



Chess makes a difference in rural Brazil

by Albert Silver

2/25/2014 – Though chess in schools is nothing new, the projects that revolve around it usually take place in or near large metropolitan areas. However, as posted at the official site of the Brazilian government, a physical teacher in a remote part of Mato Grosso state, one of Brazil's largest but least populous states, started a chess class as a tool for social inclusion that has been a huge success.



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The official site of the Brazilian federal government highlighted [this story](#)

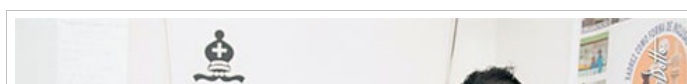
Cleiton Marino Santana, a teacher of physical education and chess at the Municipal School Jardim das Palmeiras, in Campo Novo do Parecis, Mato Grosso state in Brazil, came up with a project to attempt to change the reality in the school, where there reigned a complex of inequality and social vulnerability.



Campo Novo do Parecis is located in a largely agricultural area of Brazil

The project "Chess as a Tool for Social Inclusion" was one of last year's winners of the seventh edition of the Brazilian Teachers Award, in the category Free Themes, in Last Years of Elementary School.

With funds from the André Maggi Foundation, for public utility, he obtained furniture, computers, a printer, an electronic tablet, 70 sets of plastic chess sets, ten sets for tournaments, six books and 45 chess clocks, among other supplies. "Our goal was to create the best chess instruction classroom in Brazil," says the teacher.



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8/31/2015 – This year's edition of the Sinquefield Cup features the world's best players including Carlsen, Caurana and Nakamura amongst others. Daniel King starts analysing at 8 pm (GMT+1). [View the whole schedule!](#)

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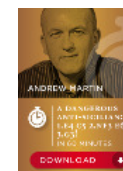
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Cleiton Marino Santana shows chess software on the tablet to students

In addition to the students who participate in the classes, the project has students-monitors that help in the organization of the room, teaching the game and other activities. Each monitor is responsible for a project area and receives weekly training on the technical aspects of the game and teaching methodologies. According to Cleiton, this contributes to the development of student-monitor in items such as working with a schedule, responsibility, organization, respect, patience, self-control and other skills necessary for future integration into the labor market.

The chess classes were so successful that they soon exceeded the allotted physical education time, to which they had been restricted. The project was expanded and today the chess classroom is open Monday through Friday from 7 AM to 11 AM and from 1 PM to 5 PM. On Saturdays it runs from 7 AM to 11 AM, serving more than 750 students per week.

With such repercussions, other schools showed interest, which has led Cleiton to prepare student members of the project to act as monitors teachers in other institutions.

With a degree in physical education and postgraduate in teaching in higher education, Cleiton considers chess a great educational tool as it contributes to develop student concentration. Among the good results of the project, he cites performance improvement, such as better average grades among students who play the game compared to the others.



Despite its enormous size, totalling more land mass than France and Germany put together, Mato Grosso state only has a population of just over three million people

Students invited to participate in competitions at local, regional or national events had the opportunity of seeing new places and other cultures. For the teacher, who has been teaching for 12 years, the activity thus contributes to broaden the horizons and perspectives of students. He further states that the opportunity to participate in tournaments and make trips is an incentive for students who are not project members to devote time to chess.

The development of the project "Chess as a Tool for Social Inclusion" also allowed the integration of parents and students, learning technologies (the computer and digital tablet), the creation of the Campo Novo Chess Association and the highlight of the project monitors in the second phase of the Brazilian Olympics of Mathematics.

Translated by Albert Silver



Albert Silver

Born in the US, he grew up in Paris, France, where he completed his Baccalaureat, and after college moved to Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. He was champion of Rio de Janeiro with a peak rating of 2240, and was a key designer of Chess Assistant 6. In 2010 he joined the ChessBase family as an editor and writer at ChessBase News.

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3/7/2014 – Actually the World Champion was stopped: by GM Gilberto Milos, 50, Elo 2583, six times Brazilian Champion, who got the only draw conceded Magnus Carlsen in the six game of the four-player double round robin. Carlsen, who had spent the morning playing blindfold against blind players, scored 5.5/6 in the semifinal stage. Big illustrated report with [pictures from the Brazilian venue](#). [\[Discuss\]](#)

**Carlsen keeps smashing**

3/9/2014 – The reigning World Champion continues annihilating competition the rapid events in Brazil. First he won a four-player knockout event, where he did concede a single draw (that qualified him to the final) and he was in trouble in just one game. At the end of the day he took the tournament, no questions asked. The open has started, and he is 5/5 [but he is not alone](#). [\[Discuss\]](#)

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