

RAUZER ■ GEMS FROM McKELVIE ■ NATIONAL INVITATIONALS

CHESSLIFE

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THE Penguin(GM1) STRIKES AGAIN!

GM ANDREW TANG WINS 2023 U.S. OPEN

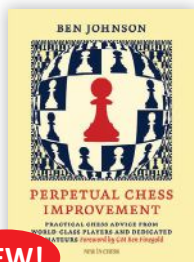


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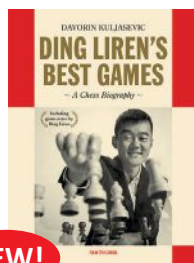


NEW!

The best practical advice

Ben Johnson

Ben Johnson hosts the Perpetual Chess Podcast, in which he is talking chess with many of the world's top players, trainers and passionate improvers. In this book, Ben looks for common ground and shared principles in all chess advice on the podcast. You will familiarize yourself with the collected wisdom of guests such as Anand, Nakamura, Ramesh, Hendriks, Aagaard, Christopher Chabris and Neal Bruce.



NEW!

The Best Games of the World Champion

Davorin Kuljasevic

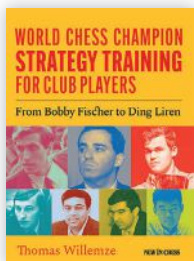
In April this year, Ding Liren sensationally defeated Ian Nepomniachtchi, to become the 17th World Champion, winning the hearts of chess fans with his incredible fighting spirit. He said the match 'reflected the deepest of his soul'. In this biography, best-selling author Kuljasevic follows and explores his rise, from his first chess steps in provincial China to the top of the chess world.



Magnus Carlsen & David Howell Explain the Grind

Magnus Carlsen and David Howell show how to win a seemingly equal chess position. Their first book tells you how to keep a game alive, keep posing problems, recognize the first small mistakes, and grind your opponent down until he cracks.

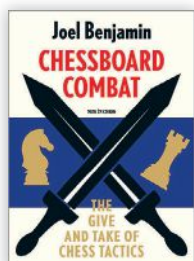
The book is converted from a popular Chessable course. The lively conversations of the two friends translate very well into a highly instructive chess manual.



100 Strategy Lessons from the World Champions

Thomas Willemze

This book offers you 100 strategic exercises from the games of the best of the best, the World Champions from Bobby Fischer to Ding Liren. IM Thomas Willemze, one of the best chess improvement authors around, will show you foundational techniques such as improving your worst-placed. Solving these exercises will help every ambitious club player better understand how to make and execute plans.



The Give and Take of Chess Tactics

Joel Benjamin

A chess tactics manual with a twist. Usually, tactics training involves puzzles with a clear solution. White wins brilliantly, or Black wins. But in real life, chess is messy. Sometimes tactics work, and sometimes they don't. That's why former US Champion Joel Benjamin tells the complete story of attack, defence, and counterattack!

A Rich and Dynamic Opening Repertoire for White

Christof Sielecki

Coach Christof Sielecki has thoroughly revised and updated his 2018 chess opening manual, one of New In Chess' all-time bestselling opening books. This new 632-page hardcover edition contains everything you need to know to play 1.e4 with confidence. The repertoire is suited for players of all levels and the variations are easy to remember and require little or no maintenance.

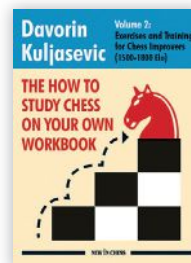


NEW!

Exercises and Training for Improvers, Volume 2

Davorin Kuljasevic

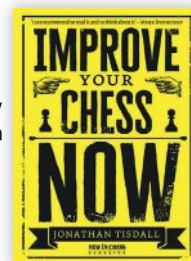
This second workbook in Davorin Kuljasevic's *How to Study Chess on Your Own* series is optimized for chess players with an Elo rating between 1500 and 1800 but is helpful for anyone between 1200 and 2000. The astounding success of his series made clear that thousands of chess players want to improve their game and like to work on their training at least partially by themselves.



Improve Your Chess Now

Jonathan Tisdall

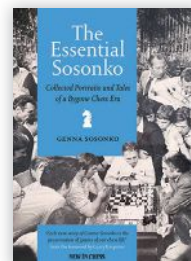
A modern classic, originally published in 1997. Adult improvers often name this book as one of their primary sources in Ben Johnson's *Perpetual Chess Podcast*. With infectious enthusiasm, Tisdall covers a wide range of topics, including visualization and calculation, pattern recognition, the psychological aspects of chess, the art of defence and the wisdom of blindfold chess – all still relevant more than 25 years later.



Tales of a Bygone Chess Era

Genna Sosonko

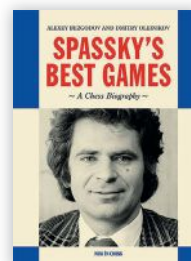
'Each new story of Genna Sosonko is the preservation of grains of our chess life', says Garry Kasparov. No writer can tell you more about legends such as Tal, Korchnoi or Bronstein and personalities such as Chepukaitis or Nikolaev. This 840-page hardcover edition is a collection of the portraits Sosonko wrote for New In Chess, plus 100 pages of stories published elsewhere. A must-have for every chess aficionado.



Spassky's Best Games – A Chess Biography

Alexey Bezgodov & Dmitry Oleinikov

World Champion Boris Spassky was a chess genius and a perfect gentleman. He was, for example, gracious in defeat after he lost his title to the American Bobby Fischer in 1972. This wonderful new biography includes more than sixty of his best games and a biographical sketch of more than a hundred pages.



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CHESSLIFE

December

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A Pleasant Diversion

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companion for a professor and
pianist.

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Still the Champ!

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Tingie to retain title.

BY JOHN HARTMANN



ON THE COVER

He's one of the fastest chess players alive, able to keep up with the likes of Carlsen, Nakamura, and Naroditsky in bullet chess. But after attending Princeton, GM Andrew Tang appeared to have given up serious chess in favor of a career at SIG. Good news for penguimg1 fans — his win at the 2023 U.S Open shows his best may still be ahead.

PHOTOGRAPH BY DANIEL DAY



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CHESSLIFE

December

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CONTRIBUTORS



IM JASON LIANG

(Cover Story) is the reigning US Chess Grand Prix champion, taking top honors in the 2022 competition. The 16th ranked American junior, and tied for 70th on

the overall October list, he made his first appearance in a U.S. Junior Championship this summer. This is his first article for *Chess Life*.



VSEVOLOD RAUZER

(In Defense of Chess Classicism) was a Soviet master and opening theoretician. Among his best-known

inventions are the Richter-Rauzer Sicilian and ideas in the Yugoslav Dragon. A champion of his native Ukraine, he participated in multiple Soviet championships with varying success. He died in 1941 at the age of 33.



JOSHUA ANDERSON

(Neil McKelvie) lives in Exton, Pennsylvania. He has been president of the Chess Journalists of

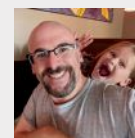
America since 2015 and chief coordinating judge since 2012. He is currently writing a comprehensive work on Donald and Robert Byrne.



FM BREWINGTON HARDAWAY

(National Invitationals) is a 14-year-old FIDE master with three IM norms.

Ranked number 36 among American juniors as of the October list, he is a popular streamer for *ChessKid.com*. In June 2023 he finished in clear second place at the U.S. Cadet Championship. This is his first article for *Chess Life*.



JOHN HARTMANN

(Women's World Championship) is the editor of *Chess Life* and *Chess Life Kids*. In 2023 he won the

"Best Story of the Year" award from the Chess Journalists of America. Beginning this spring he will run the chess club at Westgate Elementary School in Omaha, NE, where he hopes his daughter will at least learn to like the game a little.

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**Youngest-Ever USA
Female to Earn the IM Title!**

Alice Lee

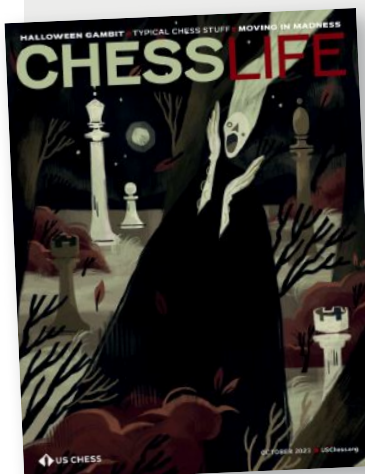
"I'd like to thank the U.S. Chess Trust for their support in my chess career. I have had the honor of receiving the prestigious Samford Fellowship, which has given me encouragement and support for my chess."



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COUNTERPLAY



WHITE TO MOVE

Instead of the game's 39. Qb7+, which my Fritz program evaluates as completely even, the move 39. Rge1 (threatening 40. Re6) gives a crushing advantage. The best response for Black is 39. ... Nxe1; after 40. Rxe1 there are three options: (a) 40. ... d3 41. axb8=N+ Rxb8 42. Qa7+ Kc6 43. Re7 wins easily, as does (b) 40. ... Ne3+ 41. Kg1 (threatening 42. Qb7+) 41. ... Qc7 42. axb8=N+, while (c) 40. ... Ne5 41. Rxe5 Qxe5 42. Nf7 forks the queen and the rook.

Thank you, and the entire *Chess Life* staff, for your hard work. I eagerly look forward to receiving each issue.

**John R. Shaw
Hickory, NC**

John Hartmann responds:

That is, indeed, why I put the diagram there! Good sleuthing.

Frightful!

I noticed two errors in the October 2023 issue of *Chess Life*. In the "ABCs of Chess" on page 45, the summary says in each case Black is to move. However, when I checked the answer key on page 63, it shows that White was on move in each position.

I also can't find the scoring key for "Solitaire Chess."

**Hass Boyouk
Via email**

John Hartmann responds:

Yep. It was a bad month, and I take full responsibility. My apologies.

I say – Isay!

I was delighted to see a game by FM Isay Golyak in the October issue of *Chess Life* (page 64). Like Isay, I was also a regular at the Rochester Chess Club when I lived there, in the mid-1990s.

I remember seeing him there almost every weekend, and sometimes playing against him in their tournaments. He was very good at chess; I played him in 26 tournament games—more games than any other opponent except for Dr. Erich Marchand, another Rochester regular—and managed just one win and two draws.

Although I no longer live in Rochester, I still visit from time to time, so I was aware that Isay had also moved away. I am happy to know, after reading this article, that he is still doing well and still enjoying the game of chess.

**David Long
Springfield, IL**

Diagram drama

You [the editor] should be aware that the game from the recent Chicago Open, described by you as "a real slobberknocker" in your October "In the News" column, overlooks a clear win for White from the diagrammed position.

Send your letters to letters@uschess.org. Letters are subject to editing for style, length, and content.

The Family that Plays Together...

Dad and daughter compete at Invitationals, but is mom the real secret weapon?

BY **AL LAWRENCE**

S

TEVE ELKINS WAS THRILLED when his then fifth-grade daughter Isabella — Bella for short — brought home a flyer from school announcing a chess club. “I think I’d like to do this,” she said. Steve knew the benefits of the game. He’d played in some tournaments before concentrating on career and home life. But now he saw a path to making chess a family activity. “I’m back in it!”, he thought.

Steve’s first move was offering to eat a mayonnaise sandwich if there were other girls at the chess club. “Dad was getting me to go just to find out. It turned out that there were a lot of girls there!”

Like all beginners, Bella lost a lot of games at first. But both she and her dad improved as the whole family, including Bella’s mom Julie, traveled to tournaments, sometimes taking long road trips together. “We would sightsee,” Steve said. “Later, when Bella got to be in high school, we would visit colleges all over the country.”

When Bella began a new school in the seventh grade, she had trouble adjusting. But she felt safe and comfortable at the school’s chess club. That helped her make the change. She won the state girls’ championship that year. After that, every month she gave free chess lessons to kids at her public library. Her students loved Bella’s classes,

which drew as many as 40 excited beginners.

Bella has won the annual Arkansas scholastic girls’ championship three times. Steve won the state’s senior championship and was the top-rated available senior in the state. As a result, they’ve each represented their state three times in the separate national invitational championships that take place during the U.S. Open. Bella won the Best Game prize in the 2022 WIM Ruth Haring National Tournament of Girls State Champions. Steve scored upsets in the John T. Irwin National Tournament of Senior Champions, a competition that includes GMs from around the USA. Here’s a nice win over a master from the 2021 Irwin.

FRENCH DEFENSE, EXCHANGE VARIATION (C01)

Steve Elkins (1583)

Mark Hulsey (2190)

2021 Irwin Senior (1), Cherry Hill, 07.31.2021

Annotations by Steve Elkins

Miles Bowlin, a friend of mine from my local club in Arkansas, plays the French. I asked him before leaving for the Irwin what White should play against it. His answer? “The Exchange. Every French player hates it!”

1. e4 e6 2. d4 d5 3. exd5 exd5 4. Nf3 Bd6 5. c4 Nf6 6. Nc3 O-O 7. Nxd5?!

I knew that this violated the principle that one should not move the same piece twice before completing development in the opening, and I saw that it was a bit risky with the



Steve, Bella, and Julie (L to R) at the 2022 U.S. Open in Rancho Mirage

PHOTOS: US CHESS / MARK CIELISKOWSKI (THIS PAGE), COURTESY ELKINS (FACING)

open e-file and my uncastled king, especially with ... Bd6-b4+ looming. I thought about the doubled pawns on the d-file, and wondered how much worse they could be than the isolani?

7. ... Nxd5 8. cxd5 Bg4 9. Be2 Bxf3

This surprised me a bit. Maybe Black thought he was removing a defender of the d2-square, or maybe he wanted to open the e-file once more. Perhaps he knew he had 600 rating points on me, and was ready to test me in the endgame. In any case I felt good about it!

10. Bxf3 Re8+ 11. Be3 Bb4+ 12. Kf1

I was feeling really good here. My pawns are strong in the center, and a c-pawn push for Black is tricky. Plus the black knight cannot develop to the c6-square.

12. ... Na6

Perhaps 12. ... Nd7 would have been better, although after 13. a3 the knight has nowhere to go, and I'm ready to play on the other side of the board with 14. h4! My king is totally safe, and maybe g2-g3 followed by Kf1-g2 is down the road if needed.

13. a3 Bd6 14. h4 Qd7

With the potential for a queen check on b5, I decided to develop and prevent Black's idea.

15. Qd3 Rad8 16. h5 h6 17. Rh4 Nb8 18. Rg4 Kh8 19. Bd1

Rerouting my bishop to create a battery.

19. ... f5 20. Rg6

The f-pawn push gummed up the diagonal. I thought about playing 20. Bc2 anyway, as the g4-rook can't be taken due to the mate threat. In the end I liked the rook on g6, so...

20. ... Qf7 21. Bc2 Re4

Whoops — I missed this move in my calculation. Now I decided to reroute my queen to f3 or g4, hitting the e4-rook with the bishop in doing so.

22. Qe2?

The moment I put the queen down, I realized I wanted it on another square! With 22. Qd2 I would have added an attacker to the h6-pawn, although now I see that the game continuation has the advantage of defending my h5-pawn.

22. ... Rh4

This blindsided me. I had looked at it briefly before my 22nd move, but now I understood that 23. g3 Rh1+ would lead to loss of material.

23. Kg1

This felt forced, and I was prepared to take the draw if he repeated with bishop checks.

23. ... Bh2+ 24. Kf1 Bf4??



Naturally Black wanted to play for the win, but this completely turns the tables.

25. g3!!

Here Black still has the skewer with ... Rh4-h1+, but the rook he gains is my only undeveloped piece. I'll grab his bishop and reroute my bishop to the e5-square, where it aims at the already pressured king. Now



it all looks so easy, but I had to consider one more nightmarish pattern — the one that played out over the board.

25. ... Rh1+ 26. Kg2 Qxd5+ 27. f3!

The key move.

27. ... Rxa1 28. Bxf4 Qxd4

Black was tempted by the brutal threat of ... Qd4-g1+, but I get to make a move first.

29. Rxh6+!, Black resigned.

Taking the rook leads to the fork with 30. Be5+, while moving the king is mate in two: 29. ... Kg8 30. Qe6+ Kf8 31. Rh8 mate.

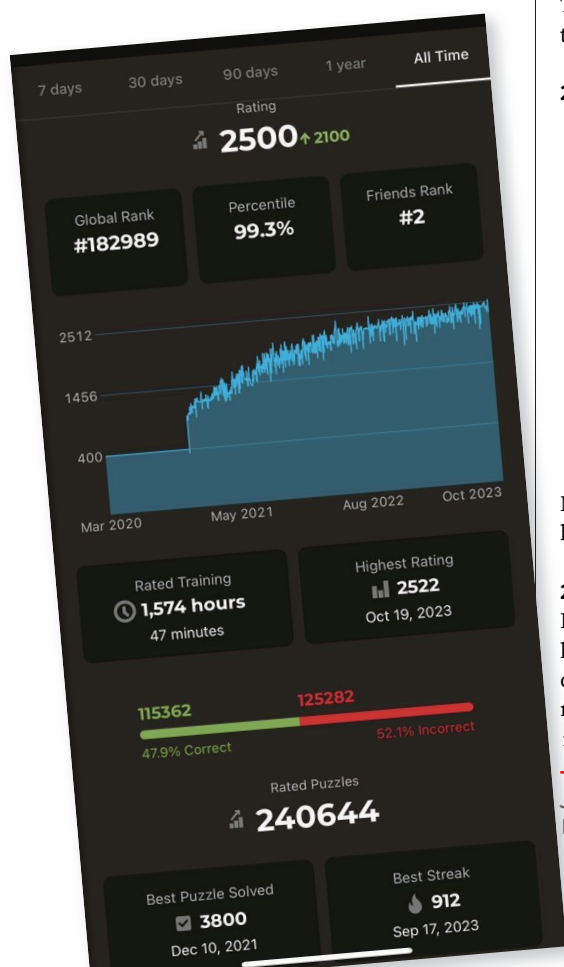
But it's possible the best chess player of the Elkins family has never played a tournament game! Mom Julie spent years watching Bella and Steve play. "They're both very calm, win or lose," she said. "But I got really nervous watching at tournaments, even though I didn't know what was going on!" She took a few online lessons on Chess.com. "I tried some puzzles and quickly got hooked." Since then, she has solved an amazing 240,000 of these chess brain-teasers! In fact, she has a puzzle-solving rating of over 2500.

The family has traveled to four annual U.S. Opens. Last year, in the main tournament, Steve and Bella won the father-daughter prize. Bella spent the cash prize to buy chess sets for her school.

Although Bella is now a freshman at the University of Arkansas and is no longer eligible for the Haring, the three plan to attend the U.S. Open Championship this summer in Virginia. Someday soon, maybe mom will take the plunge into rated chess.

Steve Elkins is indeed "back in it," and this time it's lots more fun with the whole family. ♠

Julie's incredible puzzle-solving stats from her Chess.com app!



The 2024 Scholar Chess Player Awards

IF YOU ARE A CURRENT US CHESS MEMBER and a high school junior or senior, you are eligible to apply for one of the following two awards:

- 2024 National Scholar Chess Player Award — total of five \$1,500 scholarships awarded.
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To be considered for these awards, you must show that you have met the following criteria:

- You played in at least 25 regular-rated US Chess or FIDE games held from dates January 1, 2023 through December 31, 2023. Games with a time Control less than G/30,d0 do not count toward the 25 game requirement.
- You have shown outstanding achievement in academics and chess.
- You have completed at least one year of chess-related community service since you started the ninth grade.
- You can demonstrate in an essay (of 500 words or less) how your being selected as a 2024 Scholar Chess Player enables you to further your education, improve your chess, and continue contributing to the chess community for the next five years of your life.
- For the Scholar Chess Player Ambassador: You have shown outstanding community service and leadership by being an exemplary ambassador of the game of chess.

The scholarships are provided by the US Chess Trust, with a generous, supporting contribution from the National Scholastic Chess Foundation (NSCF), to recognize and encourage outstanding high school students who promote a positive image of chess. Previous recipients of this award are not eligible.

Applications should be submitted using the online form available at new.uschess.org/news/2024-scholar-chess-player-awards.

Documents (.docx, .pdf and other usual extensions) can be uploaded to your application via this form.

Your completed application must include the following:

- Submitted application form via the online form available at new.uschess.org/news/2024-scholar-chess-player-awards.
- Your uploaded high school transcripts showing all courses and grades.
- Your SAT or ACT scores.
- Evidence, listed in the form or uploaded separately, that you have played at least 25 US Chess or FIDE qualifying rated games held from dates January 1, 2023 through December 31, 2023.
- A list and brief description of your best chess accomplishments.
- Examples of your chess-related community service since ninth grade or later.
- A letter of recommendation from a teacher in a current or former school you have attended in ninth, 10th, 11th, or 12th grade.
- A letter of recommendation from a chess coach or tournament director.
- A letter of support from someone other than a parent or guardian, bearing witness to the nature, duration and impact of your chess-related community service. We also encourage you to submit newspaper articles or web-based stories as evidence.
- Your essay uploaded in the application form of no more than 500 words describing how your being recognized as a Scholar Chess player would help you continue contributing to the greater US Chess community over the next five years.
- A recent color photograph of yourself, either a headshot or full-length.

The deadline for submitting the application is March 1st, 2024 at 11:59PM PT. Incomplete applications will not be reviewed by the selection committee. ♠

Women's Program Awards

US CHESS IS PLEASED TO ANNOUNCE seven grant awards under the US Chess Women's program. With support from the Saint Louis Chess Club, US Chess annually offers grants to nonprofit affiliate members who are promoting programs that support women and girls in their respective communities. The 2023 grant recipients are:

- Berkeley Chess School (Berkeley, California)
- Chess in the Schools (New York, New York)
- Chess Through Challenges (The Bronx, New York)
- FEMchess (Fremont, California)
- Hampton Roads Chess Association (Virginia Beach, Virginia)
- Indermaur Chess Foundation (Raleigh, North Carolina)
- Royal Oak Initiative (Columbus, Ohio)

As these activities occur throughout the year, look for stories on *Chess Life Online* about their work and impact. This year's grantees represent a wide range of activities for both women and girls.

According to US Chess Executive Director Carol Meyer, "These grants amplify the work that our affiliates are doing all over the country. We are so proud of these efforts by the grassroots chess programs to sustain and nurture the interest of women and girls in chess. These types of partnerships strengthen our community and are central to the US Chess mission."

These grants are part of a larger program initiative to elevate women and girls in chess and are funded by a grant from the Saint Louis Chess Club. ♠





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The 2023 Year-End Trivia Quiz

Time to put all that useless knowledge to work!

BY GM ANDY SOLTIS

C

HESS CHANGES SO QUICKLY today that every year brings a crushing avalanche of new information. There are dozens

of freshly minted grandmasters to know, tens of thousands of new master games to look at, and many mega-bucks tournaments named “Global,” “Ultimate” and “Super” to demand our attention.

Sifting out what is worth remembering has become a challenge. It is easier to determine which facts are trivial — and that brings us to our annual quiz. The following 18 questions comprise a test of the useless factoids you may have accidentally accumulated. And watch out for trick questions. Answers are on page 63.

(1) Ding Liren first gained international attention when he became the Chinese national champion at age 16. Which world champion won his country's championship the most times?

(2) Which world champion did it the least?

(3) Which elite player said, “The problem with chess these days is that it is all cheating?”

- (a) Magnus Carlsen in 2023
- (b) Vladimir Kramnik in 2006
- (c) Veselin Topalov in 2006
- (d) Bobby Fischer in 1992

(4) Try to answer this two-part question in less than a minute:

- (a) What is the maximum number of captures that any chess piece can make in a game?
- (b) Which pieces cannot capture that often?

(5) In January researchers from MIT and Maastricht University got media attention when they concluded:

- (a) Air pollution increases the likelihood of blunders in tournament games.
- (b) Chess engine algorithms can help doctors make better decisions in hospital emergency rooms.
- (c) Left-handedness is closely related to chess skill.
- (d) ChatGPT is a sucker for the Muzio Gambit.

(6) Fabiano Caruana and Hikaru Nakamura held the title of the world's second highest rated player at different times this year. How many players have held the No. 2 position in the decade-plus that Magnus Carlsen has been No. 1?

- (a) four
- (b) six
- (c) eight
- (d) ten

(7) Was there ever a time when more players entered the U.S. Championship than the U.S. Open?

(8) In May, this game got a lot of attention...

VAN'T KRUIJS OPENING (A00)

1. e3 e5 2. Nf3 Nc6 3. d4 e4! 4. Ne5! Nxe5 5. dxe5 c6 6. Nc3 Qa5 7. Qd4



7. ... Bb4 8. Bd2 f6 9. exf6 Nxf6 10. a3 Bxc3 11. Bxc3 Qf5 12. 0-0-0 d5 13. f4!

... and the reason was:

- (a) It featured Magnus Carlsen's opening improvement on a famous Nimzovich – Tarrasch game and made 1. e3! suddenly popular.
- (b) It was played by NASA Mission Control against current residents of the International Space Station.
- (c) It was the opening of the exhibition game Mark Zuckerberg versus Taylor Swift.

(9) As a teenager, Bobby Fischer said he would refuse to play U.S. Women's Champion Lisa Lane if they were paired. “Men and women shouldn't play together,” he said. She replied:

- (a) “Champions should play champions.”
- (b) “Adults and children shouldn't play together.”
- (c) “Brats should grow up.”

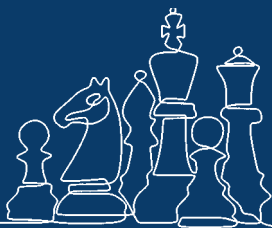
(10) When did a woman first play a reigning world champion in a tournament game?

- (a) 1909
- (b) 1938
- (c) 1971
- (d) 1994
- (e) never

QUIZ FOR DECEMBER

IN OPENING TEXTBOOKS

James Moore Hanham is remembered for the main-line of the Philidor Defense (1. e4 e5 2. Nf3 d6 3. d4 Nd7!). In history books he is mentioned as a Civil War major. And on *Chessmetrics.com*, he is listed as once being the world's eighth highest-rate player. This month's quiz is dedicated to Hanham, who died 100 years ago this month. In each diagram you are asked to find the fastest winning line of play. This will usually mean the forced win of a decisive amount of material, such as a rook or minor piece. Solutions on page 63.



PROBLEM 1

Jacob Rosenthal
James Moore Hanham



BLACK TO MOVE

PROBLEM 2

Joseph Blackburne
James Moore Hanham



WHITE TO MOVE

PROBLEM 3

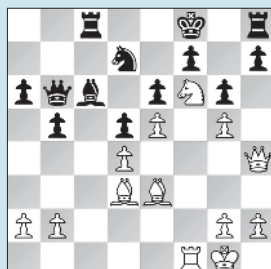
James Moore Hanham
Jackson Showalter



BLACK TO MOVE

PROBLEM 4

Max Judd
James Moore Hanham



WHITE TO MOVE

PROBLEM 5

James Moore Hanham
Emanuel Lasker



BLACK TO MOVE

PROBLEM 6

James Moore Hanham
Dionisio Martinez



WHITE TO MOVE

(11) **Players who compete in international events can change their "chess citizenship." They may switch their official allegiance from one national federation to another, usually because they move.**

In 2021, ten players left the Russian federation. How many left it in the year following the invasion of Ukraine?

- (a) 25
- (b) 45
- (c) 65
- (d) Nearly 100

(12) **When Magnus Carlsen refused to defend his world championship title he said he'd rather play younger opponents. Which world champion only lost one game to a younger opponent in his career?**

(13) **True or false: A knight must be taller than a rook in a tournament set, according to FIDE, the world chess federation.**

(14) **True or false: Four pawns should be**

able to fit into a square of a regulation board, according to FIDE.

(15) **This year he announced he was selling digital NFT trading cards, including one that depicts him as the king in a golden chess set. He is:**

- (a) Magnus Carlsen
- (b) Elon Musk
- (c) Donald Trump
- (d) Ding Liren

(16) **Mainstream media reports of chess events are often replete with inaccuracies. If you read a news story like this, how many factual errors could you find?**

"...The world championship match between the 32-year-old Chinese grandmaster and the Russian grandmaster was tied after 12 games. In the four-game playoff, held in a remote Russian city, the Chinese player dramatically won the third game. A former world champion, who refused to defend the championship title,

congratulated the match winner but said the outcome was 'extremely lucky.'"

(17) **In April, Vladimir Kramnik called a certain grandmaster "the most talented player in the last 50 years." Whom did he mean?**

- (a) Garry Kasparov
- (b) Alireza Firouzja
- (c) Magnus Carlsen
- (d) Rameshbabu Praggnanandhaa
- (e) Viswanathan Anand

(18) **He was the first prominent American player to be named a grandmaster. His chess writings have been published in dozens of languages. His best-known games were against a woman. Who was this player? ⚡**

For up-to-date chess news and information, check out **Chess Life Online** at [uschess.org/clo](https://www.uschess.org/clo) on a regular basis.

Back on the Attack

Tips for king hunts on the White side of the Sicilian

BY **WGM TATEV ABRAHAMYAN**

A

AS YOU BECOME A STRONGER player, you will most likely face a more diverse range of openings. One typical shift in a

player's career is what they face when playing 1. e4. At first you will likely encounter a lot of double king's pawn positions, but as you grow, you will increasingly be met with the Sicilian Defense, which can lead to double-edged positions.

We will examine some typical attacking ideas for White in the Open Sicilian this month. I would recommend that the reader not shy away from playing main lines, but embrace the complexity and explore the sharper middlegame positions one finds there. Many Sicilian setups — the Dragon, Najdorf, Rauzer, and Scheveningen, for example — allow for opposite side castling, but even if you castle on the same side as your opponent, there are opportunities to attack.

SAME SIDE CASTLING

In a typical Sicilian position, Black can have a pawn on either e5 (mainly in the Najdorf) or e6. After both sides finish their development and castle, White can look for an attack by opening the f-file via f4-f5. If the white bishop is on d3, White can reroute the queen to the kingside via Qd1-f3-h3 or Qd1-e1-h4 to add more pressure on the h7-pawn. In our first example, GM Alexandra

Kosteniuk plays a very classical Sicilian attack along these lines.

SICILIAN DEFENSE, SCHEVENINGEN VARIATION (B85)

GM Alexandra Kosteniuk (2501)

GM Hou Yifan (2606)

Beijing Sportaccord blitz (1), Beijing, 12.16.2012

1. e4 c5 2. Nf3 d6 3. d4 cxd4 4. Nxd4 Nf6

5. Nc3 e6 6. Be2 Nc6 7. Be3 Be7 8. 0-0 0-0

So far, the players are following the standard plan in the Scheveningen Sicilian — developing the pieces and castling.

9. f4 a6 10. a4

Trying to stop Black's queenside expansion (with ... b7-b5).

10. ... Bd7 11. Nb3 b6 12. Bf3 Qc7



13. g4

Since the center is secure, it is safe for White to play this move. If Black could open the center and trade the d6-pawn for the e4-pawn, then her pieces would gain activity and the white king would become vulnerable.

13. ... Bc8

Black is struggling to find squares for her pieces due to a lack of space.

Here 13. ... h6 is a difficult move to assess, as it creates a hook. Once White plays h2-h4 and g4-g5, Black will be faced with a tough choice: she can capture and open the h-file, or allow White to take on h6.

14. g5 Nd7 15. Bg2

The bishop slides back to make way for the queen and the rook.

15. ... Bb7 16. Qh5 Rfe8 17. Rf3 g6 18.

Qh6 Bf8 19. Qh4 Bg7 20. Rh3

Now the rook joins the attack.

20. ... Nf8 21. f5!

This is a difficult move to face with black pawns on e6 and g6. The threat of f5-f6 is looming.

21. ... Bxc3 22. f6!!

White ignores the obvious recapture and creates her own threat. With the black bishop locked out, Qg5-h6 is now devastating.

The standard 22. bxc3 exf5 23. exf5 Ne7 would allow Black to bring forces quickly to the kingside and open the center. Note how much less secure the white king is with the e4-pawn gone.

22. ... h5 23. Bf3

White keeps ignoring the c3-bishop. The goal is to sacrifice on the h5-square.

23. ... Bxf6 24. gxf6 Ne5 25. Bxh5 Nh7 26.

Be2, Black resigned.

OPPOSITE SIDE CASTLING

Castling on opposite sides and launching a pawn storm is one of my absolute favorite things to do in chess, and I have won some of my most memorable games in this manner.

