

In memoriam Kaja Parker (27.07.1965–31.12.2016)

The chess life of Võrumaa has suffered a very painful loss. Serious illness took away our active chess life promoter. At Osula Basic School, she helped the future grandmaster Meelis Kanep, Siim Kanep and others to get the wind in their wings. She organized chess tournaments for youth organizations, founded a chess club at Roosu Farm, and gave chess lessons at Osula and Antsla schools. Considering quarter of a century of pedagogical work at Osula Basic School, volunteer work as the district elder of Võrumaa Women's League and much more, she was the most conscientious and hard-working youth worker. At the school, she simultaneously taught science, biology, geography, and chemistry. In 2010, she earned the Ignatsi Jaagu Medal from B.G. Forselius Society for her merits in promoting educational life.



Kaja Parker (Lehemets) was born in Kilingi-Nõmme, where she also graduated from high school. Her brother Eiki Lehemets and her chess teacher Jüri Kotka injected a chess bug into her. Kilingi-Nõmme youth teams were always worthy competitors for larger chess centers and often won medals from various competitions. In 1978, Kaja was on the school team, representing Estonia in Soviet Union youth chess games. She was always among the best female chess players in her district; also in the top ten at the Estonian Youth Championships. In 1983, with the Kilingi-Nõmme Secondary School team, she won first place in the Estonian Youth Summer Games, at that time it was considered the Estonian youth team championship.

Kaja was a strong position player, completing good positions in games with a longer time control. In addition to the school, Kaja graduated from the chess department of the sports school with excellent grades and was awarded the certificate of a chess coach and a referee. From there on she continued mainly as a chess coach. As the permanent member of the Võru city team, she won a silver medal at the 12th National Winter Games, coming first on the women's table. In 2016, she represented Estonia at the NATO Championships, achieving 89th place (as the only woman in the tournament). Kaja Parker left behind her mother, two brothers, her husband, three adult children and three grandchildren.

ÜLAR LAUK
KRISTEL VILBASTE

Source: Estonian Chess Federation

<http://www.maleliit.ee/et/uudised/34-ametlikud-teated/1822-in-memoriam-kaja-parker-27071965-30122016.html>