

The Gambit

Nebraska State Chess Archives

Source: *Omaha Bee News*—March, 1898

Chess

Chess players in the western part of the state are taking an active interest in the formation of a State Chess association, and in response to a suggestion from this column have forced a temporary organization with the following officers: Nelson Haid, Dannebrog, president; C.L. Owen, Albion. Secretary and treasurer; T. N. Hartzell and Dr. G. N. Seeley, committee on constitution. A portion of a communication from the president is as follows:

“The formation of a State Chess association is now assured and I enclosed a copy of the constitution adopted. It is our desire to print the names of all charter members along with the constitution and all eligible persons who will make application to the secretary before April 10 will be enrolled as such. Arrangements are now being made for a correspondence tournament, to be started by April 20, in which all members are desired to participate. Informal games will also be arranged for such as do not wish to take part in a tournament. Enough members have already signified their intention to enter the tournament in insure a lively struggle for the championship. I will be pleased to hear from any one interested. Communications may be addressed to C. L. Owen, Albion, Neb.”

The scope and purpose of the organization may be seen from the following

October 2013-Special issue

Player of the Year rules (updated October 2013)

Constitution and Bylaws of the Nebraska State Chess Association or NSCA (updated October 2013)

The Nebraska State Closed Chess Championship criteria (updated October 2013)

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The Gambit serves as the official publication of the Nebraska State Chess Association and is published by the Lincoln Chess Foundation.

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Vice President (Omaha) John Hartmann
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For Chess Club information please visit the NSCA web site.

From Kent's Corner

This special issue contains three main items—**The Player of the Year Rules, the Nebraska State Chess Association Constitution and Bylaws** and finally the criteria of the **Nebraska State Closed Championship**.

The NSCA Constitution was published in the *Gambit* Vol. 33 # 1 January 1996 issue. **The document was reviewed** during a 2013 NSCA meeting with only a slight revision added.

The criteria for the **Nebraska State Closed Championship** was published in the January, 1988 issue of the *Gambit*. **The criteria for the State Closed has changed dramatically. There is a new format being used now.**

Kudos to **Bruce Draney** for his hard work in producing the NSCA Constitution and having the foresight to publish this important document in the *Gambit*. Bruce also wrote a very good 1996 article about the history of the Nebraska State Closed Championship which is not included in this issue but used as a reference in updating criteria.

As always, I'm in **Bob Woodworth's** debt for his research and support.

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Player of the Year Rules-2013-Revisions in Bold.

From *The Gambit* - Volume 44, number 1, January 2006-**Revised 2013**

Nebraska Player of the Year (POY) rules as written in 1987, revised in 1994, modified in 1998, and clarified in 2005 and Revised in 2013.

Purpose of the POY Awards

POY competition was set up to reward resident Nebraska members of the Nebraska State Chess Association for support of NSCA tournaments throughout the state during the year. It is intended that this increase the fun and participation in these events.

Award Categories

Nebraska Player of the Year

Nebraska Player of the Year Runner-Up

Nebraska Class B Player of the Year

Nebraska Reserve Player of the Year

Nebraska Scholastic Player of the Year-All school grades included.

The winner in each category will be presented **with a 1st place plaque and then medals. Please note plaques are roughly \$30.00 each to make.** A reserve player is a player rated under 1600 during the calendar year. A junior player is a player who is under 19 years of age during the year.

Rules and conditions for eligibility

1. The POY competition begins each year on January 1st and ends on December 31st.
2. Players unclear about the rules may request a written copy from the NSCA President.
3. Disputes about points awarded are resolved by the President if possible and may be appealed to a committee of at least 3 NSCA officers.
4. Only Nebraska residents may compete for the POY awards with the exception of USCF rated events that do not require USCF memberships (examples being the Cornhusker State Games and K-3 scholastic sections). **Please note there is no NSCA membership required. POY funding comes from a \$2 or \$3 surcharge from POY tournaments.**

5. When conditions dictate that a POY section must be combined with another section in order to have enough players, for, a section, this is permitted and encouraged to allow players to earn POY points.

