischer - Larsen Match. (Larsen gave two simul in Denver - in 1968 and 1974. Mahoney said he drew with Larsen by perpetual check. At the time I was only aware of the 1974 Simul, so I thought it was that one, but it could have been the one in 1968).



*Bent Larsen and John Harris, 1968*



*Bent Larsen Simul in Denver, 1968*

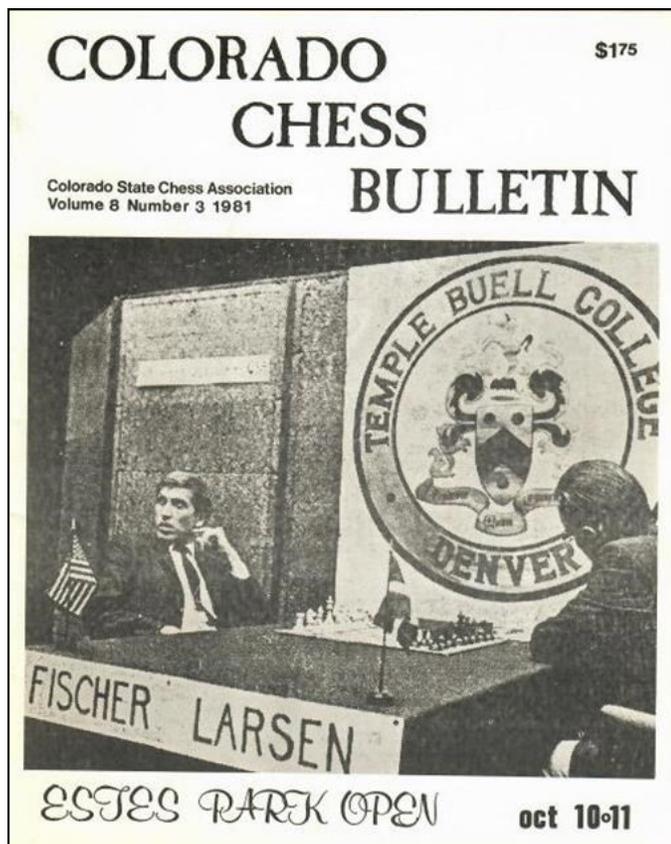
Pat said that the World Championship Quarter Final matches or later were not allowed to be played in the country of origin of one of the participants (home field advantage).

The chain of events that landed Denver as the site of the match started when Pat called Ed Edmondson at USCF. (Bob Shean and others were in the room at the time of the call.) Larsen knew Pat and others in Colorado (likely from Larsen's 1968 Simul and victory at the 1968 US Open in Aspen). Edmondson called Larsen to ask if he would waive his right and hold the match in Fischer's country of origin, and Larsen said he would, but only if the match took place in Denver because he liked Pat, Bob Shean, and others here.

John Howell and Caswell Silver ([https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Caswell\\_Silver](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Caswell_Silver)) wrote the checks to get the match to Denver. John Harris was also heavily involved. \$2000 was needed to fund the match and bring it to Denver. Donations were accepted.

George Bailey (the Assistant Arbiter) invited Fischer and others to his house for a home cooked meal. Apparently George then couldn't make it that night, but his wife, Carrie, prepared a nice meal. Fischer spent an inordinate amount of time poking at what was on the plate - Pat felt Fischer had terrible table manners.

Here is the cover from one of the October 1981 Colorado Chess Bulletins.

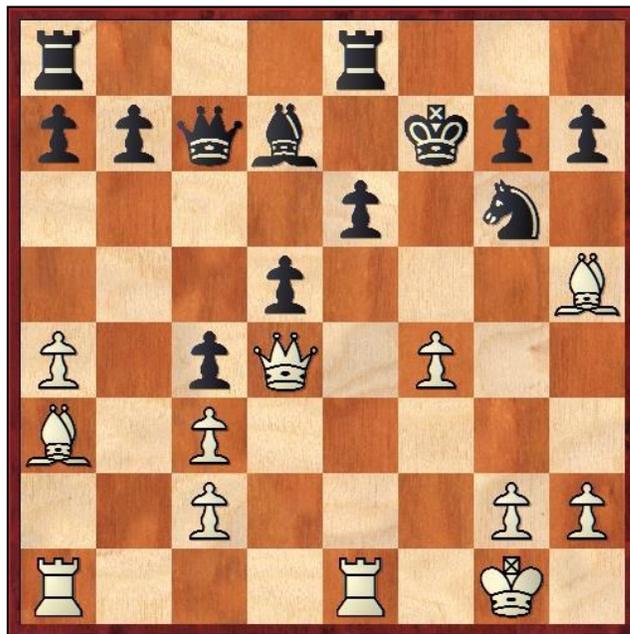


Fischer won the match 6-0 against Larsen and went on to become World Champion by defeating Boris Spassky in 1972.

Here is a position from the famous first game that set the tone for the match.

