

2023 MN Chess HOF nomination of Andy Polis

Andy Polis was born in 1935 in Latvia. He was raised during WWII. Andy learned the game from his dad who was a strong player. In 1949 the Polis family immigrated from Latvia.

For fourteen years the Hosterman Jr. High chess teams in New Hope, Minnesota were lead by Andy Polis. His teams won six state titles starting from 1976 and ending in 1983. Including in this was a dominant four year run from 1980-1983 despite playing against formidable opposition.

Twice Andy Polis climbed the highest mountain—the National Championship. In 1980 and 1986 Hosterman won the 8th Grade and Under Section.

Sometimes a coach has to coach without enough players or funding. Andy Polis took just five players to the 1979 National tourney and managed a 3rd place finish!

A 2nd place finish is an honorable result. At state, six times from 1975 to 1987 Hosterman achieved this result including a four year run from 1984-1987.

Andy Polis was a great fundraiser. He had many plans for players to contribute. Players took turns in a booth selling pens, they worked different tasks at a carnival, sold candy to classmates, sold raffle tickets with great prizes and collected newspapers with the help of many parents.

Along with fundraising, few could match his organizational skills. It was grounded in attention to detail. He had the “book”. Inside was the ratings of the players, the team results, pairings, standings, costs of travel, lodging, food etc.

His six top 3 finishes at the Nationals was the third most ever behind the 11 of Woodrow Wilson (IN) and the 9 of Vaux. (PA)

For 12 years Andy Polis's teams finished either in 1st or 2nd place at state, including the last nine years of his career.

During his coaching Andy Polis had the best record in Minnesota at the Jr. High School level and was one of the best coaches in the United States.

Andy himself says "he had the best players" or that "the elementary schools sent him the best players". Being humble is really the cornerstone of his skill and his accomplishments. He had a quiet way to motivate his players to work harder and to keep them playing and not quit.

Due to his amazing Jr. High record at both the state and national level, I strongly recommend Andy Polis for the Minnesota chess Hall of Fame.