

COLUMBIA CHESS CLUB TRAVEL TEAM 2026

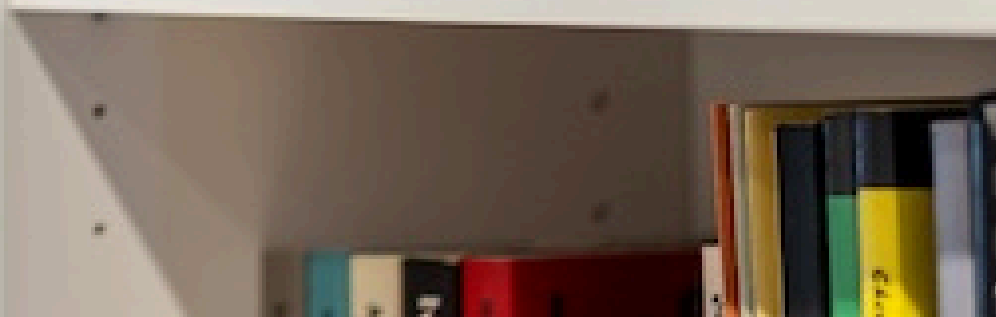
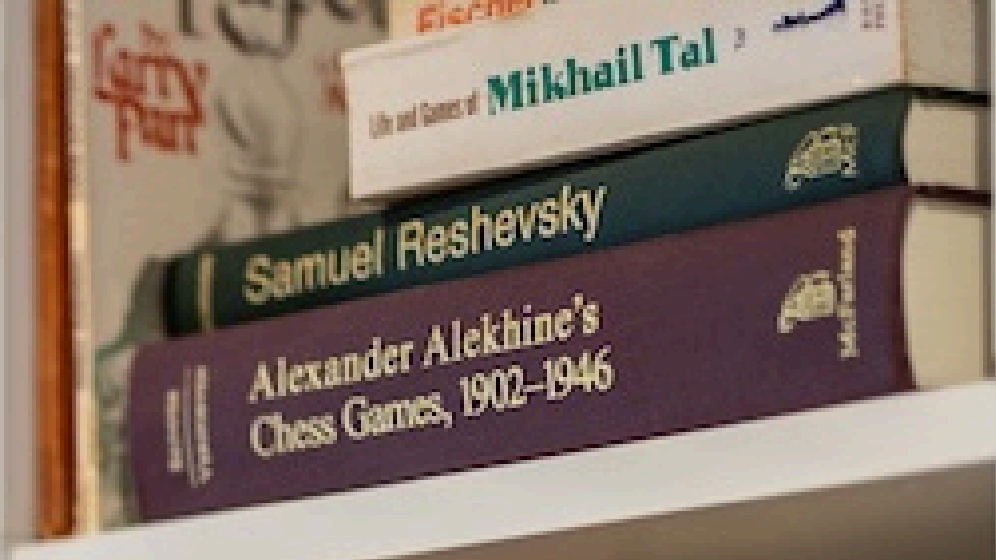
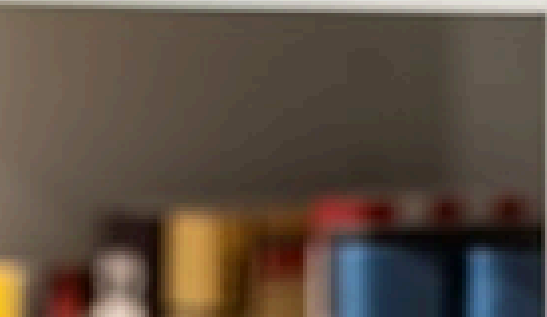
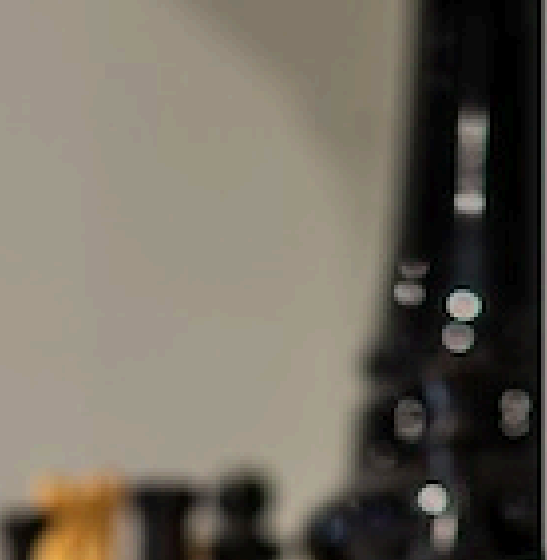


