

Giant-topplers can't fall master

Peters faces 30 at once at LCC, calmly defeats all but four players

By JOHN CROWLEY
Of the Emerald

John Peters. Doesn't he cut Barbara Streisand's hair? No, he plays 30 games of chess at once and gives out chicken coupons.

In an exhibition at Lane Community College Wednesday night, Peters showed the talent that's made him a Senior Master in the chess world.

Born 27 years ago in Boston, Peters learned the rules of chess as a tyke, but didn't start playing seriously until high school. From that point, he advanced rapidly through the ranks of chessdom, capturing the championship of the New England Open in 1971.

After that came more victories, including good showings in the U. S. and World Student Team championships. Eventually his success persuaded him to forsake all else, including his education at M. I. T., for his game.

He defended his reputation Wednesday night in a fast-moving volley with 30 would-be giant topplers in the Lane cafeteria. Shuffling thoughtfully from board to board, Peters battled the challengers with sure, quick moves. Silently, never looking back, the master managed to beat all but four opponents.

"Winning — a sense of satisfaction — keeps me interested in this game,"

Peters said. "It beats almost any job I can think of." Wednesday's exhibition was only one stop in this month's

tour of 17 such shows. His sponsor, Church's Fried Chicken, sends him on three or four such tours a year.

"Mr. Church is an amateur chess player, and a real booster. He sees this as a good way, too, to get some unusual publicity for his chicken," said Peters. "At least he's got the chess trade."

Peters, now living in Hollywood, also writes about chess for several publications, and will soon be married to "a retired chess whiz." He leaves for England soon to compete in a large international tournament.

"Chess is not a young man's sport," he said. "And it's not for old men, either. There's a great amount of stress involved. The most successful chess players are in their prime."

The 30 players who took on Peters Wednesday night were in their prime, yet 26 of them went down in flames.

"Playing Peters is a reward in itself," said Steve Fletcher, instructor at Sweet Home Junior High and coach of the chess club there. That team, state champs two years running, won top honors at the U. S. Junior High Championship in Minneapolis last year.

When the smoke cleared, four players had managed to hold their own against the champ. One battled to a draw, and received as his prize a coupon good for a Church's chicken dinner. The three ecstatic players who beat Peters won a coupon good for a family dinner, which includes ten pieces of the cluckers.

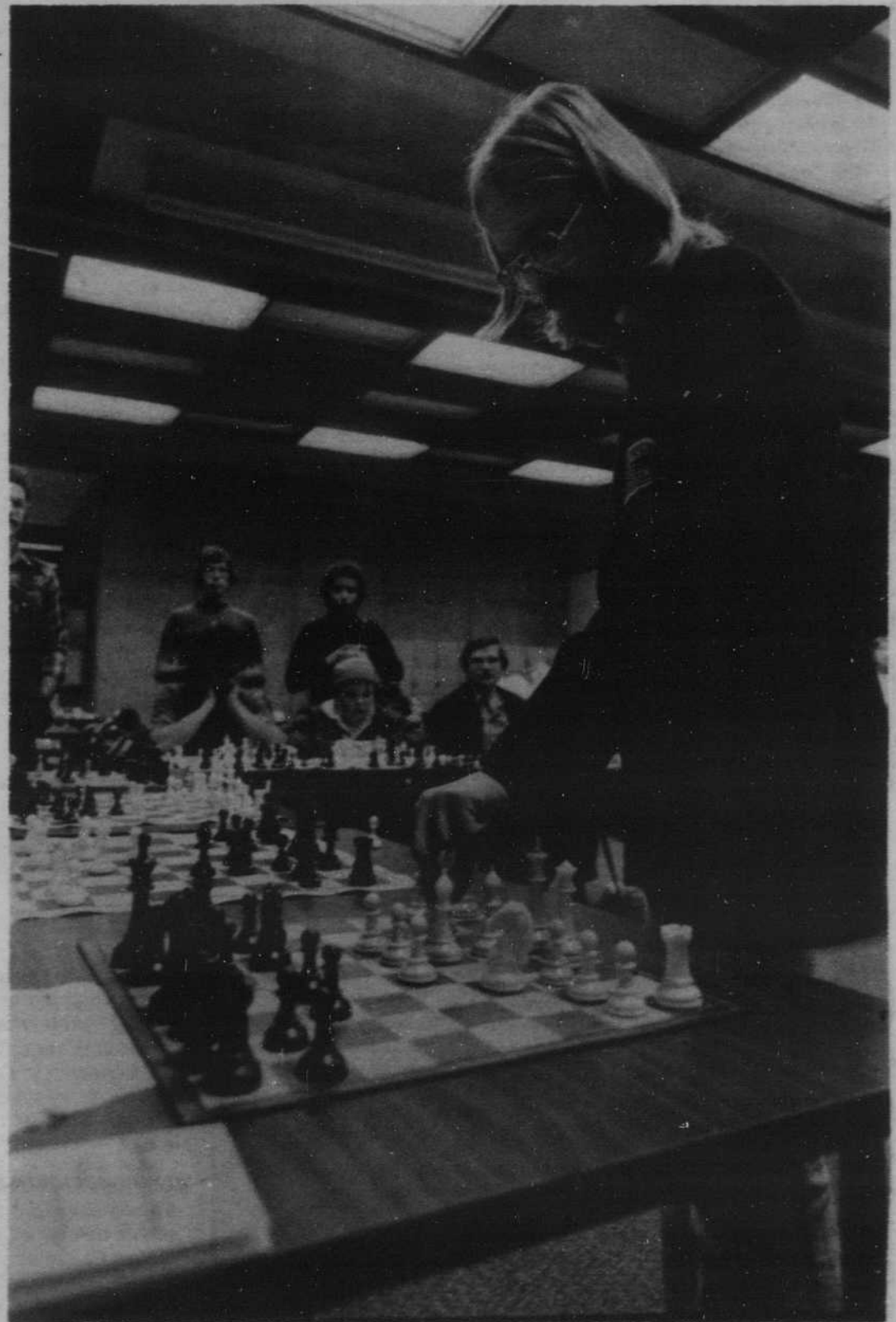


Photo by Dennis Hickok

Chess master John Peters showed his stuff to a crowd of more than 50 players and enthusiasts at Lane Community College Wednesday night, taking on 30 opponents at once. Peters, one of the top players in the country, won 26 of the games, lost three and drew one.

OCE prez will speak Sunday

Reflections on a meeting last spring between Oregon College of Education Pres. Gerald Leinwand and President Anwar Sadat will be shared with the public by Leinwand at 7 p.m. Sunday, in Temple Beth Shalom, 1995 Broadway NE, Salem.

Leinwand was among a group of 13 American state college and university presidents on a 10-day mission to study higher education institutions in Egypt and Greece at the invitation of those governments.

On his return, Leinwand reported that Sadat sees peace in the Middle East as the path that will lead to the development of human services, such as education, for the Egyptian people.

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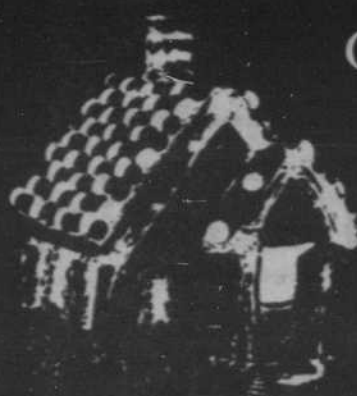
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