**Bobby Fischer - Bent Larsen**  
**World Championship Quarterfinal Match / Game 1**  
**July 6, 1971 / Denver, CO**

**Bent Larsen**



**Bobby Fischer**  
**Position after 18...Rhe8**

Boulderite and Colorado Open Champion (1955, 1967, and 1970) **Vic Traibush**, was the "Official Scorekeeper" for the first two games of the match.

Vic had observed that whenever Fischer moved a piece, he very precisely slid the piece to the exact center of the square each time he moved. Vic noted, however, that when Fischer played 19.f5, he picked up the pawn and slightly tilted it toward Larsen as he moved it forward. On the drive from Denver to Boulder to Traibush's house after the game that night for dinner, Vic asked Fischer if he was aware of how he moved the pawn. Vic said Fischer didn't realize that he had moved the pawn that way and was mortified. Noticeably disturbed by his action, Fischer said, "That was very unprofessional."

The game continued - 19.f5 exf5 20.Qxd5+ Kf6 21.Bf3 Ne5 22.Qd4 Kg6 23.Rxe5 Qxe5 24.Qxd7 Rad8 25.Qxb7 Qe3+ 26.Kf1 Rd2 27.Qc6+ Re6 28.Bc5 Rf2+ 29.Kg1 Rxc2+ 30.Kxg2 Qd2+ 31.Kh1 Rxc6 32.Bxc6 Qxc3 33.Rg1+ Kf6 34.Bxa7 g5 35.Bb6 Qxc2 36.a5 Qb2 37.Bd8+ Ke6 38.a6 Qa3 39.Bb7 Qc5 40.Rb1 c3 41.Bb6 Black Resigns

Fischer was an avid tennis player and apparently quite good at it. John Howell told me (back in the late 1990s), that it was difficult to get Fischer off the tennis court in time to get to the

chess match games against Larsen by the start time. When it was time to leave, he would protest and want to play one more game of tennis. Fischer's tennis opponent was John Harris who was athletic and enjoyed the game.

**Vance Aandahl** told me that at least for part of the match, (and maybe during the entire match), Fischer stayed at Caswell Silver's house in the Hilltop area because it was quiet and secluded and he could get away from people.



*(Caswell Silver's house today. It was a brick ranch in 1971. The owners popped the top around 2000.)*

Vance was the Official Scorekeeper for Game 4. He recalls that Colorado chess players rotated games in that position.

The Official Scorekeeper sat on the stage with the players and very quietly recorded the game. At the end of each game, Fischer and Larsen signed each other's scoresheet as well as the Official Scorekeeper's scoresheet. Vance got to keep the carbon copy of his autographed scoresheet. (Unfortunately, about ten years later, the writing on Vance's scoresheet totally faded out.)

On the stage, Vance had a direct view of Fischer and profile view of Larsen. Vance said he would never forget that, "As Fischer looked at the board, his eyes seemed to be burning with an intensity that is quite rare."

During the game, which he recalls lasted a little less than four hours, Vance said that Fischer lifted his eyes from the board on only three occasions, each time for just a few seconds. Once he looked straight at Vance, giving him a brief and dismissive glance, and the other two times he glanced at the audience. Each time he had the same piercing, intense look. The rest of the game, his eyes were fixed on the board at all times. He never looked at Larsen. Vance recalls, "Fischer had perfect, focused concentration on the board."

For a detailed account of Vance's memories of Fischer, see page 20 of the October 2004 Colorado Chess Informant ([www.coloradochess.com/informant/October\\_2004.pdf](http://www.coloradochess.com/informant/October_2004.pdf)) in an article entitled, "My Three Close Encounters with Bobby Fischer."

**Curtis Carlson** (who was about 1700-1800 strength at the time) attended the first five games of the match. He and some others

went to a tournament in Salt Lake City and missed the 6th game. In hindsight, he wished he had stayed in Denver.

Curt recorded Games 1 and 2, and the times taken for some of the moves.

The image shows two pages of chess scoresheets from the 1972 World Chess Championship. The left page is for the opening 'French Defense' and the right page is for 'English'. Both include chessboard diagrams and move lists. The left page has a handwritten note 'after white 12th' and the right page has a handwritten note 'after white 12th'. The scoresheets are filled with algebraic notation and some handwritten annotations.

Curt recalls, "I bought a match pass for \$20, but it would have been cheaper to pay \$3 a game. No one expected a repeat of Taimanov's debacle. Fischer was irritated by noisy spectators, even though we were in the back 15 rows of the auditorium. They played on the stage 30 or 40 rows in front of us. The demonstration board was on a stand on the left."

Curt recalls Saidy and Kashdan giving commentary during different rounds.

"Bobby was finely dressed, while Larsen looked like he was going to a picnic. I also remember Bobby sitting at the board before Larsen arrived, and how he always stood up to shake hands before the game."

"In the first game, after 16.Qd4, Fischer got up and paced around the stage, and kept looking back at the board. He had removed his suit coat and his bright white shirt was radiant.