ONBOARDING PACKET

EXCELLENCE
PRIDE

COMMITMENT
CAMARADERIE

SPORTSMANSHIP
DETERMINATION



Life and Games of **Mikhail Tal**

Samuel Reshevsky

Alexander Alekhine's Chess Games, 1902-1946

The Illustrated Chess

Test Your Tactical Ability

Chess Tactics for Champions

Lessons in Chess Strategy

Essentially

Strategic Chess

Chess for Dummies

Genius in Chess

Amateur to IM **Jonathan Hawkins**

Critical Moments in Chess

The Art of Chess Analysis

Chess

Chess

Chess

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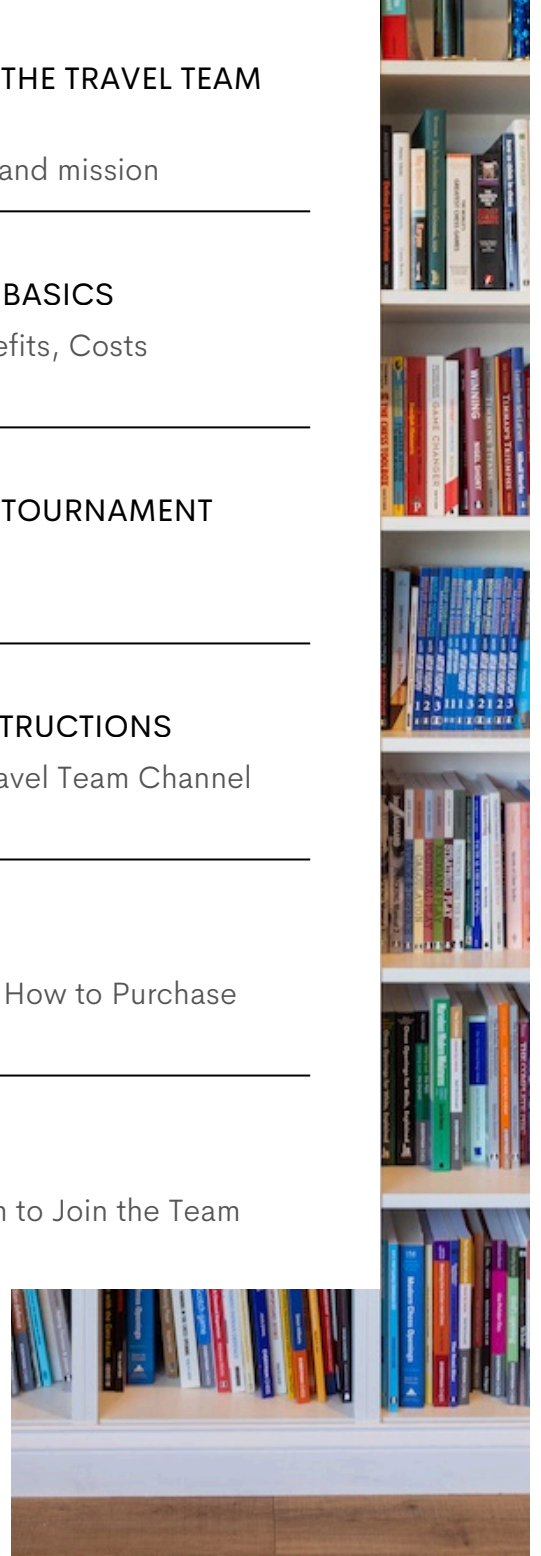
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From the Travel Team Captain



Dear Club Members and Aspiring Travelers,

We are thrilled to launch the Columbia Chess Club Travel Team! This initiative allows dedicated players to compete in select tournaments beyond our local scene, showcasing our club's strength, sportsmanship, and passion for chess. The team will focus on building skills, gaining rating points for the club, and creating lasting memories while proudly representing Columbia.