6. Byes and forfeit wins shall count toward the awards.

7. In order to be a contender and be eligible for Player of the Year points to be counted toward POY prizes, you must play in half or more POY events scheduled for that calendar year. Let's use the following tournaments as an example, 1. The Midwest Open. 2. The Great Plains Open. 3. The Cornhusker State Games. 4. The Lincoln City Championship. 5. The Omaha City Championship—A POY contender must play in at least 3 out of the 5 tournaments listed above in order to be eligible for POY prizes. If there is an even number of tournaments (like 6 tournaments for example) a POY contender must play in half or 50 percent or more of the scheduled events to be eligible for POY prizes.

8. Players who change class during the year may request in writing to play for the higher class award.

9. If they direct a POY event, tournament directors and section chiefs receive points equal to their average in other POY events in which they played during the same year. No director or section chief may earn more than 50% of their points in POY competition for directing and they must still play in **(50 percent or more events—see note under 7 added 11/14/12)** events in order to be eligible. If they also play in the POY event, their POY points for that event are the points they earn through actual play.

Revision-3/29/15-As per request, here is the new POY criteria for TDs wanting to earn POY points thru their directing efforts. Here is the language—Certified tournament directors who organize, direct, or assist at tournaments which include a POY section will receive POY credit for that event based upon their percentage score for the year and the number of rounds in the POY event during which they directed or assisted. However, they can only receive credit for as many rounds in this fashion as they have actually played in POY events. Credit for directing will not be given if the director is playing in any section of the tournament. **Please turn to page 19 for more details and examples.**

10. It is recommend but not required that a POY tournament director be well compensated for his time and trouble in directing POY events.

11. In the event of a tie, the tiebreaker will be head to head. If that isn't available, for example, the tied players didn't play each other; the tied players will be declared co-champions.

POY Tournaments

1. All POY events must be announced in either Chess Life, the Gambit, the NSCA web site, or by flyers sent to most NSCA members one month prior to POY events. **It is recommended but not required that POY and State Closed events be one and the same. Here is a listing of recommended tournaments that should be both POY and State Closed eligible. 1. The Midwest Open. 2. The Great Plains Open. 3. The Cornhusker State Games. 4. The Lincoln City Championship. 5. The Omaha City Chess Championship. If the tournament organizer decides to have the State Closed qualifying event and not count it as a POY event, or the other way around, this distinction must be very clear. As per calendar year, only a maximum of 6 (six) POY tournaments are allowed.**

2. Directors who wish to organize a new POY event must notify the NSCA President within 6 weeks of the event.

3. POY tournaments must be USCF ratable as regular chess tournaments and must have time controls no faster than G/60. (No G/10 or G/15 tournaments).

4. All Nebraska **Residents** are eligible to compete in POY events.

5. Only the top (open) section of a tournament may be a POY event.

6. POY events must be held in Nebraska or in contiguous suburbs of surrounding states. (e.g. Council Bluffs).

7. All POY events must be on consecutive days but no POY event may last more than 3 consecutive days. (e.g. the Omaha or Lincoln city championships could not be POY events since they have a format of 1 game day/night for 4 weeks, nor would a 5 day insanity).

8. All POY events require Nebraska **residency of all players** in the Open POY section of that tournament.

Obligations of the director of a POY event.

1. Directors who organize POY events are responsible for following and enforcing the above rules.

2. The fee for holding a POY event shall be one advance entry fee for the open or POY section. A check for this amount should be sent to the NSCA president within 1-2 weeks after the completion of the event. **This fee will help offset costs for POY plaques and medals.**

3. The director must send a crosstable to the NSCA president clearly showing scores of all players in the event within 1-2 weeks after the event is completed.

4. Players or directors who are found to have cheated or unfairly influenced results of POY competition may be subject to penalties which might include suspension from directing or competing in POY events or forfeiture of fees already paid to the NSCA. Enforcement of the rules shall be the function of the office of NSCA president.

5. Complaints about conduct of a director or player in a POY event should be made in writing to the NSCA president in a timely manner. Complaints should only relate to the conduct of the player or director in regard to the POY rules and their proper enforcement.

Should additional funding become available, more awards or cash prizes in addition to the trophies or plaques already offered may be awarded in this competition. Thank you to all of you who support Nebraska chess by playing in POY events.

Please turn to the next page.

