

CHESS AT PARK ROYAL

The Park Royal Shopping Centre was opened in 1950 and is regarded as Canada's first covered shopping mall. Chess has been played at the mall for fifty years; presumably this activity was casual and informal and thus undocumented. However, Park Royal was also involved in formal chess events in at least two areas:

The Chess Square

On 30 June 1984 a Chess Square was officially inaugurated at Park Royal. Consisting of tiles inlaid in the floor, the board measured 2.5 metres on each side, while the pieces were carved from maple wood; the kings were 60 centimetres tall and weighed 6 kilograms. The set was available to members of the public six days a week and was a popular feature at the mall. To celebrate the first anniversary of the Square the B.C. and Washington champions, Nigel Fullbrook and Jeremy Silman, played a match on 30 June 1985, co-sponsored by the BCCF and Park Royal. These matches continued on an annual basis until 1993, although it should be noted that there were occasional substitutions, the respective champions not always being able to attend. Silman, now a famous chess author (*How to Reassess Your Chess*, *Silman's Complete Endgame Course*) won the first match against Fullbrook, but then B.C. roared back with four straight wins. Washington won the next three before Jonathan Berry ended the series by defeating Corey Russell. The matches consisted of two games at a time control of 90 minutes per player; the latter added to the physical nature of the competitions simply because the clock stood several feet away from the board. One memorable instance was one of the Basanta-Pupols games, where Gary managed to make twenty moves in a minute to overcome a time deficit and actually win on time.

	Date	B.C. Representative	Score	WA Representative
1985	June 30	Nigel Fullbrook	0.5-1.5	Jeremy Silman
1986	December 6	David Ross	1.5-0.5	Matt Edwards
1987	June 13	David Ross	1.5-0.5	Bobby Ferguson
1988	June 4	Tom O'Donnell	1.5-0.5	Matt Edwards
1989	July 8	Gary Basanta	1.5-0.5	Viktors Pupols
1990	October 27	Brian McLaren	0.5-1.5	Neil Salmon
1991	July 7	Nicholas Spears	0.0-2.0	Neil Salmon
1992	July 11	Jonathan Berry	0.0-2.0	Elena Donaldson
1993	July 10	Jonathan Berry	1.5-0.5	Corey Russell

The Chess Square was a feature at Park Royal until 2006; in that year the floor tiling was replaced at the mall, but the chess board was not retained.



Jeremy Silman vs. Nigel Fullbrook, 1985



Jonathan Berry vs. Elena Donaldson, 1992; just visible is a chess clock on the table

B.C. Junior Championships

In 1987 West Vancouver celebrated its 75th Anniversary; as part of the festivities an open chess tournament was held at the West Vancouver Seniors' Activity Centre, won after a playoff by Leon Piasetski over John Donaldson. Adjunct to this was a three-section junior event at the Park Royal Chess Square site which attracted sixty-three entrants, followed by a twenty-four board simultaneous display by Duncan Suttles. The junior festival at Park Royal became an annual event for the next seven years, 1988-1994; these festivals included the B.C. Junior (U19) and Cadet (U15) Championships, along with other sections for younger players (in various years, U8 and U10, U9 and U11, or sections by grade). In other words, the equivalent of what we now call the BCYCC, except the first CYCC did not take place until 1999. These junior events were jointly sponsored by Park Royal and the BCCF, with total prizes in any given year in the \$1,400 range. It appears these chess collaborations received much support from Per Danielsen, the Park Royal Marketing Manager at the time (pictured with five-year-old Andrew Ho).