This packet outlines everything you need to know about joining, committing, and thriving as part of the team. If you're on a path of improvement and ready to bring honor to our club, we invite you to apply!

Paul Copeland

PAUL COPELAND
TRAVEL TEAM CAPTAIN
2025 CLUB CHAMPION

TRAVEL TEAM LEADERSHIP



Paul grew up playing chess with his brother Sam. He was the runner-up in the 2004 and 2005 high school state championship. After high school he stepped away from competitive chess for a while. He began working with club president James at Westinghouse. During COVID he reconnected with chess and began playing competitively again in 2021. Since returning he has taken his rating from 1230 to over 1800.

PAUL COPELAND
TRAVEL TEAM CAPTAIN



James, who grew up in multiple states including Hawaii and Texas, learned chess at 10 from his father and started clubs in school. At 28, he entered his first tournament and revived the Columbia Chess Club in 2021, directing over 60 events in a year. The 2022 Columbia Open became South Carolina's largest open chess event. While balancing family life, James aims to enhance the local chess community and elevate its popularity to that of other competitive sports.

JAMES BRANDMAIR
CLUB PRESIDENT



Brandon is a long-time chess player who has been coaching individual players and school clubs since 2018. Brandon's students have won multiple State Championships and represented South Carolina at the national tournament of champions. Brandon has also taught after-school classes and was the coach of the Lake Murray, Ballentine, and River Springs Elementary School chess teams who won first place in several tournaments.

BRANDON JORDAN
CLUB OWNER

GET STARTED:

Travel Team Basics

The Travel Team consists of select Columbia Chess Club members who attend designated out-of-town tournaments to pursue chess excellence and represent the club. The team aims to build ratings and foster camaraderie through travel. **Members commit to attending at least four of the scheduled tournaments each year.**

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

The Columbia Chess Club Travel Team is open to any player who:

- Has demonstrated a commitment to chess and is on a clear path of improvement (regardless of current rating or age).
- Will represent the club well at events through strong sportsmanship, respectful conduct, and dedication to the game.

Applicants must be Paid Members (or join upon acceptance). No specific rating threshold is required; focus is on character, commitment, and potential.

BENEFITS

- During-tournament coaching from **NM Mike Sailer**, either in-person or remotely via Discord.
- Official team uniform to proudly display Columbia Chess Club pride.
- Structured opportunities to bring rating points and recognition back to our club.
- Camaraderie, mentorship, and shared growth with teammates.



COSTS & RESPONSIBILITIES

Players are fully responsible for coordinating and paying for their own:

- Travel (transportation, lodging).
- Tournament registration/entry fees.
- Required uniform items (shirt; optional jacket).

Uniform costs will be detailed in the purchasing instructions below. All other tournament-related costs are the individual's responsibility.

THE CLUB IS GOING PLACES:

Anticipated Tournament Schedule

51st Snowstorm Special

February 28, 2026

- Location: Bethel United Methodist Church, Charleston, SC
- Format: 4-SS, G/45+5
- Registration Fee: \$40
- Restrictions: None



ALTO (At Least Twenty-One)

April 10-12, 2026

- Location: Hilton Garden Inn Southpark, Charlotte, NC
- Format: 5-round classical
- Registration Fee: \$139 by Mar. 30, \$155 thereafter
- Restrictions: Must be Age 21+



ANTICIPATED TOURNAMENT SCHEDULE (CONT'D):

TBD, Charlotte Event

May, 2026

- Location: Charlotte Chess Center, Charlotte, NC
- Format: TBD, See Reverse Angle, Quads, or FIDE Saturdays not yet scheduled
- Registration Fee: ~\$47.50
- Restrictions: None