**The Constitution and Bylaws of the Nebraska State Chess
Association. NSCA**
**Final draft-From the January 1996 issue of *The Gambit* with
slight revisions on October 2013.**

Article 1 **Mission Statement for the Nebraska State Chess
Association or the NSCA for short.**

The Nebraska State Chess Association shall promote chess at age and ability levels throughout the state of Nebraska. Under USCF bylaws, the NSCA will organize or be responsible for carrying out the following policies to accomplish the above mission.

Section 1. The NSCA shall maintain a State Affiliate.

Section 2. The NSCA shall organize and stage a State Championship each year and designate an official State Champion.

Section 3. The NSCA shall organize and stage a State Scholastic Championship and shall designate high school, junior high and elementary school champions each year.

Section 4. The NSCA shall maintain a tournament clearinghouse in order to coordinate events within the state and adjoining states and communities.

Section 5. The NSCA shall see to the publication and distribution of a newsletter to its members.

Section 6. The NSCA shall select delegates, voting members and alternates to represent the State of Nebraska at annual USCF delegate meetings each year.

Article 2 **The governing board:**

The NSCA shall be governed by a seven member policy board consisting of a President, a Treasurer, a Secretary, three Regional Vice Presidents, representing the Omaha area, the Lincoln area and the western Nebraska area and an historical archivist. These officers shall be elected by the NSCA membership and shall serve three year terms.

Section 1: The President. The president of the NSCA shall be the chief executive of the NSCA board. He/she, shall be responsible for carrying out the day by day activities of the organization. The president shall be elected by the membership and shall serve for a three year term. He/she, shall help to arrange for the publishing and distribution of a newsletter to NSCA members, outlining chess events and activities going on in the state, thus fulfilling the requirements of Section 5 above. He/she shall help to organize tournaments and/or appoint other certified directors within the state to do the same. He/she shall oversee the organizing of Nebraska State Championship events in which state titles will be awarded, thus fulfilling the requirements of Section 2 and 3 above. He/she shall oversee and administer various chess awards given by the NSCA during the year. The president and the treasurer shall each year determine a plan for the use of funds from the U.S. Chess Federation and shall report to both the membership and the USCF on how such funds were used. The president shall preside at NSCA membership meetings. Should the president resign or otherwise relinquish the position before his/her term is completed, the Regional Vice president who has served the longest in his/her position shall serve as acting president until the membership can elect a new president.

Section 2 The Treasurer. The treasurer of the NSCA shall be responsible for establishing and maintaining bank accounts and keeping track of finances for the organization. The treasurer shall have access to these funds to make necessary purchases and payments for the NSCA. The treasurer shall inform the President and the membership three times a year at official NSCA meeting of the financial status of the organization. The treasurer shall work closely with the President to determine a plan for the use of funds from the U.S. Chess Federation.

Section 3: The Secretary. While the secretary is responsible for keeping the minutes of the official NSCA meetings, his/her main duty shall be to keep and maintain accurate lists of the names and addresses of current NSCA members. Three times a year at official NSCA meetings, (if possible), the secretary shall give a report to the membership detailing the number of active, paid members in the organization.

Section 4: **Regional Vice Presidents.** The NSCA membership shall choose one regional vice president from each of the three regions in the State. Each of these regional vice presidents shall serve as the representative for their section of the state. They shall be responsible for organizing or helping to organize tournaments and handling chess matters in their part of the state. They shall serve three year terms. Each regional Vice President shall serve as a full member on the NSCA Board and shall have one vote in board policy making.

Region 1 shall be defined as the Omaha-Metro area and shall not extend west of the Elkhorn river nor south of the Platte River.

Region 2 shall be defined as the Lincoln and surrounding area and shall not extend north of the Platte River, nor west of Nebraska (Highway 81)

Region 3 shall be defined as the Western Nebraska Region and shall include cities, towns and communities west of Highway 81 (if south of the Platte River) and west of the Elkhorn River (if north of the Platte River). Residents of the communities who live in towns on highway 81 shall be considered to be the residents of Region 3 -**Special note---Per the NSCA Board meeting on April 20th it was decided not to fill the Region 3 Vice president position unless there is a future need.-October 8th 2013.**

Section 5: **NSCA Historical Archivist.**

The duties of the Archivist would be to collect, organize and maintain historical records relating to chess in the our State. This would include but not be limited to, newsletters of both a local and state wide nature, newspaper clippings related to Nebraska Chess and other memorabilia or items related to chess that might be acquired by the NSCA.