In opposite side castling positions, and in contrast to the Kosteniuk game, you won't have to worry about pushing your pawns to attack, as your king will be safe on the other side of the board. The flip side is that you need to be ready to face a similar attack.

The key idea is to quickly open files for

your rooks, even at the expense of sacrificing a pawn or two. Normally, these attacks include White castling on the queenside and Black castling on the kingside. If your opponent's kingside has a "hook" — a pawn in the opponent's camp, typically on g6 or h6 in the Sicilian, that can be attacked by an onrushing pawn — you should attack that pawn in order to quickly open a file. A classic example of this arises from the Sicilian Dragon.

SICILIAN DRAGON, YUGOSLAV ATTACK (B78)

WGM Tatev Abrahamyan (2364)
Christian Tunge (2055)
Reykjavik Open (5), Reykjavik,
04.22.2017

1. e4 c5 2. Nf3 d6 3. d4 Nf6 4. Nc3 cxd4 5. Nxd4 g6 6. Be3 Bg7 7. f3

Inaugurating the Yugoslav Attack. White's idea is to play Qd1-d2, 0-0-0, exchange the dark-squared bishops, and launch an attack by pushing the h-pawn. The plan is to open the h-file quickly by attacking the "hook" on g6. Once the pawn reaches h5, Black will either have to capture the pawn or allow a trade on g6. If the bishops are removed, the dark squares around the black king will be extremely vulnerable.

Move orders in the Dragon can be a bit tricky. Here it's worth noting that the idea behind 7. f3 is to prevent Black from exchanging the e3-bishop with ... Nf6-g4, while also assisting with the kingside pawn push.

7. ... 0-0 8. Qd2 Nc6 9. Bc4

This move stops d5, which generally is Black's main idea in all of Sicilian positions, and also brings another piece into the future attack as this bishop is staring down the a2-g8 diagonal.

9. ... Bd7 10. h4

There is no risk leaving the king in the center, as White can castle at any moment. Better to start the attack!

10. ... Rc8 11. Bb3 h5

Black chooses to stop the h4-h5 push, at least for now.

12. 0-0-0 Ne5

(see diagram top next column)

We have reached a key position in the Sicilian Dragon. Black will try to use the c-file, force an exchange of one of the bishops by ... Nc6-e5-c4, and then throw his queenside



pawns at the white king. White aims to blast open the kingside via g2-g4 and h4-h5.

13. Bg5 Rc5 14. Kb1

A useful move when castling queenside.

14. ... Re8 15. g4 hxg4 16. h5 Nxh5 17. Rxf5

Trying to open the kingside at any cost!

17. ... gxf5 18. Qh2

The plan is clear: take on h5, followed Rd1-h1 and trading the bishops, which will leave the black king helpless.

18. ... Nc4 19. Nd5 Rxd5

Black's attack has not lifted off, so he has to start eliminating some of White's attackers — almost all of White's pieces are aiming at the king.

20. exd5 Qc8?

The best way to defend is to counter-attack! After 20. ... Qb6! 21. Bxc4 Bxd4 Black is starting to get counterplay. The position is still dangerous, but now White has to take time to defend against mate threats.

21. Qxf5 Ne5 22. Bh6 Bf6

Not 22. ... Bxh6 23. Qxf6 when Black is toast after Rd1-h1.

23. f4 Ng6 24. Ne6!

There are just too many pieces in the attack.

24. ... a5 25. Rh1 Nh4 26. Rxf4 Bxf4 27. Qxf4+, Black resigned.

Let us examine what happens if Black allows the opening of the h-file.

SICILIAN DRAGON, YUGOSLAV ATTACK (B77)

Sam Shankland (2166)
FM Eugene Yanayt (2335)
New England Masters (4), Peabody,
08.15.2007

1. e4 c5 2. Nc3 g6 3. Nf3 Bg7 4. d4 cxd4 5. Nxd4 Nc6 6. Be3 Nf6 7. Bc4 d6 8. f3 0-0 9. Qd2 Bd7 10. h4 Qa5

Black ignores the h-pawn advance and instead prepares his own attack on the queenside.

11. h5 Ne5

White is not afraid of 11. ... Nxh5. Play continues 12. g4 Nf6 13. Nb3 Qc7 14. Bh6 and now, what happens if Black takes with 14. ... Bxh6? Generally speaking, we don't want to invite the queen in like this, and in what follows we see why. White marches to victory with 15. Qxf6, now threatening Nc3-d5 to remove the f6-knight (and the defense of h7). After 15. ... e6?! 16. e5! dxe5 17. Ne4 Nh5 18. Rxf6! finishes things off, i.e., 18. ... gxf6 19. Nf6+ Kh8 20. Qxf7 mate.

12. Bb3 Rf8 13. hxf6 hxf6

The b3-bishop is a key player in this attack. Black would prefer to capture with the f-pawn, keeping the file semi-closed, and defend the h7-pawn with a rook on f7. Instead, now that the h-file is wide open, all White has to do is trade the dark-squared bishops.

14. Bh6

Trying to remove Black's best defender and clear the h-file.

14. ... Bh8

There's no hope for survival after 14. ... Bxh6 15. Qxf6.

15. 0-0-0 Nc4 16. Bxc4 Rxc4 17. Nb3 Qa6



18. Bf8

This is a very unusual way of trading the bishops! The material investment is worth it, such is the defensive power of the dark-squared bishop.

18. ... Rxf8 19. Rxf8+ Kxf8 20. Qh6+ Kg8 21. Rh1 Nh5 22. g4 Be6??

Now White crashes through.

Modern computers find a miracle defense for Black: 22. ... Rxc3! 23. bxc3 Qc4 24. gxh5 Qxc3 25. hxg6 Qg7! and the dark squares are defended. This doesn't change the main lesson of the game, however; look at the lengths Black had to go to, just to survive!

23. gxh5 g5 24. Qxg5+ Kh7 25. Rg1, Black resigned.

The structure that we will see in our fourth example can arise from the Najdorf, Scheveningen, Classical Sicilian, or even the Taimanov variations. Unlike the Kosteniuk game, White castles queenside and starts a pawn storm. Unlike the two Dragon games, there is no hook in Black's position. Accordingly, it takes Gaponenko a bit longer to demolish the kingside.

SICILIAN DEFENSE, SCHEVENINGEN VARIATION (B80)

WGM Inna Gaponenko (2375)

WIM Martina Beltz (2177)

Women's Bundesliga (7), Germany, 2001

1. e4 c5 2. Nf3 d6 3. d4 cxd4 4. Nxd4 Nf6 5. Nc3 e6 6. Be3 Be7 7. f3 a6 8. Qd2 b5 9. g4 Bb7 10. 0-0-0 0-0

A very typical Scheveningen position. White has played the English Attack, with Bc1-e3, Qd1-d2, and f2-f3, and is ready to start pushing the kingside pawns.

For her part, Black has already started expansion on the queenside by pushing the pawn to b5. She has several ideas in this position: pushing the queenside pawns, utilizing the semi-open c-file, and, as in the Shankland game, maneuvering the b8-knight to c4.

11. g5 Nfd7 12. h4

White's idea is straightforward: to push h4-h5 and g5-g6 to destroy the king's pawn shield.

12. ... b4 13. Nce2 d5

It's quite common for Black to strike in the center, even when the kings are castled on opposite sides. As we see in this game, Black's queenside pawn storm can be quite slow.

14. Ng3 Ne5 15. f4 Nc4 16. Bxc4 dxc4 17.

Qe2 Qc7 18. h5 c3 19. g6!

By pushing the pawn to g6, White challenges the h7- and f7-pawns, ensuring that at least one file will open. Meanwhile, Black doesn't have enough attacking power to create any problems for the white king.

19. ... Nd7



20. h6!

By blasting open the kingside, White will be able to use both the g- and h-files to attack the king. The alternative 20. gxh7+ Kh8 21. h6 g6 is incorrect, as the black king will hide behind the h-pawns.

20. ... cxb2+ 21. Kb1

Once again, safety behind the enemy pawn!

21. ... hxg6 22. hxg7 Kxg7 23. Qh2 Rh8 24.

Ngf5+! exf5 25. Nxf5+ Kf6

It's soon mate after 25. ... gxf5 26. Qg1+ Kf6 27. Qg5+ Ke6 28. exf5 mate.

26. Bd4+ Ke6 27. Bxh8 Rxh8 28. Ng7+ Kf6

29. e5+ Nxe5 30. fxe5+ Qxe5 31. Rdf1+, Black resigned. ♠

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MAIN EVENT

6-SS, G/90,d5

Friday April 12

2:30 PM Opening Ceremony

3:00 PM Round 1

Saturday April 13

10:00 AM Round 2

2:30 PM Round 3

6:30 PM Round 4

Sunday April 14

9:00 AM Round 5

1:00 PM Round 6

5:00 PM Awards Ceremony

ENTRY FEE

\$90 by 3/4, \$110 by 4/1, \$120 by 4/11, \$135 on-site.

SIDE EVENTS

Bughouse Tournament

Fri. April 12 11:00 AM

Entry fee: \$50 by 4/1, \$60 after 4/1 and on-site.

Blitz Tournament (G/5,d0)

Fri. April 12 7:00 PM

Entry fee: \$40 by 4/1, \$50 after 4/1 and on-site.



SECTION/AWARDS

Age as of 1/1/2024

Under 8 top 15 individuals

top 500 – 799, top U500, top 6 schools

Under 10 top 15 individuals

top 700 – 999, top U700, top 6 schools

Under 12 top 15 individuals

top 900 – 1199, top U900, top 6 schools

Under 14 top 15 individuals

top 1100 – 1399, top U1100, top 4 schools

Under 16 top 8 individuals

top 1300 – 1599, top U1300, top 3 schools

Under 18 top 8 individuals,

top 1500 – 1799, top U1500, top 3 schools

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In Defense of Chess Classicism

A new translation of a key Soviet-era (1934) document in the history of chess theory

BY **VSEVOLOD RAUZER**

TRANSLATION BY **DOUGLAS GRIFFIN**

INTRODUCTION AND "ABOUT..." BY **GM ANDY SOLTIS**

INTRODUCTION

LONG BEFORE "CLASSICAL" WAS THE name of a time control, it meant an entire chess philosophy. It was the systematic school of thought, refined by Siegbert Tarrasch, that has influenced every player for nearly 150 years.

Almost everything you were taught as a beginner was "classical" thinking. "A knight on the rim..." and all that.

Pawns should occupy the center, Tarrasch said. The best opening moves are 1. e4 and 1. d4 — and the best replies are 1. ... e5 and 1. ... d5, respectively. Piece mobility matters a lot. The "two bishops" is a significant strategic advantage. A cramped position is a bad position.

But this was derided as hopelessly outdated in the 1920s. Iconoclasts known as Hypermoderns played — and won — with cramped openings like the King's Indian Defense. Broad pawn centers are just targets for attack, they said. The best opening move might be 1. Nf3! — and certainly not 1. e4?. Knights, even posted on "the rim," can outplay many of the bishops the classical school cherished.

Led by Aron Nimzovich, a bitter personal and ideological enemy of Tarrasch, the Hypermoderns won the support of many high-rated converts. Even Tarrasch-bred stars like the world champion, Jose Capablanca, began to play Hypermodern openings. When Tarrasch himself adopted the King's Indian and Nimzo-Indian Defenses,

"classicism" seemed to be on its deathbed.

Before it was buried, Tarrasch's heirs rallied to its defense. They did it mainly by finding new opening weapons. But a few masters debated the anti-classicists in print. One of them was the Ukrainian champion Vsevolod Rauzer (1908-1941).

He was described by friends as an impractical, chess-obsessed dreamer. He worked as a messenger in Kiev, where he studied chess constantly in a one-room apartment he shared with his mother.

Rauzer idolized Tarrasch. Two months after Tarrasch died, Rauzer rebutted the Hypermoderns in the leading Soviet chess magazine, *Shakmaty v SSSR*. In this article, published in 1934, the 25-year-old Rauzer hinted that the Nimzo-Indian Defense (1. d4 Nf6 2. c4 e6 3. Nc3 Bb4) was simply anti-positional and could be refuted by Qd1-c2 and a timely a2-a3!.

Gaining the two-bishop edge, without suffering pawn damage, was the way his hero Tarrasch would play. Given time — that is, a period free from the tactics of Black's superior development — and White's bishops and space advantage should prevail, Rauzer was saying.

In the last seven years of his all-too-brief life, Rauzer carried the classical banner further as he tried to prove 1. e4! was virtually a winning move. He found major improvements for White in the French Winawer — because he felt 3. ... Bb4? was another anti-positional bishop move. He

revised thinking in the main lines of the Ruy Lopez. In the Sicilian Defense, the Richter-Rauzer should be called the Rauzer Variation because of his discoveries. And the Yugoslav Attack in the Dragon could be renamed the "Rauzer Attack."

During his prime Rauzer was one of the world's two dozen best players, according to retro-ratings by *chessmetrics.com*. But he was more of a thinker than a player. He was often beaten tactically by more practical opponents. That's what happens in the game he analyzed in this article. But his conclusion — that it is too difficult to be true to Tarrasch — is as off base as Nimzovich's exaggerations. What we call "general principles" need to be applied with a close eye for tactics.

Today the world's best players — as well as the majority of non-masters — have classical thinking embedded in their DNA, whether they know it or not. Open up a copy of Bobby Fischer's *My Sixty Memorable Games*. You will find him explaining chess in classical terms. Trading a knight for a bishop is a material gain, he said. It is winning "the minor Exchange." That could have come straight out of the mouth of Tarrasch — or Rauzer.

In what follows, the editorial footnotes (in red) are part of the original text, while the commentary on those notes (facing page) is by Andy Soltis. The endnotes (in blue) are contributed by our translator, as is the games appendix.

Right: Making his first appearance in the 1927 Soviet Championship, 17-year-old Mikhail Botvinnik (left) battles Rauzer (right), who at age 19 is also making his debut in the event.

In the game Vidmar – Alekhine from San Remo, 1930, the following opening moves were played: **1. d4 Nf6 2. c4 e6 3. Nc3 Bb4 4. Qc2 d5.**

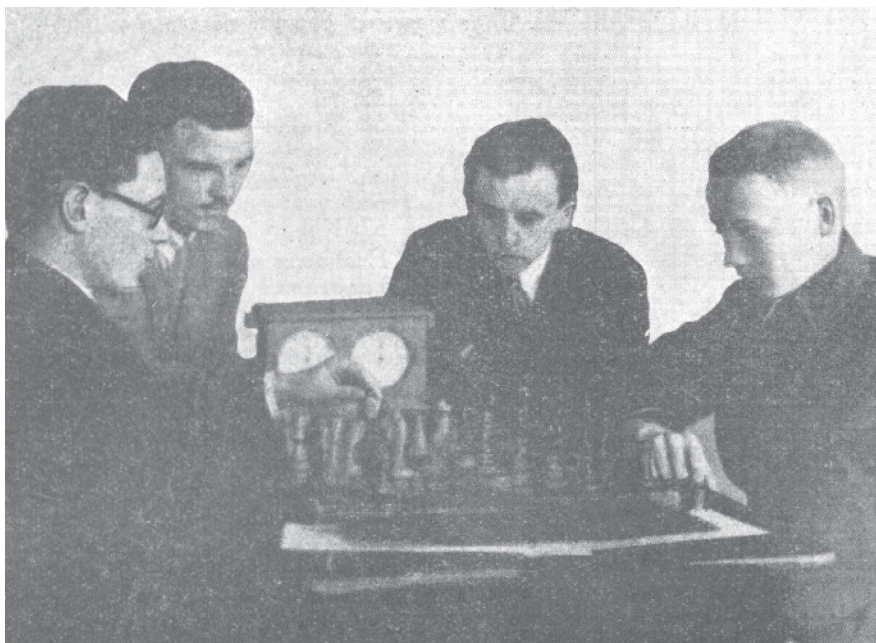


Here Vidmar played **5. a3**. In the tournament book (*Bibliotekhi shakhmatista*, 35-36) it is accompanied by the following comment: “A move in the style of Tarrasch.¹ Its basis lies in the denial of the expediency of exchanging bishop for knight. White loses time for the sake of upholding abstract principles, whereas Black, with a series of energetic moves, occupies the center.”

This comment gives rise to a series of interesting questions associated with style of play. These questions, despite their acuteness, have been discussed very little in the press. Paying great attention to the principles of the classical school and the opinion of S. Tarrasch, and also being interested in the inter-dependence of the first impression of a move and its true value (which is very important for the practical chessplayer, with limited thinking time during play at the board), I necessarily had to pay attention to this opening variation and its coverage in the tournament book.

The first impression as far as the moves **5. ... Bxc3+ 6. Qxc3** was favorable: Black’s dark squares are somewhat weakened, and it seems that in the event of the opening of the game (for example, with the move ... c7-c5) the play will develop advantageously for White, thanks to his two bishops. For a fundamental testing of this first impression, I occupied myself with the specifics of the position, i.e., with its analysis. In so doing I managed to discover the following: after **6. ... Ne4 7. Qc2 Nc6 8. e3 e5** Vidmar played

¹ A rather questionable claim, since Tarrasch always dogmatically rails against the loss of tempo in the opening (~ed).



9. f3?, after which Black’s energetic tactics were fully justified. The tournament book, besides 9. f3, provides a short analysis of another continuation:

9. cxd5 Qxd5 10. Bc4 Qa5+ 11. b4 Nxb4 12. Qxe4 Nc2+

(see diagram top of next column)

The tournament book examines only 13. Kd1 and shows that after 13. ... Nxa1 White cannot trap the a1-knight, and the play unfolds to Black’s advantage. However, in



the position above White has a stronger continuation, that is:

ABOUT THE EDITORIAL NOTES

The editorial footnote linking then-world champion Alexander Alekhine with Tarrasch is curious for two reasons. First, Alekhine was considered more of a Hypermodern than a Classical player at the time. Richard Reti certainly left that impression in *Modern Ideas in Chess*, when he listed Tarrasch first among the members of “the Steinitz School” and Alekhine first in his list of Hypermodern players.

In regard to the opening Rauzer analyzed, it was Alekhine who wrote in 1930 that 4. Qc2 was rendered harmless by 4. ... d5. Alekhine was later credited with another major improvement for Black, 7. ... c5 rather than 7. ... Nc6.

The second reason the Vainstein comment is curious is the Soviet attitude towards Alekhine. As a Russian émigré he had been reviled in the USSR chess press since 1928 when he made anti-Soviet remarks while living in France. The head of the massive Soviet chess organization, Nikolai Krylenko, called Alekhine “our political enemy.”

But in 1933 Alekhine began making overtures to return to his homeland, if only to play in tournaments. The mention of his name, in a favorable way in the footnote to Rauzer’s 1934 article, indicated a softening of Soviet-Alekhine relations. Four years later Alekhine secretly agreed to play a world championship match with the best Russian player, Mikhail Botvinnik. He died before the match was played. “Alekhine Memorial” tournaments and books celebrating his legacy were a common feature of the golden era of Soviet chess.

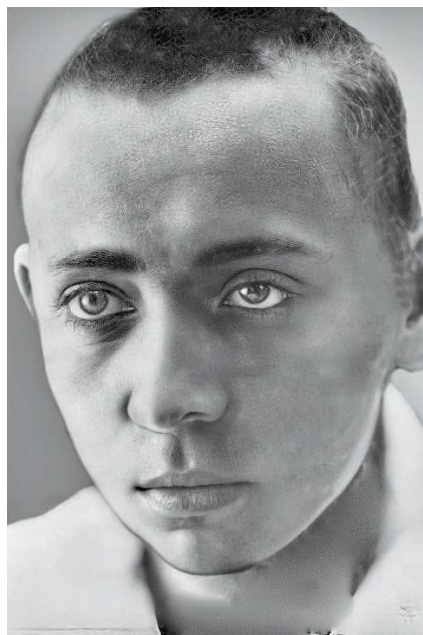
13. Ke2!

Now 13. ... Nxa1 is bad on account of 14. Bb2 and the knight is caught, since on 14. ... Qa4 (without check!) White plays 15. Qd3 and thanks to the threat of 16. Bb5+ the knight perishes. In the absence of the check on a4 lies the advantage of the move 13. Ke2 over 13. Kd1. After 13. Ke2 Black can play first...

13. ... Qe1+ 14. Kf3

Calmness and imperturbability — this is White's motto! Only now...

14. ... Nxa1 15. Bb2



Worse is 15. Qxe5+ Be6 16. Bxe6 0-0 and both bishops are under attack.

15. ... 0-0

Quite timely: White's threats in the center have grown too great. All these moves were first encountered in a summer training tournament in Kiev with the participation of a Leningrad "youth team" in 1932, in the game Rauzer – Konstantinopolsky. This game (like Vidmar – Alekhine) was lost by White, in part on account of the tournament conditions, which were not conducive to the search for "only," almost study-like moves. The best move after 15. ... 0-0 was:

16. Kg3!



The move 16. Kg3 is seemingly made with the aim of freeing the queen from the need to defend the g4-square (in the case of the possible ... Qe1-d1+ and ... Qd1-g4 mate) and

Left: The haunting face of Vsevolod Rauzer. Below: Tarrasch (left) and Chigorin (right) at play in St. Petersburg, 1893.

to prepare h2-h3, Kg3-h2 and Ng1-f3. But there is more to it than this! It transpires that the black king falls under a mating attack: White threatens 17. Nf3!! Qxh1 18. Ng5 g6 19. Qxe5 followed by d4-d5 or Qe5-f6 with a rout.

There is no fully satisfactory defense for Black. If (a) 16. ... h6, then 17. Bd3 g6 (or 17. ... f5) 18. Qxe5 with a winning attack.^I It is also doubtful whether Black can survive his king wandering over the whole board after (b) 16. ... h6 17. Bd3 Re8 18. Qh7+ Kf8 19. Qh8+ Ke7 20. Qxg7. Finally, the idea of exchanging one of White's dangerous bishops by means of (c) 16. ... Qd2 also fails to save Black: 17. Nf3! (17. Bxa1 Qc1) 17. ... Qxb2 18. Ng5 g6 19. Qxe5 Be6 (a defense against the threat of Qe5-f6, and also against Ng5xf7. If 19. ... Qxa3, then 20. Qxc7; if 19. ... Bd7, then 20. Ne4 Rfd8 21. Bxf7+ Kxf7 22. Ng5+ Kg8 23. Qe7, and wins) 20. Bxe6! fxe6! 21. Qxe6+ Kh8 (21. ... Kg7 22. Qe7+ Kh6 23. f4) 22. Qe7! Qxf2+ 23. Kh3 Qf5+ 24. g4, and wins.

In the position after 16. Kg3 the best defense is probably the cold-blooded:

16. ... Bd7

But this also fails to save Black.

17. Nf3 Qxh1 18. Ng5 g6

If 18. ... Rfe8 19. Bxf7+ Kf8 20. a4 Qd1 (20. ... Ke7 21. Ba3+ Kd8 22. Qxb7 Rc8 23. Bxe8 etc.) 21. Ba3+ Re7 22. Bxe7+ Kxe7 23. Qxe5+ Kd8 24. Ne6+ Bxe6 (24. ... Ke7 25. Bh5 Qxh5 26. Qxh5 Bxe6 27. Qd1 Nb3 28. d5) 25. Bxe6 Qxa4 26. Qg5+ Ke8 27. Qxg7 Qb5 (otherwise 28. Bf7+) 28. d5 followed by Qg7-g8+ and Qg8xa8, in White's favor.

19. Qxe5 Rae8 20. Qf6 Rxe3+ 21. fxe3 Qe1+ 22. Qf2

It is impossible to escape from checks with the king.^{II}

22. ... Qxf2+ 23. Kxf2 Nc2 24. Bb3 Nxe3 25. Kxe3

The resultant endgame is slightly to White's advantage: Black has no passed pawns, his dark squares are weak, and White has a pair of strong bishops.

These variations demonstrate excellently the strength of moves played in the style of Tarrasch's school. If we add to this the sharp and interesting analysis of O. M. Bogartrev, indicating in the magazine *Shakhmaty i shashki v massy* (1932:4) the disadvantage of the move 7. ... c5 (instead of 7. ... Nc6), then one involuntarily recalls the words from the obituary of Tarrasch in *Shakhmaty v SSSR* (1934:3) that Tarrasch had died without having understood the present epoch in chess.



Suggesting itself is the idea that, on the contrary, our epoch has still not managed to understand and assess Tarrasch, because it has departed from the classical school, which gives full combinational scope to those who believe in the inviolability of the principles of this school and can reveal the possibilities of a position to the very end!²

My personal analysis, carried out over many years with the help of a group of Kiev chessplayers, has led me to conclude that the classical style is a synthesis of positional and combinational play. One wonders, why then has it not taken root, if it is capable of satisfying any demands or tastes?

To understand this is not at all difficult. The classical style is too impractical. After all, it is no accident that both games played in the variations given and demonstrated in this article were lost by White. The chessplayer cultivating the classical style is always in danger of being confused in the complications of his own creation.

The classical style requires very great knowledge, sharp opening variations and unceasing analytical work. Emanuel Lasker in his handbook writes: “Were a chessplayer to possess such a good memory that they were able to accurately remember millions of variations, then they could limit themselves to combinations, without resorting to the help of positional play. But even if they had a lot of time and were, in addition, a great talent, it would still be too much for them to remember several hundred variations.” The classical style, representing a synthesis of positional and combinational play, inevitably demands an enormous amount of memory work. In return for all of this, it offers the master marginal success, sometimes depending on the failure of some poorly-understood opening variation.

It is not surprising that fearless contemporaries of Tarrasch, such as the “peaceable” Schlechter and Teichmann, were destined to bring about the triumph of this style. It is not surprising that among foreign professional masters, who are too materially dependent on their success, and too distracted from analytical work by their tours and simultaneous displays, it is not the classical style that is widespread, but a “vulgar-practical” style,

2. It is hardly possible to agree with this conclusion. It is unconvincing because Comrade Rauzer, based on very limited material, has tried to draw questionable conclusions that do not flow from this material. The same variations that in his view “demonstrate excellently the strength of moves played in the style of Tarrasch’s school” could be equally well attributed to Chigorin or Alekhine (~ed).

a style of complications “with the draw in one’s pocket.” Who dares to shoulder such a burden as the classical style? ♠

GAMES APPENDIX

16. Qxe5

Vsevolod Rauzer

Alexander Konstantinopolsky

Training tournament, Kiev, 1932

1. d4 Nf6 2. c4 e6 3. Nc3 Bb4 4. Qc2 d5 5. a3 Bxc3+ 6. Qxc3 Ne4 7. Qc2 Nc6 8. e3 e5 9. cxd5 Qxd5 10. Bc4 Qa5+ 11. b4 Nxb4 12. Qxe4 Nc2+ 13. Ke2 Qe1+ 14. Kf3 Nxa1 15. Bb2 0-0 16. Qxe5 Qd1+ 17. Ne2 Qxh1 18. d5 f6 19. Qh5 Qb1 20. Nf4 Bf5 21. Bxa1 Be4+ 22. Kg3 Qxa1 23. d6+ Kh8 24. f3 Qe5 25. Qxe5 fxe5 26. Ne6 cxd6 27. Nxf8 Rxf8 28. fxe4 Rc8 29. Bd5 b5 30. Kg4 g6, White resigned.

16. Kg3 Bd7

GM Matthew Sadler (2575)

GM Vladimir Tukmakov (2585)

Linares Open, 1995

1. d4 Nf6 2. c4 e6 3. Nc3 Bb4 4. Qc2 d5 5. a3 Bxc3+ 6. Qxc3 Ne4 7. Qc2 Nc6 8. e3 e5 9. cxd5 Qxd5 10. Bc4 Qa5+ 11. b4 Nxb4 12. Qxe4 Nc2+ 13. Ke2 Qe1+ 14. Kf3 Nxa1 15. Bb2 0-0 16. Kg3 Bd7 17. Nf3 Qxh1 18. Ng5 g6 19. Qxe5 Rae8 20. Qf6 Rxe3+ 21. fxe3 Qe1+ 22. Kf3!

Here 22. Qf2? Nc2! 23. Qxe1 Nxe1 24. Kf2 b5 and now 25. Bf1! (25. Be2?! was seen in Danilov – Peleshev, Tallinn 1998) is unclear.

22. ... Qd1+ 23. Kg3?

Overlooking 23. Be2! Qb1 24. d5 Qf5+ 25. Qxf5 Bxf5 26. Bxa1; here Black resigned in Watson – Roberts, Scotland 1995.

23. ... Qe1+ 24. Kf3 Qd1+ 25. Kg3 Qe1+ 26. Kf3, draw.

16. Kg3 Kh8

Joel Lautier (2645)

Jan Timman (2635)

Donner Memorial, Amsterdam, 1994

1. d4 Nf6 2. c4 e6 3. Nc3 Bb4 4. Qc2 d5 5. a3 Bxc3+ 6. Qxc3 Ne4 7. Qc2 Nc6 8. e3 e5 9. cxd5 Qxd5 10. Bc4 Qa5+ 11. b4 Nxb4 12. Qxe4 Nc2+ 13. Ke2 Qe1+ 14. Kf3 Nxa1 15. Bb2 0-0 16. Kg3 Kh8 17. Nf3

The game Atalik – Sax (Maroczy Memorial, 1997) went 17. dxe5 Be6 18. Nf3 Qxh1 19. Ng5

g6 20. Nxf7+ Rxf7 21. Bxe6 Rg7 22. Bf7 Rxf7 23. e6+! with a winning position.

17. ... Qxh1 18. Ng5 f5 19. Qxe5 f4+

In 1997 Timman tried 19. ... Bd7 20. Nf7+ Rxf7 21. Bxf7 f4+ 22. exf4 Qd1 23. f3 Nc2 24. Bc3 Qd3 25. d5 and Black soon won in Hillarp Persson – Timman, Koge 1997.

20. exf4 Bh3 21. Kxh3 Qb1 22. d5 Qf5+ 23. Qxf5 Rxf5 24. Ne6 Nc2 25. Nxe7 Rf7 26. Nf5+ Kg8 27. Nh6+ Kf8 28. Nxf7 Kxf7 29. d6+ Ke8 30. dxc7 Kd7 31. Be5 Nxa3 32. Bd3 Rf8 33. Kg4 a6 34. Bxh7 Nc4 35. Bf5+, Black resigned.

16. Kg3 h6

GM Garry Kasparov (2813)

GM Michael Adams (2740)

European Club Ch (5), Izmir, 10.07.2004

1. d4 Nf6 2. c4 e6 3. Nc3 Bb4 4. Qc2 d5 5. a3 Bxc3+ 6. Qxc3 Ne4 7. Qc2 Nc6 8. e3 e5 9. cxd5 Qxd5 10. Bc4 Qa5+ 11. b4 Nxb4 12. Qxe4 Nc2+ 13. Ke2 Qe1+ 14. Kf3 Nxa1 15. Bb2 0-0 16. Kg3 h6 17. h4 Re8 18. Kh2 Qxf2 19. Bxa1 Bf5 20. Qxb7 exd4 21. Nf3 Be4 22. Qxc7 Bxf3 23. Qxf7+ Kh8 24. Qxf3 Qxh4+ 25. Kg1 Qe1+ 26. Bf1 Qxa1 27. Rxh6+ gxh6 28. Qf6+ Kg8 29. Qg6+ Kf8 30. Qf6+, draw.

Translator’s Endnotes

This text was originally published as “V zashchitu shakhmatnogo klassitsizma,” *Shakhmaty v SSSR* (1934:4). The editorial notes are unattributed; however, the main editor of the magazine is indicated as being S. O. Vainstein (1894-1942). Vainstein, who was among the Soviet players interned at Triberg during WW I, translated many works from German into Russian for publication in the U.S.S.R.; among them, books by Tarrasch. I. This entire line was revived in the mid-1990s and was argued for a decade; then, after 16. ... h6 White’s attempts (for instance, in Kasparov – Adams, European Club Cup, 2004) focused on 17. h4. On 17. Bd3 Adams, annotating the above-mentioned game in *Chess Informant* (92/497), indicates the line 17. ... f5; the main variation of his analysis continues 18. Qd5+ (18. Qxe5 Qd1 19. Be2 f4+; or 19. Bc4+ Kh7 20. h3 Qc2, etc.) 18. ... Kh8 19. Qxe5 (19. dxe5 f4+ 20. exf4 Qd2) 19. ... f4+ 20. exf4 Qd2, etc. White’s attack is certainly not winning, as Rauzer claimed in the 1930s. II. The engine shows that 22. Kf3! should win instead of 22. Qf2. See Sadler – Tukmakov. III. Here 22. ... Nc2! gives Black a slight edge, as in Danilov – Peleshev, Tallinn 1998.

