

Dear Parents,

Every year on Easter Weekend, Victoria hosts BC's premier high caliber chess tournament, the Grand Pacific Open, taking place at the Grand Pacific Hotel in Victoria. This tournament attracts players from beginner level to Master level, and Hikaru Nakamura, one of the top players in the world, has even attended before. It is a professionally organized tournament with a high caliber of chess, organization, and venue.

This year, VCS hopes to attend as a team. It will be the first time the chess school has attended a tournament outside of our own school together, and attending as a team is a great way to boost the confidence of our players, especially those attending a large-scale tournament such as this one for the first time. On the tournament website <http://grandpacificopen.pbworks.com/w/page/15387541/FrontPage> you can find all the information there, including logistical details, the pre-registered list, and so on. Please take a look at this page to get an idea of the type of tournament the GPO is.

One of the perks of this tournament is the great rate offered by the **hotel** to participants and their families. The hotel fills up very quickly, and since they have a 24hr cancellation policy, it is wise to **book well in advance** even if you are undecided about attending the tournament. Their information can be found at: [www.hotelgrandpacific.com](http://www.hotelgrandpacific.com).

As Easter Weekend is one of the busiest weekends to travel on the **ferries**, if you are planning to take your car on the ferry for the tournament it may also be wise to reserve in advance for that as well, which they do for a small fee. You can see their website at: <http://www.bcferries.com/>, and their sailing schedule at: <http://www.bcferries.com/schedules/mainland/tssw-current.php>

With regards to costs, there is a **registration fee** that differs based on section and time of registration. Please see the tournament website's main page (scroll to near the bottom) for the details. Additionally, as we are attending as a team, Maxim will be leading the team, but we will have a coach onsite as well. To cover the costs **for this coach**, there will be a fee per player, depending on how many students participate. This is a small cost relative to other expenses and will allow for invaluable between-game analysis and preparation between the players and the coaches.

**To register** for the tournament, you can find this link <http://www.victoriachess.com/registration/gpo/> on the tournament website, and you only need to fill out this form and pay the entry fee. There are **three sections**, the Premier, U1900 (CFC rating under 1900) and U1400 (CFC rating under 1400). You may pay extra to play up a section if your rating is within 100 points of that rating ceiling, i.e. 1850 can play in the Premier section for an additional cost, but 1790 cannot. You can check your CFC rating at [www.chess.ca](http://www.chess.ca) . **If you don't have a CFC rating, you are unrated and may play in U1400.** More details about CFC membership requirements: <http://grandpacificopen.pbworks.com/w/page/54618009/Policies>.

We would like to stress that this is a very high level tournament, with players from all around the world of up to grandmaster strength participating. We are not attending with the expectation for any of our players to have a perfect score, but simply with the goal to **expose our students to a higher caliber** tournament and give them an invaluable experience towards their chess. Travelling to another city, playing in a hotel, and meeting many new people is one of the greatest parts of being a chess player of any level and an experience many students have not had by simply playing on weekends at the chess school.

In order to organize our VCS team, **please confirm with us whether or not you are playing by March 12<sup>th</sup> 2016.** Remember to book the hotel, investigate booking the ferry, register for the tournament (done through the tournament website, NOT our website), and let us know, all as soon as possible. You can email Vivien at [vivien@vanchess.ca](mailto:vivien@vanchess.ca) to confirm your participation.

If you have any questions about the VCS team going to GPO, feel free to ask us. Otherwise, if you have questions about the tournament itself, as we are not affiliated with the organizers, please direct your questions to them at [grandpacificopen@gmail.com](mailto:grandpacificopen@gmail.com) .

We hope to see everyone there!

Maxim Doroshenko, VCS Principal