After 41.Bb6, Larsen (in this order) stopped the clock and knocked over his king. Bobby was away from the board and they shook hands when he came back.”

“After Larsen resigned the first game we gave Bobby a well deserved standing ovation. I’ve gone over it 1000 times or more and am repeatedly struck at what a masterpiece it was.”

“Larsen took a time out (after the third game, I think) but we didn’t know until we got there. I went on the stage and sat briefly in Fischer’s chair! I don’t think Bobby knew. No one was in the auditorium, I’m surprised the doors weren’t locked.”

“Larsen resigned the fourth game by knocking his king over violently. The echo reverberated throughout the auditorium, like a whip snapping. What a memory! He then left through the lobby with a disgusted look on his face. I don’t remember him (or Fischer) in the lobby any other time.”

Carlson and others mentioned Larsen complaining about the 100 degree heat in Denver. In Larsen’s obituary published in *The Guardian* by Leonard Barden on September 17, 2010, Barden says, “At the time, Larsen blamed high blood pressure and the 40 degree (Celsius - over 100 degrees Fahrenheit) heat.” Later he expanded, “The organisers chose the wrong time for this match. I was languid with the heat and Fischer was better prepared for such exceptional circumstances. I saw chess pieces through a mist and thus my playing level was not good.”

([www.theguardian.com/sport/2010/sep/17/bent-larsen-obituary](http://www.theguardian.com/sport/2010/sep/17/bent-larsen-obituary))

“Isaac Kashdan gave commentary on some of the games but I don’t think he was involved in setting up the match or how it was ran. Anthony Saily was in attendance for a while and also gave commentary. Paul Kmetiuk, with his eternal holier than thou attitude, said it was very bad analysis. Kashdan was also director for the US Junior championship in Denver in September 1977. We asked him a few questions about Bobby, but I don’t remember his answers. He died in 1985.”

Curt recalls that the attendance was about 30-40 people in the beginning, and few less for the fourth and fifth games.

He said that Jerry Saltz was the Official Scorekeeper for some of the games, but doesn’t recall which ones. (It had to be some combination of games 3, 5, or 6.) Saltz got Fischer to autograph his copy of “My 60 Memorable Games”.

Curt also said that Martin Deschner (popularly known as “The Tuna”) moved the pieces on the demo board for the crowd for at least one game. “One time, while sitting at the board, Fischer whispered something in his ear.”

Martin remembers working the demo board for two or three games. He didn’t recall what Fischer told him. Martin does recall spectators sitting under the balcony in the playing hall. (Bob Shean and Wesley Koehler were also reportedly on stage at some times either moving pieces on the demo board or acting as scorekeeper.)

At Lone Pine in 1978, Curt said he had the opportunity to play five blitz games against Larsen. He lost all five, but said, “I made it to a pawn down in a rook and pawn ending in one, but it was nonetheless hopeless.”

Curt recalls that Larsen played against about 40 opponents in the simul he gave in Denver on July 18, 1974. He recalls 4 players beat Larsen that night and that he got crushed along with pretty much everyone else. (On a personal note, as an 11 year old rated in the high 1200’s, I played Larsen that night and was the fourth to last person to lose (I remember getting to stay up past my bedtime!). The players who beat Larsen that night were Paul Nikitovich, Ron Leonard, and my dad, Alan Bardwick. For years, I have tried to find out who the fourth was to beat Larsen, but so far, it is still a mystery.)

At the simul, Curt asked Larsen who he would expect to win a match with Fischer and Karpov. Larsen replied, “No one could beat Bobby!” After their match it was easy to understand. Curt recalls, “Larsen talked with John Watson about Watson’s loss to Browne in the World Open that Larsen had just won.”

**Steve Yamamoto** was 17 years old during the match and kept his match program. He also had lots of newspaper articles and photos on the match and other chess events during that era that are on the History section of the CSCA website.

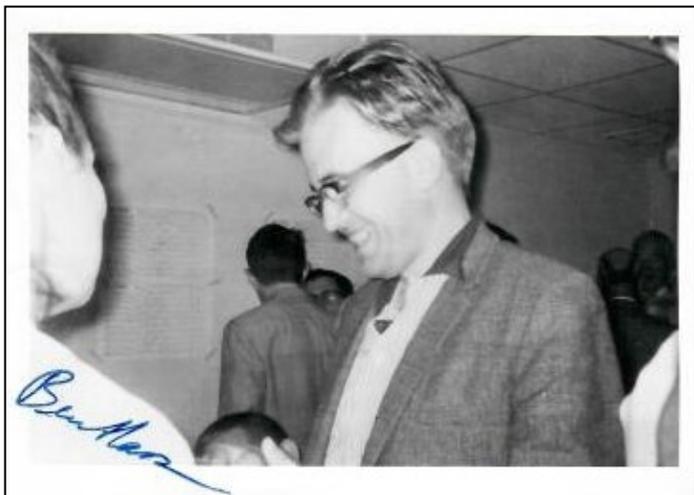
Steve recalls, “John Harris and John Howell (CSCA) were gracious enough to allow me to be a low level gopher. This allowed me to be off to the side of the stage at times as well as having some opportunity to have some contact with both Fischer and Larsen. I can’t recall what my specific duties were but I remember serving 2 different functions for Fischer:

- I made sure he had a full glass of orange juice when he requested.
- Fischer called me over a couple of times during the games (I can’t remember which ones). One of the times, Fischer heard a camera shutter click and pointed out a spectator in the back of the auditorium (may have been the balcony) who he wanted removed immediately because he was taking pictures.