A Pleasant Diversion

Chess has been a constant companion for a professor and pianist.

BY JOSHUA ANDERSON

"FUN!"

That's how Neil McKelvie sums up his 80-plus years of playing chess.

Born in England in 1930, McKelvie learned the game from his father when he was four years old. In 1940, shortly after the outbreak

of World War II, he escaped "The Blitz" by moving with his mother from London to New Jersey. He learned more about the game from a teacher at his private school there. After the war, McKelvie returned to England to continue his studies at Cambridge, earning his B.A. and M.A. It was during those years that McKelvie had the rare honor of

taking first board for Cambridge in its annual match against Oxford.

SICILIAN DEFENSE, DRAGON VARIATION (B73)

D.A. Yanofsky (Oxford)
Neil McKelvie (Cambridge)
Oxford-Cambridge Match (board 1),
London, 03.28.1953

1. e4 c5 2. Nf3 Nc6 3. d4 cxd4 4. Nxd4 Nf6 5. Nc3 d6 6. Be2 g6 7. 0-0 Bg7 8. Be3 0-0 9. h3 a6 10. Qd2 Bd7 11. f4 b5 12. Bf3 Rc8 13. Nb3 Rb8 14. Nd5 a5 15. c3 Ne8 16. Bf2 e6 17. Ne3 a4 18. Nd4 Qa5 19. Nec2 Nxd4 20. Bxd4 Bxd4+ 21. Qxd4 Rc8 22. Rad1 Bc6 23. f5 Rd8 24. Nb4 Bb7 25. e5 Bxf3 26. Rxf3 Qc7 27. f6 Qb7 28. Rfd3 d5 29. Qe3 Kh8 30. Rd4 Qb6 31. Kh1 Rg8 32. Qg5, Black resigned.

McKelvie returned to the United States in 1954 to earn his doctorate in chemistry from Columbia University. He did post-doctoral work in analytical chemistry at Yale, got married, settled in New York City, and became a member of the Manhattan Chess Club.

In those early years in New York, McKelvie had occasion to play John Collins, a regular at the rival Marshall Club, who was making a rare appearance in an event at the Manhattan club. Collins, as always, was there with his sister Ethel, and the two were known to all, since Collins had worked with the likes of the Byrne brothers, William Lombardy, and, of course, Bobby Fischer.

SICILIAN DEFENSE, SOZIN VARIATION (B88)

Neil McKelvie
Jack Collins
Manhattan Club Ch, late 50s / early 60s
Annotations by Neil McKelvie

1. e4 c5 2. Nf3 e6 3. d4 cxd4 4. Nxd4 d6 5. Bc4 a6 6. Bb3 Nf6 7. Nc3 Qc7 8. f4 Nc6 9. Be3 Be7 10. Qf3 0-0



Neil McKelvie,
1967

Right: The competitors at the British Universities Individual Championships, 1951. McKelvie is sixth from the left, second row.

An invitation to attack!

11. Rg1

Jack looked stunned; after some thought, he finally played...

11. ... Bd7 12. g4 Nxd4 13. Bxd4

Thanks for putting my bishop in such a nice place!

13. ... Bc6 14. g5 Nd7 15. Qh3 Nc5 16. f5 Nxb3 17. axb3 exf5



18. Qh6!

Suddenly Jack underwent a fit of violent shaking. I was scared — had I literally played a killing move? — but I saw that Ethel was calm; she'd seen this before.

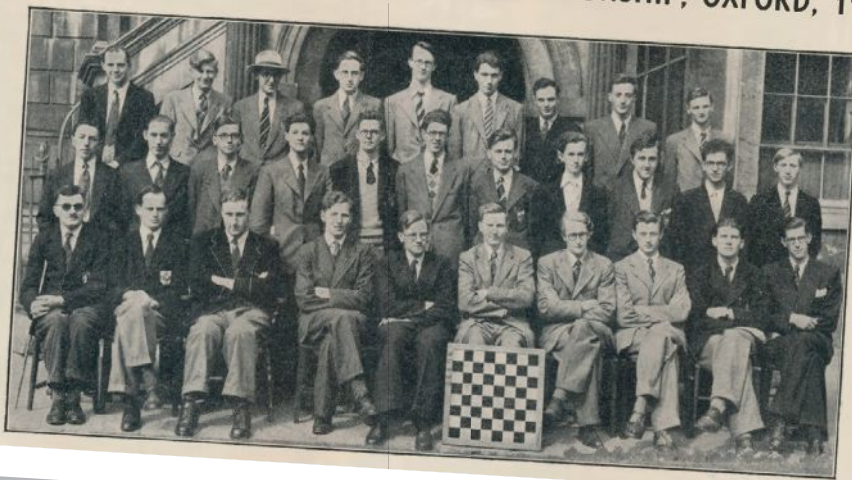
18. ... f6 19. gxf6 Bxf6 20. Bxf6 Rf7 21. 0-0-0 b5 22. Rg3 Ra7 23. Bd4 Rb7 24. Rdg1 b4 25. Rh3 bxc3 26. Qxh7+ Kf8 27. Rxb7, Black resigned.

There's a faster win with 27. Qxg7+ Rxb7 28. Rh8+ Rg8 29. Rxb7 Kf7 30. Rg7+ Ke6 31. Rh6 mate, but my move did the trick as well.

McKelvie found that he greatly enjoyed playing at the Manhattan. The club was full of businessmen who took the game seriously, but who also had professional lives. For them, chess was nothing more than a pleasant distraction. McKelvie played there throughout the 1960s, drawing the attention of *Chess Review* readers with his win over GM Pal Benko.

By the 1970s, McKelvie was in his 40s and still doing quite well at his "fun distraction." In 1971, two prominent blitz tournaments took place: one was at the Manhattan to celebrate Fischer's run to the world championship, and the other was at the Marshall. In the Manhattan event, Fischer

BRITISH UNIVERSITIES INDIVIDUAL CHAMPIONSHIP, OXFORD, 1951



annihilated the best players in New York, scoring 21½/22 (only Walter Shipman drew him), and Andy Soltis edged out Robert Byrne for second place.

The Marshall event lacked Fischer but included Samuel Reshevsky. The tournament began with two groups: McKelvie won one and Robert Byrne won the other. In the final round-robin, both men, along with Reshevsky, Arthur Bisguier, and Donald Byrne, were among the remaining participants. After losing to Bisguier and both Byrne brothers in the first three rounds, McKelvie thought his luck had run out. In the fourth, he met Reshevsky.

SICILIAN DEFENSE, KAN VARIATION (B42)

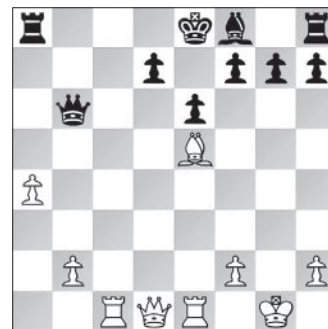
Neil McKelvie
GM Samuel Reshevsky
Marshall CC (blitz), 05.24.1971
Annotations by Neil McKelvie

1. e4 c5 2. Nf3 e6 3. d4 cxd4 4. Nxd4 a6 5. Bd3 Qc7 6. 0-0 b5 7. Re1 Nc6 8. Nxc6 Qxc6 9. Nc3 Bb7 10. a4 b4 11. Nd5 Nf6 12. Bd2 Nxd5 13. exd5 Qc7

Up to this point we were following a game recently published in *Chess Life* where Tal (after 13. ... Qc5) played 14. Be4 and won. The annotator suggested 14. c4, sacrificing a pawn, so I tried it! Reshevsky had no idea that I was unlikely to have a prepared variation; from here, I had to work everything out.

[Editor's note: I'm having trouble finding the citation in *Chess Life*, but the game appears to be 13. ... Qc5 14. Be4 f5 15. Bf3 Bxd5 16. Bxb4 Bxf3 17. Qxf3 Qc8 18. Bc3 Kf7 19. Rad1 Be7 20. g4 Rf8 21. gxf5 Kg8 22. Qg2 Bf6 23. Bxf6 Rxf6 24. Rxd7 Qxd7 25. Qxa8+ Rf8 26. Qxa6 and Black resigned in Tal – Gipslis, Riga 1958.]

14. c4 bxc3 e.p. 15. Bxc3 Bxd5 16. Bxa6 Bxg2 17. Bb5 Bc6 18. Be5 Qb7 19. Bxc6 Qxc6 20. Rc1 Qb6



Now I thought for a whole minute — an eternity in rapid play! — and tossed out:

21. Bc7

Sacrificing a second pawn. This hit Reshevsky like an electric shock! Through this move he had played almost instantly, obviously following analysis, whereas I had to think. He was sure that my move was some deep home preparation!

21. ... Qb7

What I had seen was that if 21. ... Qxb2 then 22. Qf3 Rc8 followed by 23. Bf4. If he plays 23. ... Rxc1 24. Rxc1 I thought I was winning, and if instead 23. ... Rd8 24. Bc7 and either I win the Exchange for my two pawns, or I get a draw by repetition, which I'd be quite happy with against Reshevsky! But he was sure my move was prepared analysis, so after shaking his head, he declined the offered pawn.

[Editor's note: 23. Bf4 is a blunder, as the position is balanced after 23. ... Rxc1 24. Rxc1 Be7. Instead, White would have achieved his goals with the tricky 23. Rc4!

with the idea 24. Be5! winning nearly on the spot.]

22. a5

My reply was instant. I expected that he would try ... Bf8-e7 and then castle. I'd still be a pawn down, but the connected passers might balance things out. Instead, he played...

22. ... Bb4 23. Qb3

I expected 23. ... Ra7 24. Re2, but instead Sammy blitzed out...

23. ... Ke7? 24. Bb6!

This wins the bishop, and after Black grabbed the rook, I won more material.

24. ... Bxe1 25. Bc5+...

This takes the queen, and soon the game, as I delivered mate in a few more moves!

Ultimately Bisguier, a friend of McKelvie's and the 1954 U. S. Champion, won the event.

The 1970s proved to be a great decade for the Manhattan club and McKelvie, who won the club championship twice, in 1975 and 1979 (with Jorge Massana).

He also had the occasion to witness an unusual event. Here we quote McKelvie:

"He [Bobby Fischer] had been in California doing whatever for some time, and suddenly walked into the Manhattan Chess Club. It was nearly empty, and I

was about to go home, but we sat down together in a side room. I said that he could have been successful in many other occupations. He sprang to his feet with his back to me and gave a speech to an invisible audience about how he could have been great at so many things! I realized that he was quite deranged, but eventually he sat down and saw me.

I said that he certainly had superb intellect, but now in his early 30s it was a bit late to put in years of training, which for many started in childhood, like him in chess. I suggested computer programming, and I was sure Apple Computer for one would be interested in him.

I suggested a computer for rapid chess that would have a 10 second pause before a loss on time. I then left to go home. Years later, Fischer patented such a clock!"

As the Fischer boom died out, McKelvie continued to play at the Manhattan, though not with as much success as before. Still, the game provided much fun, and was a pleasant diversion for many years.

In the 1990s, McKelvie's first wife became sick, and he would eventually leave the club to spend more time with her before her passing. Today he lives comfortably in Mt. Vernon, New York. While he has largely retired from chess, he still looks at various puzzles and stories.

He also continues with his other great passion — the piano. McKelvie is an accomplished amateur pianist, having taken lessons with a number of leading teachers in his nearly 70 years of playing, and he has earned multiple special prizes in competitions.

McKelvie enjoys entertaining others with his wit and stories, and would welcome visits from any chess players who find themselves in his neck of the woods. Contact Joshua Anderson at joshuamiltonanderson@gmail.com if you would like to connect with McKelvie. For more, check out McKelvie's self-penned "My Best Move" in our March 2020 issue.

SELECTED GAMES

How to describe Neil McKelvie's playing style? Let's quote two experts:

- "Chemist McKelvie is naturally a master of analysis and accordingly prefers carefully concocted hot variations." (IM Hans Kmoch, *Chess Review*, August 1967)
- "McKelvie's chess style is best described as optimistically enterprising. His sharp, aggressive play leaves little room for compromise." (GM William Lombardy, *Chess Life & Review*, December 1975)

After reviewing nearly 80 of McKelvie's games, spanning almost 40 years of play, my only disagreement with these two masters is that they might have understated the case.

While capable of subtle positional struggle, McKelvie clearly relished the to-and-fro of tactical battle. Here are some of his most interesting games; for more, visit the *Chess Life Online* companion piece.

NIMZO-INDIAN DEFENSE, FISCHER VARIATION (E43)

Neil McKelvie
Bengt Alenius
World Student Team, Brussels,
03.18.1953

1. d4 Nf6 2. c4 e6 3. Nc3 Bb4 4. e3 c5 5. a3 Bxc3+ 6. bxc3 b6 7. Bd3 Bb7 8. f3 0-0 9. e4 d6 10. Bg5 Nc6 11. Ne2 e5 12. d5 Na5 13. Ng3 h6 14. Be3 Kh7 15. 0-0 Ba6 16. Qe2 Qd7 17. Nf5 Ng8 18. a4 g6 19. Nh4 Qe7 20. g3 Nf6 21. f4 Nxe4? 22. Bxe4 f5



Below: Celebrating the 45th anniversary of AVRO at the Manhattan Chess Club, L to R: Alburt, Bisguier, Reshevsky, Botvinnik, McKelvie, Grayson (seated), and Pandolfini.



23. Nxg6! Kxg6 24. Qg4+ Kh7 25. Bxf5+ Kh8 26. fxe5 Nxc4 27. Bxh6 Rxf5 28. Rxf5 Nxe5 29. Qh5 Bd3 30. Bg5+ Qh7 31. Bf6+ Kg8 32. Rg5+, Black resigned.

SICILIAN DEFENSE, NAJDORF VARIATION (B96)

Neil McKelvie
Robert Steinmeyer
Manhattan CC Ch, 1964

1. e4 c5 2. Nf3 d6 3. d4 cxd4 4. Nxd4 Nf6 5. Nc3 a6 6. Bg5 e6 7. f4 b5 8. e5 dxe5 9. fxe5 Qc7 10. Nf3 Nfd7 11. Ne4 Bb7 12. Bd3 Nxe5 13. Nxe5 Qxe5 14. 0-0 Nd7 15. Qh5 Nf6?



16. Rxf6! 0-0-0

Worse is 16. ... gxf6? 17. Nxf6+ Kd8 18. Ng4+.

17. Rxf7 Bc5+ 18. Kh1 Bxe4 19. Bxe4 Be3 20. Qf3! Bxg5 21. Bf5 Rd5 22. Be4 Rd6 23. Bb7+ Kd8 24. Rf1 Bf6 25. Bc6 Qf5 26. Rd1! Qe5 27. Rxd6+ Qxd6 28. Rd7+ Qxd7 29. Bxd7 Kxd7 30. Qb7+ Kd6 31. Qxa6+ Kc5 32. Qa7+ Kc6 33. b4 Rd8 34. Qc5+ Kb7 35. Qxb5+ Kc7 36. Qe2 Rd4 37. c4 e5 38. g3 e4 39. h4 Kd6 40. a4 Ke5 41. a5 Rd3 42. a6, Black resigned.

SICILIAN DEFENSE, SCHEVENINGEN VARIATION (B82)

Neil McKelvie
GM Pal Benko
Manhattan CC Ch, 1966

1. e4 c5 2. Nf3 d6 3. d4 cxd4 4. Nxd4 Nf6 5. Nc3 e6 6. f4 a6 7. Be3 b5 8. e5 dxe5 9. fxe5 Nd5 10. Nxd5 Qxd5 11. Be2 Qxe5 12. Qd2 Bb7 13. Bf4 Qd5 14. 0-0-0 Qd7? 15. Qc3 Bd5

(see diagram top of next column)

16. Nf5!

Also winning was 16. Nxe6 fxe6 17. Bh5+ Kd8 (17. ... g6 18. Qxh8 gxh5 19. Bh6) 18. Rxd5 exd5 19. Qa5+ Kc8 20. Bg4!.



Above: GM Lev Alburt lectures at the Manhattan Chess Club, year unknown. McKelvie is standing, second from left.



16. ... Nc6 17. Rxd5 exd5 18. Bg4 Kd8 19. Nd4 Nb4 20. Kb1 Qb7 21. a3 h5 22. Bh3 a5 23. axb4 Ra6 24. Nxb5 axb4 25. Bc7+ Ke8 26. Re1+ Re6 27. Bxe6 fxe6 28. Qh3 Rh6 29. Rxe6+ Kf7 30. Rxh6 gxh6 31. Qf5+ Kg8 32. Qe6+ Kh7 33. Qf7+ Bg7 34. Nd4 Qa7 35. Nf5 Qg1+ 36. Ka2 b3+ 37. Kxb3, Black resigned.

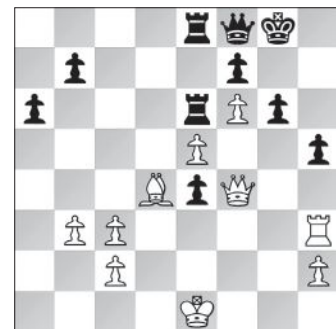
SICILIAN DEFENSE, SOZIN VARIATION (B88)

Neil McKelvie
Steven Grant
Metropolitan Masters, 1967

1. e4 c5 2. Nf3 e6 3. d4 cxd4 4. Nxd4 Nf6 5. Nc3 d6 6. Be3 Nc6 7. Bc4 Be7 8. f4 0-0 9. Bb3 Na5 10. Qf3 Nxb3 11. axb3 a6 12. g4 e5 13. Nf5 Bxf5 14. gxf5 d5 15. fxe5 Nxe4 16. Rg1 Bb4 17. f6 g6 18. Qf4 Re8 19. Ra4 Bxc3+ 20. bxc3 Re6 21. Rxe4 dxe4 22. Rg3 Qf8 23. Rh3 Rae8 24. Bd4 h5?

(see diagram top of next column)

25. Rxh5! gxh5 26. Bc5! R6e7 27. Bxe7 Rxe7 28. Qg5+ Kh7 29. Qxh5+ Kg8 30. Qg5+ Kh7 31. fxe7 Qe8 32. Qf6 Kg8 33. Qd6, Black resigned.



SICILIAN DEFENSE, SOZIN VARIATION (B88)

Neil McKelvie
Walter Shipman
Metropolitan Masters, 1967

1. e4 c5 2. Nf3 d6 3. d4 cxd4 4. Nxd4 Nf6 5. Nc3 e6 6. Be3 Be7 7. f4 Nc6 8. Bc4 0-0 9. Bb3 Bd7 10. Qf3 Nxd4 11. Bxd4 Bc6 12. g4 Qa5 13. 0-0-0 e5 14. fxe5 dxe5 15. Qf5!? Bd7 16. Qxe5 Qxe5 17. Bxe5 Bxg4 18. Rd3 Be6 19. Nd5 Bxd5 20. exd5 Ne4 21. Rg1 Bg5+ 22. Kb1 f6 23. Bc7 Nd2+



24. Rxd2 Bxd2 25. d6+ Kh8 26. Bd5 Bf4 27. Bxb7 Rad8 28. Rd1 Rd7 29. c4 Bxd6 30. Bxd6 Rfd8 31. c5 Rxb7 32. c6 Rf7 33. b4 f5 34. Rd2 a6? 35. a4 h6 36. b5 axb5 37. axb5 f4 38. b6 Rf5 39. c7 Re8 40. b7 Rb5+ 41. Rb2 Re1+ 42. Ka2, Black resigned.

SICILIAN DEFENSE, TAIMANOV VARIATION (B48)

Neil McKelvie
IM Arnold Denker
Manhattan CC Ch, 1968

1. e4 c5 2. Nf3 e6 3. d4 cxd4 4. Nxd4 a6 5. Nc3 Qc7 6. Bd3 Nc6 7. Be3 Nf6 8. Qe2 Bd6 9. g3!? Nxd4 10. Bxd4 e5 11. Be3 Bb4 12. 0-0 Bxc3 13. bxc3 0-0 14. Bg5 Qc6 15. f4 exf4 16. e5 f3!? 17. Rxf3 Ng4 18. Be7 Re8 19. Bd6 b5?



20. Qe4! Qxe4 21. Bxe4 Ra7 22. Bd5 Nh6 23. Raf1 Re6 24. Bxe6 dxe6 25. c4 bxc4 26. Rc3 Bd7 27. Rb1 f5 28. Bb8 Ra8 29. Rxc4 Nf7 30. Rb7 Nd8 31. Rxd7 Rxb8 32. Rcc7, Black resigned.

SICILIAN DEFENSE, ACCELERATED DRAGON (B39)

Mitch Saltzberg
Neil McKelvie
69th US Open (9), Aspen, 08.20.1968

1. d4 Nf6 2. c4 c5 3. Nf3 cxd4 4. Nxd4 g6 5. Nc3 Bg7 6. e4 Nc6 7. Be3 Ng4 8. Nxc6 Nxe3 9. Nxd8 Nxd1 10. Nxd1 Kxd8 11. Bd3 d6 12. Rb1 e6 13. 0-0 Ke7 14. Re1 Be5 15. Ne3 h5 16. h4 f6 17. g3 g5 18. Ng2 Bd7 19. Kf1 Bc6 20. b4 a6 21. Rec1 Rhg8 22. Re1 Rgc8 23. Rec1 b5 24. c5 dxc5 25. Rxc5 Bd4 26. Rcc1 Bb7 27. Ke2 f5 28. hxg5 fxe4 29. Bc2 Rg8 30. Bb3 Kd6 31. Nf4 Bd5 32. Rd1 Ke5

(see diagram top of next column)

The king is a fighting piece!

33. g6 Rac8 34. Rd2 h4 35. Rbd1 Bxb3



36. axb3 hxg3 37. fxg3 Rcd8 38. g7 Rxg7 39. Rxd4 Rxd4 40. Rxd4 Rxg3 41. Nxe6 Rc3 42. Kd2 Rg3 43. Ke2 Rg1 44. Kd2 Rb1 45. Ke3 Re1+ 46. Kd2 Rb1 47. Kc3 Rc1+ 48. Kd2 Rh1 49. Ke3 Rh3+ 50. Kd2 Rg3 51. Ke2 Rg2+ 52. Ke3 Rg4 53. Rd8 Rg3+ 54. Ke2?? Here 54. Kd2 draws, i.e., 54. ... Kxe6 55. Re8+ Kd5 56. Rd8+ Kc6 57. Rd4 Rxb3 58. Rxe4.

54. ... Kxe6 55. Ra8

We see the flaw in White's 54th move with 55. Re8+ Kd5 56. Rd8+ Ke5 57. Re8+ Kd4 58. Rd8+ and now 58. ... Kc3!.

55. ... Rxb3 56. Rxa6+ Kd5 57. Ra8 Rxb4 58. Rd8+ Kc4 59. Ke3 Kc3 60. Rd1 Rc4 61. Rb1 b4, White resigned.

ENGLISH OPENING (A25)

Eugene Shapiro
Neil McKelvie
Manhattan CC Ch, 1975

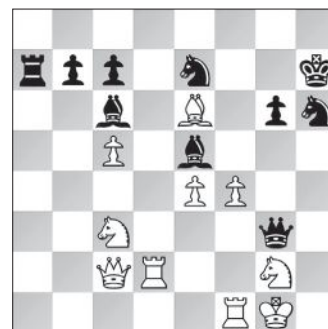
1. c4 e5 2. Nc3 Nc6 3. g3 g6 4. Bg2 Bg7 5. e3 Nge7 6. Nge2 Nf5 7. Rb1 a5 8. a3 h5 9. Qa4 Ra6 10. d3 d6 11. Bd2 Bd7 12. Qc2 h4 13. b4 axb4 14. axb4 Ra7 15. c5 Nce7 16. 0-0 dxc5 17. bxc5 Bc6 18. e4 hxg3 19. hxg3 Nh6 20. f3 Qd7 21. Be3 f5 22. Rbd1 Qe6 23. Rd2 0-0 24. Bh3 Qf6 25. d4



25. ... f4!?

Annotating this game for *Chess Life* (December 1975), Lombardy here noted that "McKelvie has obviously made a thorough study of Tal's style!" — and we can't disagree.

26. dxe5 Qg5 27. Be6+ Kh7 28. Bxf4 Rxf4 29. Nxf4 Qxg3+ 30. Ng2 Bxe5 31. f4



31. ... Nef5 32. fxe5 Ng4 33. Re1? Qh2+ 34. Kf1 Qh1+ Of course 34. ... Ng3 mate is also good.

35. Ke2 Qxg2+ 36. Kd1 Ra1+ 37. Nb1 Nge3+ 38. Kc1 Nxc2 39. Rxg2 Nxe1 40. Rh2+ Nh6 41. Kb2 Ra4 42. Nc3 Nd3+, White resigned.

SICILIAN DEFENSE, RICHTER-RAUZER VARIATION (B66)

Neil McKelvie
IM Maxim Dlugy
Manhattan CC Ch, 05.12.1984

1. e4 c5 2. Nf3 Nc6 3. d4 cxd4 4. Nxd4 Nf6 5. Nc3 d6 6. Bg5 e6 7. Qd2 a6 8. Be2 Bd7 9. a4 Be7 10. 0-0 0-0 11. Nb3 Qc7 12. Rad1 Ne5 13. f4 Ng6 14. e5 Qb6+ 15. Kh1 Ne8 16. a5 Qb4 17. Bxe7 Nxe7 18. f5 Qh4 19. fxe6 Bxe6 20. Rf4 Qh6 21. exd6 Nf5 22. d7 Nf6 23. Nc5 Rad8 24. Bd3 Qh5 25. Qe1 Ng4 26. h3 Nfe3



27. Nxe6 fxe6 28. Rxg4 Nxg4 29. Qxe6+ Kh8 30. Qxg4 Qxg4 31. hxg4 Rxd7 32. Ne4 Rd5 33. b4 Rf4 34. Re1 Rxg4 35. Nc5 Rd8 36. Re4, Black resigned. ♠

For more of McKelvie's games, please visit the accompanying CLO article at new.uschess.org/news/games-neil-mckelvie.

2024

World Amateur Team & U.S. Amateur Team Championship East

Welcome to the country's
favorite event!



February 17-19

Parsippany Hilton

1 Hilton Court

Parsippany, NJ 07054

Open to four-player teams with one optional alternate. Team average must be under 2200 (four highest ratings from 2024 January rating list used for ALL players—no exceptions). Teams rated over 2000 average—no more than 1000 points between boards 3 and 4. No more than two GMs on a team.

Time Control: 6SS, 40/100, SD/30 delay 5. **Rds.:** 1-7:30 Sat., 11-6 Sun., 9-3:30 Mon.

Registration: Online registration opens December 1st at official website www.njscf.org. Advance registration only—no on-site registration.

EF: \$240 online only by 1/28/24; ALL \$290 after. All teams: any changes at site or after 1/28/24—\$30 charge. **ENTRY MAXIMUM IS 325 TEAMS.** Enter early!

TEAM PRIZES: 1-5th place teams, plaque and 4 digital clocks; Top team (Denis Barry Award) U2100, 2000, 1900, 1800, 1700, 1600, 1500, 1400, 1300, 1200, 1000, each plaque and 4 digital clocks; Top college (same school), 4 digital clocks & plaque; Top high school (grades 9-12 same school), Top middle school (grades 5-9 same school), Top elementary school (grades K-6 same school), Top 2 scholastic teams (mixed schools okay) (Collins Award), Top mixed doubles (2 males, 2 females, no alternates), Top seniors (all players over age 50), Top military, each plaque & 4 digital clocks; Top company (full time only, same employer, noneducational), Top coaches (educational), Top all female, Top family (4 family members), Top

state (CT, DE, MD, MA, NJ, NY (Benjamin Award), PA, VA), each plaque; Top future team (all players under age 10), Top military college, Top parent/child (2 pairs, one parent, one child), each special plaque.

ADDITIONAL PRIZES: Best Player 1-4 and top alternate, all 6-0 scores, each digital clock. Biggest individual upset each round, engraved Cross pen. Entry fee refunded Sunday night to team with best "chess related" name. Best "chess related costumes or gimmick," 1st—gourmet dinner for 4. 2nd—gourmet dinner for 4. Surprises and special giveaways each round.

HR: See link to reserve room at www.njscf.org. Chess rates expire 1/17/2024.

Tournament Director NTD/IA: E. Steven Doyle (49 years)
Sunday night: Bughouse \$25 per team. Cash prizes.



For help forming teams contact
esdoyle@aol.com

See TLA section of this issue or visit new.uschess.org/node/39739 for more details.



*The Denker
Tournament of High
School Champions*

IM Arthur Guo

*The Barber
National
Tournament of
Middle School
State Champions*

FM Erick Zhao

*The Haring National
Tournament of Girls
State Champions*

FM Ruiyang Yan

- *The Rockefeller*
- *National Tournament*
- *of Elementary School*
- *State Champions*
- **John Abraham**

*The Irwin National
Tournament of Senior
State Champions*

GM Jesse Kraai

*The Weeramantry National
Blitz Tournament of
State Champions*

**FMs Terry Luo and
Gus Huston**

The National Invitationals were a hit in Grand Rapids.

BY **FM BREWINGTON HARDAWAY**

THIS YEAR'S NATIONAL INVITATIONALS were hosted at the Devos Place Convention Center in Grand Rapids, Michigan from July 29 through August 2. The five Invitationals — the Barber, Denker, Haring, Irwin, and Rockefeller, along with the Weeramantry Blitz — are an annual four-day event held alongside the U.S. Open, bringing in the best players from each state to battle it out across the board for cash prizes and scholarships.

MY EXPERIENCE

I was extremely excited to qualify to play the Barber again, as the Invitationals are one of the most enjoyable and well-organized events on the tournament calendar. My first time playing in one of these Invitationals was in 2022, where I won first place in the Barber with a 5½/6.

I was eager to repeat my success this year, but when I woke up at six in the morning for an early flight to Grand Rapids, I was disheartened to hear that it had been delayed. Those delays snowballed, causing me to arrive around two hours after the first round started, and forcing me to take a half-point bye. I was, of course, disappointed, as this bye would impact my tiebreaks, but it only motivated me to strive to win every game for the rest of the rounds. I chose to take control over what I could, and focus on playing to the best of my abilities.

How did I end up doing? Read on!

DENKER

In the Denker, Georgia's IM Arthur Guo successfully defended his 2022 title with a perfect 6/6 score against an extremely strong field! His victory was not completely guaranteed, especially since his critical game against IM Maximillian Lu (CT) fluctuated, but with no time on the clocks, Arthur was able to capitalize on an unfortunate blunder made by Max.

FRENCH DEFENSE (BY TRANSPOSITION) (C00)

IM Arthur Guo (2595)

IM Maximillian Lu (2459)

2023 Denker K-12 (5), Grand Rapids, 07.31.2023

1. e4 a6?!

Perhaps played for the shock factor; now we get a non-theoretical battle.

2. d4 e6 3. Nf3 d5 4. e5 c5 5. c3 Bd7 6. Bd3 Nc6

We have transposed into a fairly normal French-style position.

7. dxc5 Bxc5 8. b4 Bb6 9. 0-0 Nge7 10. Re1 Ng6 11. Be3 Bc7 12. Bxg6

Obviously the e5-pawn was under attack, but opening the h-file does not feel right to me.

12. ... hxc6 13. Bf4 f6 14. Bg3 Rh5



Lu was not scared about his king being weak. He knew the f7-square is a fairly safe square, at least for now!

15. exf6 gxf6 16. Nbd2 Bxg3 17. fxg3 Qb6+ 18. Kh1 e5 19. Qb3 Ne7 20. c4 Be6 21. cxd5 Bxd5 22. Qa4+ Kf7 23. g4 Rhh8 24. Rf1 Nc6 25. Rae1 Kg7

The black king is safely tucked away on g7. With the open h-file and the strong bishop on d5, Black is doing very well.

26. a3 Rad8 27. Qc2 Rd7 28. Ne4 Bxe4 29. Qxe4 Qb5 30. Qb1 Qc4 31. g5 f5 32. Qa1 Qf4 33. h3 Rd3 34. Qb2



34. ... Nd4

You can't move the f3-knight, or else Black sacrifices on h3 with the rook (either one!) and wins!

