

2008-11-09

The KWA met in Dresden General Meeting 08-09/11/2008

The KWA met in "Elbflorenz" Annual Meeting on November 8th/9th, 2008

This year's general meeting was held in Dresden immediately after our [Brunswick anniversary celebration](#), the capital of Saxony was the obvious place for the meeting as a particularly attractive combination of chess events should be made possible for our members by a further attendance at the soon starting Chess Olympiad as well as at a "bridging" trip to Wrocław.



Our venue – the restaurant-café SchillerGarten situated directly on the river Elbe and at the base of the "Blue Wonder".

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The nice beer garden belonging to the restaurant and with a view of the Elbe is hardly visible here (right on the left in the picture). Even a book has been published on the traditional Blasewitz inn, see <http://www.schillergarten.de/...>



Here is the frequently quoted “Blue Wonder” – connection between the districts Blasewitz and Loschwitz. The bridge got its name owing to the blue coat of paint and because it was regarded as a wonder of engineering skills at that time. On the occasion of the Chess Olympiad four flags had been hoisted at the highest parts of the steel construction.

Our general meeting could start on time in the early Saturday afternoon – the room was nearly filled to capacity and the restaurant had dealt to our complete satisfaction with the technical precautions. The participants – members and guests – are listed below (in alphabetical order):
Hans-Henning Albrecht (temporarily), Ralf Binnewirtz, Iván Bottlik, John Donaldson, Bernd Ellinghoven, Tamás Erdélyi, Calle Erlandsson, Vlastimil Fiala, Gunnar Finnlaugsson, Hans-Jürgen Fresen, Tony Gillam, Karl Kadletz, Karl Klittich (temporarily), Matthias Limberg, Claes Løfgren, Manfred and Monika Mädler

(temporarily), Michael Negele, Toni Preziuso, Andreas Saremba, Petra and Siegfried Schönle (temporarily), Frank Schubert, Per Skjoldager, Jurgen Stigter, Bob van de Velde, Susanne and Heinz van Kempen.



General meeting in the "Gentlemen's Room" of the SchillerGarten. Centrally placed at the laptop beamer combination: Michael Negele who is appearing here for the last time in his function as German country's representative. As of now Karl Klittich will take on this task as his successor.



Jurgen Stigter and Michael Negele shared the presentation of the meeting. In the background visible are (from left) Matthias Limberg, John Donaldson, Andreas Saremba and Vlastimil Fiala.

The following pdf file will give you an overview of the agenda as well as of the different points dealt with (in the member section, log-in required).

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Manfred and Monika Mädler who together with our Dresden member Frank Schubert helped us with the organization of our meeting. The well-known Chess House Mädler is only about 10 minutes' walk away.



On the left our two Hungarian members – Iván Bottlik and Tamás Erdélyi, on the right the Icelander living in Sweden, Gunnar Finnlaugsson.



Susanne and Heinz van Kempen from Leverkusen, next to them (on the right) our Austrian member Karl Kadletz. Our Ken Whyld poster could be effectively placed too.



Tony Gillam and our new German country's representative Karl Klittich who had to start his return journey to Brunswick after a short attendance.



Two Rubinstein experts have found each other: John Donaldson (on the left) and Toni Prezioso (right). In between Andreas Saremba who will soon look again after the BoC database.

During the following tour of the city by bus only a small part of the numerous Dresden sights could be closely looked at. The historical monuments of the old part of Dresden were the centre of attention, they are partly lit with light at this time and therefore have a very impressive effect even on dull November evenings – the small photo selection below may roughly show that.



The universally known Dresden "Zwinger" (entrance) – a masterpiece of the courtly baroque – originally laid out as an orangery for August the Strong.

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The Catholic Court

Church on the Theaterplatz



The famous "Fürstenzug"

[Procession of Princes] – 800 years of Dresden history on Meissen china tiles!



The enchanting Coselpalais – a baroque Grand Café and restaurant near the "Frauenkirche"



Our guide Mrs Thieme had to summarize the Dresden building history in a nutshell. In the front our webmaster "illuminated by flashlight", on the left Hans-Jürgen Fresen looking at the night sky.