I don’t remember too much about sitting in the auditorium or going into the analysis room. Curtis Carlson and I watched one of the games together.”

“At a casual social gathering sometime during the match, I got to spend some brief moments with both Fischer and Larsen. Fischer walked up to me as I was standing alone at the side of the room. He told me that he was going to beat the Russians and began mentally analyzing a game he played against another Grandmaster. It was so far above my level, I didn’t know what he was talking about so I just tried not to say too much or act too stupid.”

“I showed Larsen a picture I took of him when he won the US Open at Aspen, Colorado in 1968. He smiled and signed the photograph for me (*next page*). He was very friendly and easy to talk to.”



Before one of the games, I went up to the board and touched a couple of the pieces (*Drueke Player's Choice Set* like the one I had at home). I thought to myself, "I'm touching the same pieces that GM Fischer and GM Larsen will be touching in just a short while." The clock was a wooden mechanical one (BHB?).

After the 6th and last game, I approached the board. Both Fischer and Larsen were nice enough to sign a score sheet I had of that last game. Sometime during the contest, I got Fischer to sign my copy of his book "My 60 Memorable Games".

Here are Steve's lasting impressions of the players:

"Fischer: Totally focused on and off the board. He was on a mission that didn't stop with Larsen. It was his way or the highway. He was nice to me but he always seemed to be concentrating deeply on something.

Larsen: A complete Class Act. Always gracious and friendly. Nice smile. When most others would have been pouting or having tantrums and making excuses, he held his head high with dignity. What little time I saw of him and the few moments I shared with him, he exemplified how a true hero should act. It is easy to be a good winner, but he showed me his great character and strength with his gracious behavior in defeat. A great role model."

**Brian Wall** recalls about a hundred fans showed up for Games 4 and 6. Bob Ascher confirmed the number. Wesley Koehler put out a short bulletin after Game 1 with quite a bit of detailed analysis.

In 1974, at John Watson's Chess House, Brian recalls Larsen complaining about the heat in Denver. It was over 100 degrees at times during match.

**Bobby Fischer**



**Bent Larsen**  
*Position after 16...Qc7*

Brian recalls, in Game 4, when Larsen played 17.bxc5, Fischer responded instantly with 17...bxc5. 16 year old, 1700ish, Brian Wall was impressed that he took with the b-pawn so quickly in such an important game.

Later in the game when Fischer played 26...Qg7, he thought for about 10-15 minutes. At that point he had the position all worked out and played rest of his moves quickly.

WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP QUARTER FINALS  
COLORADO STATE CHESS ASSOCIATION

Tournament: MATCH FISCHER LARSEN Round: 6 Date: 7/20/74

Time adjourned, white: 40/2 1/2 black: \_\_\_\_\_

(DENMARK) (U.S.A.)

White: BENT LARSEN Black: ROBERT J. FISCHER

White	Black	White	Black
1 P-KB4	P-QB4	31 Q-B6	B-B1
2 N-KB3	P-N3	N/N-B1	R-KB2
3 P-K4	B-N2	Q-R6	B-N2
4 R-K2	N-QB3	NXP	Q-KB3
5 Q-Q	P-Q3	Q-K3	R-K2
6 P-Q3	P-K3	QR-K1	B-Q3
7 N-R3	KN-K2	B-N5+	QXQ
8 P-QB3	Q-Q	NAG	RXR
9 B-K3	P-QB3	RXR	B-Q4
10 P-Q4	PXP	40 R-KB+	K-N2
11 NXP	P-QN4	41	WHITE RESIGNS
12 NXN	NXN	42	
13 Q-Q2	Q-B2	43	
14 QR-Q1	R-Q1	44	
15 N-B2	Q-N1	45	
16 P-QB3	N-B4	46	
17 P-K5	B-B1	47	
18 P-QN4	N-B3	48	
19 N-Q4	PXP	49	
20 PXP	NXP(6)	50	
21 B-N5	R-Q4	51	
22 Q-B4	R-N2	52	
23 P-KB4	B-N2	53	
24 B-B6	AXP	54	
25 QXR	QXP	55	
26 P-B5	PXP	56	
27 K-R1	N-N5	57	
28 AXN	PXR	58	
29 Q-R6	B-Q2	59	
30 R-B4	P-B4	60	