35. Nh2?

Guo tries to stop the terrible threat of the rook sacrifice on h3, but this is not an improvement. Now the g5-pawn falls. The only way to keep the game going was with 35. Qc1 Qxc1 36. Rxc1 Nc6 with a fairly equal position.

35. ... Qxg5 36. Rf2 e4 37. Nf1 Rd8 38. Rd2 Rxd2 39. Nxd2 Kh6 40. Nf1 Ne6 41. Rc1 f4 42. Nh2 Rd4 43. Ng4+ Kh5??

It seems like the king is safe because there are no checks, but with no time to speak of, Lu misses White's next move. Black is busted. The win is still there after 43. ... Kg7.

44. Rc5! e3

Even worse is 44. ... Rd5? 45. Qh8+ with mate on the move.

45. Rxc5+ Kxc5 46. Ne5 Rd1+ 47. Kh2 Nd4 48. Qxd4!

Guo knows the endgame is winning.

48. ... Rxd4 49. Nf3+ Kf5 50. Nxd4+ Ke4 51. Nf3 Kd3 52. g4 fxg3+ e.p. 53. Kxg3 b5 54. h4 Kc3 55. Kf4 Kd3 56. Ne1+ Kd2 57. Ng2 e2 58. Kg5 Kc3 59. Kxg6 Kd4 60. Kf5, Black resigned.

Despite the heartbreak of his game against Guo, Lu finished strong by winning his last game to take second place with 5/6. Additionally, New York's FM Gus Huston came back after a third-round loss to Guo to finish with 4½/6, in third place after tiebreaks. Also at 4½ points were fourth-place finisher FM Sharvesh Deviprasath (TX), and in fifth was FM Terry Luo (DE), who won the \$500 Ursula Foster award for the top player age 15 and under.



IRWIN

The Irwin saw many interesting and complicated games, leaving the spectators (both in-person and on the Twitch livestream!) on the edge of our seats. One match of particular complexity was the battle between GM Jesse Kraai (MD) and IM Nikoloz Managadze (NJ). Their intriguing head-to-head encounter featured a double-edged Sicilian with opposite side castling. Here is how the game went.

SICILIAN DEFENSE, ROSSOLIMO VARIATION (B23)

GM Jesse Kraai (2452)

IM Nikoloz Managadze (2434)

2023 Irwin Senior (4), Grand Rapids, 07.31.2023

1. e4 c5 2. Nc3 Nc6 3. Bb5 e6 4. Bxc6 bxc6 5. Nf3 d5 6. d3 Nf6 7. 0-0 Ba6 8. e5 Nd7 9. Re1 h6 10. b3 Qc7 11. Na4 Nb6 12. Nxb6 I think 12. Nb2, not allowing the a- and c-pawns to reconnect, was slightly more accurate.

12. ... axb6 13. c4 Be7 14. Bf4 g5 15. Bg3 0-0-0

With the kings now castled on opposite wings, an exciting battle is to come.

16. Qe2 g4 17. Nd2 Rdg8 18. f3 h5 19. fxe4 Rxe4 20. Rf1 Bg5 21. Rf2 Rg8 22. Raf1 Rg7 23. Nf3 Bd8 24. Qe3 b5



25. cxd5

It's very natural to open the c-file here, but it appears that Black has nothing to fear from a White attack. The engine strongly argues that White should just play 25. Bf4 and improve his pieces.

25. ... cxd5 26. Rc1 c4 27. Qh6 Qa7 28. d4 b4 29. Qxh5 c3 30. a3 Bd3 31. axb4 Kb8 32. Qh6 c2

A wild position that the engine says is balanced, but all three results feel possible for humans!

33. Ne1 Qxd4 34. Nxd3 Qxd3 35. Rfxc2



35. ... Kb7?

I think Managadze had to go all in with 35. ... Rxc3 36. hxc3 Bb6+ 37. Rc5 Qxc3 and we've reached a very unclear position where I believe Black should be for choice.

36. Rc3 Bb6+ 37. Kh1 Qh7?? 38. Qf6!

The only winning move! Black's king is now going to be mated.

38. ... Rxc3 39. Qe7+ Ka6 40. Ra1+ Kb5 41. Ra5+ Bxa5 42. Qc5+ Ka6 43. Qxa5+, Black resigned.

A wild game where both sides had chances, but in the end Kraai got the knockout blow!

Despite losing to Kraai, Managadze won his final two games while Kraai drew against the two other GMs in the field, New York's John Fedorowicz and Southern California's Enrico Sevillano, which meant that there was a two-way tie for first place between Kraai and Managadze. The ChessDojo guru had the better tie-breaks, sending Kraai to the 2024 U.S. Senior Championship.

Tying for third were Fedorowicz (my old school coach!), Sevillano, and IM Ronald Burnett (TN), all at 4½/6. FM Javier Antonio Torres (FL) won the \$500 Irwin Award for the top player 70 or over.

HARING

In the Haring, top seed FM Ruiyang Yan (CA-N) scored 5½/6, achieving a third consecutive victory in this competition! Her impressive win against Esther Jou in the final round is a good representation of the skills she used to be successful in this tournament.

FRENCH DEFENSE, STEINITZ VARIATION (C11)

FM Ruiyang Yan (2355)

Esther Jou (2161)

2023 Haring K-12 (6), Grand Rapids, 08.01.2023

1. e4 e6 2. d4 d5 3. Nc3 Nf6 4. e5 Nfd7 5. f4 c5 6. Nf3 Nc6 7. Be3 Be7 8. Qd2 0-0 9. dxc5 Qa5

Jou was still moving quickly here, and her move has been played widely, but I think 9. ... Nxc5 was very natural as well.

10. a3 Nxc5 11. Nd4 Qd8 12. Qf2?! Nxd4 13. Bxd4 b6 14. 0-0-0 Ba6 15. Bxa6 Nxa6 16. f5



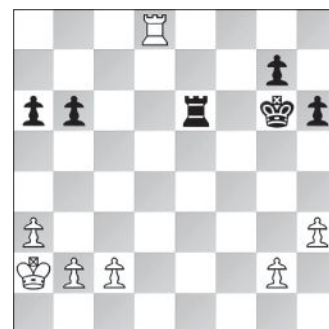
16. ... f6?

Black's position was already quite unpleasant, so Jou tries to complicate, but White's pieces are very well coordinated.

17. Qe2 Nc7 18. exf6 Bxf6 19. fxe6 Re8 20. Bxf6 Qxf6 21. Nxd5 Nxd5 22. Rxd5 Rxe6 23. Qc4

White is up a pawn. Now it becomes a matter of converting it.

23. ... Kh8 24. Rhd1 Ree8 25. Kb1 Rac8 26. Qg4 Rcd8 27. Rd7 a6 28. Qd4 Rxd7 29. Qxd7 Qe5 30. Qc6 h6 31. h3 Qe2 32. Rd3 Re6 33. Rd8+ Kh7 34. Qd5 Qf1+ 35. Ka2 Qf6 36. Qd3+ Qg6 37. Qxg6+ Kxg6



Tarrasch famously said that all rook endings are drawn, but here, there are too

many pawns for Black to hope for a miracle. White will cut off the king and push the c-pawn.

38. Rd2 Kf6 39. Kb3 Ke7 40. Kb4 Re5 41. Kc4 Rc5+ 42. Kd4 Kd6 43. c4 b5 44. Kc3+ Ke5 45. b3 a5 46. Rd7 g5 47. Re7+ Kf6 48. Rb7 bxc4 49. bxc4 Re5 50. Rb6+ Ke7 51. Kd3 h5 52. Rb5 Re6 53. Rxa5 Rb6 54. Rxc5 Rb3+ 55. Ke2 Rxa3 56. Rxh5 Ke8, and Black resigned.

11-year-old Jwalanthi Ram (GA) and 10-year-old Megan Paragua (NY) were not intimidated by their older and more experienced opponents. Both ended with scores of 5/6, with Ram winning second place on tiebreaks and Paragua finishing third. Ram also earned the \$500 Ursula Foster Award for the top player under 12.

BARBER

I had a feeling that my half-point bye would be challenging for me to overcome in the long run, especially after FM Erick Zhao (PA) took a quick draw in the final round. Much to my surprise, I was able to grind out a win in the last game after overcoming a dubious opening that set me up for uncertain positions throughout. Below is this “must win” final round battle with Massachusetts’ Eric Feng, the tournament co-leader entering the final round.

TWO KNIGHTS TANGO (A50)

Eric Feng (2223)

FM Brewington Hardaway (2453)

2023 Barber K-8 (6), Grand Rapids, 08.01.2023

1. d4 Nf6 2. c4 Nc6

The Two Knights Tango is a way to surprise my opponent, and to keep pieces on the board.

3. Nc3 d5 4. e3 g6 5. cxd5 Nxd5 6. Bc4 Nb6 7. Bb5 Bg7 8. Nf3 0-0 9. 0-0 Qd6 10. b3 Bf5 I knew 10. ... e5 equalized, but I knew it would probably lead to a repetition, or give me a worse position. For example, after 11. Ne4 Qd5 12. Nc3 Qd6 13. Ne4 I felt that if I moved my queen somewhere else I was worse.

11. Bb2 Rad8 12. Qe2 a6 13. Bxc6 Qxc6 14. Rac1 Qd6?!

Here 14. ... Bg4, with the plan of getting ... e7-e5 in, was definitely better than what I did.

15. Rfd1 c6 16. Nd2 h5 17. h3 Nd5 18. e4



18. ... Nxc3

I took here without considering 18. ... Nf4, which leads to a fascinating sacrifice. We get a double-edged position after 19. Qf3 Be6 20. e5 Qxd4 21. Na4 Nxh3+ 22. gxh3 Qh4 and anything can happen.

19. Bxc3 Bc8?

This is a mistake. After making my move, I realized that 20. Ba5! (followed by Nd2-c4) 20. ... Rd7 21. Nf3 left me much worse. Black's pieces lack coordination.

20. Nc4 Qf4 21. d5 cxd5 22. Bxg7 Kxg7 23. exd5 Qg5 24. Qe5+ Qxe5 25. Nxe5

I think trading queens was a mistake. Now I knew I had equalized, and I could try to outplay my opponent in the endgame.

25. ... Kf6 26. Nc4 b5 27. Ne3 Rd6 28. a4 Bd7 29. a5?! Rc8 30. b4?!

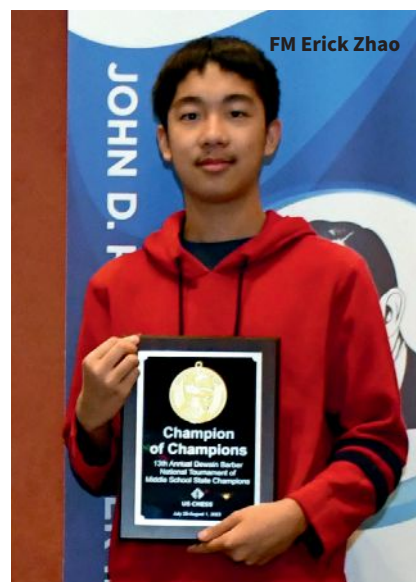
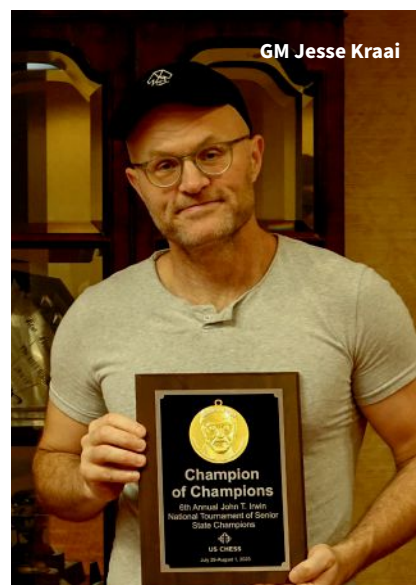


The plan to play 29. a5 and 30. b4 was not optimal. While it's true that I have a light-squared bishop and pawns on light squares, my pieces are much more active. This proves to be a decisive advantage.

30. ... Rxc1 31. Rxc1 e6 32. dxe6 Bxe6 33. Kf1?

Natural, but too late. Now the b4-pawn becomes a target.

The computer says that the only way to stay in the game is 33. f4!?, and if 33. ... Rd4 34. Rc6! when White has decent counterplay.



33. ... Rd4 34. Rb1

Again 34. Rc6 was the best way to try and grow counterplay.

34. ... Ke5 35. Ke2 f5

Now ... f5-f4 is coming, and White is lost.

36. Nc2 Bc4+ 37. Ke1 Re4+ 38. Kd1 Re2 39. Ne3 Bd3 40. Rc1 Rxf2 41. Rc5+ Kd4 42. Nd5 f4 43. Ke1 Rf1+ 44. Kd2 Bc4 45. Ne7 Rf2+ 46. Kd1 Kd3 47. Kc1 Rxe2 48. Nd5 Rg1+ 49. Kb2 f3, Black resigned.

A key win. I was worse in the middlegame, but took full control in the ending.

I was very impressed by 12-year-old Jasmine Su (CT), who ended in a three-way tie for first place with Zhao and your author by winning her final round game against Washington's Yiding Lu. As predicted, the



tiebreaks did factor, with Zhao in first, me in second, and Su in third place. Su also won the \$500 Barber Award for the top player 12 or under — there were no 11-year-olds in the field!

While I didn't claim first place this time, I was pretty happy with my play, and I'm ready to try and qualify for next year's Denker to take another shot at a national title!

ROCKEFELLER

The Rockefeller features some of the youngest and most impressive upcoming talents from across the United States. This tournament presented a diverse array of exciting games, with heavy emotions experienced by these competitors. Ultimately John Abraham (KY), Andrew Jing (DE), and Harshin Reddy Jagirapu (NM) all ended with 5/6; Abraham was first on tiebreaks, with Jing in second, and Jagirapu in third. Nebraska's Siva Kolli won the Rockefeller Award for the top player age 8 or under.

WEERAMANTRY

I missed the Weeramantry Blitz due to my travel issues, but it was very well attended, with 162 of the Invitational competitors taking part across four sections. FMs Terry Luo and Gus Huston tied for first in the 2200+ section, scoring 6½/8. Eric Feng scored 7/8 in the 1800-2199 section. Kushagra Bhargava (CT) was a perfect 8/8 in the 1400-1799 section, as was Varun Venkat Iyengar (OR) in the U1400 section.

TEAM

The team scores are always a source of pride for the winners. This year, Georgia and New York ended up tying with 23/30, but after tiebreaks, Georgia finished slightly ahead, giving them bragging rights for the year.

Florida was the top finisher with an average team rating under 2100, while Oregon took top honors among the U1900 crowd. Congratulations to all the winners! ♦

For more on the Invitationals and the 2023 U.S. Open, visit our CLO coverage at new.uschess.org/2023-us-open.

THE FIRST INVITATIONAL WAS THE GM Arnold Denker Tournament of High School Champions, which crowned its first winner in 1985. In 2011 the Dewain Barber Tournament of Middle School Champions was established, followed by the WIM Ruth Haring National Tournament of Girls State Champions in 2013. (It was renamed in honor of Haring in 2019.)

This was followed by the National Tournament of Senior Champions, for players over the age of 50, in 2018. The Senior was renamed in honor of John T. Irwin in 2020 as part of John D. Rockefeller V's endowment. Among the other elements of this endowment were the start of the John D. Rockefeller III National Tournament of Elementary School Champions, the FM Sunil Weeramantry National Blitz Tournament of State Champions, and several other initiatives, including additional funding for the senior event.

What kind of prizes are on tap? Well, the top five players in each section win cash. But more important are the scholarships. The top three finishers (determined via tiebreaks) in the four scholastic tournaments win scholarships to the institute of higher learning of their choice, with \$5,000 going to the first-place finisher, \$3,000 to the second-place finisher, and \$2,000 to the person in third. There are also special awards (the Ursula Foster 15U / 12U, Barber 11U, and Rockefeller 8U awards) in each scholastic section for players under specific ages.

Irwin winners do not take home scholarships. Instead they get larger cash prizes, with a total of \$5,900 for the top five finishers, and another \$500 (the Irwin award) for the top player over 70 or 75. The Irwin winner also qualifies for the 2024 U.S. Senior Championship.

All scholarships and awards are funded through generous contributions from US Chess, The U.S. Chess Trust, Dewain Barber, David and Maureen Grimaud, John D. Rockefeller V, Richard and Barbara Schiffrin, the Internet Chess Club (ICC), the Play Magnus Group, and US Chess Sales. US Chess expresses special thanks to Dwight Barber, the Ursula Foster Family, and a number of anonymous sponsors for their support.



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YOUTH **RISES**

The **future was now** at the 2023 U.S. Open.

BY IM JASON LIANG



THE 123RD ANNUAL U.S. OPEN Championship was held from July 29 through August 6 at the DeVos Place Convention Center in Grand Rapids, Michigan. This was my third time competing in the Open, and first since 2018. With \$50,000 in advertised prizes and a seat in the U.S. Championship on the line, it's an important event on the tournament calendar. Like many American swisses, the U.S. Open offers multiple schedules — the traditional nine-day, a six-day, and a four-day schedule, which all merge in round seven.

I opted for the traditional one-round a day option this year, hoping to avoid exhausting myself with multiple games at quick time controls. There were many strong titled players scattered throughout the three schedules, including 10 GMs: Varuzhan Akobian, David Brodsky, John Fedorowicz, Dmitry Gurevich, Semen Khanin, Viktor Matviishen, Alexander Shabalov, Aleksey Sorokin, Rahul Srivatsav, and Andrew Tang.

The nine-day schedule gave me plenty of time to explore the downtown, which featured a great variety of food options, and I was able to walk around and enjoy views of the Grand River, which was racing by right outside the playing hall. I even had the opportunity to visit the Grand Rapids Public Museum after my fifth-round game, and I snuck in a history lesson at the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Museum after the tournament had ended.

One of my favorite features of this annual event is the unpredictability of pairings in a single-section Swiss. With such a large field, you don't really know who you are going to play until minutes before the round. Since there is less time for preparation, there is more room for surprises.

The action really heated up after the merge. In round seven, I defeated FM Brewington Hardaway in a long, grinding Ruy Lopez, while GM Andrew Tang took down GM Dmitry Gurevich with his favorite London System. This meant that Tang joined me in shared first place with two rounds to go, with each of us on 6½/7.

RUY LOPEZ (C75)

IM Jason Liang (2594)
FM Brewington Hardaway (2432)
U.S. Open (7), Grand Rapids,
08.04.2023

1. e4 e5 2. Nf3 Nc6 3. Bb5 a6 4. Ba4 d6
5. 0-0 Bd7 6. c3 Nge7

Not unexpected, as Hardaway had played this in an earlier round, as well as at the 2023 Cadet Championship.

7. d4 Ng6 8. Bc2 Be7 9. a4 0-0 10. d5 Nb8

I forgot to analyze this before the game, so I improvised with a natural looking knight move.

11. Na3 Qc8 12. Nc4 f5 13. exf5 Bxf5
14. Bxf5 Qxf5 15. Ne3 Qh5 16. Nd2 Qxd1

The exchange of queens was a bit of a surprise, as the pawn structure suggested Black wanted to keep pressure on my king.

17. Rxd1 a5

While the engine thinks this move is fine, I'm not sure what its point was, as I wasn't trying to play a4-a5 — it would give Black opportunities for counterplay. For example, if 17. ... Nd7 18. a5 Nf4 19. Ne4 Nf6 20. Ra4 Ne2+ 21. Kf1 Nxc1 22. Rxc1 Nxe4 23. Rxe4 Bg5.

18. Ne4 Nd7 19. g3 h6

Stopping any Ne4-g5 ideas.

20. Nc4 Nf6



21. f3

I was pleased to have found this idea, as my moves come very easily now.

21. ... Nh8 22. Kg2 Nf7 23. Be3 Rfb8

24. Ra3

Here 24. Na3 Nxe4 25. fxe4 Ng5 26. Bxg5 Bxg5 27. Nb5 Rc8 looks like a stable edge for White, but it is not so clear how to proceed.

24. ... b6 25. b4

It's important to note that ... b6-b5 never works for Black.

25. ... Nd8 26. Bf2 Nb7 27. h4 Rf8 28. Be1

Here I wanted to go for an endgame, as all of the black pawns are on dark squares, while mine are on light squares.

28. ... Ra7 29. bxa5 Nxa5 30. Nxa5 Rxa5

31. c4 Ra6 32. Rda1 Rfa8 33. a5 Nd7

Not something I anticipated. It looks unnatural to leave my beautiful knight on e4, but exchanging them didn't look too appealing either!

34. Bb4 Kf7 35. Kf2 Bd8 36. Ke3 Ke7

37. Kd3 Rb8 38. axb6 Rxa3+ 39. Rxa3
Nxb6 40. Ra7??

(see diagram next page)

Beginning to go astray...

40. ... Nc8 41. Ra4 Nb6 42. Ra3 Kd7



Black missed a huge chance with 42. ... Nxd5!?. True, White is still better, but the position is less clear and Black gets counterplay after 43. Bxd6+ cxd6 44. cxd5 Kd7 45. h5 Bc7 46. g4 Rf8 47. Ke2 Rb8 48. Ra2 Rb5.

43. Bd2 Nc8 44. h5 Ne7?!



IM Jason Liang



FM Brewington
Hardaway

The alternative 44. ... c6 seems very strong here.

45. g4!

Achieving my ideal setup.

45. ... Ke8 46. Kc2 Nc8 47. Ra1 Nb6 48. Kd3 Nc8 49. Bc3 Kf7 50. Rg1 Nb6 51. Rb1! Switching plans!

51. ... Ra8 52. Ra1

Here 52. Rxb6 cxb6 53. Nxd6+ Kf8 54. Bxe5 Bc7 55. Kd4 looked very good, but I've made unnecessary sacrifices like this before, and I didn't want to risk it.

52. ... Rb8 53. Ra2 Kf8 54. Bd2 Kf7 55. Be3 Nd7 56. Ra7

Now I was sure I was winning.

56. ... Rb3+ 57. Kd2 Ke8 58. Ra8 Rb2+ 59. Kc3 Rb8 60. Rxb8 Nxb8 61. Kb4 Be7 62. Kb5 Kd8 63. Ng3 Nd7 64. Nf5 Bf8 65. Bf2 Kc8 66. Ng3 Be7 67. Ne4 Kb7 68. c5 dxc5 69. Bxc5 Bh4 70. Bb4 Nb6 71. Bf8 Nxd5 72. Bxg7 Ne3 73. Bxh6 Nc2 74. Bg7 Nd4+ 75. Kc4 Nxf3 76. h6 Bg5 77. h7, Black resigned.

After refreshing the pairings website multiple times, I discovered that my suspicions were accurate. I would have the black pieces against Tang for round eight. I had played Andrew one time before, at the 2022 Eastern Chess Congress in New Jersey. There Andrew opened with his familiar London System and we made a forced draw. This time, however, the stakes were much higher for us both.

Playing into a less forcing Semi-Slav, I intended to make the game a bit more challenging for my opponent, but he played solidly and the game quickly liquidated to a rather balanced middlegame. We shortly agreed to a draw, an acceptable result for both of us. It would all come down to round nine.

QUEEN'S GAMBIT, SEMI-SLAV VARIATION (D45)

GM Andrew Tang (2597)

IM Jason Liang (2594)

U.S. Open (8), Grand Rapids,
08.05.2023

1. d4 d5 2. c4 e6 3. Nc3 c6 4. e3 Nf6 5. Nf3 Nbd7 6. b3

A slight surprise; perhaps Andrew wanted to avoid my preparation in the main lines.

6. ... Bb4 7. Bd2 0-0 8. Be2

This was played after long thought, but it looks a little passive. The main idea might be to meet a future ... Nf6-e4 with Nc3xe4 and not be forked in the center. The alternative 8. Bd3 dxc4 9. bxc4 e5 10. dxe5 Ng4 shows the vulnerability of the d3-bishop.

8. ... b6 9. 0-0 Qe7

Of course not 9. ... Bb7?? allowing 10. Nxd5.

10. Re1

Played with the e3-e4 push in mind.

10. ... Bb7 11. cxd5 cxd5

I also considered 11. ... exd5 12. Bd3 Rfe8 13. e4 Bxc3 14. exd5 and if 14. ... Qb4?! 15. Rxe8+ Rxe8 16. Bxc3 Qxc3 17. Rc1 with advantage to White.

12. Nb5

The position is equal.

12. ... a6

Both 12. ... Rfc8 13. Bxb4 Qxb4 14. Qd2 and 12. ... Ne4 13. Bxb4 Qxb4 14. a3 Qe7 15. Nd2 are equal as well.

13. Bxb4 Qxb4 14. a3 Qe7 15. Nc3 Rac8 16. Qd3!?

If 16. Qd2 Ne4 17. Nxe4 dxe4 18. Ne5 Nxe5 19. dxe5 Qc5 20. Qd6 Qxd6 21. exd6 Rfd8 22. Rac1 we once again reach an equal position.

16. ... Rc7 17. Rec1 Rfc8 18. Qd2 Ne4 19. Nxe4 dxe4, draw.

A crowd of seven players all shared the lead with 7/8 heading into Sunday's final round: GMs Aleksey Sorokin, Varuzhan Akobian, Rahul Srivatsav, Viktor Matviishen, David Brodsky, and Andrew Tang, along with your author, the lone IM! I had white against Sorokin, while Akobian faced off with Tang. Matviishen was playing Srivatsav, and Brodsky was paired with IM Joshua Posthuma, who at 6½/8 was just a half-point behind the leaders.

My opponent was a strong GM, and he won last year's U.S. Open in Rancho Mirage, California. I had not played him before, and with little time to prepare, I decided to play the London System rather than the King's Pawn openings I had been playing throughout the tournament. We went down a topical line of the London where White sacrifices a pawn in return for attacking prospects on the kingside. But Sorokin played solid defense, and I realized I lost the thread in the early middlegame when I frittered away the initiative. From there Sorokin found a strong idea, returning the pawn and leaving

me with a passive position. He managed to win the resulting major piece endgame, guaranteeing himself at least a tie for first.

LONDON SYSTEM (D02)

IM Jason Liang (2594)

GM Aleksey Sorokin (2668)

U.S. Open (9), Grand Rapids,
08.06.2023

As I wasn't feeling confident against Sorokin's Najdorf, I decided to play the London and try to get a solid position.

1. d4 Nf6 2. Bf4 d5 3. e3 e6 4. Nf3 c5 5. Nbd2 Nc6 6. c3 Bd6

Previously he had exchanged on d4 here.

7. Bg3 0-0 8. Bd3 b6 9. e4 Be7 10. e5 Nh5 11. Ng5 Bxg5 12. Qxh5 g6 13. Qe2 cxd4 14. h4 Be7 15. h5



15. ... Kg7

This defends against any potential Qe2-g4 and h5xg6 ideas, so now I needed to deal with the fact that I was a pawn down with a short-term initiative.

Black could also have tried 15. ... g5 16. 0-0 (or perhaps 16. h6 dxc3 17. bxc3 f5 18. exf6 e.p. Bxf6 19. 0-0) 16. ... h6 17. f4 when I start opening lines.

The engine prefers the double-edged 15. ... dxc3 16. bxc3 d4 17. hxg6 hxg6 18. Ne4 Kg7.

16. Nb3?

A fairly obvious move, and one that I regret spending so much time on. I was debating what to do with my king.

Other ideas: (a) 16. Rd1!? is another typical move, improving my rook before committing to the placement of my other pieces. By playing this first I also retain the option of Nd2-f3, which is desirable in many lines. Play might continue 16. ... dxc3 17. bxc3 Bd7 18. Nf3 with a pleasant position. (b) Also possible is 16. Nf3 dxc3 17. bxc3 Bd7 18. Qd2 g5 19. h6+ Kh8 20. Nh2 which isn't clear.

16. ... dxc3 17. bxc3 Bd7 18. Rd1?!

Maybe not a terrible move in itself, but there's no real idea behind it. I hint at some c3-c4 themes, but it never really works out, so the rook ends up poorly placed on d1. Better would have been 18. Rb1, anticipating a2-a4-a5.

18. ... Rc8 19. 0-0?

A bad move, and inconsistent with my previous play. My reasoning for this move was a lack of belief in my attack, so instead I brought the king to "safety" and played for compensation. I have no obvious plan to prove that compensation, and am just down a pawn.

It was still complex after 19. Qe3 g5 20. h6+ Kh8 21. Bb1 f5 22. exf6 e.p. Bxf6.

Another idea was 19. Qd2 g5 (19. ... Rh8 allows 20. h6+! when I have more than enough compensation after 20. ... Kf8 21. 0-0) 20. Bb1 f5. Somehow this move worried me during the game, as Black will dominate with central space and good piece placement given time, but I underestimated my short-term dynamics, i.e., 21. exf6+ e.p. Bxf6 22. Qd3 Rf7 23. Qxh7+ Kf8 24. Qd3.

19. ... a5 20. Nd4?

While I saw the upcoming pawn sacrifice with ... b6-b5, I really underestimated how difficult the upcoming positions would be for me. One way to try and avoid these problems would have been 20. Rb1 a4 21. Nd4 (or 21. Nd2 Na5 22. Rfc1) 21. ... Na5 with plenty of play in the position.

20. ... Nxd4 21. cxd4 b5 22. Bxb5?

Too greedy. I thought Black was moves away from promoting, when in truth, that was far from the case. Now I had to admit that I was worse and suffering for a draw.

If 22. Bf4 Bg5 White should play 23. Bd2!. White could also try 22. Rc1 b4 23. Rxc8 Qxc8 24. Bf4 Qb7 25. g3! when the black kingside is a bit soft, I have good bishops, and the d7-bishop is poor.

22. ... Bxb5 23. Qxb5 Rc4



Now my queen feels misplaced, so I should recentralize it and try to support the d-pawn. My kingside also needs some attention.

24. Bf4?

I thought that if I got another move, I could play Bf4-e3 and secure the center. Unfortunately it was now Black's turn to move!

24. ... Bg5! 25. Bxg5 Qxg5 26. Qxa5

Taking with 26. hxg6 hxg6 would just accelerate Black's attack.

26. ... Qxh5 27. Qa7 Qf5 28. a4 h5 29. Ra1 Rfc8 30. Ra3 Rc1 31. Ra1 Rxa1 32. Rxa1 Rc2 33. Rf1

A sad, but forced, move, although the onus is now on Black to find a good setup, while



GM Andrew Tang



GM Aleksey Sorokin

I can perhaps consolidate if I can get a few moves.

33. ... Ra2 34. a5 h4 35. Qe7 Qf4 36. Qb4 Qg5?!

Here 36. ... Rd2 should win.

37. Qc3 Qf4 38. Qb4 g5 39. Qc3

Now I felt there were real chances to hold the position.

39. ... Qf5 40. Kh2 g4 41. Kg1 Qe4 42. Re1 Qf4 43. Rf1 Qf5

Sorokin smartly triangulates, forcing me to pick a new square for the queen.

44. Qe1?

The draw is in hand with 44. Qc7! h3 45. Qc3! hxg2 46. Kxg2.

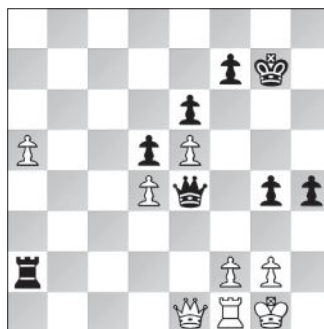


GM Viktor Matviishen



GM Rahul Srivatsav

44. ... Qe4?



A cursory look suggests this move is strong; after all, Black has a massive pawn wall (h4, g4, and potentially e4), but I have one clever idea which I should have slowed down to find.

The right path was 44. ... Qc2 45. Qe3 Kg6 46. Qf4 Qf5 and Black should win easily.

45. Qc1??

Missing my chance by blundering immediately.

One option was 45. Qc3, to at least stop ... h4-h3. I saw ideas like 45. ... g3 46. Qf3 trying to get to a drawn rook and pawn ending.

More spectacular was 45. Qxe4 dxe4 46. g3!! (or 46. Re1 Kg6 [46. ... g3 47. fxg3 hxg3 48. Kf1!!] 47. g3 Kf5 48. gxh4 Rxa5 49. Rc1 draws) 46. ... Kg6 47. Re1 hxg3 (47. ... h3 48. Rxe4) 48. fxg3 Kf5 49. Rf1+ and safety is at hand.