Article 3: **NSCA membership.**

Section 1: Types of NSCA membership

The NSCA shall offer memberships to both residents and non-residents of the state. Membership type and cost are set by the NSCA Policy Board.

Section 2: Benefits and rights of NSCA members.

NSCA membership will entitle a person to play in any or all NSCA sponsored events during the calendar year. It will also allow the person to play in tournaments in other states (in most cases) without having to purchase that state's membership. It will entitle the person to a yearlong subscription to the State Newsletter. It will entitle the person to vote in NSCA elections or to hold office as a member of the NSCA policy board. It will make the person eligible for chess awards, scholarships and stipends given by the NSCA throughout the year. In addition, only NSCA members may play in State Closed Championships.

Non-Residents may purchase memberships in the NSCA and may enjoy all benefits except the right to play in the Nebraska Closed Championship, or hold Nebraska State Titles, or to be NSCA Policy Board members.

Section 3: **Membership meetings**

The NSCA shall hold membership meetings during each calendar year. One meeting shall be held during the State Closed Championships, one during the Cornhusker State Games and one during the Midwest Open. All current members are entitled to vote on matters brought before the membership at these meetings. The NSCA President shall be responsible for conducting these meetings, and the secretary if possible should submit the minutes of these meetings so that they may be published in the Gambit.

Section 4: **Quorums**

No legislation may be passed without a quorum being present as defined here. Should the NSCA paid membership be 200 or fewer

as of January 1st of the year in question, a quorum of at least 10 paid members including 2 officers must be present. If NSCA membership is greater than 200, a quorum shall consist of 5% of the total paid membership including two officers. The NSCA secretary shall inform the president at the beginning of each calendar year as to what constitutes a proper membership quorum.

Article 4: Amending this Constitution.

Section 1: Method 1

This document may be amended by a 3/4 vote of the executive board and a simple majority vote of those members present at the NSCA membership meeting.

Section 2: Method 2

Should 51% of the total membership as of January 1st in which the meeting is held, vote either by proxy or in person to amend this document, then such amendments shall be adopted with an NSCA Policy Board vote.

Article 5: Compensation

All officers of the NSCA serve voluntarily and are not compensated with salary. The NSCA shall reimburse officers for the following expenditures if they submit receipts or bills to prove such expenses were incurred.

1. Supplies and material used to conduct NSCA business (e.g. paper, printer ribbons, stamps, envelopes, etc)
2. Phone bills directly related and necessary to conducting NSCA business.
3. Mileage if directly related and necessary to conducting NSCA business.
4. Postage if directly related and necessary to conducting NSCA business.

Article 6: NSCA property.

Section: 1 The NSCA claims ownership of its membership lists and information compiled by its officers. Use of such information shall entitle the NSCA to fair compensation.

Section: 2 All computer software, supplies and equipment purchased by NSCA funds shall be transferred back to an active NSCA officer should the person using them retire, resign, or relinquish their position.

Article 7 : State Championships and State Titles

The NSCA shall hold exclusive rights to award State titles in Nebraska, including both Scholastic and Open or Closed titles. The NSCA may award the right to organize and run tournaments which grant state titles but they retain ultimate control and responsibility for them under Article 1, Section 2 and 3 above.

Please turn the page.