**Bobby Fischer****Bent Larsen**  
*Position after 26.Rc6*

26...Qg7 27.Rb1 Nh4 28.Qd3 Bf5 29.Kh1 f3 30.Ng3 fxg2+  
31.Kg1 Bxe4 32.Qxe4 Nf3+ 33.Kxg2 Nd2 White Resigns

**Jeff Maguire** attended all the games. He recalls at least 100 spectators for each of the games. For Game 1, Jeff happened to be sitting next Bent Larsen's wife, who didn't speak much English. Jeff doesn't speak Danish. Mrs. Larsen didn't play chess, but knew enough English to ask Jeff how Larsen was doing at times during the game. Jeff recalls nodding or shaking his head at times to tell her what he thought about Larsen's position.

**Dwight Sehler** attended the first game. He recalls:

"I went to the first game with Bill Riley, a friend from high school. Bill was State Champion somewhere around this time - actually, maybe several years earlier. I think he was State Champion when he was a Senior in High School, which would be about 1967. We took buses from Lakewood to east Denver, the site of the match. We arrived early. The front half of the modestly sized auditorium was roped off. We sat close to the ropes! Fischer came in, sat down, and slowly scanned the horizon from one side to the other. I recall that when his eyes passed over my location I sat perfectly still, and actually felt a little afraid. But then I reminded myself, "He can't hurt me by just looking at me!"

"When the game got started I think it was Wesley Koehler or Vic Traibush that sat onstage overseeing the board from several feet away. The game was a French Defense, and Fischer in spectacular fashion got his queen trapped in the middle of the board. My hero was losing his queen! There was an analysis room across the hall. I believe it was Isaac Kashdan who was guiding some of the analysis. I recall when Fischer played

21.Bf3 there was lots of hubbub in the analysis room. I later learned that my friend, Jeff Maguire, sat next to Mrs. Larsen. I recall it was lots of fun!"

**Brad Lundstrom** attended two games from the match.

He recalls that the summer of 1971 was brutally hot.

"For me it was perfect. I lived in my tennis shoes and gym shorts, had eight lawn jobs and rode my bike everywhere I went. James Taylor came out with his signature song, "You've Got a Friend." My junior year of high school was just ahead; I was working out hard getting ready for fall football and I had the cutest sixteen year old girlfriend in chess history. Since falling fully in love with chess during junior high school, I'd followed Bobby Fischer during his 18 month lay-off into his incredible return. I'd also been thrilled with Bent Larsen's recent years tournament domination."

"When I learned their epic candidates semi-final match was to be held in Denver, I was beside myself with joy and excitement. It took a masterly sell job to convince my parents, then my girlfriend's parents, but I was not to be denied... going to the first game was truly an adventure. My girlfriend Joanne and I took the long bus trip from Greeley to Denver and found our way to Temple Buell. We sat about half way up the stadium style seating. There was a large stage with a wall board that some lucky chess kids relayed the moves from the board to and a table with the set and clock. Larsen arrived to the stage and was greeted with polite applause and we waited a few minutes for Fischer. He lumbered in to huge applause and he shook Larsen's hand. As the game started some kid towards the front made some noise with his candy wrapper and Fischer jumped up, motioned to referee and pointed into the audience. It scared the heck out of me and I was praying he wouldn't just walk out."

"Finally the game started. I was surprised when Larsen played a French Winawer but remembered Bobby had sometimes struggled against this opening so it made some sense. The game was awesome with Larsen playing a little out of the norm and Fischer sacrificing a pawn for the initiative. Late in the middle game Fischer gave up his queen for two bishops and a rook but Larsen's pawns looked dangerous. Sad to say about this time I had to leave as we had a bus schedule to meet. I learned later of the brilliant ending Fischer played and his first game victory."

"All the games were immediately reported by the local and national news and after Fischer had climbed to a 4-0 lead, I suddenly had another chance to go! My uncle Doug Sears was an avid chess fan and had played the legendary Sammy Reshevsky in a simultaneous exhibition when he was a teenager. Doug invited my cousin Steve and I to the beautiful 5th game. We got there early and again Larsen showed up first and Fischer was a few minutes late. The auditorium was full and so quiet you could've heard a pin drop. I think everybody knew we were witnessing an incredible part of world chess history and the crowd was truly mesmerized. Fischer seemed to play quickly and confidently. This time Bobby faced a Sicilian Defense and essayed his trademark Bc4 Sozin line. Late in the middle-game Bobby sacrificed the exchange and his bishop pair and strong rook tied Larsen down. Fischer traded down to an even king and pawn ending. Well not so even as Bobby had a far outside

passed pawn and Larsen resigned pretty quickly then. I later learned Bobby won the sixth game and it was done... an incredible 6-0 whitewash. Hard to believe anyone could do that to the great Bent Larsen.”