45. ... h3 46. Qg5+ Qg6 47. Qd8 hxg2 48. Kxg2 Qe4+ 49. Kg1 Qf4 50. Qh4 Rxa5 51. Re1 Ra3 52. Re3 Rxe3 53. fxe3 Qxe3+ 54. Kg2 Qh3+ 55. Qxh3 gxh3+ 56. Kxh3 f6 57. exf6+ Kxf6 58. Kg4 e5 59. dxe5+ Kxe5 60. Kf3 Kd4, White resigned.

Matviishen had found himself on the better end of a Benoni structure against Srivatsav, but after finding some resourceful moves, Rahul managed to force a perpetual.

BENONI DEFENSE (A72)

GM Viktor Matviishen (2629)

GM Rahul Srivatsav (2547)

U.S. Open (9), Grand Rapids, 08.06.2023

1. d4 Nf6 2. c4 e6 3. Nc3 c5 4. d5 exd5 5. cxd5 d6 6. Nf3 g6 7. e4 Bg7 8. Be2 0-0 9. Be3 Bg4 10. Nd2 Bxe2 11. Qxe2 Na6 12. 0-0 Re8 13. h3 Nc7 14. a4 Na6 15. Bf4 Nb4 16. Nc4 Nbx5 17. Nxd5 Nxd5 18. Bxd6 Nb6 19. Rad1 Qh4 20. f4 Bd4+ 21. Kh1 Nxc4 22. Qxc4 Rxe4 23. Bxc5 Re3 24. Qxd4 Rxh3+ 25. gxh3 Qxh3+ 26. Kg1, draw.

The game between Brodsky and Posthuma was extremely sharp. Brodsky had a big advantage at some point, but Posthuma was able to salvage a draw with resilient play in the endgame.

SICILIAN DEFENSE, LÖWENTHAL VARIATION (B32)

GM David Brodsky (2493)

IM Joshua Posthuma (2443)

U.S. Open (9), Grand Rapids, 08.06.2023

Going into the final round David had 7/8 and needed a win to tie for first, while Joshua had 6½/8 and was looking to finish near the top of the standings.

1. e4 c5 2. Nf3 Nc6 3. d4 cxd4 4. Nxd4 e5 5. Nb5

Are we going to see a Kalashnikov?

5. ... a6

Nope! Black chooses the Löwenthal, and fireworks ensue.

6. Nd6+ Bxd6 7. Qxd6 Qf6 8. Qd1 Qg6 9. Nc3 d5!?

This move is key to creating dynamic counterplay; without it, Black just has weaknesses galore.

10. Nxd5 Qxe4+ 11. Be3 Nd4 12. Nc7+ Ke7



13. Be2

David goes for a rare, but sharp, move where Black has to really know their stuff. The alternative 13. Rc1 Bg4 14. Qd3 Qxd3 15. Bxd3 Rd8 leads to a complex ending where it's not clear that White is better.

13. ... Nxc2+ 14. Kf1 Nxe3+ 15. fxe3 Bh3

A cool move to get to play, forcing White to find a precise sequence of moves to retain any hopes of an edge.

16. Nd5+ Kf8 17. Bf3 Qc4+ 18. Kg1 Rd8 19. Rc1 Qh4 20. gxh3 e4 21. Qd4 Qg5+



The players have been following a forced sequence of moves through this point; now, in a messy battle, White makes the first mistake.

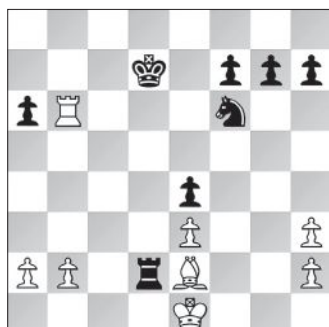
22. Bg4?

The right move is 22. Kf2, which leaves both the knight and bishop *en prise*, but frees the h1-rook to join the game! Play continues 22. ... Qxd5 (after 22. ... exf3 23. Rhg1!! Qxd5 24. Qxg7+ Ke7 25. Rc7+ Kd6 26. Rxf7 is what I suspect White missed or miscalculated; the line continues 26. ... Qd2+ 27. Kxf3 Qd5+ 28. Kf4! which is not an easy move to spot in your calculations at all — Black's king is simply less safe) 23. Qxd5 Rxd5 24. Rc8+ Ke7 25. Bxe4 and we can see the key difference between this and the game continuation.

22. ... Qxd5 23. Qxd5 Rxd5 24. Rc8+ Ke7 25. Kf2 Rd2+ 26. Be2 Rd8 27. Rbc1 Nf6 28. R1c7+ Ke6 29. Rxd8 Rxd8 30. Rxb7 Rd2

White would love to take the a6-pawn and have two connected passers, but Black gets enough counterplay.

31. Rb6+ Kd7 32. Ke1



32. ... Kc7?!

Care is needed when entering knight versus bishop endings with imbalanced pawn structures. The correct 32. ... Rc2 33. Kd1 Rc7 34. Rxa6 Nd5 35. Ra4 f5 36. Kd2 would still favor White, of course.

33. Kxd2 Kxb6 34. Kc3?

Going for king activity, but missing a huge

opportunity. Here 34. Bc4 would simply have won a pawn, and more than that, the only pawn that could defend the weakness on e4.

34. ... Nd7 35. Kd4 Nc5

After 35. ... f5 36. Bc4 g6 it's not easy for White to progress.

36. Bc4 f6 37. b4?!

Better was 37. h4 as it's one step closer to Black being in *zugzwang*.

37. ... Nd3!

This is a brilliant resource. The king and pawn ending is drawn, so White has to defend the b-pawn.

38. a3 Nf2 39. h4 a5 40. bxa5+?

The final mistake. Black gets time to attack the white pawns, while White won't be able to win enough kingside pawns without losing his queenside pawns in the process.

Fixing the pawns with 40. h5!! still worked!

40. ... Kxa5 41. Bb3 h5 42. Bf7 Ka4 43. Bxh5 Kxa3 44. Bg6 Kb2 45. Bxe4 Kc1 46. Bf3 Kd2 47. h5 Nd3 48. Ke4 Ne5 49. Kf4 Nd3+ 50. Ke4 Ne5 51. h4 Nc4 52. Kf5 Kxe3 53. Kg6 Kxf3 54. Kxg7 Ne3 55. Kxf6 Ng4+ 56. Kg5 Kg3 57. h6 Nxh6 58. Kxh6 Kxh4, draw.

As I walked by the board during the round, it seemed to me that Akobian was pushing for a win against Tang. He took many risks in the process, and with his clock ticking and his king stuck in the center, he ended up dropping a few pawns. In mutual time pressure, Tang managed to simplify the position and win the resulting rook and pawn endgame, securing a tie for first place.

QUEEN'S GAMBIT, RAGOZIN VARIATION (D38)

GM Varuzhan Akobian (2641)

GM Andrew Tang (2597)

U.S. Open (9), Grand Rapids, 08.06.2023

Both players needed a win to clinch a tie for first and have any chance of qualifying for the U.S. Championship.

1. d4 d5 2. c4 e6 3. Nc3 Nf6 4. Nf3 Bb4 5. Qa4+ Nc6 6. e3 0-0 7. Bd2 dxc4 8. Bxc4 Bd6 9. h3

A rare move, waiting for Black to choose a plan. More often seen is 9. Qc2 e5.

GM David Brodsky



IM Joshua Posthuma



GM Varuzhan Akobian



9. ... a6 10. Qc2

This looks a bit mistimed now. White has spent the tempo on h2-h3, while Black has played ... a7-a6, helping to control the b5-square and aiding his harmonious development.

As Black can't play ... b7-b5 yet, I think 10. 0-0 makes more sense, although Var was likely trying to avoid the ... e6-e5 break. White is fine after 10. ... e5 11. dxe5 Nxe5 12. Nxe5 Bxe5 13. Qc2 b5 14. Bd3 Bb7.

10. ... b5 11. Be2 Bb7 12. Ne4

Realizing that Black had ideas of ... Nc6-b4, White tries to change the structure.

12. ... Nb4

Just taking with 12. ... Nxe4 13. Qxe4 Rb8 would have been simpler, but I suspect Tang was trying to be more ambitious. Now 14. Qh4 looks a bit awkward, but Black has the better bishops and the ... e6-e5 break coming.

13. Nxf6+ gxf6

The lack of a g-pawn helps Black with a kingside attack, and that, coupled with the two bishops aimed at the white king, is quite a fright.

14. Bxb4

Giving up the bishop pair is a serious decision.

Another idea is 14. Qb3 Bd5 15. Qd1 f5 16. 0-0 Nc6 17. Rc1 Kh8 and now 18. Ne1 Qh4 19. Bf3 is a key resource for White in a tricky position.

14. ... Bxb4+ 15. Kf1 Kh8 16. a3 Be7 17. Nd2 c5!?

Very nicely timed — had White just one more move, the break may have been prevented. To wit: 17. ... Rc8 18. Nb3 Bd5 19. Nc5, although Black's pressure has not subsided yet.

18. dxc5 Bxc5 19. Bf3 Bxf3 20. Nxf3 Rc8 21. Qb3 Be7 22. Ke2 Qc7 23. Rhd1 f5 24. Rd2

White has few chances for any advantage, so simplifying before any bishop versus knight ending with pawns on both sides of the board might be a way out. One idea would be 24. a4 Qb7 25. axb5 axb5 26. Rac1 Bf6 27. Qb4.

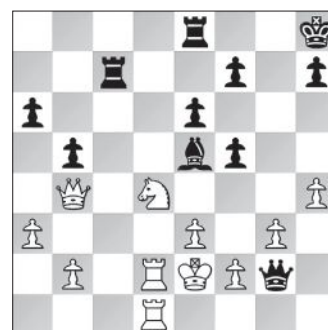
24. ... Bf6 25. Rad1 Qc6 26. g3 Rc7 27. Nd4?!

Allowing the queen to infiltrate was unnecessary, but maybe Akobian was gambling a bit that tactics would pop up in White's favor. The alternatives were to try to hold without even a sniff of winning chances.

Here 27. Qb4 waits for Black to trade queens; else it is hard to make progress: 27. ... Qc4+ 28. Qxc4 bxc4 29. Rc2 Rb8 30. b4!? a5 31. bxa5 Rb5 32. Rdc1 c3 33. Nd4 is equal enough.

27. ... Qg2 28. h4 Be5

Here 28. ... Rg8 seems stronger: 29. Nf3 (29. Nxe6 is nothing to fear 29. ... fxe6 30. Qxe6 Rf8 31. Rd7 Rcc8) 29. ... Rxc3 30. Ne1 Qh2 31. Nf3 Rxf3 32. Kxf3 Rc4 33. Rf1 f4 and Black is pushing.

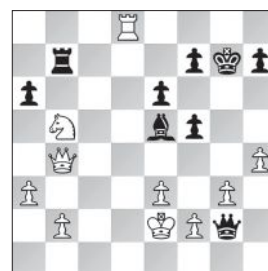
29. Qb4 Re8

White must give up material one way or another, but there is a fantastic resource that takes advantage of the flaws in Black's king safety.

30. Nf3?

Now Black picks up pawns.

White had to find 30. Nxb5! Rb7 (if 30. ... axb5 31. Qxb5 Bxc3 32. Qxe8+ Kg7 33. Rf1 Bxf2 34. Rxf2 Qg4+ is a perpetual) 31. Rd8 Rxd8 32. Rxd8+ Kg7



POSITION AFTER 32. ... Kg7

It's likely that both players saw this far, but the next move is magnificent: 33. Rh8!! (not 33. Qf8+?? Kg6 34. Qg8+ Bg7 when Black is safe and better) The rook plants itself right next to the king! One sample line is 33. ... Kh6 (obviously not 33. ... Kxh8?? 34. Qf8 mate) 34. Qf8+ Kh5 35. Qg8 f6 36. Rxh7+ Rxh7 37. Qxh7+ Kg4 38. Qg8+ Kh3 39. Qxe6 axb5 40. Qxf5+ with equality.

30. ... Bxc3 31. Rf1 Rc4 32. Qb3

The calm before the storm; Sorokin and Tang play for the title.

Preferable was 32. Qa5 Bxh4 33. Qb6! trying to gain counterplay against Black's king. Now Black can't play his desired ... Rc4-c1.

32. ... Bxh4 33. Ne5?

The c4-rook is a problem, so White should try to remove it with 33. Rc2 Rxc2+ 34. Qxc2 Bf6 35. Rg1 Qh3 36. Qc6.

33. ... Rc7 34. Rc2 Rxc2+ 35. Qxc2 Qg7?!

A safe move, but imprecise.

36. Qc7

Now 36. Qc6! Rd8 37. Qc7 Rf8 38. Qc5! highlights Black's coordination issues. The f7-square is always soft, and Ne5-d7 is in the air.

36. ... Rf8?

Black is fine giving up the f7-pawn with the correct 36. ... Bf6!! if it means winning in the endgame!

37. Nd7??

37. Qc5!! is again available.

37. ... Qxb2+ 38. Kf3 Qg7 39. Qf4 Rd8

40. Qxh4 Rxd7 41. Rc1 Qg4+

Up two pawns, there's no reason not to trade queens.

42. Qxg4 fxg4+ 43. Kxg4 Rd3 44. a4 bxa4 45. Rc4 a3 46. Ra4 Rd2 47. Rxa3 Rxf2 48. Rxa6 Kg7 49. Ra5 h6 50. Kg3 Rf5 51. Ra4 Kg6 52. Ra8 e5 53. Rg8+ Kf6 54. Re8 h5 55. Kg2 Rg5+ 56. Kf3 Kg7 57. Ra8 Rg4 58. Ra5 Kf6 59. Ra8 Kf5 60. Rh8 e4+ 61. Kf2 Rg5 62. Re8 f6 63. Rh8 Kg4 64. Kg2 Ra5 65. Rg8+ Kh4 66. Re8 Ra2+ 67. Kf1 f5 68. Rg8 Kh3 69. Rg5 h4 70. Rg8 Kh2 71. Rg6 h3 72. Rg5 Rb2 73. Rg8 Rg2 74. Rf8 Kg3 75. Rxf5 Ra2 76. Rg5+ Kf3 77. Kg1 Rg2+, White resigned.

With Sorokin and Tang both at 8/9, there was a blitz playoff to determine the overall winner and ownership of the trophy. By holding with black in the Armageddon playoff, Tang was the ultimate winner. He took home the trophy, a prize of \$5,720, and — as Sorokin does not play under the U.S. flag — the spot in the 2023 U.S. Championship.

QUEEN'S GAMBIT, CATALAN OPENING (E04)

GM Aleksey Sorokin (2668)

GM Andrew Tang (2597)

U.S. Open Armageddon TB, Grand Rapids, 08.06.2023

1. d4 d5 2. c4 e6 3. Nf3 Nf6 4. g3 dxc4 5. Bg2 Nc6 6. Qa4 Bd7 7. Qxc4 Na5 8. Qd3 c5 9. dxc5 Bxc5 10. Ne5 Bc6 11. Qxd8+ Rxd8 12. Nxc6 Nxc6 13. Nc3 Nb4 14. 0-0 Nbd5 15. Nxd5 Nxd5 16. Rd1 Ke7 17. Bg5+ f6 18. Bxd5 fxg5 19. Bc4 Rxd1+ 20. Rxd1 Rc8 21. b3 Rc6 22. Kg2 Rd6 23. Bd3 h6 24. Rc1 b6 25. Rc2 Rd4 26. Kf3 a5 27. Rc3 Kf6 28. Rc1 e5 29. Rc2 e4+ 30. Bxe4 g4+ 31. Ke3 Rc4+ 32. Kf4 Bd6+ 33. Kxg4 Rxe4+ 34. Kf3 Re6 35. Rc8 Bc5 36. e3 Rd6 37. Ke2 Bb4 38. Rc2 Ke5 39. f4+ Kf5 40. h3 h5 41. Kf3 Rd3 42. Rc6 Rd6 43. Rc7 Kf6 44. g4 hxg4+ 45. hxg4 g6 46. g5+ Ke6 47. Ke4 Rd7 48. Rc6+ Rd6 49. Rc7 Rd7 50. Rc8 Bc5 51. Rb8 Kf7 52. Kf3 Rd3 53. Rb7+ Kf8 54. f5 gxf5 55. Kf4 Rxe3 56. Kxf5 Re7 57. Rb8+ Re8 58. Rb7 Re7 59. Rb8+, draw.

Looking back, this year's U.S. Open was a great experience for me. I came to the tournament just wanting to play high-quality games, and the fact that I was just one game short of joining the playoffs has definitely boosted my confidence.

Looking forward, I hope to become a U.S. Open winner someday soon, and also to qualify for the U.S. Championship before I graduate from college. I'll be back to try again at the 124th U.S. Open in Virginia — maybe I'll see you there! ♡



Hartmann (L) and Hengen (R)

▶ THE U.S. OPEN IS ONE OF MY favorite tournaments, and the 2023 edition was my seventh bite at the apple. While I haven't qualified for the U.S. Championship yet, there's always next year...

I was forced to withdraw after three rounds, having contracted (you guessed it!) COVID-19; still, there was one moment worth sharing. After making the trip from Omaha to Grand Rapids, I wandered into the playing hall for the first round to learn that my opponent was my friend Clover Hengen, seen above, who plays at our local club in Omaha! To come all that way, just to be paired with a fellow Nebraskan... and then to have the situation repeat itself in round two, when I faced off with NE state champ Nick Lacroix... well, what are the odds of that?

— John Hartmann

123RD U.S. OPEN AT A GLANCE

JULY 29-AUGUST 6, 2023 | GRAND RAPIDS, MI

WINNERS

1st-2nd: GMs Andrew Tang (winner of blitz playoff; also qualifies for U.S. Championship), Aleksey Sorokin, 8/9. **3rd-8th:** GMs David Brodsky, Viktor Matviishen, Rahul Srivatsav, IMs Ben Li, Justin Sarkar, FM Sharvesh Deviprasath, 7½/9. 488 players.

CLASS PRIZES

1st U2400: IM Justin Sarkar, 7½/9. **2nd-6th U2400:** IM Ronald Burnett, FM Seth Homa, Ryan Clayton, Michael Takahashi, James Neal, 7/9. **U2200:** Bryan Weisz, Kiren Nasta, Alaa-Aadin Moussa, Sho Glashauser, Cole Blakeman, Michael Dang, Eric Starkman, Harvey Hanke, 6½/9. **CLASS A:** Ujan Ray, Arjun Raman, Wayne Ballantyne, Rishav Bhattacharyya, Paul Royal, Vineethreddy Thatiparthi, Kazuma David, 6/9. **CLASS B:** Robert Wang, 6½/9. **CLASS C:** Stan Halstead, 6/9. **CLASS D:** Bernardo Ferreira, 6/9. **CLASS E:** Andrew Victoria, 5/9. **UNRATED:** Paul Avery, 4½/9.

MIXED DOUBLES

1st: GM David Brodsky + Angelina Verma, 13. **1st U1800:** FM Seth Homa + Beril Kayra Haskara, 10½. **COACH & STUDENT:** GM Dmitry Gurevich + Zoe Zelner, 12½. **BROTHER & SISTER:** Hersh Sing + Aradh Kaur, 11½. **FATHER & DAUGHTER:** Kiana Hajiarbabi + Mohammadreza Hajiarbabi, 7½. **MOTHER & SON:** Alexander Bembem + Robin Darlene Ray, 7½. **HUSBAND & WIFE:** Guy Hoffman + Sandra Hoffman, 7.

For complete results and additional photos, visit new.uschess.org/2023-us-open.

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Holidays!*

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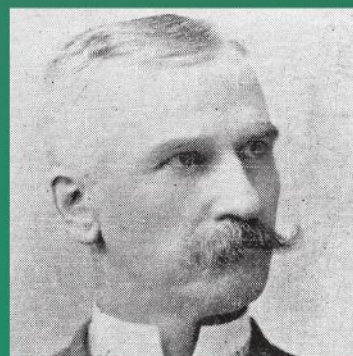
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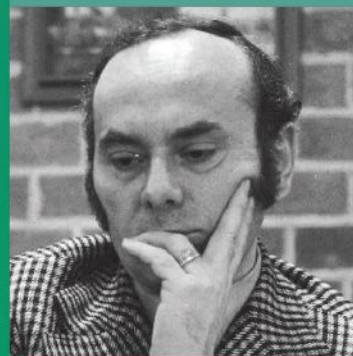
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STILL the CHAMP!

GM Ju Wenjun defeats GM Lei Tingjie to retain title.

BY **JOHN HARTMANN**

ANNOTATIONS BY **WGM TATEV ABRAHAMYAN**

IN AN EXCITING 12-game match, GM Ju Wenjun defeated GM Lei Tingjie to keep her Women's World Championship title, an honor she has held since 2018.

The match, held in Shanghai and Chongqing, China, was hard-fought. Lei won game five to take an early lead, but with victories in games eight and 12, Ju proved she was a worthy champion once more.

Ju first became world champion by defeating GM Tan Zhongyi in a May 2018 match. In November 2018, she won a 64-player knockout tournament to retain the title. A victory in 2020 against GM Aleksandra Goryachkina followed, and now with this match win against Lei, Ju is writing her name in chess history.

Here is the game that decided the match, annotated by WGM Tatev Abrahamyan.

QUEEN'S PAWN GAME (D04)

GM Ju Wenjun (2564)

GM Lei Tingjie (2554)

Women's World Ch (12), Chongqing, 07.23.2023

Annotations by WGM Tatev Abrahamyan

1. d4 d5 2. Nf3 Nf6 3. e3

For the final game of the match, Ju chooses a quiet system to avoid theoretical confrontations. This approach served her well in the match.

3. ... c5 4. dxc5

The alternative 4. Bd3 e6 5. b3 Nc6 6. Bb2 cxd4 7. exd4 g6!? was seen in game five of the Candidates finals. After 8. 0-0 Bg7 9. Ba3

Ne4 10. Re1 f5 11. c3 Bd7 12. Qc2 Rc8 13. Qb2 g5 Black eventually won in Tan – Lei, Chongqing, 2023.

4. ... e6 5. b4 a5 6. c3 axb4 7. cxb4 b6

This is a typical pawn break for these kinds of structures. White won't be able to hang on to her extra pawn.

8. Bb5+

Black's position is quite comfortable after 8. cxb6 Bxb4+ 9. Bd2 Qxb6.

With 8. a4 bxc5 9. b5 White could have reached the same structure with the light-squared bishops on the board. However, since Black has more space in the center, the presence of the bishop pair would be more favorable. After 9. ... c4 10. Be2 Nbd7 11. 0-0 Bb4 12. Bd2 Qa5 13. Qc2 0-0 14. Nc3 Qc7 15. Rfb1 Ba5 16. e4 Bb7 17. exd5 exd5 Black was better, and Carlsen won from this position in So – Carlsen, *Chess.com*, 2017.

8. ... Bd7 9. Bxd7+

A quick and efficient way for White to finish her development.

9. ... Nbx d7 10. a4 bxc5 11. b5

The players reached this position fairly quickly. In the long run, the position is quite dangerous for Black, as White's connected passed pawns can become quite dangerous. Indeed, some endgames will just be lost. On the other hand, Black does have a nice center and a very solid structure. Since White's passed pawns won't be moving anytime soon, it gives Black some time to look for active play.

11. ... Qc7

Here 11. ... g5!? is one of the engine's top suggestions, and it has been tried by Grischuk, So

and Xiong in rapid online games, which are serious business these days! I wonder if Lei was familiar with this idea, because it feels very much in the spirit of how she likes to play. Now 12. Bb2 (12. Nxc5 Rg8 13. Nf3 Rxc2 is a huge success for Black, as the white king will be more vulnerable here) 12. ... Bd6 13. Qe2 g4 14. Nfd2 Qc7 15. f4 gxf3 *e.p.* 16. Nxf3 Rg8 17. 0-0 Ke7 was unclear, although Black won on move 48 in Le – So, *Chess24.com*, 2021.

12. Bb2 Bd6 13. 0-0 0-0

Lei chooses a more standard route of developing her pieces. Still possible is 13. ... g5, which has been played in four correspondence games. The fact that this is a main move in a normal looking position indicates that the computer is worried about the long-term implications of this structure. The position is unclear after 14. g3 g4 15. Nh4 Be5 16. Nc3 Rg8 17. Qc2 h5.

14. Nbd2 Rfc8 15. Qc2

White's idea is straightforward: play Bb2-c3, Rf1-b1, and push the pawns.

15. ... c4?

Too committal, and bad strategically. Lei is looking for counterplay with ... Nd7-c5-d3, but this pawn push makes it impossible for her center to move in the future as it fixes the structure.

The correct 15. ... e5!? would force White to make some decisions here as ... e5-e4 is a threat. Now after 16. e4 (16. Rfb1 e4 17. Bxf6 exf3 18. Bb2 Bxh2+ 19. Kf1 fxg2+ 20. Kxg2 is some kind of strange computer line that is apparently equal) 16. ... c4 Black is, in contrast to the game, able to play ... d5-d4. We continue with the forcing 17. Rfc1 (not 17. exd5? c3) 17. ... Bb4 18. Bc3 Bxc3 19. Qxc3 dxe4 20. Ng5 Qb7. Perhaps Lei considered this line and was afraid of losing her pawn mass while leaving White with the two passed pawns; it's a difficult position to evaluate over the board. To me this position is entirely unclear.

16. Bc3 Nc5 17. a5 Nb3



18. Bxf6?!

After a 15-minute think, Ju chooses the most concrete continuation, changing the flow of the game.

Instead 18. Ra2 was simple and strong. The pawn is untouchable and the option of capturing on f6 is still in the air. Now after 18. ... Qc5 (18. ... Nxa5? 19. Rfa1) 19. b6 the pawn is still forbidden unless Black gives up the Exchange with 19. ... Rxa5 20. Bxa5 Nxa5. Perhaps Ju was unsure of this position and didn't like giving up her dark-squared bishop, thus opening the path of the c-pawn. However, White still manages to hang on to the other pawn and maintain her advantage with 21. Rb1.

18. ... Nxa1

Not 18. ... gxf6? 19. Nxb3 cxb3 20. Qxb3 with a significant advantage.

19. Bxa1 Qxa5

Lei must have been quite happy about this turn of events as her chances in this imbalanced position are just as good as Ju's.

20. Qc3 Qxc3 21. Bxc3 Rcb8 22. Nd4 e5?

A costly mistake. Again, Lei chooses the most concrete variation. I am not sure what is behind this decision: nerves, ambition, or a simple desire to get rid of a b5-pawn that has been sitting there since move 11.

After 22. ... Ra3 23. Bb2 (23. Nb1 Raa8) 23. ... Ra2 24. Bc3 I don't think White has anything better than to repeat.

Riskier is 22. ... g6, preparing ... e6-e5. Now after 23. e4 White will quickly break apart the pawn structure. If she hangs on to the b5-pawn, Black will be in trouble. For instance, 23. ... e5 (the position after 23. ... Bc5 24. exd5 exd5 25. N2f3 looks dangerous for Black as the pawns are blocked and the c3-bishop can be rerouted to the h2-b8 diagonal) 24. Nc6 Rxb5 25. exd5 Rxd5 26. Ne4 White will collect pawns through tactical means: 26. ... Rd3 27. Nxd6 Rxc3 28. Nxe5 Ra5 29. Nexc4 (29. Nexc7 looks a bit risky as the c4-pawn will start moving) 29. ... Ra6 and Black will play ... Ra6-c6 next and trade the rook for the knights.

23. Nf5 Bf8 24. Bxe5 Rxb5 25. g4 g6 26. Nd4 Rb2

Black needs to sit tight with 26. ... Rb6. The idea is to eventually cause some kind of

disruption to White's pieces with ... f7-f6. After 27. g5 Bg7 28. Bxg7 Kxg7 29. Nb1 Ra1 30. Nc3 Rxf1+ 31. Kxf1 the endgame still looks good for White, but without a pair of rooks, it looks more manageable for Black. It is also important to keep in mind that a king and two knights versus a king is a draw!

27. Nb1

A nice maneuver! The knight is headed to the c3-square, where it will attack the backwards d5-pawn.

27. ... Bg7 28. Bxg7 Kxg7 29. Nc3 Ra5 30. Rd1

The presence of the rook pair favors White greatly as Black will be unable to defend her pawns. Ju converts this endgame with great technique.

30. ... Rb6 31. Nde2 Rb3

32. Kg2 h6 33. Kf3 f6

34. Rc1 Kf7 35. Nf4

Now the d5-pawn falls.

35. ... d4 36. exd4 g5

37. Nfe2 f5

Lei is looking for some activity, but White's pieces are well coordinated.

38. gxf5 Rxf5+ 39. Ke3

g4 40. Nf4 Rb8 41. d5

Rf6 42. Rc2 Ra8 43. Nb5

Rb6 44. Nd4 Ra3+ 45.

Ke4 c3 46. Nfe2 Rb2

White doesn't mind exchanging the pair of rooks now as she will pick up the c3-pawn and march the d-pawn down the board.

47. Kd3 Rb1

After 47. ... Rxc2 48. Nxc2 Ra5 49. Nxc3 Black can't attack White's pawns.

48. Nxc3 Rh1 49. f3

gxf3 50. Nxf3

Everything is perfectly safe is White's position.

50. ... Rf1 51. Nd4 Ke7

52. Kc4 Rf4 53. Rb2 Rh4 54. Rb7+ Kf6 55. Rb2 Ra8 56. Kc5 Rh3 57. Ncb5 Re3 58. d6 Ke5 59. Nc6+ Ke4 60. d7 Rd3 61. Nd6+ Kf4 62. Rb8, Black resigned.

Congratulations to Ju Wenjun, seen below, on retaining her title with this clutch victory! ♦

For more on the Women's World Championship, visit CLO's coverage: new.uschess.org/2023-womens-world-chess-championship.



2023 WOMEN'S WORLD CHESS CHAMPIONSHIP

			1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	
1	GM Ju Wenjun	2564	½	½	½	½	0	½	½	1	½	½	½	1	6½
2	GM Lei Tingjie	2554	½	½	½	½	1	½	½	0	½	½	½	0	5½

Outside Looking In

When the outside passed pawn doesn't rule in the pawn endgame.

BY GM JOEL BENJAMIN

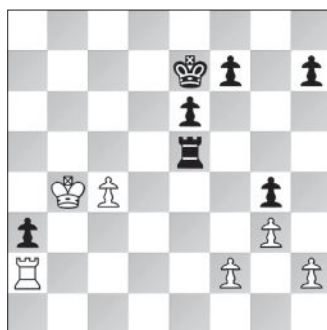


IT IS PARTICULARLY IMPORTANT to appreciate the power of outside passed pawns, particularly in king and pawn endings. But rules are made to be broken; sometimes other factors can more than compensate for an outside passer.

The game Svane – Wang Hao from last month's column forcibly reminded me of one of my favorite pawn endings. I had a great ringside seat for this one, playing on the adjacent board for team USA.

GIVE ME A BREAK

Filemon Cruz Estrada (2405)
GM Yasser Seirawan (2585)
Moscow Olympiad, 1994



WHITE TO MOVE

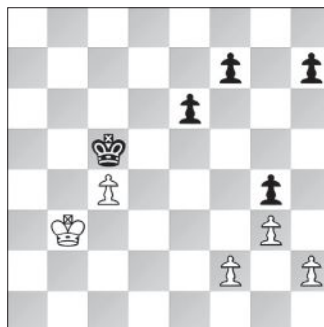
48. Kxa3??

I have kept Yasser's punctuation from *Informant* 62. While technically correct — this move loses from an equal position — it's a bit harsh. It took not only good intuition but deep calculation from Seirawan to demonstrate

the proper assessment of the pawn ending.

Nevertheless, if the pawn ending is lost, White has to avoid it. 48. Rxa3 Re2 49. Ra7+ Kf6 50. c5 Rxf2 51. c6 is sharp but balanced. Black is taking pawns, but the c-pawn may potentially cost a rook or force a repetition.