Criteria for The Nebraska State Closed Championship

Revision 2012 and 2013

The New Proposed Nebraska State Closed Criteria

Based on discussions with Kent Nelson & Bob Woodworth

Final draft-November 6th, 2012

1. Introduction and Rational.

The existing Nebraska State Closed criterion has been in place since the 1980s. Overall, it has been a decent system in determining who qualifies for participation in the Nebraska State Closed Championship. Some difficulty with the present system includes confusion in determining qualifiers and the use of tie breaks needed to seed qualifiers for the Closed. For example, **Mr. Joe Wilson** wins the Midwest and Great Plains Open in the same year. The Midwest Open was held in March, the Great Plains Open was held in November. Both tournaments are qualifying events. Does **Mr. Joe Wilson** qualify for the State Closed Championship based on his winning the first tournament? (The Midwest Open) or does he qualify for the State Closed based on his winning performance from the second tournament, (The Great Plains Open?). Traditionally, based on previous years experience with one player winning two or more State Closed qualifying events, the concept of “first come, first serve” has been used. So, using the above example, **Mr. Joe Wilson** will be qualified for the State Closed based on his result in the first tournament, which, in this case, is the Midwest Open. Now staying with the above example, with **Mr. Joe Wilson** also winning the Great Plains Open (in addition to the Midwest Open) **Mr. Joe Wilson** has previously qualified for the State Closed, so, a determination is needed to figure out who qualifies for the State Closed spot from the Great Plains Open. Traditionally, it has been the second highest finishing player after Joe Wilson. In this example, the second highest finisher is Mr. Joe Wilson son, *Mr. John Wilson*. Simple enough, *Mr. John Wilson*, is the State Closed qualifier. But wait, in addition to *Mr.*

John Wilson, Joe Wilson's other sons have tied with John. Their names are Mr. Jacob Wilson and Mr. Chris Wilson. All the Wilson boys have identical scores of 4-1. Each Wilson boy wants to join their father, Mr. Joe Wilson, in the State Closed Championship. What tie breaks should be used? Sometimes the tie breaking is very difficult, unclear and requires research to figure out under the current system. This at times, is very time consuming and a hardship on the NSCA President. Under the present system, 2 out of the 3 Wilson boys will be very upset for not qualifying for the State Closed Championship which in turn will lead to terrible family discord until the next qualifying State Closed tournament. And guess what!? The same thing could happen again under the current system.

The reason for the new proposed State Closed criteria is to simplify the system and create a very clear path to the Nebraska State Closed Championship. It is based on a point system generated by player results in key tournaments. Details follows.

2. Who can qualify for the Nebraska Closed Championship? The answer is Nebraska Residents only.

Nebraska Resident Definition:

A person working full time in Nebraska, living in a house or apartment in Nebraska, and in possession of an Nebraska driver's license or state identification.

Or

Anyone attending K -12 in Nebraska in the past 6 months.

Or

Anyone who has had an Nebraska residence as their primary residence for the previous 6 months prior to the start of the tournament in which points would be allowed. Members serving in the armed forces and on active duty elsewhere shall be considered as residing within the State.

Or

Any college student who is enrolled full time in an Nebraska school at the time of the qualifying tournament.

3. Format.

- *Open Sections only.* It is okay if Reserve and Open Sections are combined into one Open Section.
- *How many open spots or “seeds” for the Closed?* There will be 5 open spots that players will be vying for. The defending State Closed Champion is already qualified.
- *How are the winners determined?* It is all based on the total individual scores from the qualifying tournaments. The higher the point total, the more likely you’ll win a spot in the Closed Championship but it will require more active tournament participation than under the current system in order to win. For example, you have 5 tournaments and with each tournament being 5 rounds for 25 rounds or a 25 point potential. **Mr. Joe Wilson** scores 22 points out of 25 points. *Mr. John Wilson* scored 20 points out of a possible 25. Mr. Jacob Wilson scored 19 points out of 25 points and Mr. Chris Wilson scored 18 points. Rounding out the qualifiers is Mr. Johnson with 17 points. All the above winners will join the defending champion, Mr. King, in the Closed Championship.
- *Tournaments.* The State of Nebraska will endeavor to have at least 5 qualifying State Closed Championship tournaments per calendar year. The recommended tournaments that are about to be listed are not limited to just 5 events per year. Other tournaments can be organized and advertised as State Closed qualifying events if the following condition is met. All State Closed qualifying events (to be scheduled) require at least 2 months notice in advance. The tournament organizer will need to contact the NSCA President or the Nebraska Tournament Coordinator or both, to report the announcement of the tournament.
- *The recommended tournaments are.* 1. The Midwest Open. 2. The Great Plains Open. 3. The Cornhusker State Games. 4. Lincoln City Championship. 5 **The Omaha City Championship with the maximum of six POY Tournaments per year. ***Bob Woodworth’s note.**
- *Time Controls.* It is strongly recommended but not required that

the time controls for the qualifying events be not faster than Game/60.*****Bob Woodworth's note.** For the actual State Closed Championship, the recommended time control is **G/120 w/delay of 5 seconds.*******Bob Woodworth's note.** It will be up to the State Closed organizer to determine if the Sudden Death time control has a delay of 5 seconds or more.

