

## **Words of Encouragement for Knights Quest Players: You Are Better Than Your Rating!**

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As an instructor and Knights Quest tournament assistant, I have observed a lot of games of young players under 1000 rating. I have also studied many of those games as a chess instructor for these players. I want to tell all Knights Quest players and their families that in my professional opinion, you are all better chess players than your rating shows!

Watching the under-800 section for many months, I have to say I have never in my life seen so many players with 700 ratings play chess so well. When I compare your games in the Quest to other games in outside tournaments, the 700 rated Quest players are at least as good if not better than the 900 rated players in other tournaments. I am sure the same will be true for the 500 rated Quest players in the under-600 section and the 900 rated Quest players in the under-1000 section this year.

You may wonder why this happens. I think it is because you are all playing most of your games against other Quest players whose ratings are also lower than their real chess strength. If a group of 20 players with 700 ratings all play each other month after month, they will all improve a lot, but their average rating will not go up because they are always playing against the other people in the same group who are also improving along with them. The same is true for the 600 and 500 rated players who have to play against the 700 rated players.

The moral of the story is, don't be discouraged if your rating doesn't go up a lot in the Quest tournaments! In reality, the experience of playing in the Quest every month is making you a much better chess player. Later, when you go to other tournaments, you will find yourself beating much higher rated opponents and your rating will suddenly go up hundreds of points in a very short period of time. Other players will wonder how you improved so fast. The answer is: from the experience you gained by playing in the Knights Quest every month!