48. ... Ra5+!! 49. Kb3 Rxa2 50. Kxa2 Kd6
51. Kb3 Kc5

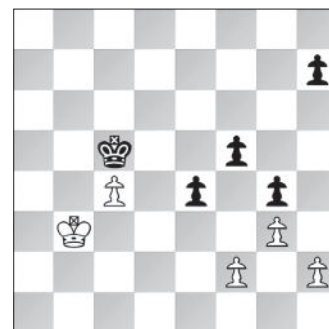


In this position White hoped that Black would exhaust his pawn moves and ultimately be forced to give ground with his king. The pawn on g4 makes creating a passed pawn conventionally more difficult, but it freezes the white pawns, allowing Black to push everything forward while White has to wait with his king.

52. Kc3 e5 53. Kd3 f5 54. Kc3 e4 55. Kb3

(see diagram top of next column)

White's problems begin to crystallize. To preserve his passer, he has to slide his king perilously far from Black's pawn majority. But giving up the pawn is hopeless — in



general an extra pawn will be decisive in the pawn ending when there are so many pawns still left on the board.

After 55. Kd2 Kxc4 56. Ke3, I gave the following line in *Liquidation on the Chessboard*: (a) 56. ... Kd5 57. Kf4 Ke6 58. Kg5 Ke5 59. Kh5 f4! 60. Kxg4 f3 61. h4 h5+! and 62. ... e3 forces a queen. Black doesn't even have to bring the king back because his advanced pawns make him faster in the race, even if White starts eating pawns first. After (b) 56. ... h5 57. Kf4 Kd3 58. Kxf5 Ke2 59. Kxe4 Kxf2 Black will soon promote. Passive defense does not work either: 57. Ke2 Kd4 58. Kd2 Ke5 59. Ke3 f4+ 60. gxf4+ Kf5 61. Ke2 Kxf4 62. Ke1 Kf3 63. Kf1 h4 64. Kg1 Ke2 65. Kg2 Ke1 66. Kg1 h3 67. Kh1 Kf1 (67. ... g3 also works) 68. f4 e3, etc.

55. ... h6!

Seirawan (admittedly with a lot more time to think) finds the stutter-step that Wang Hao missed in the World Cup. Black wants the king on b3 when he is ready to break.

56. Kc3 h5 57. Kb3

White has no choice but to ride out the tactics. We have already seen that 57. Kd2 Kxc4 58. Ke3 Kc3 wins routinely.

57. ... f4! 58. gxf4

Here 58. Kc3? f3 is a non-starter. After taking the c4-pawn, Black achieves ... e4-e3 and the tempi don't matter.

58. ... e3!

Black can start with 58. ... h4 as well because 59. Kc3 e3 60. Kd3 exf2 61. Ke2 g3 62. hxg3 hxg3 63. f5 Kd6 64. Kf1 Ke5 wins for Black.

59. fxe3 h4 60. f5 Kd6!

Black can almost taste a new queen, but he has to slow down White's pawns first. 60. ... g3? 61. hxg3 hxg3 62. f6 Kd6 63. c5+ Ke6 64. c6 draws.

61. Kb4 Ke5!, White resigned.

Black invests time in removing the f-pawn, but will gain it all back in forcing White's

king forward. Seirawan is poised for a spectacular finish: 62. c5 Kxf5 63. c6 Ke6 64. Kb5 g3 65. hxc3 h3! (a typical finesse; Black wants to queen on the ideal square) 66. Kb6 h2 67. c7 Kd7 68. Kb7 h1=Q+ and queening with check decides the game.

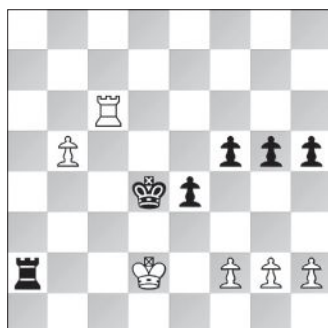
As a coach I came across an ending with many similarities, particularly in the variations of the Seirawan game. It was unfortunately played just a bit too late to be included in the expanded edition of *Liquidation*.

DOPPELGANGER

Mary Elizabeth Tracy (1531)

Daniel Mero (1849)

K-6 Championship, Nashville, 2019



WHITE TO MOVE

Danny Mero showed me this game in the Columbia Grammar and Prep team room at the 2019 National Elementary Championship in Nashville. Many of the secrets of the position only revealed themselves during post-analysis engine work.

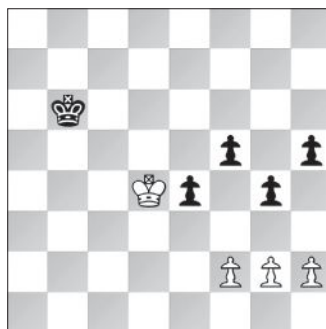
40. Rc2?

In this case, too, the decision to allow the pawn ending can be queried. In fairness, I would say the pawn ending appears, on the surface, to be good for White. In the rook endgame after 40. Kc1 Kd3! (40. ... Rxf2??? 41. b6 Rf1+ 42. Kb2 Rf2+ 43. Rc2 e3 44. b7 Kd3 45. Rxf2 exf2 46. b8=Q f1=Q 47. Qb5+ wins for White) 41. b6 Ra1+ 42. Kb2 Ra8 White's strong passed pawn and active rook might be able to offset Black's superior king position.

40. ... Rxc2+ 41. Kxc2 Kc5 42. Kc3 g4!!

I think this was played more to delay White's king invasion than to protect the pawn chain, making it something of an accidental brilliancy. Now 42. ... Kxb5 is quite playable but inferior because of the rather unlikely 43. g4!! hxc4 44. Kd4 and Black's pawns are vulnerable enough for White to earn a draw.

43. b6 Kxb6 44. Kd4



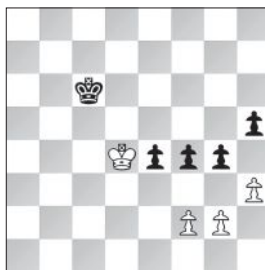
44. ... h4??

Black sees the imminent king incursion and opts for a trick to keep the invader frozen, though only for a moment. There is no substitute for putting in the work of calculating, which could have led to a Black victory here.

I would not have faulted Danny for playing 44. ... Kb5, preparing to dive bomb the f2-pawn. Black will win if White sends the king after the Black pawns. The problem is that the white king can stand its ground while tidying up the kingside. 45. h3!! unexpectedly draws: 45. ... Kc6! 46. hxc4 hxc4 47. g3 (47. Ke5? g3! makes a queen) 47. ... Kd6 48. Ke3 Ke5 49. Ke2! (49. Kd2? Kd4 50. Ke2 e3! 51. fxe3 Ke4 with a fatal Zugzwang) 49. ... f4 (49. ... Kd4 50. Kd2 makes no headway) 50. gxf4+ Kxf4 51. Ke1 Kf3 (if 51. ... e3 52. Ke2! is equal) 52. Kf1 and White holds. Note that Black would win with h-pawns on the board, as we saw in the previous game.

The lone winner is 44. ... Kc6! when 45. h3 loses in two ways. The prosaic method is (a) 45. ... gxh3 (45. ... Kd6? 46. hxc4 hxc4 47. g3 draws, as noted earlier) 46. gxh3 Kd6 with a routine win. You might remember 47. f3 exf3 48. Ke3 Ke5 49. Kxf3 f4 was explained in an earlier column — the pawn is not on h2, so Black always wins.

Black also has a more flamboyant win with (b) 45. ... f4:



POSITION AFTER 45. ... f4

After 46. hxc4 (alternatively, if 46. Kxe4 f3 47. g3 gxh3 48. Kxf3 Kd5 49. g4 h4 a queen emerges via zugzwang) 46. ... e3! 47. Kd3 f3! Black promotes. Note one more great

subtlety here — the breakthrough would not work if the king were on b5. In that case 47. fxe3 f3 48. gxf3 h4 49. g5 wins for White! The h-pawn does indeed reach home, but Black's king has wandered out of the square to catch White's g-pawn.

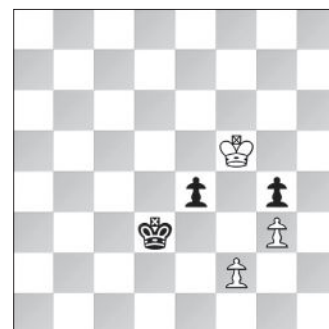
Back to 44. ... Kc6, White finds no hope in waiting: 45. Kc4 Kd6 46. Kd4 Ke6 47. Ke3 Ke5 48. Ke2 (we saw 48. g3 f4+ in the previous game) 48. ... f4 49. Kd2 Kd4 50. Ke2 Kc3 51. g3 f3+ 52. Kd1 (52. Ke3 Kc2 53. Kxe4 Kd2) 52. ... Kd3 53. Ke1 Kc2 (or 53. ... e3 54. fxe3 Kxe3 55. Kf1 f2) and you can take off everything but the f-pawns and Black would still win!

Now for the part that is arguably counterintuitive. White's king can grab pawns faster, but Black's king grabs them better! After 44. ... Kc6 45. Ke5 Kc5 46. Kxf5 (46. h3 g3) 46. ... Kd4 and even though Black is a tempo slower than the line in the Seirawan game, White can't eat the kingside because her king is tethered to the e-pawn — 47. Kg5 (47. h3 g3) 47. ... Kd3 48. Kxh5 Ke2 49. Kxg4 Kxf2, etc. White can't maintain a defense because 47. Kf4 Kd3 48. h4 (or 48. g3 Ke2 49. Kxe4 Kxf2 50. Kf4 Kg2 and wins) 48. ... Ke2 49. Kg3 Kf1 leads to yet another zugzwang.

45. g3!

White sidesteps the trap 45. Ke5 g3! forcing a queen. But now the race is turned upside down, as White can protect her own pawns while snacking on enemy pawns.

45. ... hxc3 46. hxc3 Kb5 47. Ke5 Kc4 48. Kxf5 Kd3



49. Kxg4?

Maybe White was relieved to avoid the loss, or the rating difference factored into her thinking. Here it is White who creates a fatal zugzwang with 49. Kf4! Ke2 (49. ... Kd4 50. Kxg4) 50. Kxe4! Kxf2 51. Kf4 and Black wishes those h-pawns were still on the board!

49. ... Ke2 50. Kf4 Kxf2 51. Kxe4 Kxg3, draw.

Down to bare kings; a sign of a good endgame fight! ♠

Tal's Prestidigitation

The magician from Riga conjures another brilliancy.

BY **BRUCE PANDOLFINI**

M

IKHAIL TAL (1936-92) WAS known as one of the most creative attackers of all time. His play is full of sacrifices and unexpected moves. Yet his games don't always begin that way. Suddenly, a cornucopia of ideas are released. Sound or unsound, the complications can be so great, it becomes impossible to calculate them all and Tal wins marvelously. Consider his game against Bukhuti Gurgenidze (White) played in Moscow during the 1957 USSR Championship. White has a slight edge, until a slight misstep allows Tal to unleash a magic bag of tricks.

BENONI DEFENSE (A78)

Bukhuti Gurgenidze
GM Mikhail Tal
Moscow, 1957

1. d4 Nf6 2. c4 c5 3. d5 e6 4. Nc3 exd5 5. cxd5 d6 6. Nf3 g6 7. e4 Bg7 8. Be2 0-0 9. 0-0 Re8 10. Nd2



BLACK TO MOVE

Now ensure that the position above is set up

on your chessboard. As you play through the remaining moves in this game, use a piece of paper to cover the article, exposing Black's next move only after trying to guess it. If you guess correctly, give yourself the par score. Sometimes points are also awarded for second-best moves, and there may even be bonus points — or deductions — for other moves and variations. Note that ** means that Black's move is on the next line. **

10. Par Score 5 Na6
Black is not afraid of 11. Bxa6, when play along the b-file outweighs the doubled a-pawns. Accept **full credit** for 10. ... Nbd7.

11. Re1
White positions the king-rook to back up the e-pawn. **

11. Par Score 5 Nc7
This is part of Black's plan, to support the b-pawn's advance.

12. a4
A typical counter. White generally deters ... b7-b5. **

12. Par Score 5 b6
Tal opens the a diagonal for the c8-bishop. You may accept **full credit** for 12. ... Nd7.

13. Qc2
White supports the e-pawn. The simple 13. h3 also made sense. **

13. Par Score 5 Ng4
Black crosses the frontier. If White were playing it safe, 14. Bxg4 would be in order.

14. h3
As a rule, one shouldn't let an enemy knight hang out nearby. So White naturally tries to drive it away. **

14. Par Score 6 Nxf2
Having crossed the Rubicon, there's no way Tal's going back.

15. Kxf2
It's hard to look a gift horse in the mouth. But this is chess, not Troy, and 15. Nf3 might have been more prudent. **

15. Par Score 4 Qh4+
Now if 16. g3, there follows 16. ... Bd4+ 17. Kg2 (17. Kf3 Qh5+) 17. ... Qxh3+ 18. Kf3 Qh5+ 19. Kg2 (19. Kf4 g5 mate) 19. ... Bh3+ 20. Kh1 Bg4+ 21. Kg2 Qh3 mate (**2 bonus points**). You may accept **full credit** for 15. ... Bd4+.

16. Kf1
White keeps the e1-rook defended. **

16. Par Score 6 Bd4
Mate at f2 is the threat.

17. Nd1
White deals with the threat. **

17. Par Score 7 Qxh3
This hurts, since 18. gxxh3 allows 18. ... Bxxh3 mate. You may accept **1 point** part credit for 17. ... Bxxh3, which also wins.

18. Bf3
White creates an escape square at e2. **

18. Par Score 7 Qh2

ABCS OF CHESS

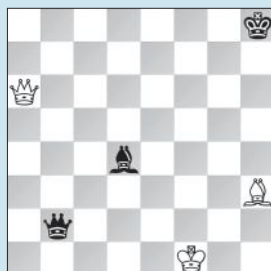
THESE PROBLEMS ARE ALL related to key positions in this month's game. In each case, White is to move. The answers can be found in Solutions on page 63.

DECEMBER EXERCISE:

Keep a chess diary. Summarize the results of your games, especially noting what you've gotten from each contest and learning experience. Did you fare well in the opening? If you won, how did you win? If you lost, why did you lose? Try to take away at least five key thoughts from every chess encounter. Then review this growing journal of vital information. Doing this regularly will help you become more aware of what you've done and what you still need to do.

PROBLEM 1

Mating net



PROBLEM 2

Mating net



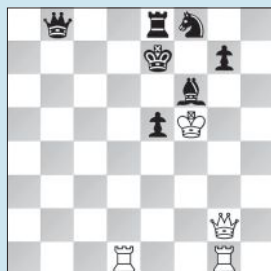
PROBLEM 3

Mating net



PROBLEM 4

Mating net



PROBLEM 5

Mating net



PROBLEM 6

Mating net



This is better than 18. ... Qh1+. White's pieces are tied up in knots.

19. Ne3

White blocks the d4-bishop's diagonal and adds shaky protection to g2. **

19. Par Score 6 f5

A line-opener. You may accept *full credit* for 19. ... Ba6+.

20. Ndc4

White opens further squares for escape and obstructs the a6-f1 diagonal. **

20. Par Score 5 fxe4

Black follows through. You may accept *3 points* part credit for 20. ... Ba6.

21. Bxe4 **

21. Par Score 6 Ba6

Black has monster pieces. White must tread carefully.

22. Bf3

White retreats the bishop to a safer place. **

22. Par Score 6 Re5

This rook lift takes advantage of the pin on the c4-knight.

23. Ra3

White in turn activates his queen-rook, defending the knight at e3. He could also have tried to flee with 23. Ke2. **

23. Par Score 5 Rae8

Doubling rooks, but you may accept *full credit* for 23. ... Rf8.

24. Bd2

White defends e1, but the position is hopeless. **

24. Par Score 6 Nxd5

Tal breaks through.

25. Bxd5+

White reduces the attackers against e3, but now White's light squares are weaker. **

25. Par Score 5 Rxd5

Accept *1 bonus point* for realizing the rook is immune — if 26. Nxd5 Qg1 mate.

26. Ke2

You can run, but you can't hide. **

26. Par Score 5 Bxe3

Deduct 2 points for 26. ... Qxg2+ 27. Kd1, allowing White back in the game.

27. Rxe3 **

27. Par Score 6 Bxc4+

White resigns, in the face of 28. Qxc4 Qxg2+ 29. Kd1 Qxd2 mate. The inevitable could be delayed by 28. Kd1 Rxe3 29. Rxe3 Qg1+ 30. Re1 Qf2, but the position remains lost. So...

28. White resigned.

TOTAL YOUR SCORE TO DETERMINE YOUR APPROXIMATE RATING BELOW:

Total Score	Approx. Rating
95+	2400+
81-90	2200-2399
66-80	2000-2199
51-65	1800-1999
36-50	1600-1799
21-35	1400-1599
06-20	1200-1399
0-05	under 1200

For more "Solitaire Chess," check out the *Chess Life* digital archives at new.uschess.org/chess-life-digital-archives.

New Wine in Old Bottles

A modern look at a classic positional primer is revelatory.

BY IM JOHN WATSON

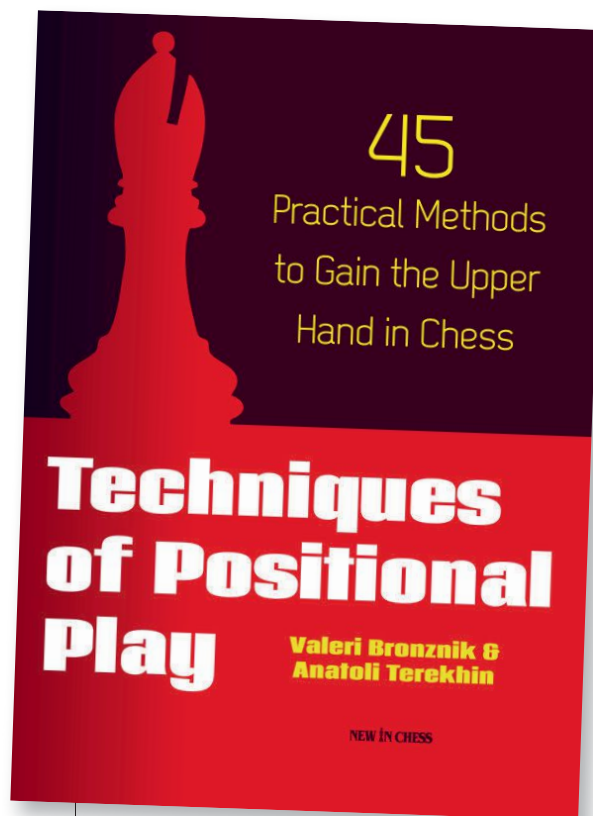
T

HERE ARE FEWER books on positional chess than on other major areas of the

game. Of such books, the best-known ones written for the beginner and improving player emphasize the same fundamental themes; for example, outposts, open lines, isolated pawns, bad bishops, centralization, weaknesses, and the like.

These are aspects of chess with which inexperienced players simply must become familiar, and they are much easier to master if one has read about them, whether in an organized manual of motifs or in well-annotated games. There are also general books about principles of strategy and planning, with advice such as accumulating small advantages, exchanging pieces favorably, improving the position of your worst piece, and similar wisdom.

In my experience, after most players have absorbed the elementary themes and ideas, mastering more complex positional strategies involves learning about how to handle typical positions one-by-one. That in turn comes about from extensive playing experience and, for example, studying specific openings and resulting middlegames in depth. So, over the years, when students have asked me to recommend books that will help them go beyond the standard themes, I've told them that the next step is to play concrete variations repeatedly and study examples to deepen



their knowledge.

But the book I'm reviewing this month reminds me that there's no fundamental reason why more complex positional motifs recurring in widely varying middlegames can't be systematized in the same way that elementary positional themes can. FM Anatoli Terekhin's *Techniques of Positional Play in Chess* is described as a "Russian classic" and has been praised by a number of players from the ex-Soviet Union. I don't have any knowledge of earlier editions, but in 2005, IM Valeri Bronznik collaborated

with Terekhin to co-author a widely expanded German version of Terekhin's work, published by Harald Keilhack's Schachverlag Kania press.

In 2013, New in Chess published an English translation of that work with some nice extra features, and just recently Chessable has released an online MoveTrainer Tactics/Strategy course by Grandmaster Peter Heine Nielsen. That course is based on the New in Chess book, and adds Nielsen's extensive commentary and analysis, with over 22 hours of video.

Nielsen's videos cover a large selection of Bronznik & Terekhin's 328 game positions and 40 additional exercises. With each video comes a series of positions that you can play through, or you can use the study function to guess the best moves and improve your judgment. I find it pleasing that one can also click on links in each chapter and see all the original prose and analysis from Bronznik & Terekhin's book. That way you can read the original in prose form, the old-fashioned way.

Nielsen gives verbal explanations of the positional techniques involved, and, since some of the examples tend to be rather old, he reveals how a modern master looks at the positions today. Without getting obsessive, he also supplements the original book with a modest amount of computer engine analysis, to deepen the specific analysis and show us some related ideas. This is all very conveniently organized and exceedingly well done.

Bronznik and Terekhin arrange the material to illustrate 45 positional techniques in 10 thematic chapters. The techniques range from opening to endgame, classified by broader themes such as “The clash between pawn formations,” “Techniques in the fight for an open file,” “Working with the king,” and “Developing and activating pieces.” Remarkably, very few of the specific techniques are included in standard beginner’s books, and yet all are essential knowledge for an advanced player. I would estimate the target audience to be players ranked from 1600-2400, but anyone above 1200 will certainly benefit.

There is a wealth of material to choose from, so let me pick just a few examples to give you a feel for the book. The first chapter is called “Restricting the enemy pieces,” and the first technique is “Paralyzing the knight with the duo of wing pawns.” Put simply, when White has a knight on g3 or b3, Black can both restrict the knight’s forward movement with ... g7-g6 or ... b7-b6, respectively, and prepare to harass the knight with a further ... h7-h5-h4 or ... a7-a5-a4. With colors reversed, a black knight on g6 can be neutralized and attacked by g2-g3 and h2-h4-h5, and one on b6 by b2-b3 and a2-a4-a5. You have probably seen many examples of this but not systematized them; here’s an abbreviated example of this technique. I’ll refer to Peter Heine Nielsen as “PHN” and the New in Chess text as “Bronznik.”

THE CORRAL

GM Tigran Petrosian
GM Mikhail Botvinnik
World Championship (1), Moscow, 1963



BLACK TO MOVE

12. ... g6!

Black restricts the knight on g3 from the f5- and h5-squares, and intends ... h6-h5-h4-h3. PHN mentions that the engine likes 12. ... Nd7 13. Bd3 Qg5!, intending 14. 0-0?! Nf6

(when ... h6-h5-h4 may still be an effective idea). That sequence arguably saves time and could be considered more “harmonious.” Nielsen says that Botvinnik’s plan is “clear and brilliant,” and that the computer’s plan is “more an evolution of it.”

13. f3?

Covering the key squares e4 and g4, but this is loosening. PHN praises the computer for its suggestion 13. Bd3 h5 14. 0-0 h4 15. Ne2, when 15. ... h3! is enough to discourage any normal human being as White, but the engine has anticipated this move with the idea 16. f4! Rxe3 (16. ... hxe2 17. Rf2) 17. Qd2 hxe2 18. Rf2 Re7 19. f5! with an attack.

13. ... h5 14. Be2

The engine suggests 14. h4.

14. ... Nd7

The original Bronznik edition says: “Black takes his time about ... h5-h4, as long as White has not decided on where to place his king.”

PHN points out a lovely idea by the computer: 14. ... h4 15. Nf1 Na6! intending 16. Bxa6 (better is 16. Nd2) 16. ... h3! 17. gxh3 Qxf3 18. Rg1 bxa6. He admits that this line is not terribly relevant, but he is “such a fan of modern computer chess analysis” that “when there’s a chance, [he] likes to flick in the knowledge” that the computer provides. I find this sort of thing fascinating and a reminder of the rich ideas that lurk in even in a fairly unassuming position.

15. Kf2

Bronznik: “15. 0-0?! h4 16. Nh1 Qg5 17. Kf2 Nf6 and the [h1-knight] looks like some insignificant bystander who is not allowed to take part in the game.”

15. ... h4 16. Nf1 Nf8 17. Nd2

Bronznik: “Actually the knight is pretty well placed on f1, from where it protects the [pawn] on e3 — but the [rook] on h1 has to be freed and that costs White two extra tempi (Nf1-d2-f1).”

17. ... Re7 18. Rhe1 Bf5 19. h3?! Rae8 20. Nf1 Ne6 21. Qd2

Here 21. ... Ng7? was played. Bronznik comments: “and now, as Botvinnik explains, Black could by 21. ... Ng5! immediately bring about a won position, e.g., 21. ... Ng5! 22. Kg1 Bxh3! 23. gxh3 Nxh3+ 24. Kh1 (24. Kh2 Rxe3! 25. Nxe3 Qf4+ 26. Kh1 Nf2+ 27. Kg1 Qg3+ 28. Kf1 Nh3 mates shortly) 24. ... Qg5! 25. Kh2 Qg1+ 26. Kxh3 Rxe3 27. Kxh4 R8e4+ 28. fxe4 g5+ winning.”

Another of the techniques is called “Karpov’s file-blocking.” The authors start with a skeleton position:



WHITE TO MOVE

Bronznik writes: “The significance of the a-file as the only open file is obvious here:

1. Ba7!

Blocking the file in order to double the rooks behind the bishop. After that the bishop returns.

1. ... Nf5 2. Ra6 Rfc8 3. Rca1 e5 4. Bc5

White has won the a-file.”

It’s surprising how often this technique arises. The most famous example is from a game by Karpov, in which control of the a-file is always threatened but never explicitly used:

KEY PRIYOME

GM Anatoly Karpov
GM Wolfgang Unzicker
Olympiad, Nice 1974



WHITE TO MOVE

24. Ba7! Ne8 25. Bc2 Nc7 26. Rea1 Qe7 27. Bb1 Be8 28. Ne2!

Bronznik: “The knight on c7 is overprotecting the a8-square, which in the event of 28. Be3 Rxa2 29. Qxa2 would make it possible for Black to play 29. ... Ra8. But, on the other hand, the knight is very passive just like its

colleague on b7. For that reason Karpov maintains the tension on the a-file and begins to play actively on the kingside — his idea being f2-f4. His calculation is that Black will be in no position to defend both flanks simultaneously.” It’s instructive to see how Karpov specifically goes about this.

28. ... Nd8 29. Nh2 Bg7 30. f4 f6 31. f5 g5 32. Bc2 Bf7 33. Ng3 Nb7 34. Bd1 h6 35. Bh5 Qe8 36. Qd1 Nd8 37. Ra3 Kf8 38. R1a2 Kg8 39. Ng4 Kf8 40. Ne3 Kg8 41. Bxf7+ Nxf7 42. Qh5 Nd8 43. Qg6 Kf8 44. Nh5, Black resigned.

Terekhin shows from one of his own games how this idea might be utilized on other files across the board.

IDEAS IN ACTION

**Anatoli Terekhin
Shein
USSR, 1990**

(see diagram top of next column)

15. Bc7!

Bronznik: “The threat is Rc2, Rfc1 followed by the removal of the [bishop] on c7, after which White conquers the c-file. Now 15. ... Ne8? fails to 16. Qxd7! [continuing 16. ... Qxd7 17. Ne5+ -jw], whilst 15. ... Qa6



WHITE TO MOVE

is very strongly met by 16. Rc3! with the threat of 17. Re3.” PHN doesn’t discuss this example, but I think it’s important to realize that the technique could apply on any file.

I’m thoroughly impressed by this book as well as the new Chessable version. The authors (and presenter Nielsen) teach positional chess play in a manner similar to the way in which endings or attacking methods are taught; that is, systematically, showing specific techniques that recur across a variety of positions. Potentially, *Techniques of Positional Play in Chess* can be a shortcut to accumulating knowledge that masters have spent many years learning the hard way.

Naturally one will have to play many games to become proficient at applying these techniques, but even the ability to

recognize them could prove invaluable in practice. I’m not aware whether there are other books that take this approach, but in any case I suspect that there’s a range of other methods of play that haven’t been systematically explicated in this fashion. For example, computers have shown new ways of approaching frequently-occurring positions; that in itself would make an interesting investigation. In any case, we can hope to see future writers use this approach to explain positional ideas and make similarly important contributions to the literature. ♠

Bronznik, Valeri, and Anatoli Terekhin. *Techniques of Positional Play: 45 Practical Methods to Gain the Upper Hand in Chess*. New in Chess: Alkmaar, 2013. ISBN 978-90-5691-434-9. PB, 254pp.

Bronznik, Valeri, Anatoli Terekhin, and Peter Heine Nielsen. *Techniques of Positional Play: 45 Practical Methods to Gain the Upper Hand in Chess*. Chessable, 2023. 75,132 words, 448 variations, and 22:11 video (1:57 free). Available at [Chessable.com](https://chessable.com).

For up-to-date chess news and information, check out **Chess Life Online** at uschess.org/clo on a regular basis.

chessable

PHN on Petrosian vs. Botvinnik

GM Peter Heine Nielsen

19:54

MAKE YOUR MOVE

BY **FM CARSTEN HANSEN**

THIS MONTH'S PUZZLES ARE TAKEN FROM THIS YEAR'S FIDE Women's World Cup that took place in Baku in August 2023.

The puzzles start from easy and gradually move toward being difficult. It is worth noting that "easy" is a relative term. If you are new to the game, the easy ones can also represent a challenge.

Try first to solve the puzzle before reading the text at the bottom of the page. If unsuccessful, play through the solution, but return to the puzzle in one or two weeks to see if you can now solve it. That way you gradually expand your tactical vision, and it will be more likely that you will spot tactics as they occur in your own games. Whatever you do, do not use an engine to solve the puzzles. You will only cheat yourself out of improving your game. Solutions are on page 63. ♠

TACTIC 1.



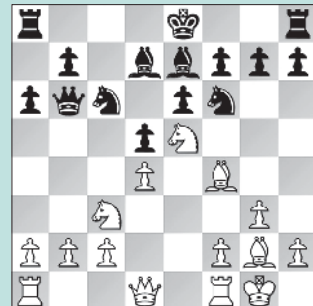
BLACK TO MOVE

TACTIC 2.



BLACK TO MOVE

TACTIC 3.



WHITE TO MOVE

TACTIC 4.



WHITE TO MOVE

TACTIC 5.



WHITE TO MOVE

TACTIC 6.



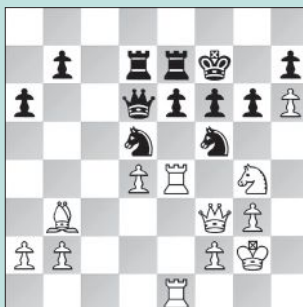
WHITE TO MOVE

TACTIC 7.



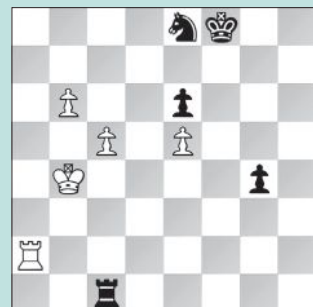
BLACK TO MOVE

TACTIC 8.



WHITE TO MOVE

TACTIC 9.



BLACK TO MOVE

Position 1: IMMEDIATE IMPACT

Position 2: TOO MANY HOLES

Position 3: SLICING THE CAKE OPEN

Position 4: ELIMINATE THE DEFENDER

Position 5: COVERED WEAKNESSES OR NOT?

Position 6: BUILDING STEAM IN THE KETTLE

Position 7: GOING DARK

Position 8: DARK MAGIC

Position 9: THE LONG WAY HOME

TOURNAMENT LIFE ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Executive Board authorizes a temporary change in the US Chess Grand Prix (GP) rules for the period March 4, 2020 through December 31, 2023 out of concern for the unforeseeable impacts the COVID-19 (Coronavirus) could have on participation in GP events. The change allows organizers with guaranteed prize funds to change the status of their prize fund without first seeking US Chess permission to make the change. More specifically, organizers who have announced "XXXX in Guaranteed prizes" (or similar words) for their GP events shall be allowed to re-state their prize funds in their publicity as "XXXX in Projected prizes based on ### players," where ### represents the number of players in last year's event rounded to the nearest five players. For new GP events lacking historical attendance data, the organizer shall specify a "based on" number of players as part of the Projected Prize Fund language in their publicity. This decision includes all GP tournaments that already have been advertised in Chess Life. For any GP events being publicly advertised (whether by TLA, another website, flyers, emails, social media, etc.), organizers shall take all necessary steps to ensure their revised pre-tournament announcements call attention to this change in prize fund status and provide the appropriate "Projected based on XXX players" in the language of their updated publicity. US Chess asks that the chess community support this temporary change in the spirit that it is intended. The Executive Board shall revisit this matter as necessary.