The “Frauenkirche” belongs to the most famous symbols of Dresden. Its rebuilding was completed in 2004.

You will find a series of additional photos – also of the three Elbe castles on the right side of the Elbe (Albrechtsberg Castle, Lingner Castle and Eckberg Castle) – in the following [picture gallery](#) (17 photos).

Finally we met for dinner in the restaurant "Kanzlei", a "gourmet haunt" in the Dresden district Striesen which had a quite extravagant menu.



A Scandinavian-German

dinner party: Per Skjoldager, Claes Løfgren, Hans-Jürgen Fresen and Matthias Limberg



Vlastimil Fiala, Toni Prezioso

und Andreas Saremba - obviously arrived at the hors d'œuvre.



Still waiting to see what

would happen: Tony Gillam, Frank Schubert, Susanne van Kempen and Ralf Binnewirtz



The meal for our webmaster has arrived meanwhile, Michael Negele can at least taste the cool wine.



bernd ellinghoven had joined the Mädlers – apparently they leaf through Scacchia Ludus I first.



Karl Kadletz and the Dutch

bridge expert Bob van de Velde

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The KWA duo from the Swedish

town of Lund – Gunnar Finnlaugsson and Calle Erlandsson

Our book market was due on Sunday morning, we can offer a small picture gallery of this meanwhile traditional institution as well.



The book market in the Bridge Room of the SchillerGarten – for each (chess) taste there was something available.

Additional 9 photos in this [gallery](#)!

— Manfred Mädler at the front door of his Blasewitz villa (with a chess keepsake from Brunswick)

In the meantime the Chess House Mädler nearby had also attracted some collectors who promptly made a strike in the antiquarian stocks of the chess shop.

On the occasion of the Chess Olympiad the Mädlers could notch up an increasing media presence: not only an article was published in the November issue of the local *Elbhang-Kurier* entitled "Schachhaus Mädler - Die Olympia-Schach-Uhr tickt auch in Blasewitz" with Manfred on the title page - "Schach macht nicht matt, sondern schlau!" ([title page](#) / [article - page 1](#) / - [page 2](#)), but also a nice pictorial report [Besuch bei Mädlers in Dresden](#) (by André Schulz, in German only) could be called up a little later at ChessBase which gives among other things some impressions of the "inner world" of the chess shop.

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Manfred Mädler showed us a private piece of memorabilia, it's the announcement of the last chess lecture Manfred has given in Dresden before his leaving to the west in 1951. (Click on the small picture on the right to enlarge.)

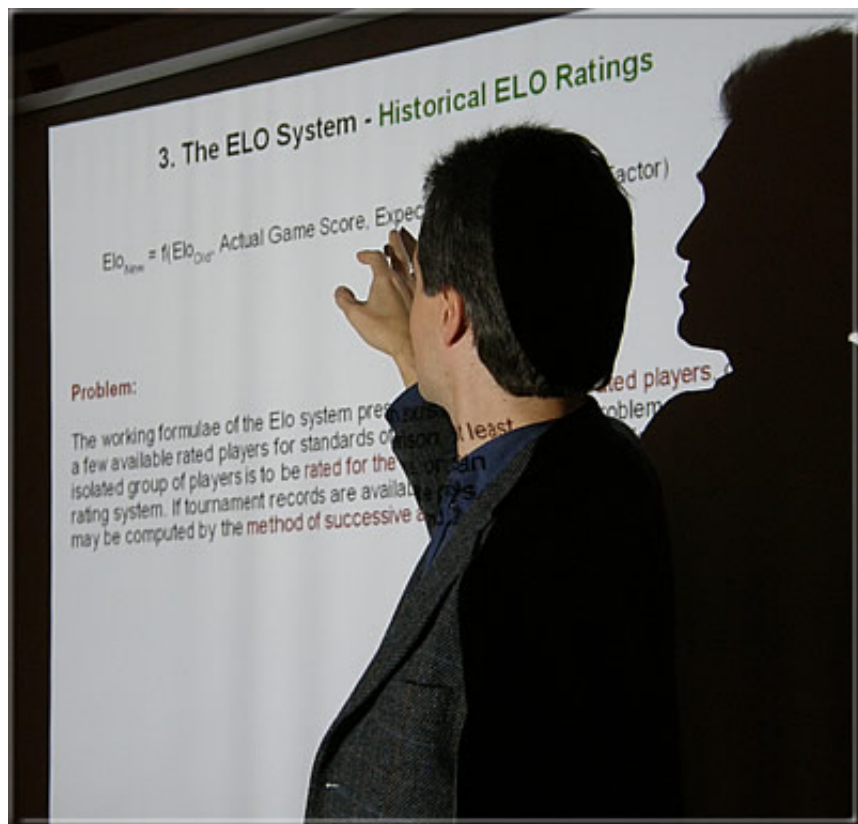
The Sunday afternoon was reserved for the lectures of our members, for that we had the magnificent Elbe Room at our disposal (see picture below).



