

INTERNATIONAL RAPID CHESS TOURNAMENT

PAUL KERES MEMORIAL '2006

Paul Keres was one of the most important figures in the history of chess; he is loved and respected by his fellow countrymen not only because of his great talent but also because he shared the fate of his fatherland in reaching the world arena.

Paul Keres - one of the greatest players in chess history, a leading contender for the World Championship for a third of a century, and perhaps the strongest player to have never played a match for the World Championship. Thanks to his modesty, honesty, and open - minded approach to chess, Keres was respected and loved by not only his fellow Estonians, but also by chess enthusiasts the world over. An interesting fact is that Paul Keres is probably the only chess player whose portrait is on a banknote - the Estonian five kroon bill.

In 2000, he was elected the Estonian Sportsman of the Century.

The International Chess Tournament "Paul Keres Memorial", has a tradition that goes back to 1991. The tournament had its source in the wish to mark particularly the 75th anniversary of Paul Keres, honorary member of Estonian Sports Association Kalev. Beginning from the 4 - th tournament , the next tournaments are played rapid and with preliminaries and finals. Since the 9- th tournament the women final play were also organized. The tournament takes place in the time close to the birthday /7th January/ of Paul Keres. This year's tournament is dedicated to the 90th birth year of Paul Keres.



Named tournament is turned very popular and is one of the top events in Estonian chess life.

We have had many world champions and remarkable chess players in our tournament. Such as N. Capridashvili, M. Chiburdanidze, B. Spasski, V. Smolov, X. Jun, J. Polgar, J. Timman, A. Khalifman, V. Ivantshuk, A. Shirov, P. Svidler, T. Rajabov, S. Matveeva, A. Morozevitsh, B. Gelfand, A. Karpov a.s.o.

Estonian well known writer Ülo Tuulik informed the public on last year's opening ceremony that Anatoly Karpov is the tenth World Champion who has played in our tournament. Ülo Tuulik clarified that Alexander Alekhine, Robert Fischer, Garry Kasparov, Vladimir Kramnik and Rustam Kasimdzhanov have never been in Keres Memorial. On the 16th Paul Keres Memorial we will see once again one World Champion who has never been in Tallinn – Rustam Kasimdzhanov.

One part of the Paul Keres Memorial 2006 will be a symposium about Paul Keres with performers of the world class of chess - V. Smöslov, D. Bronštein, M. Taimanov, S. Gligoric, L. Portisch, B. Larsen, V. Kortšnoi, F. Olafsson, B. Spasski, J. Timman, A. Karpov and also well known Estonians like Mart Laar, Jaan Undusk, Paavo Kivine, Peeter Olesk a.s.o.

Moments of the Paul Keres Memorial 2005



At the opening ceremony of the last years tournament the 12th World Champion Anatoly Karpov said: “Paul Petrovich is embedded forever in my recollection as very calm, intelligent, and polite man. But on the chessboard he was really reborn, surprising his opponents with sharp lunges and hard-nosed battles.”



Alexei Shirov, two time winner of P. Keres Memorial said in turn that the main book which he had used to learn chess was “100 Games” by Paul Keres. “In comparison with my native town Riga, where tournaments in memory of Mikhail Tal are not widespread, Memorials of Paul Keres are world famous”.



In 2005 GM Alexei Širov triumphed (over Anatoly Karpov and Boris Gelfand) and won the tournament for the second year in succession.



GM Ekaterina Kovalevskaja /RUS/ and GM Pia Cramling /SWE/ are playing for the 1 place in womens finals.



Boris Gelfand emphasized that those who love chess to any extent know and esteem the contribution of Paul Keres to the game and its progress. "That's why many chess players go to Tallinn to play on this tournament", GM Gelfand said.