“Years later I played in the 1984 New York Open masters section and came face to face with Bent Larsen at the game pairing sheet. He looked at me with an intense glare and I just looked down. I always wished I would have smiled and said hello. Anyway seeing two games from the match was a fantastic memory that I will always treasure.”

**Bob Ascher** moved the demo board pieces for one of the games (he doesn't recall which one). He said the first 15 rows in the auditorium were blocked off because Fischer wanted complete quiet. The match was played on a wooden stage and he had to take off his shoes and walk in his socks and stay as far as possible from the game board so as not to disturb the players. Somewhere in the auditorium, Al Humes was reading his newspaper during the game. While turning a page of his paper, it made enough noise to upset Fischer. After this, Brian Wall said they asked Humes to leave the auditorium.

At one point during the game, Fischer finished his orange juice. He and Bob had made eye contact and Bob pointed to the glass, gesturing if he wanted a refill. Fischer shook his head, no. Later Bob learned that Fischer had a padlock on the door of the refrigerator where the orange juice was to prevent anyone from getting into it and putting something in his orange juice.

As an aside, Bob also told me a story about the Korchnoi Simul in 1977. (Bob says the words spoken below are not exact quotes, but as close as he can remember all these years later.)

He was sitting next to a Class C player (he doesn't know the player's name) where Korchnoi hung his queen. The player took Korchnoi's queen when he came around and Korchnoi asked, “What happened here?”. The player showed him the last move. Korchnoi asked him, “You don't want to win like this do you? Take your time and think about it.”

The C player asked Bob what he thought he should do. Bob suggested he take the queen and he may be the only player who wins. When Korchnoi came around again, he saw the player and Bob talking and told Bob to stay out of it. The player decided to take the queen and won the game.

**Frank Mezek** also attended the Korchnoi Simul. He said that Korchnoi had a brutal schedule in Europe, and must have suffered jet lag also. “But he did not rest and our simul was, I believe, his first event in the US.”

Frank recalls, “I answered his 1.d4 with my favorite Budapest Gambit. He was a perfect gentleman, and after he hung his queen, Korchnoi resigned and apologized profusely saying, “I'm so sorry I ruined our game.”

*(Articles on Korchnoi's Simul and his visit to Denver are in the Oct-Nov 1977 and Feb-March 1978 CSCA Bulletin's.)*

When asked about the playing conditions in Denver, Fischer said those in Denver were among the “best conditions I've ever played in.” (*Denver Post - July 22, 1971*)

### **Grandmaster Lubosh Kavalek Simul**

(commentary below is from **Vance Aandahl**).

Kavalek came to Denver and gave a Simul at 7:00pm on Saturday, July 31 at Metropolitan State College's Bannock Student Center, 1345 Bannock Street, the building the college used for special events before the Auraria campus was built. The simul was co-sponsored by the MSC Chess Club and the CSCA, and it cost \$4 to play.

Kavalek was ranked #2 in the U.S. at the time, and had only briefly met Fischer previously. He was young and energetic and one of the best soccer players in Europe. He chose a career in chess over soccer.

The simul was in a large room and it was packed - every table was full. Kavalek didn't want anyone to go home and not have a chance to play, so he suggested that players pair up in teams of two or three players.

Fischer was still in town and John Howell arrived with Fischer and introduced him to Vance. Fischer watched the Simul for about 15 minutes and left.

Fischer said the team idea was wrong and asked Vance why he didn't put a stop to it. Vance nervously explained it was Kavalek's idea for the players to team up so everyone could play.

Fischer ignored Vance's explanation, turned and stared at an enormous portrait of Malcom X on the wall in the room. He asked words to effect of, “What's a painting like that doing in a place where a chess event is being held?” Vance said he was momentarily speechless, and after an awkward silence, said that the room was part of a student center, not normally used for chess events. Fischer gave Vance a disapproving look and without further comment turned away.

The simul ended after midnight and word was sent to Kavalek that Howell and Fischer were at Duffy's Tavern and Fischer wanted to go bowling with him.

Kavalek was exhausted, but eager to take Fischer up on the offer and get to spend time with him. Vance and Mary Aandahl took Kavalek and his girlfriend to Duffy's where they found Howell and Fischer sitting in a booth. Fischer was drinking orange juice... his beverage of choice. Fischer didn't drink alcohol. When Fischer saw them approaching, he lowered his head until his forehead was directly over the top of his glass and then stared straight down at the tabletop, refusing to speak or make eye contact.

After discussing plans for the rest of the evening, Vance and Mary went home and Howell took Fischer, Kavalek, and his girlfriend to an all-night bowling alley.

At 6:30 the next morning, after bowling all night with Fischer, Kavalek and his girlfriend, who stayed with the Aandahl's while in town, showed up at Vance's house and reported that he had a wonderful time. Fischer won all the games bowling - he was extremely competitive (besides tennis, Fischer was also a good

bowler). Despite being a soccer phenomenon in Europe and a great athlete, Kavalek had never bowled before.