NATIONAL EVENTS & BIDS NOW ON USCHESS.ORG Effective with the November 2020 *Chess Life*, we have removed the National Events and Bids page that has traditionally been part of our TLA section. This information continues to be available here: new.uschess.org/national-events-calendar

For complete details on individual events, please visit [new.uschess.org/node/\[TLA ID\]](http://new.uschess.org/node/[TLA ID]). You will find the event's unique five-digit TLA ID at the end of each TLA.

Nationals

NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP EVENT • JUNIOR GRAND PRIX

2023 National K-12 Grade Championships

DECEMBER 15-17, 2023, FLORIDA

Event site: Hyatt Regency Orlando **Address:** 9801 International Drive, Orlando, FL 32819 **Overall prize fund:** n/a **GP Points:** n/a **FIDE Rated:** N **Handicap accessible:** Y **Residency restriction:** N **Organizer:** Boyd Reed **Email:** nationalevents@uschess.org **Phone:** n/a **Website:** <http://www.uschess.org/tournaments/2023/k12> **TLA ID:** 39936

NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP EVENT • HERITAGE EVENT

World Amateur Team & U.S. Team East

FEBRUARY 17-19, 2024, NEW JERSEY

Event site: Parsippany Hilton **Address:** 1 Hilton Ct., Parsippany, NJ 07054 **Overall prize fund:** n/a **GP Points:** n/a **FIDE Rated:** N **Handicap accessible:** Y **Residency restriction:** N **Organizer:** New Jersey Chess Federation **Email:** esdoyle@aol.com **Phone:** [201-491-2261](tel:201-491-2261) **Website:** <http://www.uschess.org/tournaments/2024/k12> **TLA ID:** 39739

NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP EVENT

2024 U.S. Amateur Team Championship - South

FEBRUARY 23-24, 2024, FLORIDA

Event site: Laurel Manor Recreation Center **Address:** 1985 Laurel Manor Drive, The Villages, FL 32162 **Overall prize fund:** Commemorative awards, plaques, trophies **GP Points:** n/a **FIDE Rated:** N **Handicap accessible:** Y **Residency restriction:** N **Organizer:** The Villages Chess Club **Email:** TheVillagesChessClub@outlook.com **Phone:** 1-407-491-2261 **Website:** <http://www.thevillageschessclub.org> **TLA ID:** 40253

NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP EVENT

2024 KCF All-Girls National Championships

APRIL 12-14, 2024, ILLINOIS

Event site: Hyatt Regency McCormick Place **Address:** 2233 S MLK Dr, Chicago, IL 60616 **Overall prize fund:** n/a **GP Points:** n/a **FIDE Rated:** N **Handicap accessible:** Y **Residency restriction:** N **Organizer:** Kasparov Chess Foundation & Renaissance Knights **Email:** david.heiser@renaissanceknights.org **Phone:** n/a **Website:** <http://allgirls.rknights.org> **TLA ID:** 40277

Grand Prix

The Grand Prix point totals reflect all rated event information as of December 31, 2022 for the 2022 Grand Prix.

FINAL 2022 GRAND PRIX STANDINGS

Congratulations to the 2022 Grand Prix Champion

IM JASON LIANG

Name	State/Ctry	Pts
1. IM JASON LIANG	NY	222.68
2. GM BRANDON JACOBSON	NJ	177.20
3. IM JOHN BRYANT	CA	166.43
4. IM SEMEN KHANIN	RUS	152.35
5. GM FIDEL CORRALES JIMENEZ	MA	137.17
6. IM MYKOLA BORTNYK	UKR	127.25
7. FM DANILA POLIANNIKOV	MA	124.26
8. GM MARK PARAGUA	PHI	121.20
9. GM ALEXANDER FISHBEIN	TN	103.43
10. GM ANDREW TANG	MD	103.28

2022 Awards

\$12,500 in cash prizes
First Prize \$5,000

2nd: \$2,500	3rd: \$1,000
4th: \$900	5th: \$800
6th: \$700	7th: \$600
8th: \$500	9th: \$300
10th: \$200	

The Grand Prix continues in 2023. For information visit new.uschess.org/us-chess-grand-prix-program

HERITAGE EVENT • GRAND PRIX • ENHANCED GRAND PRIX

Harry Nelson Pillsbury Memorial

DECEMBER 10, 2023, MASSACHUSETTS

Event site: Westford Regency Inn & Conference Center **Address:** 9219 Littleton Road, Westford, MA 01886 **Overall prize fund:** \$2,000 **GP Points:** 10 **FIDE Rated:** N **Handicap accessible:** Y **Residency restriction:** N **Organizer:** Massachusetts Chess Association **Email:** info@masschess.org **Phone:** 6038912484 **Website:** <http://www.masschess.org> **TLA ID:** 39769

GRAND PRIX • ENHANCED GRAND PRIX

Tunnelvision XV

DECEMBER 16, 2023, SOUTH CAROLINA

Event site: First Church of the Nazarene **Address:** 901 St Andrews Rd, Columbia, SC 29210 **Overall prize fund:** \$1,000 **GP Points:** 10 **FIDE Rated:** N **Handicap accessible:** Y **Residency restriction:** N **Organizer:** Columbia Chess Club **Email:** info@columbiachess.org **Phone:** 8035690938 **Website:** <https://columbiatunnelvision.com/tunnelvision-xv-dec-2023> **TLA ID:** 39265

GRAND PRIX • ENHANCED GRAND PRIX

1st Bearcat DKC USCF Grand Prix

DECEMBER 17, 2023, NORTH CAROLINA

Event site: Dragon Knight Chess Center **Address:** 2000 Bearcat Way, Suite 104, Morrisville, NC 27560 **Overall prize fund:** \$810 **GP Points:** 10 **FIDE Rated:** N **Handicap accessible:** Y **Residency restriction:** N **Organizer:** Dragon Knight Chess **Email:** jon@dragonknightchess.com **Phone:** 9194222535 **Website:** <https://www.dragonknightchess.com> **TLA ID:** 40543

GRAND PRIX • ENHANCED GRAND PRIX • JUNIOR GRAND PRIX

2023 SPICE Cup Open

DECEMBER 17-22, 2023, MISSOURI

Event site: Hyatt Regency Crystal City **Address:** 2799 Richmond Highway, Arlington, VA 22202 **Overall prize fund:** \$30,000 **GP Points:** 200 **FIDE Rated:** Y **Handicap accessible:** Y **Residency restriction:** N **Organizer:** Liem Le **Email:** chess@webster.edu **Phone:** 314-246-8075 **Website:** <https://www.webster.edu/spice/> **TLA ID:** 40349

HERITAGE EVENT • GRAND PRIX • ENHANCED GRAND PRIX • JUNIOR GRAND PRIX

48th annual Eastern Open

DECEMBER 26-29, 2023, VIRGINIA

Event site: DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel St. Louis - Chesterfield **Address:** 16625 Swingley Ridge Rd, Chesterfield, MO 63017 **Overall prize fund:** \$16,500 **GP Points:** 150 **FIDE Rated:** Y **Handicap accessible:** Y **Residency restriction:** N **Organizer:** Continental Chess Association **Email:** director@chess.us **Phone:** [314-246-8075](tel:314-246-8075) **Website:** <http://www.chessevents.us> **TLA ID:** 39208

HERITAGE EVENT • AMERICAN CLASSIC • GRAND PRIX • ENHANCED GRAND PRIX • JUNIOR GRAND PRIX

33rd annual North American Open

DECEMBER 26-30, 2023, NEVADA

Event site: Horseshoe Casino Resort (formerly Bally's) **Address:** 3645 Las Vegas Blvd. S, Las Vegas, NV 89103 **Overall prize fund:** \$130,000 **GP Points:** 300 **FIDE Rated:** Y **Handicap accessible:** Y **Residency restriction:** N **Organizer:** Continental Chess Association **Email:** director@chess.us **Phone:** [702-735-7600](tel:702-735-7600) **Website:** <http://www.chessevents.us> **TLA ID:** 38602

GRAND PRIX

Eastern Open Blitz

DECEMBER 28, 2023, VIRGINIA

Event site: Hyatt Regency Crystal City **Address:** 2799 Richmond Highway, Arlington, VA 22202 **Overall prize fund:** \$500 **GP Points:** 10 **FIDE Rated:** N **Handicap accessible:** Y **Residency restriction:** N **Organizer:** Continental Chess Association **Email:** director@chess.us **Phone:** [314-246-8075](tel:314-246-8075) **Website:** <http://www.chessevents.us> **TLA ID:** 40155

GRAND PRIX • JUNIOR GRAND PRIX

2023 World Chess Festival

DECEMBER 28-31, 2023, HAWAII

Event site: Neal Blaisdell Center **Address:** 777 Ward Avenue, Honolulu, HI 96803 **Overall prize fund:** \$5,000 **GP Points:** 30 **FIDE Rated:** Y **Handicap accessible:** Y **Residency restriction:** N **Organizer:** Joe Hanley **Email:** hanleychessacademy@gmail.com **Phone:** 714 925 3195 **Website:** <http://hanleychessacademy.com/2023WCF.html> **TLA ID:** 38682

HERITAGE EVENT • GRAND PRIX • ENHANCED GRAND PRIX

32nd annual North American Blitz

DECEMBER 29, 2023, NEVADA

Event site: Horseshoe Casino Resort (formerly Bally's) **Address:** 3645 Las Vegas Blvd. S, Las Vegas, NV 89103 **Overall prize fund:** \$3,000 **GP Points:** 30 **FIDE Rated:** Y **Handicap accessible:** Y **Residency restriction:** N **Organizer:** Continental Chess Association **Email:** director@chess.us **Phone:** [314-246-8075](tel:314-246-8075) **Website:** <http://www.chessevents.us> **TLA ID:** 39363

GRAND PRIX • ENHANCED GRAND PRIX

2nd Bearcat DKC USCF Grand Prix (New Year's Eve)

DECEMBER 31, 2023, NORTH CAROLINA

Event site: Dragon Knight Chess Center **Address:** 2000 Bearcat Way, Suite 104, Morrisville, NC 27560 **Overall prize fund:** \$810 **GP Points:** 10 **FIDE Rated:** N **Handicap accessible:** Y **Residency restriction:** N **Organizer:** Dragon Knight Chess **Email:** jon@dragonknightchess.com **Phone:** 9194222535 **Website:** <https://www.dragonknightchess.com> **TLA ID:** 40544

GRAND PRIX • ENHANCED GRAND PRIX

New Year's Day 2024 Ticks Jeff Jones Memorial

JANUARY 1, 2024, NORTH CAROLINA

Event site: Dragon Knight Chess Center **Address:** 2000 Bearcat Way, Suite 104, Morrisville, NC 27560 **Overall prize fund:** \$810 **GP Points:** 10 **FIDE Rated:** N **Handicap accessible:** Y **Residency restriction:** N **Organizer:** Dragon Knight Chess **Email:** jon@dragonknightchess.com **Phone:** 9194222535 **Website:** <https://www.dragonknightchess.com> **TLA ID:** 40547

PLEASE NOTE

DEADLINE FOR PRINT TLA SUBMISSIONS

TLAs appearing in *Chess Life* must be uploaded online on the 10th, two months prior to the issue cover date in which the ad is to appear. (For example, October TLAs must be uploaded no later than August 10th.) TLAs uploaded past this deadline cannot be published without special approval by US Chess.

GRAND PRIX

CFCC 2024 Winter Open & Scholastic**JANUARY 5-7, 2024, FLORIDA**

Event site: Holiday Inn at Lake Buena Vista **Address:** 13351 State Road 535 Orlando, Florida 32821 **Overall prize fund:** \$8,600 **GP Points:** 20 **FIDE Rated:** Y **Handicap accessible:** Y **Residency restriction:** N **Organizer:** Larry Storch **Email:** info@centralfchess.org **Phone:** 407-312-6237 **Website:** n/a **TLAID:** 39866

GRAND PRIX • ENHANCED GRAND PRIX • JUNIOR GRAND PRIX

Tim Just Winter Open XL**JANUARY 5-7, 2024, ILLINOIS**

Event site: Hyatt Regency Schaumburg **Address:** 1800 E Golf Rd., Schaumburg, IL 60173 **Overall prize fund:** \$10,000 **GP Points:** 20 **FIDE Rated:** Y **Handicap accessible:** N **Residency restriction:** N **Organizer:** King Registration **Email:** bill@kingregistration.com **Phone:** 773-317-8347 **Website:** <https://www.kingregistration.com> **TLAID:** 40644

GRAND PRIX • ENHANCED GRAND PRIX • JUNIOR GRAND PRIX

12th annual Boston Chess Congress**JANUARY 5-7, 2024, MASSACHUSETTS**

Event site: Hyatt Regency Boston Harbor **Address:** 101 Harborside Dr, Boston MA 02128 **Overall prize fund:** \$12,000 **GP Points:** 80 **FIDE Rated:** Y **Handicap accessible:** Y **Residency restriction:** N **Organizer:** Continental Chess Association **Email:** director@chess.us **Phone:** <http://www.chessevents.us> **Website:** <http://www.chessevents.us> **TLAID:** 39219

GRAND PRIX

Dewey Beach Open 2024**JANUARY 6-7, 2024, DELAWARE**

Event site: Hyatt Place **Address:** 1301 Coastal Highway, Dewey Beach, DE 19971 **Overall prize fund:** \$2,800 **GP Points:** 10 **FIDE Rated:** N **Handicap accessible:** Y **Residency restriction:** N **Organizer:** Delaware Chess Association **Email:** Bradct@verizon.net **Phone:** 302-312-4524 **Website:** <http://Delawarechessassociation.org> **TLAID:** 40526

GRAND PRIX • ENHANCED GRAND PRIX

Bearcat DKC USCF Grand Prix January 7**JANUARY 7, 2024, NORTH CAROLINA**

Event site: Dragon Knight Chess Center **Address:** 2000 Bearcat Way, Suite 104, Morrisville, NC 27560 **Overall prize fund:** \$810 **GP Points:** 10 **FIDE Rated:** N **Handicap accessible:** Y **Residency restriction:** N **Organizer:** Dragon Knight Chess **Email:** jon@dragonknightchess.com **Phone:** 9194222535 **Website:** <https://www.dragonknightchess.com> **TLAID:** 40545

HERITAGE EVENT • AMERICAN CLASSIC • GRAND PRIX • ENHANCED GRAND PRIX • JUNIOR GRAND PRIX

56th annual Liberty Bell Open**JANUARY 12-15, 2024, PHILADELPHIA**

Event site: Sonesta Hotel **Address:** 1800 Market St, Philadelphia 19103 **Overall prize fund:** \$25,000 **GP Points:** 150 **FIDE Rated:** Y **Handicap accessible:** Y **Residency restriction:** N **Organizer:** Continental Chess Association **Email:** director@chess.us **Phone:** <http://www.chessevents.us> **Website:** <http://www.chessevents.us> **TLAID:** 39349

GRAND PRIX • ENHANCED GRAND PRIX • JUNIOR GRAND PRIX

15th annual Golden State Open**JANUARY 12-15, 2024, CALIFORNIA, N.**

Event site: Embassy Suites San Rafael Marin County **Address:** 101 McInnis Pkwy, San Rafael CA 94903 **Overall prize fund:** \$25,000 **GP Points:** 150 **FIDE Rated:** Y **Handicap accessible:** Y **Residency restriction:** N **Organizer:** Continental Chess Association **Email:** director@chess.us **Phone:** <http://www.chessevents.us> **Website:** <http://www.chessevents.us> **TLAID:** 39226

GRAND PRIX

2024 Charlotte Open**JANUARY 13-15, 2024 NORTH CAROLINA**

Event site: UNC Charlotte Marriott Hotel & Conference Center **Address:** 9041 Robert D Snyder Road, Charlotte, NC 28262 **Overall prize fund:** \$20,000 **GP Points:** 100 **FIDE Rated:** Y **Handicap accessible:** N **Residency restriction:** N **Organizer:** Charlotte Chess Center **Email:** events@charlottechesscenter.org **Phone:** <http://www.charlottechesscenter.org/usmasters> **Website:** <http://www.charlottechesscenter.org/usmasters> **TLAID:** 40280

GRAND PRIX • ENHANCED GRAND PRIX

Bearcat DKC USCF Grand Prix January 14**JANUARY 14, 2024, NORTH CAROLINA**

Event site: Dragon Knight Chess Center **Address:** 2000 Bearcat Way, Suite 104, Morrisville, NC 27560 **Overall prize fund:** \$810 **GP Points:** 10 **FIDE Rated:** N **Handicap accessible:** Y **Residency restriction:** N **Organizer:** Dragon Knight Chess **Email:** jon@dragonknightchess.com **Phone:** 9194222535 **Website:** <https://www.dragonknightchess.com> **TLAID:** 40546

GRAND PRIX • ENHANCED GRAND PRIX

Columbia Tunnelvision XVI**JANUARY 20, 2024, SOUTH CAROLINA**

Event site: First Church of the Nazarene **Address:** 901 St Andrews Rd, Columbia, SC 29210 **Overall prize fund:** \$1,000 **GP Points:** 10 **FIDE Rated:** N **Handicap accessible:** Y **Residency restriction:** N **Organizer:** Columbia Chess Club **Email:** info@columbiachess.org **Phone:** 8035690938 **Website:** <https://columbiatunnelvision.com/tunnelvision-xv-dec-2023> **TLAID:** 405

GRAND PRIX

Austin Chess Club Winter Open 2024**JANUARY 26-28, 2024, TEXAS**

Event site: Southpark Hotel **Address:** 4140 Governors Row, Austin, TX 78744 **Overall prize fund:** \$5,000 **GP Points:** 30 **FIDE Rated:** Y **Handicap accessible:** Y **Residency restriction:** N **Organizer:** Austin Chess Club **Email:** austinchessclub@austinchestournaments.com **Phone:** <http://www.austinchestournaments.com/> **Website:** <http://www.austinchestournaments.com/> **TLAID:** 40536

HERITAGE EVENT • GRAND PRIX • JUNIOR GRAND PRIX

Land of the Sky XXXVI**FEBRUARY 2-4, 2024, NORTH CAROLINA**

Event site: Crowne Plaza Resort Asheville **Address:** One Resort Dr, Asheville NC 28806 **Overall prize fund:** \$12,500 **GP Points:** 20 **FIDE Rated:** Y **Handicap accessible:** N **Residency restriction:** N **Organizer:** Wilder Wadford **Email:** info@landofthesky.us **Phone:** <http://www.chessevents.us> **Website:** <http://www.chessevents.us> **TLAID:** 40025

GRAND PRIX • ENHANCED GRAND PRIX • JUNIOR GRAND PRIX

15th annual Southwest Class Championships**FEBRUARY 15-19, 2024, TEXAS**

Event site: Westin Dallas Fort Worth Airport **Address:** 4545 W John Carpenter Fwy, Irving TX 75063 **Overall prize fund:** \$35,000 **GP Points:** 200 **FIDE Rated:** Y **Handicap accessible:** Y **Residency restriction:** N **Organizer:** Continental Chess Association **Email:** director@chess.us **Phone:** <http://www.chessevents.us> **Website:** <http://www.chessevents.us> **TLAID:** 39835

GRAND PRIX • ENHANCED GRAND PRIX • JUNIOR GRAND PRIX

8th annual George Washington Open**FEBRUARY 23-25, 2024, VIRGINIA**

Event site: Washington Dulles Marriott **Address:** 45020 Aviation Dr, Dulles VA 20166 **Overall prize fund:** \$17,000 **GP Points:** 120 **FIDE Rated:** Y **Handicap accessible:** Y **Residency restriction:** N **Organizer:** Continental Chess Association **Email:** director@chess.us **Phone:** <http://www.chessevents.us> **Website:** <http://www.chessevents.us> **TLAID:** 40252

HERITAGE EVENT • GRAND PRIX • ENHANCED GRAND PRIX • JUNIOR GRAND PRIX

31st annual Western Class Championships**MARCH 1-3, 2024, CALIFORNIA, S.**

Event site: Hilton Orange County Airport **Address:** 18800 MacArthur Blvd, Irvine CA 92612 **Overall prize fund:** \$20,000 **GP Points:** 120 **FIDE Rated:** Y **Handicap accessible:** Y **Residency restriction:** N **Organizer:** Continental Chess Association **Email:** director@chess.us **Phone:** <http://www.chessevents.us> **Website:** <http://www.chessevents.us> **TLAID:** 40212

GRAND PRIX • ENHANCED GRAND PRIX

21st annual Southern Class Championships**MARCH 15-17, 2024, FLORIDA**

Event site: Wyndham Orlando Resort **Address:** 8001 International Drive, Orlando 32819 **Overall prize fund:** \$17,000 **GP Points:** 80 **FIDE Rated:** Y **Handicap accessible:** Y **Residency restriction:** N **Organizer:** Continental Chess Association **Email:** director@chess.us **Phone:** <http://www.chessevents.us> **Website:** <http://www.chessevents.us> **TLAID:** 40675

HERITAGE EVENT • GRAND PRIX • ENHANCED GRAND PRIX • JUNIOR GRAND PRIX

28th Annual Mid-America Open**MARCH 22-24, 2024, MISSOURI**

Event site: Clayton Plaza Hotel St. Louis-Clayton **Address:** 7750 Carondelet Ave., St. Louis MO 63105 **Overall prize fund:** \$20,000 **GP Points:** 120 **FIDE Rated:** Y **Handicap accessible:** Y **Residency restriction:** N **Organizer:** Continental Chess Association **Email:** director@chess.us **Phone:** <http://www.chestour.com> **Website:** <http://www.chestour.com> **TLAID:** 40663

HERITAGE EVENT • AMERICAN CLASSIC • GRAND PRIX • ENHANCED GRAND PRIX • JUNIOR GRAND PRIX

16th Annual Open At Foxwoods**MARCH 27-31, 2024, CONNECTICUT**

Event site: Foxwoods Resort Casino And Hotel **Address:** Rt 2, Mashantucket CT 06339 **Overall prize fund:** \$60,000 **GP Points:** 200 **FIDE Rated:** Y **Handicap accessible:** N **Residency restriction:** N **Organizer:** Continental Chess Association **Email:** director@chess.us **Phone:** <http://www.chesstour.com> **Website:** <http://www.chesstour.com> **TLAID:** 40673

Regional

ALABAMA

NOVEMBER 22-26, 2023**2023 US Masters (NC)**

See National Events.

NOVEMBER 24-26, 2023**2023 North Carolina Open (NC)**

See Grand Prix.

NOVEMBER 24-26, 2023**2023 63rd Mid South Open (TN)**

See Grand Prix.

DECEMBER 19-23, 2023**2023 North American Junior U20 Championships (VA)**

See Virginia.

JANUARY 13-15, 2024**2024 Charlotte Open (NC)**

See Grand Prix.

FEBRUARY 23-25, 2024**2024 U.S. Amateur Team Championship - South (FL)**

See National Events.

MARCH 15-17, 2024**21st annual Southern Class Championships (FL)**

See Grand Prix or chessevents.us

ALASKA

DECEMBER 19-23, 2023**2023 North American Junior U20 Championships (VA)**

See Virginia.

AMERICAN SAMOA

DECEMBER 19-23, 2023**2023 North American Junior U20 Championships (VA)**

See Virginia.

ARIZONA

DECEMBER 19-23, 2023**2023 North American Junior U20 Championships (VA)**

See Virginia.

DECEMBER 26-30, 2023**33rd annual North American Open (NV)**

See Grand Prix or chessevents.us

DECEMBER 29, 2023**32nd annual North American Blitz (NV)**

See Grand Prix or chessevents.us

JANUARY 12-15, 2024**15th annual Golden State Open (CA-N)**

See Grand Prix or chessevents.us

MARCH 1-3, 2024**31st annual Western Class Championships (CA-S)**

See Grand Prix or chessevents.us

ARKANSAS

DECEMBER 19-23, 2023**2023 North American Junior U20 Championships (VA)**

See Virginia.

FEBRUARY 23-25, 2024**2024 U.S. Amateur Team Championship - South (FL)**

See National Events.

CALIFORNIA

SEPTEMBER 19, 2021-ONGOING**PCC LBX Hangar Sunday Action**

Event site: LBX Hangar Building (inside and out) **Address:** 4150 McGowen St, Long Beach CA 90808 **Overall prize fund:** 80% of total entry fee **GP Points:** n/a **FIDE Rated:** N **Handicap accessible:** Y **Residency restriction:** N **Organizer:** John Tan **Email:** paramountchessclub@gmail.com **Phone:** 3107356871 **Website:** <http://n/a> **TLAID:** 31701

DECEMBER 19-23, 2023**2023 North American Junior U20 Championships (VA)**

See Virginia.

DECEMBER 29, 2023**32nd annual North American Blitz (NV)**

See Grand Prix or chessevents.us

JANUARY 12-15, 2024**15th annual Golden State Open (CA-N)**

See Grand Prix or chessevents.us

JANUARY 13-15, 2024**2024 Charlotte Open (NC)**

See Grand Prix.

MARCH 1-3, 2024**31st annual Western Class Championships (CA-S)**

See Grand Prix or chessevents.us

COLORADO

DECEMBER 19-23, 2023**2023 North American Junior U20 Championships (VA)**

See Virginia.

DECEMBER 26-30, 2023**33rd annual North American Open (NV)**

See Grand Prix or chessevents.us

JANUARY 13-15, 2024**2024 Charlotte Open (NC)**

See Grand Prix.

CONNECTICUT

OCTOBER 15, 2023-APRIL 21, 2024

9th Annual NY State Magnus High School And Junior High Chess League (Out-Of-State Players Welcome) (NY)

See New York.

DECEMBER 19-23, 2023**2023 North American Junior U20 Championships (VA)**

See Virginia.

JANUARY 5-7, 2024**12th annual Boston Chess Congress (MA)**

See Grand Prix or chessevents.us

MARCH 27-31, 2024**16th Annual Open At Foxwoods (CT)**

See Grand Prix or chessevents.us

For complete details on individual events, please visit [new.uschess.org/node/\[TLA ID\]](http://new.uschess.org/node/[TLA ID]). You will find the event's unique five-digit TLA ID at the end of each TLA.

DELAWARE

DECEMBER 19-23, 2023

2023 North American Junior U20 Championships (VA)

See Virginia.

JANUARY 6-7, 2024

Dewey Beach Open 2024 (DE)

See Grand Prix.

DIST. OF COLUMBIA

DECEMBER 19-23, 2023

2023 North American Junior U20 Championships (VA)

See Virginia.

JANUARY 13-15, 2024

2024 Charlotte Open (NC)

See Grand Prix.

FLORIDA

DECEMBER 19-23, 2023

2023 North American Junior U20 Championships (VA)

See Virginia.

JANUARY 5-7, 2024

CFCC 2024 Winter Open & Scholastic (FL)

See Grand Prix.

JANUARY 13-15, 2024

2024 Charlotte Open (NC)

See Grand Prix.

FEBRUARY 23-25, 2024

2024 U.S. Amateur Team Championship - South (FL)

See National Events.

MARCH 15-17, 2024

21st annual Southern Class Championships (FL)

See Grand Prix or chessevents.us

GEORGIA

APRIL 8, 2023-ONGOING MONTHLY

Pizza Scholastic

Event site: The Boardroom Address: 1675 Peachtree Pkwy, Suite #180, Cumming Georgia 30041 Overall prize fund: n/a GP Points: n/a FIDE Rated: N Handicap accessible: Y Residency restriction: N Organizer: ThinkChess, LLC Email: info@mythinkchess.com Phone: 770.744.8595 Website: <https://mythinkchess.com/> TLA ID: 37216

DECEMBER 19-23, 2023

2023 North American Junior U20 Championships (VA)

See Virginia.

JANUARY 13-15, 2024

2024 Charlotte Open (NC)

See Grand Prix.

FEBRUARY 23-25, 2024

2024 U.S. Amateur Team Championship - South (FL)

See National Events.

MARCH 15-17, 2024

21st annual Southern Class Championships (FL)

See Grand Prix or chessevents.us

GUAM

DECEMBER 19-23, 2023

2023 North American Junior U20 Championships (VA)

See Virginia.

HAWAII

DECEMBER 19-23, 2023

2023 North American Junior U20 Championships (VA)

See Virginia.

IDAHO

DECEMBER 19-23, 2023

2023 North American Junior U20 Championships (VA)

See Virginia.

ILLINOIS

DECEMBER 19-23, 2023

2023 North American Junior U20 Championships (VA)

See Virginia.

DECEMBER 26-30, 2023

33rd annual North American Open (NV)

See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

JANUARY 5-7, 2024

Tim Just Winter Open XL (IL)

See Grand Prix.

JANUARY 13-15, 2024

2024 Charlotte Open (NC)

See Grand Prix.

FEBRUARY 3, 2024

2024 Greater Chicago K-12 Championship

Event site: McCormick Place West Building Address: 2301 S Dr Martin Luther King Jr Dr, Chicago, IL 60616 Overall prize fund: n/a GP Points: n/a FIDE Rated: N Handicap accessible: Y Residency restriction: N Organizer: Renaissance Knights Email: info@renaissanceknights.org Phone: n/a Website: <http://greaterchicago.knights.org> TLA ID: 40037

MARCH 22-24, 2024

28th Annual Mid-America Open (MO)

See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

INDIANA

DECEMBER 19-23, 2023

2023 North American Junior U20 Championships (VA)

See Virginia.

JANUARY 5-7, 2024

Tim Just Winter Open XL (IL)

See Grand Prix.

MARCH 22-24, 2024

28th Annual Mid-America Open (MO)

See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

IOWA

DECEMBER 19-23, 2023

2023 North American Junior U20 Championships (VA)

See Virginia.

JANUARY 5-7, 2024

Tim Just Winter Open XL (IL)

See Grand Prix.

KANSAS

DECEMBER 19-23, 2023

2023 North American Junior U20 Championships (VA)

See Virginia.

KENTUCKY

DECEMBER 19-23, 2023

2023 North American Junior U20 Championships (VA)

See Virginia.

JANUARY 13-15, 2024

2024 Charlotte Open (NC)

See Grand Prix.

FEBRUARY 23-25, 2024

2024 U.S. Amateur Team Championship - South (FL)

See National Events.

LOUISIANA

DECEMBER 19-23, 2023

2023 North American Junior U20 Championships (VA)

See Virginia.

JANUARY 13-15, 2024

2024 Charlotte Open (NC)

See Grand Prix.

FEBRUARY 15-19, 2024

15th annual Southwest Class Championships (TX)

See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

FEBRUARY 23-25, 2024

2024 U.S. Amateur Team Championship - South (FL)

See National Events.

MAINE

DECEMBER 19-23, 2023

2023 North American Junior U20 Championships (VA)

See Virginia.

MARYLAND

MARYLAND CHESS TOURNAMENTS (NORTH PENN CHESS CLUB)

Maryland Chess runs 21+ annual K-12 tournaments every other Saturday from September through June & 12+ annual 1-day or multi-day open tournaments for adults & K-12 players on weekends. See www.MD-Chess.org for tournament announcements, registration for tournaments, updated wallcharts, live standings, sign up for K-12 & open e-newsletters, lists of coaches & clubs, camp announcements, & news. K-12 MD players who compete in the Varsity section (for players rated 1600+) of 1 of 8+ annual MD-Sweet-16 Qualifiers can qualify for the \$48,000+ scholarship to the University of Maryland, Baltimore County awarded annually. UMBC is a perennial top-10 contender for the collegiate national chess championship.

DECEMBER 19-23, 2023

2023 North American Junior U20 Championships (VA)

See Virginia.

DECEMBER 26-29, 2023

48th annual Eastern Open (VA)

See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

JANUARY 5-7, 2024

12th annual Boston Chess Congress (MA)

See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

JANUARY 6-7, 2024

Dewey Beach Open 2024 (DE)

See Grand Prix.

JANUARY 12-15, 2024

56th annual Liberty Bell Open (PA)

See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

JANUARY 13-15, 2024

2024 Charlotte Open (NC)

See Grand Prix.