Castle Chess Grand Prix

June 26-28, 2026

- Location: Emory University, Atlanta, GA
- Format: 5-SS, G/90;+10
- Registration Fee: \$125 by June 23, \$140 thereafter
- Restrictions: None



2026 US Open Championship

August 3-9, 2026

- Location: DeVos Place Convention Center, Grand Rapids, MI
- Format: 9-SS, 40/100, SD/30, +30
- Registration Fee: TBD, ~\$155
- Restrictions: None
- Full details not yet published



ANTICIPATED TOURNAMENT SCHEDULE (CONT'D):

TBD, NC / GA Event

October, 2026

- Location: NC or GA
- Format: TBD
- Registration Fee: TBD
- Restrictions: None



National K-12 Grade Championships (Scholastic)

December 11-13, 2026

- Location: Rosen Shingle Creek, Orlando, FL
- Format: 7-SS, G/90;d10
- Registration Fee: ~\$105 early
- Restrictions: K-12 Players Only
- Full details not yet published



DISCORD INSTRUCTIONS

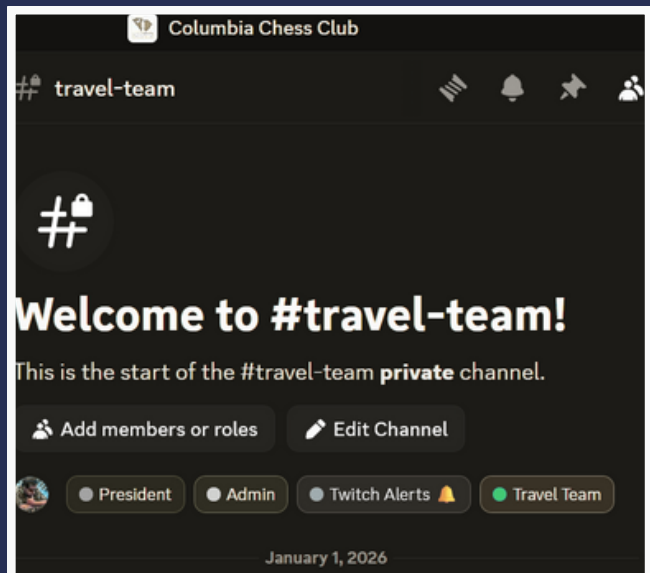
Team communication happens in our dedicated Travel Team channel on the Columbia Chess Club Discord server. This channel facilitates coordination for upcoming events, carpooling ideas, on-site updates, and general team discussion. Discord is an organized chat room, with installable desktop and mobile phone applications and mute settings so you can manage notifications.

ALL TRAVEL TEAM MEMBERS OR THEIR PARENT/GUARDIAN MUST BE A MEMBER OF THE TRAVEL TEAM DISCORD CHANNEL

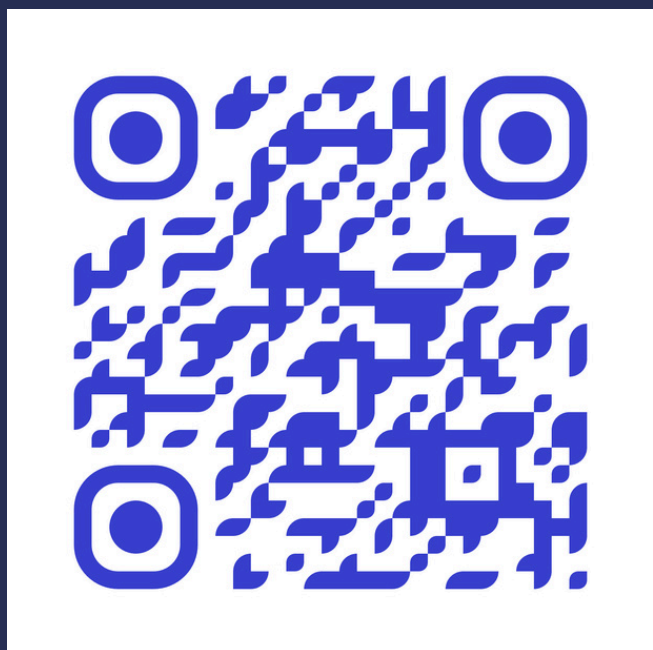
TO JOIN

Join the main Columbia Chess Club Discord server (if not already a member). Once accepted to the Travel Team, you'll receive an invitation to the private Travel Team channel.