**Curt Carlson** had this to add to the Kavalek Simul.

“Kavalek’s simul was on July 31, 1971. Against 42 opponents he won all but six, drawing me, Wendling, Dan Gollub, Milovan Bosnjak, Mike McDonald, and Tom Wayman.”

“When it was nearly over, Fischer unexpectedly arrived with John Howell as his consort. We were amazed. Fischer briefly glanced at my position and his face contorted like he’d seen

something wretched.”

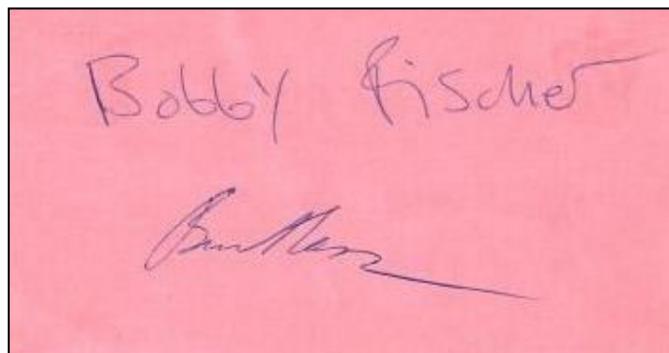
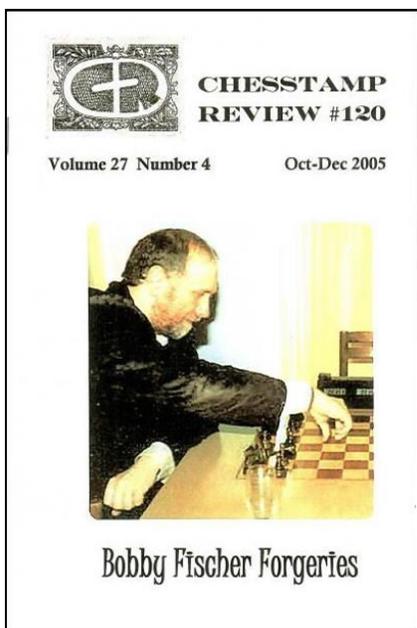
“He signed autographs and shook hands with Kavalek. I wish I’d thought to bring my copy of “My 60 Memorable Games”! Kavalek predicted Bobby would beat Petrosian, but would lose a close match to Spassky. He was half right.”

“Fischer also shook hands with Wendling when they were introduced! Wish I’d brought my camera.”



If you are interested in Fischer autographs, I recommend taking a look at Chesstamp Review #120 where you will find an article entitled, “Bobby Fischer Forgeries”, with photos of real and fake Fischer autographs by Lawrence Totaro.

The ones I showed earlier are authentic. As is this one which is on the back side of another admission ticket to the Fischer - Larsen match.



John Howell once told me that it was difficult to get Fischer to give an autograph. First, Fischer had to perceive you as a friend, and secondly, you had to catch him in the right mood.

John always got excited telling stories about Fischer. I'll always remember his booming voice, “All these folks were warning me about Bobby. Don’t do it, don’t get involved! You’ll regret it! Well Bobby was fine, he was more than fine, I had no trouble with Bobby. You know why? Well I’ll tell you why, I just gave him everything he wanted. When he ordered one steak I bought him two. Of course winning 6-0 helps a lot.”

Totaro says that of all the World Chess Champions, Fischer signed his name more different ways than most... Bobby Fischer, Robert Fischer, R. Fischer, and Robert James Fischer. Fischer’s autographs have sold at times for over \$1000 each, and many are actually fakes... so buyer beware!



## COLORADO CHESS CLUB DIRECTORY

**Boulder Chess Club:** Meets Wednesdays at the University Memorial Center (First Floor) on the CU Boulder campus, 6:30-9:30pm. 1669 Euclid Avenue, 80309. [www.BoulderChess.com](http://www.BoulderChess.com).

**Carbondale Chess Club:** Meets every Tuesday from 6:00pm until the wee hours at Kahhak Fine Arts & School, 411 Main Street, Carbondale, 81623. All levels and ages are welcome and chess coaching is available. Please contact Majid Kahhak at (970) 704-0622 or email: [Mkahhak@sopris.net](mailto:Mkahhak@sopris.net).

**Castle Rock Chess Club:** Meets every Monday from 6:00-9:00pm at the Philip S. Miller Library, 100 South Wilcox Street, Castle Rock, 80104.

**Chess Knights:** (Highlands Ranch) Meets on the 2nd & 4th Wednesday evenings from 7:00-9:00pm. Highlands Ranch Library, 9292 Ridgeline Boulevard, 80129. Information is also available on the Chess Knights' Web site at [HighlandsRanchLibraryChess.org](http://HighlandsRanchLibraryChess.org). Contact: Frank Atwood (720) 260-1493 or by email: [FrankAtwood@HighlandsRanchLibraryChess.org](mailto:FrankAtwood@HighlandsRanchLibraryChess.org).