JANUARY 20, 2024

MCA Rockville Quads for K-12

Event site: Bender Jewish Community Center Address: 6125 Montrose Rd, Rockville, MD 20852 Overall

prize fund: n/a GP Points: n/a FIDE Rated: N Handicap accessible: N Residency restriction: N Organizer: Magnus Chess Academy Email: divyanshu@chessacademy.com Phone: n/a Website: <https://chessacademy.com/tournaments> TLA ID: 39026

FEBRUARY 23-25, 2024

8th annual George Washington Open (VA)

See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

MASSACHUSETTS

REGIONALS

DECEMBER 3, 2023

1st WMCA Senior Open Over 50

Event site: Myrtle Street Park building Address: 117 Main Street, Indian Orchard, MA 01151 Overall prize fund: \$700 GP Points: n/a FIDE Rated: N Handicap accessible: Y Residency restriction: N Organizer: Western Massachusetts Chess Association Email: gbompastore@gmail.com Phone: 413.356.0303 Website: <http://www.wmass-chess.us/> TLA ID: 39288

DECEMBER 19-23, 2023

2023 North American Junior U20 Championships (VA)

See Virginia.

JANUARY 5-7, 2024

12th annual Boston Chess Congress (MA)

See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

HERITAGE EVENT

JANUARY 27, 2024

32nd Mid-Winter Classic

Event site: St. John's Lutheran Church Address: 60 Broad Street, Westfield, MA 01085 Overall prize fund: \$700 GP Points: n/a FIDE Rated: N Handicap accessible: Y Residency restriction: N Organizer: Western Massachusetts Chess Association Email: gbompastore@gmail.com Phone: n/a Website: <http://www.wmass-chess.us/> TLA ID: 40306

MARCH 27-31, 2024

16th Annual Open At Foxwoods (CT)

See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

MICHIGAN

DECEMBER 19-23, 2023

2023 North American Junior U20 Championships (VA)

See Virginia.

MINNESOTA

DECEMBER 19-23, 2023

2023 North American Junior U20 Championships (VA)

See Virginia.

JANUARY 5-7, 2024

Tim Just Winter Open XL (IL)

See Grand Prix.

MISSISSIPPI

DECEMBER 19-23, 2023

2023 North American Junior U20 Championships (VA)

See Virginia.

JANUARY 13-15, 2024

2024 Charlotte Open (NC)

See Grand Prix.

MISSOURI

DECEMBER 19-23, 2023

2023 North American Junior U20 Championships (VA)

See Virginia.

JANUARY 13-15, 2024

2024 Charlotte Open (NC)

See Grand Prix.

FEBRUARY 23-25, 2024

2024 U.S. Amateur Team Championship - South (FL)

See National Events.

MARCH 22-24, 2024

28th Annual Mid-America Open (MO)

See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

📍 MONTANA

DECEMBER 19-23, 2023

2023 North American Junior U20 Championships (VA)

See Virginia.

📍 NEBRASKA

DECEMBER 19-23, 2023

2023 North American Junior U20 Championships (VA)

See Virginia.

📍 NEVADA

DECEMBER 19-23, 2023

2023 North American Junior U20 Championships (VA)

See Virginia.

DECEMBER 26-30, 2023

33rd annual North American Open (NV)

See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

DECEMBER 29, 2023

32nd annual North American Blitz (NV)

See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

JANUARY 12-15, 2024

15th annual Golden State Open (CA-N)

See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

MARCH 1-3, 2024

31st annual Western Class Championships (CA-S)

See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

📍 NEW HAMPSHIRE

DECEMBER 19-23, 2023

2023 North American Junior U20 Championships (VA)

See Virginia.

📍 NEW JERSEY

JANUARY 14-DECEMBER 30, 2023

Hamilton Chess Club Quads

Dates: Feb. 11, Mar. 18, Apr. 29, May 20, Jun. 3, Aug. 19, Sep. 30, Oct. 21, Nov. 18, Dec. 30. Event site: Switlik Park Pavilion Address: Fischer Place/Joe Dimaggio Drive, Hamilton, NJ 08610 Overall prize fund: n/a GP Points: n/a FIDE Rated: N Handicap accessible: N Residency restriction: N Organizer: Edward Sytnik Email: edmendou@aol.com Phone: 609-758-2326 Website: <https://sites.google.com/site/hamiltonchessclub/> TLA ID: 35704

OCTOBER 15, 2023-APRIL 21, 2024

9th Annual NY State Magnus High School And Junior High Chess League (Out-Of-State Players Welcome)! (NY)

See New York.

DECEMBER 19-23, 2023

2023 North American Junior U20 Championships (VA)

See Virginia.

DECEMBER 26-29, 2023

48th annual Eastern Open (VA)

See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

JANUARY 5-7, 2024

12th annual Boston Chess Congress (MA)

See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

JANUARY 6-7, 2024

Dewey Beach Open 2024 (DE)

See Grand Prix.

JANUARY 12-15, 2024

56th annual Liberty Bell Open (PA)

See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

JANUARY 13-15, 2024

2024 Charlotte Open (NC)

See Grand Prix.

STATE CHAMPIONSHIP EVENT

FEBRUARY 25, 2024

2024 NJ Elementary and Junior High School Championships

Event site: Brookdale Community College - Student Life Center Address: Arena Dr (Park in lot #7), Lincroft, NJ 07738 Overall prize fund: n/a GP Points: n/a FIDE Rated: N Handicap accessible: Y Residency restriction: N Organizer: New Jersey State Chess Federation Email: tournaments.njscf@gmail.com Phone: n/a Website: <https://njscf.org> TLA ID: 40213

MARCH 27-31, 2024

16th Annual Open At Foxwoods (CT)

See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

📍 NEW MEXICO

DECEMBER 19-23, 2023

2023 North American Junior U20 Championships (VA)

See Virginia.

📍 NEW YORK

OCTOBER 15, 2023-APRIL 21, 2024

9th Annual NY State Magnus High School And Junior High Chess League (Out-Of-State Players Welcome)!

Event site: Columbia Grammar And Prep School Address: 36 West 93rd Street (between Central Park West and Columbus Ave.), New York, NY 10025 Overall prize fund: \$480/match + \$750 end-of-season prize GP Points: n/a FIDE Rated: N Handicap accessible: N Residency restriction: N Organizer: Chess Center of New York Email: director@magnusleague.org Phone: director@magnusleague.org, chesscentr@gmail.com Website: <http://www.magnusleague.org> TLA ID: 40218

DECEMBER 19-23, 2023

2023 North American Junior U20 Championships (VA)

See Virginia.

DECEMBER 26-29, 2023

48th annual Eastern Open (VA)

See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

JANUARY 5-7, 2024

12th annual Boston Chess Congress (MA)

See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

JANUARY 12-15, 2024

56th annual Liberty Bell Open (PA)

See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

JANUARY 13-15, 2024

2024 Charlotte Open (NC)

See Grand Prix.

STATE CHAMPIONSHIP EVENT • AMERICAN CLASSIC • HERITAGE EVENT • JUNIOR GRAND PRIX

MARCH 9-10, 2024

56th annual New York State Scholastic Championships

Event site: Saratoga City Center, Hilton and Court-yard Address: various locations, Saratoga Springs, NY Overall prize fund: n/a GP Points: n/a FIDE Rated: N Handicap accessible: Y Residency restriction: N Organizer: Continental Chess Association Email: director@chess.us Phone: director@chess.us Website: <http://www.chessevents.us> TLA ID: 40245

MARCH 27-31, 2024

16th Annual Open At Foxwoods (CT)

See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

📍 NORTH CAROLINA

DECEMBER 19-23, 2023

2023 North American Junior U20 Championships (VA)

See Virginia.

JANUARY 13-15, 2024

2024 Charlotte Open (NC)

See Grand Prix.

FEBRUARY 23-25, 2024

2024 U.S. Amateur Team Championship - South (FL)

See National Events.

📍 NORTH DAKOTA

DECEMBER 19-23, 2023

2023 North American Junior U20 Championships (VA)

See Virginia.

📍 N. MARIANA ISLANDS

DECEMBER 19-23, 2023

2023 North American Junior U20 Championships (VA)

See Virginia.

📍 OHIO

DECEMBER 19-23, 2023

2023 North American Junior U20 Championships (VA)

See Virginia.

MARCH 22-24, 2024

28th Annual Mid-America Open (MO)

See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

📍 OKLAHOMA

DECEMBER 19-23, 2023

2023 North American Junior U20 Championships (VA)

See Virginia.

FEBRUARY 15-19, 2024

15th annual Southwest Class Championships (TX)

See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

📍 OREGON

DECEMBER 19-23, 2023

2023 North American Junior U20 Championships (VA)

See Virginia.

📍 PENNSYLVANIA

North Penn Chess Club

Main & Richardson - St. John's UCC, 500 West Main St., Lansdale, PA 19446. See www.northpennchessclub.org for schedules & info or 215-699-8418

OCTOBER 15, 2023-APRIL 21, 2024

9th Annual NY State Magnus High School And Junior High Chess League (Out-Of-State Players Welcome)! (NY)

See New York.

DECEMBER 19-23, 2023

2023 North American Junior U20 Championships (VA)

See Virginia.

DECEMBER 26-29, 2023

48th annual Eastern Open (VA)

See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

JANUARY 6-7, 2024

Dewey Beach Open 2024 (DE)

See Grand Prix.

JANUARY 12-15, 2024

56th annual Liberty Bell Open (PA)

See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

JANUARY 13-15, 2024

2024 Charlotte Open (NC)

See Grand Prix.

JANUARY 20, 2024

Annual Lehigh Valley K-12 Scholastic Open & Open Quads Championships

Event site: College Hill Moravian Church Address: 72 W Laurel St, Bethlehem, PA 18018 Overall prize fund: n/a GP Points: n/a FIDE Rated: N Handicap accessible: Y Residency restriction: N Organizer: Bruce R Davis

Sr Email: bdavis@lehighvalleychessclub.org Phone: 4848663045 Website: n/a TLA ID: 40519

JANUARY 20-21, 2024

2nd Steel City Open

Event site: Jewish Community Center of Greater Pittsburgh Address: 5738 Forbes Avenue, Pittsburgh, PA 15217 Overall prize fund: \$3,600 GP Points: n/a FIDE Rated: N Handicap accessible: N Residency restriction: N Organizer: Pittsburgh Chess Club Email: info@pittsburghchessclub.org Phone: 412-421-1881 Website: <https://pittsburghchessclub.org> TLA ID: 40550

📍 PUERTO RICO

DECEMBER 19-23, 2023

2023 North American Junior U20 Championships (VA)

See Virginia.

FEBRUARY 23-25, 2024

8th annual George Washington Open (VA)

See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

FEBRUARY 23-25, 2024

2024 U.S. Amateur Team Championship - South (FL)

See National Events.

📍 RHODE ISLAND

DECEMBER 19-23, 2023

2023 North American Junior U20 Championships (VA)

See Virginia.

📍 SOUTH CAROLINA

DECEMBER 16, 2023

Columbia Tunnelvision XV (SC)

See Grand Prix.

DECEMBER 19-23, 2023

2023 North American Junior U20 Championships (VA)

See Virginia.

JANUARY 13-15, 2024

2024 Charlotte Open (NC)

See Grand Prix.

FEBRUARY 23-25, 2024

2024 U.S. Amateur Team Championship - South (FL)

See National Events.

📍 SOUTH DAKOTA

DECEMBER 19-23, 2023

2023 North American Junior U20 Championships (VA)

See Virginia.

📍 TENNESSEE

DECEMBER 19-23, 2023

2023 North American Junior U20 Championships (VA)

See Virginia.

JANUARY 13-15, 2024

2024 Charlotte Open (NC)

See Grand Prix.

FEBRUARY 23-25, 2024

2024 U.S. Amateur Team Championship - South (FL)

See National Events.

MARCH 22-24, 2024

28th Annual Mid-America Open (MO)

See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

📍 TEXAS

DECEMBER 9, 2023

2023 Winter Open(TM)

Event site: Dover Ridge Clubhouse Address: 9418 Dover Ridge, San Antonio, TX 78250 Overall prize fund: \$200 gtd b/20 GP Points: n/a FIDE Rated: YN Handicap

For complete details on individual events, please visit [new.uschess.org/node/\[TLA ID\]](http://new.uschess.org/node/[TLA ID]). You will find the event's unique five-digit TLA ID at the end of each TLA.

accessible: N Residency restriction: N Organizer: Aaron Reyes Email: officialSATXchess210@gmail.com Phone: 2103323439 Website: n/a TLA ID: 40495

DECEMBER 19-23, 2023

2023 North American Junior U20 Championships (VA)
See Virginia.

DECEMBER 26-30, 2023

33rd annual North American Open (NV)
See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

JANUARY 13-15, 2024

2024 Charlotte Open (NC)
See Grand Prix.

JANUARY 26-28, 2024

Austin Chess Club Winter Open 2024 (TX)
See Grand Prix.

FEBRUARY 15-19, 2024

15th annual Southwest Class Championships (TX)
See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

MARCH 22-24, 2024

28th Annual Mid-America Open (MO)
See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

U.S. MIN. O.L. ISLS.

DECEMBER 19-23, 2023

2023 North American Junior U20 Championships (VA)
See Virginia.

UTAH

SEPTEMBER 7, 2023-ONGOING WEEKLY

Chess Knight
Event site: Kiln (Lehi) Address: 2701 N Thanksgiving Way #100, Lehi, UT 84043 Overall prize fund: n/a GP Points: n/a FIDE Rated: N Handicap accessible: Y Residency restriction: N Organizer: Rob Harker Email: utahchessknight@gmail.com Phone: n/a Website: n/a TLA ID: 39726

DECEMBER 19-23, 2023

2023 North American Junior U20 Championships (VA)
See Virginia.

DECEMBER 26-30, 2023

33rd annual North American Open (NV)
See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

VERMONT

DECEMBER 19-23, 2023

2023 North American Junior U20 Championships (VA)
See Virginia.

VIRGIN ISLANDS, U.S.

DECEMBER 19-23, 2023

2023 North American Junior U20 Championships (VA)
See Virginia.

VIRGINIA

FIDE EVENT • JUNIOR GRAND PRIX

DECEMBER 19-23, 2023

2023 North American Junior U20 Championships

Event site: Washington Dulles Airport Marriott Address: 45020 Aviation Drive, Dulles, VA 20166 Overall prize fund: FIDE titles GP Points: n/a FIDE Rated: Y Handicap accessible: N Residency restriction: N Organizer: Anand Dommalapati Email: 2023naj@capitalareachess.com Phone: 1-703-627-5314 Website: <https://www.capitalareachess.com/2023NAJ> TLA ID: 39413

DECEMBER 26-29, 2023

48th annual Eastern Open (VA)
See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

JANUARY 6, 2024

MCA Fairfax County Quads for K-12
Event site: Pozze Jewish Community Center of North-ern Virginia Address: 48900 Little River Turnpike, Fairfax, VA 22031 Overall prize fund: n/a GP Points: n/a FIDE Rated: N Handicap accessible: N Residency restriction: N Organizer: Magnus Chess Academy Email: divyanshu@chessacademy.com Phone: n/a Website: <https://chessacademy.com/tournaments> TLA ID: 39031

JANUARY 6-7, 2024

Dewey Beach Open 2024 (DE)
See Grand Prix.

JANUARY 13-15, 2024

2024 Charlotte Open (NC)
See Grand Prix.

FEBRUARY 23-25, 2024

8th annual George Washington Open (VA)
See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

FEBRUARY 23-25, 2024

2024 U.S. Amateur Team Championship - South (FL)
See National Events.

WASHINGTON

DECEMBER 19-23, 2023

2023 North American Junior U20 Championships (VA)
See Virginia.

DECEMBER 26-30, 2023

33rd annual North American Open (NV)
See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

JANUARY 12-15, 2024

15th annual Golden State Open (CA-N)
See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

WEST VIRGINIA

DECEMBER 19-23, 2023

2023 North American Junior U20 Championships (VA)
See Virginia.

JANUARY 12-15, 2024

56th annual Liberty Bell Open (PA)
See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

FEBRUARY 23-25, 2024

2024 U.S. Amateur Team Championship - South (FL)
See National Events.

WISCONSIN

DECEMBER 16-17, 2023

The Wisconsin Memorial
Event site: Courtyard by Marriott Address: 2266 Deming Way, Middleton, WI 53562 Overall prize fund: \$900 GP Points: n/a FIDE Rated: N Handicap accessible: Y Residency restriction: N Organizer: Mike Nietman Email: mike.nietman@charter.net Phone: 16084678510 Website: <https://www.wischess.org> TLA ID: 39080

DECEMBER 19-23, 2023

2023 North American Junior U20 Championships (VA)
See Virginia.

JANUARY 5-7, 2024

Tim Just Winter Open XL (IL)
See Grand Prix.

HERITAGE EVENT • JUNIOR GRAND PRIX

FEBRUARY 3-4, 2024

Michael A. Selig Memorial/57th NorthEastern Open
Event site: DoubleTree by Hilton Address: 150 S. Nicolet Rd., Appleton, WI 54914 Overall prize fund: \$1,200 GP Points: n/a FIDE Rated: Y Handicap accessible: N Residency restriction: N Organizer: Mike Nietman Email: mike.nietman@charter.net Phone: 16084678510 Website: <https://www.wischess.org> TLA ID: 39081

WYOMING

DECEMBER 19-23, 2023

2023 North American Junior U20 Championships (VA)
See Virginia.

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www.marshallchessclub.org

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Chess Club and Scholastic Center of Saint Louis

St. Louis, MO
314-361-CHESS
www.saintlouischessclub.org

San Diego Chess Club San Diego, CA

619-752-4377
www.sandiegochessclub.org

Washington Chess Federation

Redmond, WA
206.769.3757
www.wachess.com

Williamsburg Tutoring.com

Brooklyn NY
www.WilliamsburgTutoring.com

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www.dkchess.com

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td_edg@twc.com

Evangel Chess Club (AL)

www.evangelchurch.me

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shorehschessleague@yahoo.com

Little House of Chess, Inc. (NY)

littlehouseofchess.org

Long Island Chess Nuts (NY)

516-739-3907

Mechanics' Institute (CA)

www.milibrary.org/chess

Michigan Chess Association (MI)

www.michess.org

Oklahoma Chess Foundation (OK)

www.OCFchess.org

Regents School of Austin Chess Club (TX)

www.regentsaustin.org/chess

Rochester Chess Center (NY)

www.chessset.com

Sparta Chess Club (NJ)

www.spartachessclub.org

TLA CHESS (VA)

tla.chess.llc@gmail.com

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HOW TO USE THIS INDEX

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Dear devoted reader or future historian:

First, let me thank you for your commitment in making it this far. Not many people venture into the Index without good reason. I appreciate your doing so.

I write to you from November 2023, just before this issue goes to print. Like most times in human history, our days are not untroubled. There are two regional wars that threaten to burst into global conflicts. The globe itself continues to heat and heat, with a fury that is already evident and charring. Hubris is everywhere; wisdom, alas, is not.

Still, there is hope. There is *always* hope. Good people are coming together to try and bind the wounds of the world. In war zones and laboratories, in classrooms and community meetings, it is normal, everyday people — people just like you — who will make the difference. That's how it's always been, and it's why I have faith in the future you who reads these words.

Chess, too, has its problems. The spectre of cheating haunts our game. Misogyny and anti-LGBT+ biases persist. But this year saw serious advances in the fight for equality at the board for all, and our top players achieved great successes over-the-board. Two of our top GMs are Candidates, and the pipeline is full of talent.

Perhaps most important are the lessons that chess continues to teach its initiates. We value careful thought over knee-jerk reaction, cultivate the ability to focus deeply, and train our eyes to appreciate beauty. We work with, and play against, those with whom we might otherwise have almost nothing in common. We learn from the past and build for the future.

With hope for that future, I wish you a wonderful holiday season and a peaceful new year.

– John Hartmann, *Chess Life* editor

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Solutions

PAGES 10-11 QUIZ

1. Max Euwe and Bobby Fischer each won eight national championship tournaments. Euwe also won Dutch championship matches. **2.** Wilhelm Steinitz, Emanuel Lasker and Jose Capablanca never won a national championship. Magnus Carlsen won one Norwegian championship. Vladimir Kramnik shared a four-way tie a Russian Championship. **3. d. 4.** (a) 15 is the maximum for a king, queen, rook or knight. (b) A pawn can only make six. A bishop is limited to 14. Question suggested by Bob Basalla. **5. a.** See news.mit.edu/2023/chess-players-tough-foe-air-pollution-0130. Answer b. was prize-winning research for a University of Buffalo doctoral student. As to c., a 2009 study found no link between chess skill and lefthandedness. **6. d.** Alireza Firouzja, Levon Aronian, Caruana, Nakamura, Wesley So, Maxime Vachier-Lagrave, Ian Nepomniachtchi, Viswanathan Anand, Vladimir Kramnik and Shakhriyar Mamedyarov. **7.** Yes, only 16 players entered the 1941 U.S. Open in St. Louis. 22 entered the preliminary sections of the 1942 U.S. Championship and eight additional seeded players entered the finals. **8. b. 9. b.** Quoted in the *New York Times Magazine*, June 4, 1961. **10. b** — and the woman wasn't Vera Menchik. It was Rowena Bruce of Great Britain, who played Alexander Alekhine at Plymouth 1938. Max Euwe (before he was champion) and Jose Capablanca (as ex-champion) played Menchik at Karlsbad 1929. **11. d. 12.** Bobby Fischer lost to Florin Gheorghiu, one year younger than Bobby, in the 1966 Olympiad. **13.** True. Point 2.3 of FIDE's Standards of Chess Equipment says, "The height of the pieces, in descending height order, is as follows: King – 9.5 cm, Queen – 8.5 cm, Bishop – 7 cm, Knight – 6 cm, Rook – 5.5 cm and Pawn – 5 cm. These dimensions may differ by up to 10%, but the pieces must remain in descending height order." **14.** True. Point 3.3. **15. c. 16.** Trick question: There are no errors if this is about the 2020 Women's World Championship. It was won by Ju Wenjun from Aleksandra Goryachkina in Vladivostok. Former champion Hou Yifan made the "lucky" comment. **17. e.** On the World Chess YouTube channel. **18.** Benjamin Franklin, named grandmaster of a Masonic Lodge, played his most famous games with Lady Caroline Howe, while he conducted secret diplomacy with her brothers in an effort to avert the Revolutionary War.

PAGE 11 CHESS TO ENJOY

PROBLEM 1. Black wins with 25. ... Rh5! 26. gxf5 Qxf3 followed by 27. ... Qxd1+ or 27. ... gxf6. **PROBLEM 2.** Did you find 23. Qxh7+! Kxh7 24. Rh3+ Kg7 25. Bh6+ Kh8

26. Bxf8 mate? **PROBLEM 3.** Fastest is 34. ... Re4+ 35. Kg4 Rg4+ 36. Kxh5 and now 36. ... Rfg8, threatening 37. ... R8g5 mate. **PROBLEM 4.** Black resigned after 22. Nxd7+ Bxd7 23. Bxg6! Be8 24. Bxf7! Bxf7 25. g6! Rc7 26. Qd8+. **PROBLEM 5.** Here 36. ... d4 threatens 37. ... d3 or 37. ... dxe3 followed by ... Re8-d8-d1+. White resigned after 37. exd4 Bxd4+ 38. Kf1 Nh2+! (and if 39. Rxh2 Rg1 mate). **PROBLEM 6.** The right move is 32. g3! Nfe6 33. exf5 so that 33. ... gxf5 is met with 34. Nxf5 Rxf5 35. Bxe6 or 34. ... Qf7 35. Nh4. Also lost is 33. ... fxe4 34. Nxe4 Nfe6 35. Rd7.

PAGE 47 ABCS OF CHESS

PROBLEM 1. Mating net: It's mate in two for White: **1. Qh6+ Kg8 2. Be6 mate. PROBLEM 2. Mating net:** White mates in two: **1. Qa6+ Kc5 2. Bd4 mate. PROBLEM 3. Mating net:** White mates in two: **1. Qg8+ Ke7 2. Qf7 mate. PROBLEM 4. Mating net:** It's checkmate in two with **1. Qxg7+ Bxg7 2. Rxg7 mate. PROBLEM 5. Mating net:** White mates in two moves: **1. Qh4+ Kxh4 2. Bf6 mate. PROBLEM 6. Mating net:** White mates in two: **1. Qxd7+ Kxd7 2. Bc8 mate.**

PAGE 51 MAKE YOUR MOVE

TACTIC 1. 36. ... Rxf2! 37. Qe4 White cannot capture the rook. After 37. Kxf2 Bc5+ White will have to give up the queen because 38. Ne3 allows 38. ... Rd2+, forcing mate. **37. ... Bc5 38. Kh2 Bd6+! 39. Kg1 Rxf1+! 40. Kxf1 Rf8+ 41. Kg1 Qg3** Total penetration on the dark squares; **White resigned.** (Narva – Bulmaga, FIDE Women's World Cup, 2023) **TACTIC 2. 24. ... Nc2!** Threatening ... Nc2xe1 and ... Nc2-e3. **25. Qe4** Or 25. Qe2 c4+ 26. Bf2 Bxf2+ 27. Qxf2 c3 and Black has a decisive advantage. **25. ... Qxe4 26. Nxe4 Re8** Black is winning a piece and the game. **27. Nd6 Rxe1 28. Rxe1 Nxe1 29. Kf2 Nd3+ 30. Ke3 c4+ 31. Ke4 Nc5+ 32. Kd5 c3 33. Kd4** and **White resigned** simultaneously. (Serikbay – Guichard, FIDE Women's World Cup, 2023) **TACTIC 3. 11. Nxd7! Nxd7** Or 11. ... Kxd7 12. Na4 Qxd4 13. c4 with a powerful initiative for White. **12. Bxd5! Qxb2** Of course, 12. ... exd5 13. Nxd5 is a disaster for Black. **13. Bxc6 bxc6 14. Qd3 0-0 15. Rab1 Qa3 16. Rb3** White has a clear advantage. **16. ... Qa5 17. Rb7 Qd8 18. Bc7 Qc8 19. Rfb1 a5 20. Ne4 Nf6 21. Nxf6+ Bxf6 22. Qa3** and White is completely dominating the game. In the game continuation, White played less accurately but still converted her advantage in E. Paehtz – Ju Wenjun, FIDE Women's World Cup, 2023. **TACTIC 4. 26. Rxe5!** In the game, White instead went for the less forcing **26. Nd3 Qc7 27. g3 Rae8 28. Kg2 Kf7 29. Nxe5+ fxe5 30. Qc4+ d5 31. Qxa6 e4 32. Rb3 Rb8 33. f3 exf3+ 34. Rxf3+** and White was completely winning and eventually converted the advantage. (Munguntuul – Yuan Ye, FIDE Women's World Cup, 2023) **26. ... fxe5 27. Rxe5 Kg8 28. Re6** and White is winning. **TACTIC 5. 31. R7c6! Nc4** Or 31. ... Rb7 32. Nd6 Rbb8 33. Rc7 and White penetrates on the seventh rank. **32. Rxa6!** Exploiting Black's weak back rank. After **32. ... Rad8 33. a4 Rd2 34. axb5 Nb2 35. Ra2 g6 36. Ng3 Nc4 37. Rxd2 Nxd2 38. b6** White is winning and eventually converted the advantage without any serious trouble. (Koneru – Badelka, FIDE Women's World Cup, 2023)

TACTIC 6. 19. Rf3! Building on the pin of the knight. The pin along the diagonal seems well taken care of, but the text move adds to pin on the f-file. **19. ... Rf8** If Black ignores White's threats, things clearly get worse, for instance, 19. ... a5 20. Rd1 Ne5 21. Rxf6 Bxf6 22. Nf5+ gxf5 23. Qh6+ and White wins. **20. e5!** Forcing the opening of the d-file, allowing White to add more pressure to the pins. **20. ... dxe5 21. Rd1** The point behind the previous move. **21. ... Nd5 22. Nxf7 Qe8 23. Bxe7 Rxf7 24. Rxf7+ Qxf7** Black has avoided losing material, but she is strategically completely lost. Black resigned on move 32 in Roebbers – Mona, FIDE Women's World Cup, 2023. **TACTIC 7. 29. ... d4!** The black pawn was impossible to cover in any case, but Black uses it to penetrate on the dark squares which are already perilously weak. **30. e4** If 30. exd4 Rc2 31. Rf2 Re1+ 32. Rf1 Bh4 33. Rxe1 Bxe1 34. Kf1 Bg3 with strong, enduring initiative for Black. **30. ... Rc2 31. Rf2 Rc8 32. Rfd2 Rxd2 33. Rxd2 Bg5 34. g3 h4** White's fragile house of cards collapses on the dark squares. Black is now easily winning in Tan Zhongyi – Goryachkina, FIDE Women's World Cup, 2023. **TACTIC 8. 32. Ne5+!!** In the game, White missed her opportunity with **32. Qe2** in Ouellet – Krush, FIDE Women's World Cup, 2023. **32. ... fxe5 33. dxe5 Qb8 34. g4** and White would have had a clear advantage. **TACTIC 9. 44. ... Rb1+!** This is the only move to save the draw. In the game, Black lost after **44. ... g3??** (Shuvalova – Salimova, FIDE Women's World Cup, 2023). **45. Ka5** Or 45. Kc3 Rb5 46. Kc4 Rb1 47. Rg2 Ng7 with a draw. **45. ... Ng7!** The only way for the knight to make it around to stop White's advanced pawns. **46. c6 Nf5! 47. c7 Ne7!** Stopping the c-pawn just in the nick of time. **48. Rd2 g3!** The essential counterplay coming just when it is needed. **49. Ka6 g2! 50. Rxd2 Nc8! 51. Rd2 Rxb6+ 52. Ka5** followed by Rd1-d8+ with a draw.

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MY BEST MOVE

WCM ALLYSON WONG

PRESIDENT AND CO-FOUNDER,
FEMCHESS



ON MY FIRST DAY IN KINDERGARTEN, I received a flyer to try out for my school's chess team. My curiosity was piqued, and I begged my older brother to teach me the basics. Soon I was ready. After the tryout, Coach Lonsdale gave me a reassuring smile and said, "Congratulations on making the Mission San Jose Elementary Chess team! Always remember Allyson, girls are just as smart as boys!" To this day, I still remember those exact words like it happened yesterday.

Throughout the years, I've made numerous lifelong friendships through chess tournaments, but it always baffled me to see so few female players.

When the COVID-19 pandemic hit, over-the-board tournaments abruptly stopped. Determined to find a way to continue sharing our love of chess, two friends and I started FEMchess, which provides free chess lessons to empower young girls to learn and compete in chess. We spent months developing a chess curriculum and recruited many nationally ranked volunteer chess coaches around the country.

One of FEMchess's most important initiatives is partnering with local school districts to reach girls without stable housing. For these at-risk girls, our mission extends beyond the chessboard. We use chess as a tool to provide positive encouragement as they build friendships through a shared love of chess. By fostering a nurturing environment, we hope to help them transcend their circumstances and to persevere.

While I will probably not be able to showcase GM-level "best chess moves," I am proud that my best move is partnering with my fellow FEMchess coaches to champion girls in chess, especially those that otherwise would not have access.

Here is one of my favorite games I played at an all-girls tournament — a sharp game from start to finish.



SICILIAN DEFENSE, DRAGON VARIATION (B76)

Allyson Wong (1520)

Sophie Velea (1562)

Polgar Foundation National Open (4),
05.06.2017

1. e4 c5 2. Nf3 d6 3. d4 cxd4 4. Nxd4 Nf6
5. Nc3 g6 6. Be3 Bg7 7. f3 0-0 8. Qd2 Nc6
9. 0-0-0 Nxd4 10. Bxd4 Be6 11. Kb1 Qc7
12. h4 Rfc8 13. h5 Qa5 14. a3

Better would have been 14. h6! as after
14. ... Rxc3 15. Qxc3 Qxa2+ 16. Kc1 the king
is safe enough.

14. ... Rab8 15. hxc6 hxc6 16. Bd3 b5 17.
Qg5 a6? 18. f4 Bd7?

The second mistake is too much to overcome. Now I go on the attack.

19. Nd5 Qd8 20. Nxf6+?!

Trying to open lines with 20. f5 would have
been stronger.

20. ... exf6 21. Qh4 a5?! 22. b3?! b4?! 23.
a4 Bc6 24. Rh2 Qe8?

All the pressure works, and my opponent's position cracks. Do you see how?

25. Bxf6 Qe6



Now come **MY BEST MOVE...** at the board, anyway!

26. Qh8+!! Bxh8 27. Rxh8, mate. ♠

You can read archival copies of
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