Right at the beginning the plenary talk was on the agenda, this time it was given by our Dresden member **Frank Schubert** – it was a matter of honour for him to take on this task for the KWA without requiring any fee!

Frank Schubert's topic was "New developments in historical chess ratings and their potential benefit for chess historians" where after [his introduction](#) he first gave a historical overview of the early rating systems, then he went over to the Elo system and its developments and finally presented a new method elaborated by him which avoids the inherent disadvantages of the old systems: maybe the "VRIM – Variable Rating Iteration Method" will be able to supersede the current systems in not too distant future.

There will be done some more work on the still existing problem of long computing times, but there are already promising attempts at a solution. You will learn more from the presentation sheets Frank Schubert let us have for publication [as a pdf file (2.4 MB), explicitly in our member section only as the results are meant for a future publication].



This lecture, rich in content and deliberately not too scientifically formulated, met with an intense applause. In the end Frank Schubert accepted a present with pleasure – Michael Negele gave him a copy of our "Festschriften" bibliography signed by all participants.

There followed a varied series of short talks which gripped the audience owing to topic and content. **Hans-Jürgen Fresen** started with "My Anderssen collection and its history"...



... this talk especially appealing to our collectors, was at the same time a perfect transition to the visit of Wrocław next day – this city is known to have been Anderssen's home town and his grave is also in Wrocław (see the photos below).

In the picture on the left Hans-Jürgen with a chessman from the original Anderssen chess set.

You may read his lecture word for word in this [pdf file](#) (in German only), the Anderssen memorabilia presented (from his own stock) are accessible in this [picture gallery](#).



Anderssen's grave in Wrocław



and the memorial slab



Matthias Limberg (on the left) who became a KWA member on this Sunday afternoon is our 165th member and at the same time one of the youngest.



Michael Negele on the hunt for photographs – unfortunately he was not photographed himself during his talk.

The entertaining-humorous talk of **Michael Negele**, "Arnold Schottländer – a cripple, fond of chess" may be regarded as a little reverence for Wrocław as well. He explored the question who this Silesian master and pupil of Anderssen really was, who – being at a disadvantage owing to physical afflictions – attracted attention by his occasionally disrespectful behaviour at chess tournaments and moreover had a loose tongue. One of his bon-mots which survived him was a remark he was supposed to have made to his wife: "Louise, if one of us dies, I think I'll move to Berlin." (According to Edward Lasker, Chess Secrets.) For this lecture too we can offer the presentation sheets (with Michael's German-English mix) as a [pdf file](#) (1.5 MB). We may also refer here again to the already shown [grave of Schottländer](#) in Wrocław, there exists a small [Wikipedia web page on A.S.](#) as well.



The one half of the audience ...

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... and the other half



John Donaldson who above all had come to Dresden as the captain of the US-American Olympic team gave us pleasure by his talk on the oldest American chess club ("Some remarks to the History of the Oldest Chess Club in the United States").

This traditional club is located at the [Mechanics' Institute](#), San Francisco, we already know this institute a little from one of Michael Negele's expeditions in 2004 (see [On the Gold Rush's track](#)).

There is an extensive section of 11(!) web pages [History of the MI Chess Room](#) at the Mechanics' Chess Club web site presenting the chronicle of the club – plenty of reading material for all who wish to learn more about this issue.

