

FIDE Events at NorCal House of Chess

March 21, 2012
by Michael Aigner

*March Invitational players and arbiters stand with **USCF President Ruth Haring** (third from left) and tournament organizer **Ted Castro** (far right).*

Motivated by the success of the **Northern California International** in January, respected chess coach **Ted Castro** organized a **10-player IM-Norm Invitational** over two consecutive weekends. Due to demand, Castro plans to run similar events on a bimonthly basis. In addition to master level competition, these high level tournaments offer a unique local opportunity to **earn one of three norms for the International Master title**. *Well done Ted!*



At the top of the field are three veteran IMs: **Enrico Sevillano** (*photo on left*), **Ricardo DeGuzman** (*photo on right*) and **Ray Kaufman**. The Southern California master Sevillano (2562 USCF, 2502 FIDE), is the top seed. Rated second is DeGuzman, the 800 lb. gorilla of Northern California chess. Kaufman, the **son of a Grandmaster**, moved out West last summer after living near Washington D.C.



Three FIDE Masters, one Women's FM and three National Masters fill out the Category III tournament (**2307 average FIDE rating**). The youngest two participants are 22-year old WFM **Uyanga Bayambaa** and my former student, 14-year old NM **Yian Liou** (*photo left*). Players need to score 6.5 out of 9 for an IM norm. It ain't easy!



The big guns have certainly proven themselves so far. In early showdowns, Kaufman beat DeGuzman but lost to Sevillano. Cusi and Lobo have three draws and a win each, but still must face all of the IMs. High school freshman Liou drew four straight games, including against Sevillano and Kaufman. While his pairings for the coming weekend seem favorable, he needs to score a nearly perfect 4.5 out of 5 next weekend for his first norm. *Go Yiansky!*

Standings After First Weekend (4 rounds)

- 3.5 Sevillano (2502)
- 3.0 DeGuzman (2400)
- 2.5 RKaufman (2316), Cusi (2316) and Lobo (2236)
- 2.0 YLiou (2293)
- 1.5 Ishkhanov (2347) and Bayambaa (2110)
- 0.5 EPerez (2290) and BEvans (2256)

Would you like to play in one of these invitationals? Ted Castro says about 20 people have expressed interest, many his friends or students. Since he can't accommodate everyone, he set up another tournament: a **FIDE qualifier**. **The winner earns an invite to the next IM norm event in May.** *Four straight wins (or maybe 3.5/4) and you're in!* If you're interested, **contact Castro** right away because only a handful of seats remain. Recommended for USCF over 2000!

Good skill (luck)!! :-)