- *Tie Breaks.* The first break is head to head. If that fails to determine a seed for the State Closed, then a 2 game playoff will be scheduled. The playoff tournament format will be determined by the NSCA President.
- All *Forfeits & Byes* are to be included in the overall Closed-qualifying point totals.

In the event of a last minute *withdrawal* or *withdrawals* just prior to the State Closed Championship, the next player(s) of the Closed total points-lists qualifies for the open spot(s). The possible Alternates will be given a “heads up” prior to the Closed Championship so that they would be ready to play if there is a withdrawal.

The devil is in the details.

Questions proposed: (A). How do we resolve the problem of a 3-way (or more! tie for the 5th & last seeded spot AFTER the head-to-head tie-break is applied?? A Playoff & how?

In the event of 2 or more players tied for the final 6th spot of the Closed, the NSCA President will organize a round robin playoff. It is recommended the NSCA President sit down with the playoff players and solicit their input in terms of time controls, playing sites etc. However, the final adjudication in terms of the playoff format is the NSCA President's decision alone to make. This includes the time controls, the playing site and the tie-breaks to be used during the playoff round-robin.

(B). If there is a withdrawal by a player(s) DURING the CLOSED, are all of their remaining games scored as 1-point forfeits??

This occurred during the 2012 Closed Championship. A player became ill and he had to withdraw. The TD declared the remaining un-played games from the withdrawn player as forfeit wins for the opponents he was scheduled to play prior to withdrawing. If possible, however, in the spirit of the good sportsmanship, all players seeded into the State Closed should play every round with exceptions for illness or emergencies.

(C). From the CLOSED TOTAL- Points List, will the highest point total accrued from the year's tournaments automatically determine the annual POY winner??

The short answer is yes. And the first tie-break used to determine the Player of the Year is head to head.

(D). What is the tie-break for 1st & 2nd place in the CLOSED tournament ITSELF??

The first tie-break is head to head. The second tie-breaks recommended by the USCF rule book for round robins is the Sonneborn-Berger System.

How do we record and assign pairing numbers to the “Super Six” State Closed participants?

For documentation proposes, the seeding/pairing numbers for the 6 participants in the CLOSED will start with the #1 slot being assigned to last year's defending Closed Champion with # 2 thru #6 being ranked by total points accrued (during the qualifying cycle) with the #6 player having the lowest point total of the five.

For the Record, just so you know cheating is a Big No, No.

If there are proven to be any PRE-ARRANGED game results by any of the competitors to ensure a player(s) seat in the CLOSED, then all concerned participants are banned from play in that year's CLOSED.

**POY Formula for calculating points for TDs.
Including an example.**

POY Points—TD Qualifying Scenarios:

- 1. Question—TD plays 10 rounds, direct 20 rounds.
Answer—TD only gets credit for 10 rounds.**
- 2. Question—TD plays 10 rounds, directs 10 or less rounds.
Answer—TD gets credit for all directed.**
- 3. Question—TD scores 70% in OTB games.
Answer—TD also gets 70% in directed rounds.**
- 4. The TD directed points can only be calculated at the end of the calendar year.**

Example below on how POY points can be calculated.

- Player named Tony played in the Midwest Open and scored 3.5 points in 5 rounds. He played in the Lincoln Championship and scored 1 point in 3 rounds. He played in the Great Plains Open and 3.5 points in 5 rounds.**
- Therefore, Tony scored 8 points out of a max of 13 (which is 13 total rounds).**
- So we then divide 13 into 8 (which is a fraction 8/13) and obtain the Percentage (%) of .615 or 61.5%.**
- Next, Tony Directed (& didn't play) in the Omaha City Championship in December, 2014 which had 4 rounds (or a total possible score of 4 points.)**
- So, to calculate the POY TD points for Tony, we multiply 61.5% times 4 (which is a total max, possible score in the Omaha tourney) and arrived at 2.46 (which when rounded to the nearest half point) is 2.5 points that Tony was awarded for directing the Omaha City.**
- Therefore Tony earned 2.5 points for directing.**

Notes and Comments

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