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John Donaldson giving his talk, in the picture the homepage of the Mechanics' Institute



Perfect timing of a snapshot: I wonder what our webmaster wanted to show to his neighbour (Susanne van Kempen)?



Tony Gillam (as speaker) and Michael Negele (as operator of the laptop)

The following lecture by **Tony Gillam** dealt with a generally scarcely noticed German chess master, the title "Newest research on the smallest German grandmaster" referred to the Berlin master Carl August Walbrodt (1871-1902) and his dwarfish stature. Born in Amsterdam (Walbrodt's parents had moved just before his birth from the lower Rhine town of Wesel to the Dutch metropolis), he came later to Berlin where as a co-owner of an engineering works for pantographs and guilloching machines he was prosperous enough to devote his life largely to chess. His early decease had to be attributed to tuberculosis (certainly in conjunction with an aggravating alcoholism) which he had suffered from for many years.

That Walbrodt was actually a "dwarf" seems to be quite sure according to the most recent findings. Only a short time ago Edward Winter has touched on this question as well in his Chess Notes (see C.N. 5832 in [November 2008](#)).

PS: It seems to me quite remarkable that an [obituary of Walbrodt](#) was published even in the New York Times of October 4th, 1902 (pdf file).

On Walbrodt too a [Wikipedia web page](#) has been made.

You may derive from the vertical sequence of pictures (on the right) what a talented speaker our Tony is – physiognomy, facial expression, gestures and motoricity unify into an integrated whole!
(>> click separately on the small pictures)

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— Calle Erlandsson (giving his talk),
assisted by Jurgen Stigter

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Calle Erlandsson was the next to speak about the "Lachaga series", the subject had been prepared by him

together with **Jurgen Stigter**. The well-known series of tournament and match booklets were published over 40 years – 1943 to 1983 – mainly in Spanish language, edited by the Argentinian Milcíades A. Lachaga and including 158 (155?) issues altogether.

The presentation sheet on the right gives an overview of the first 27 issues (please click on the picture).

Finally **Karl Kadletz** dealt with the Lasker biographer (Johann) Jacques Hannak in a lecture which picked out as a central theme the quarrel associated with the tournament Semmering-Baden 1937: The pugnacious Hannak had fallen out with the organizers and among other things had provoked the promoters of the Panhans tournament with hostilities in his (inofficial) tournament book (here the [introduction / first page](#) from *Semmering – Baden 1937*; as well as a [dedication to Tartakower](#)). The reply of the tournament committee was not long in coming ... [Die Rache des Enttäuschten (The revenge of the disappointed) – [front page / excerpt](#)].

But in turn Hannak started his counteroffensive by the polemic *Die Nachtigallen vom Semmering* (The Nightingales from Semmering): here two excerpts – [first page](#) / [last page \(14\)](#).

Even ten years ago (1927) Hannak had come into the police's field of view: owing to an action of Karl Kraus against the editorial staff of *Arbeit und Wirtschaft* where Hannak was working the latter was questioned by the police and also a house search ordered – here the [statements and orders](#) as well as the [court decision](#).



At a late hour **Gunnar Finnlaugsson** still asked to speak, in his commemorative speech he was reminiscent of the late Bobby Fischer (>> [grave of Bobby Fischer](#)), and he gave the audience some tough nuts to crack with a short Bobby Fischer quiz.



• [Claes Løfgren, John Donaldson and Calle Erlandsson during the Bobby Fischer quiz](#)



• [John Donaldson looked very satisfied at the closing dinner in the SchillerGarten.](#)

In this [picture gallery](#) we have included additional photos from Sunday afternoon and evening.

Words of thanks are addressed to all who played a substantial role in the success of this meeting:
To Mr Jacobs as our host in the SchillerGarten ...



Mr Thomas Jacobs – our host took care of a pleasant stay and made sure that things went smoothly during our meeting.

... but also to all other members who were involved in the preparation and the realization of our meeting or who enriched our chess knowledge by a lecture. Dresden 2008 deserves to be awarded a worthy place among all our general meetings – San Francisco is waiting for our visit next year!