**Chessmates Chess Club:** (Fort Collins) 4825 South Lemay Avenue, 80525. Mondays & Thursdays 5:00-6:30pm for Advanced players, Tuesdays for Beginners from 5:15-6:15pm. Instructed by Zachary Bekkedahl. For more information contact Zachary Bekkedahl by email at [info@chessmatesfc.com](mailto:info@chessmatesfc.com) or go to [www.chessmatesfc.com](http://www.chessmatesfc.com).

**Colorado Springs Chess Club:** Meets Tuesday evenings, 7:00-10:00pm, in the ballroom of the Acacia Apartments building, 104 East Platte Avenue. Scheduled activities every meeting at 8:00pm (must show up by 8:00pm or you might be locked out). For information see our website at [www.SpringsChess.org](http://www.SpringsChess.org) or email Richard "Buck" Buchanan at [buckpeace@pcisys.net](mailto:buckpeace@pcisys.net) or call (719) 685-1984.

**Craig Chess Club:** Call Rick or Mary Nelson, (970) 824-4780 to schedule play.

**Denver Chess Club:** Meets on Tuesdays, 6:00-10:00pm at the Third Christian Reformed Church, 2400 South Ash Street, Denver. (303) 733-8940. [www.DenverChess.com](http://www.DenverChess.com).

**Denver Chess / Meetup.com:** This group is run through the social site [Meetup.com](http://Meetup.com), and our page is [www.Meetup.com/Learn-to-Play-Chess/](http://www.Meetup.com/Learn-to-Play-Chess/). Players must join in order to receive information and sign up for events. Contact: David Costantino at [avs1cup@yahoo.com](mailto:avs1cup@yahoo.com) or through the group's [Meetup.com](http://Meetup.com) page.

**Durango Chess Club:** Meets on Wednesdays from 6:00-9:00pm at Durango Joe's Coffee Shop, 732 East College Drive.

**Fort Collins Chess Club:** Currently meets Tuesdays, 7:00pm, in the food court of the Lory Student Center (2nd level),

Colorado State University. You can email Randy Reynolds at [randy\\_heyana@msn.com](mailto:randy_heyana@msn.com).  
On the web - [groups.yahoo.com/group/fort\\_collins\\_chess](http://groups.yahoo.com/group/fort_collins_chess).

**Fort Lewis College Chess Club:** Meets Thursday nights in the X-treme room which is located the College Union Building, the club is sponsored by the school and is a USCF affiliate club. For more info, contact Andrea Browne at (970) 247-6239.

**Grand Junction Chess Club:** Meets Mondays at 6:30pm in the Safeway at Starbucks, 2901 Patterson Road. Call Rick Lovato at (970) 243-1073.

**Grand Junction Junior Chess Club:** Meets every 3rd Saturday of the month at the Knights of Columbus Building, 2853 North Avenue. Call Rand Dodd at (970) 245-4015.

**Greeley Chess Club:** Meets Wednesdays, 6:00-9:00pm at Your Place Coffee, 2308 West 17th Street, Greeley. Contact Brad Lundstrom at [ChessCoach2014@gmail.com](mailto:ChessCoach2014@gmail.com). Or call him at (970) 415-3855.

**Lafayette Chess Club:** Meets Mondays, from 6:00-9:00pm at the Mojo Coffeehouse, 211 North Public Road in Lafayette. For more information send an email to [aerofirewp@yahoo.com](mailto:aerofirewp@yahoo.com) or contact Victor Creazzi at (303) 332-7039.

**Longmont Chess Club:** Meets Wednesdays from 6:30-9:00pm. Check [www.LongmontChess.com](http://www.LongmontChess.com) for current meeting location. Email Todd Burge at [Admin@LongmontChess.com](mailto:Admin@LongmontChess.com) or call (720) 220-5240.

**Northeast Denver Chess Club:** Meets Mondays and Thursdays from 4:00-8:00pm at 2575 Vine Street, Denver. Call (303) 320-6716 for more info.

**Pagosa Springs Chess Club:** Meets on Tuesdays (6:00-9:00pm) and on Saturday mornings (9:00-Noon) at Nello's Restaurant, 135 Country Center Drive, #A. For more information contact Anthony Steventon by email at [asteveton@centurytel.net](mailto:asteveton@centurytel.net) or at (970) 731-3029.

**Pueblo Chess Club:** Meets at the Hanging Tree Café, 209 South Union, 81003 on Tuesdays and Thursdays after 6:30pm. For more info contact Liz Nickovich at [chessliz@comcast.net](mailto:chessliz@comcast.net) or by phone at (719) 696-8389.

**Rifle Chess Club:** Meets Thursdays, 6:30-9:00pm, at City Hall. For information email Dane Lyons at [duilen@gmail.com](mailto:duilen@gmail.com).

**Stonebridge Games Chess Club:** (Longmont) Meets Tuesdays at 5:00pm. 449 Main Street, Longmont. Call (303) 776-3796 for more info.