Scan the QR code to access the server. After joining please request access to the Travel Team channel in chat.



Discord Server Invite:



UNIFORMS



JERSEY : REQUIRED



JACKET: OPTIONAL

REQUIREMENTS

All Travel Team members are required to purchase and wear the official Columbia Chess Club Travel Team shirt at tournaments and maintain their uniform in good condition. An optional team jacket is available for added pride and warmth.

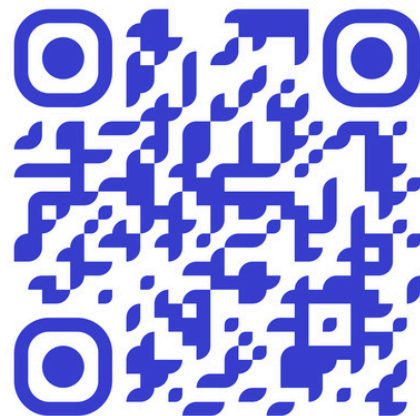
- Required: Team Jersey – Available exclusively at raven.gg (see store for sizing, styles, and pricing ~\$55).
- Optional: Team Jacket – Also at raven.gg (~\$70).

Payment and delivery details via the store. Wear your uniform to represent the club proudly!

ORDER LINK

Once accepted to the Travel Team, players should act quickly to purchase their uniform at

www.raven.gg/stores/colachess/



UNIFORMS (CONT'D)

JERSEY : REQUIRED



JACKET: OPTIONAL



PURCHASING INSTRUCTIONS AND STYLE GUIDE

For consistency, **only provide a "Gamertag" during checkout consisting of your last name:**

Customise your product
Enter your customisation.

Gamertag

Name

Number

Flag

Because the uniforms are customized to our club and with your own last name, there is a **lead time of approximately 30 days**. Please order well in advance of scheduled events!

Uniform should be worn with a **dark pair of jeans** or with a **dark pair of shorts** as seasonal temperatures dictate. Jersey should be kept untucked.



APPLICATION:

Apply to Join the Travel Team

Please complete and submit this application via email to the Columbia Chess Club at info@columbiachess.org. Applications will be reviewed on a rolling basis.

Applicant Information

Full Name: _____

USCF ID: _____

Current Rating (USCF): _____

Email: _____

Phone: _____

Age/Grade/School (for K-12): _____

Discord Username (required): _____

Commitment Statement

I understand the requirement to attend at least four tournaments on the schedule and agree to make every effort to fulfill this commitment. I will represent the Columbia Chess Club with excellence.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Short Statement (Attach, Optional but Encouraged)

Provide a short statement describing your commitment to chess improvement and why you'd like to represent the Columbia Chess Club on the Travel Team:



Selection Process

Applications are reviewed and members selected by the Travel Team Leadership, in consultation with the Youth Team Captain and other club leaders. Selection emphasizes demonstrated commitment, path of improvement, and fit for positive representation. Accepted members will be notified promptly and added to the Discord channel.

Oath of Commitment

Once accepted and uniform obtained, members will recite the following oath (aloud at a Thursday club meeting):
"I, [Your Name], pledge my unwavering commitment to excellence in the game of chess. I will represent the Columbia Chess Club with honor, sportsmanship, and dignity at every tournament I attend. I vow to play with focus, respect my opponents, uphold the highest standards of conduct, and strive to bring pride and strength back to our club through my efforts on the board."

Contact Information

Travel Team Captain:
Paul Copeland
803.528.4404
copeland.paulb@gmail.com

Club General:
info@columbiachess.org
803-569-0938



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**COLUMBIA
CHESS
CLUB**

