

THE CANDIDATES ■ JEDDAH YOUNG MASTERS ■ MORE NIMZO

CHESSLIFE

JULY 2024 ■ USChess.org





US CHESS
FEDERATION SALES

The United States' Largest Chess Specialty Retailer

888.51.CHESS (512.4377)



www.USCFSales.com

CHESS SUBSCRIPTIONS

NEW IN CHESS MAGAZINE

One Year Subscription | 8 Issues



New in Chess is the magazine of choice for serious Chess players. If it is happening in Chess, you'll read about it in New in Chess Magazine. It features On the spot tournament reports, in-depth interviews with top players, comprehensive analysis!

NICYRSUB

Subscription **\$124.99**

If Purchased Individually \$143.92

AMERICAN CHESS MAGAZINE

One Year Subscription | 6 Issues



The American Chess Magazine brings you 100 colorful pages, packed with amazing chess material, ranging from world class play to local State news and games. Instructive and entertaining games from recent events are presented with outstanding annotations, while special attention is given to overviews of latest trends in the openings, and explanations of practical endgame techniques. Here's your chance to subscribe and save 20% off MSRP and receive FREE SHIPPING!

BOSUBACM6

Subscription **\$129.95**

If Purchased Individually \$149.95

CHESS INFORMANT

One Year Subscription | 4 Issues



Subscribe to Chess Informant – the publication the Pros Use and Create! Subscriptions come with tons of benefits: SAVE 20% off the cover price! Pay once as soon as a new issue comes out, it is sent directly to you. Don't worry about ordering every issue! subscribe once and let us take care of it for you!

BOSUBINF

Subscription **\$129.95**

If Purchased Individually \$159.95

**Free Ground Shipping On
All Books, Software and
DVDs at US Chess Sales**

**\$25.00 Minimum - Excludes
Clearance, Shopworn and
Items Otherwise Marked**

15 ANALYSIS STUDYING A TABIYA

Putting It All Together

Key games and concrete analysis are essential to learning openings. Part three of a three-part series.

BY IM ROBERT SHLYAKHTENKO

22 EVENTS JEDDAH YOUNG MASTERS

Achieving the Aim

The journey to my final GM norm

BY GM ANDY WOODWARD

32 COVER STORY

THE CANDIDATES

Gukesh and Tan win in Toronto to advance to the World Championship.

BY GM EUGENE PERELSHTEYN

44 FIRST PERSON CANDIDATES

Chess is Hard

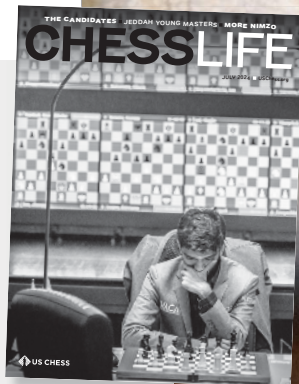
Our intrepid reporter spent two weeks in the press room at the Toronto Candidates. Here's what he saw and learned.

BY ABHINAV SURESH

ON THE COVER

The 2024 Candidates produced the youngest challenger in history: GM Dommaraju Gukesh. He was not the favorite coming in, but his steady play and mental balance carried him to victory. Our cover gives a sense of the intensity of the event along with Gukesh's inner strength.

PHOTO BY MICHAL WALUSZA / FIDE



The Internet Chess Club and Continental Chess Association presents:



- ♔ Over **\$250,000** in prize money paid out
- ♔ Class prizes so you can win too!
- ♔ Longer controls for an OTB experience
- ♔ Weekly US Chess rated events
- ♔ US Chess approved fair play oversight



More information:

chessaction.com



*Continental
Chess
Association*

COLUMNS

10 CHESS TO ENJOY
ENTERTAINMENT
Impossible Dreams
BY GM ANDY SOLTIS

12 ENDGAME SCHOOL
INSTRUCTION
Unbreakable
BY GM JOEL BENJAMIN

47 PUZZLES
MAKE YOUR MOVE!
BY FM CARSTEN HANSEN

48 SOLITAIRE CHESS
INSTRUCTION
Caro-Kanning à la Bronstein
BY BRUCE PANDOLFINI

50 GETTING TO WORK
INSTRUCTION
Good and Bad Bishops
BY WGM TATEV ABRAHAMYAN

52 BOOKS AND BEYOND
SHOULD I BUY IT?
Subtle Strategies
BY IM JOHN WATSON



DEPARTMENTS

5 COUNTERPLAY
READERS RESPOND

6 FIRST MOVES
CHESS NEWS FROM
AROUND THE U.S.

8 US CHESS AFFAIRS
NEWS FOR OUR MEMBERS

54 TOURNAMENT LIFE

62 CLASSIFIEDS

63 SOLUTIONS

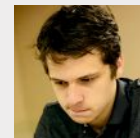
64 MY BEST MOVE
PERSONALITIES
TIFFANY HARRIS

CONTRIBUTORS



GM EUGENE PERELSHTEYN
(Cover Story) was born in Ukraine, where he learned to play chess. He moved to the United States in 1994, where he began to work with GM Roman Dzindzi-

chashvili. The IM and GM titles followed. In 2000 he won the U.S. Junior Championship, earning him the Samford Fellowship the next year. Today he mainly works as a chess trainer and coach, and he is well known for his work in the openings. His most recent book is *Evaluate Like a Grandmaster*, co-written with FM Nate Solon, and a Chessable course called *Every Gambit Refuted* just dropped!



IM ROBERT SHLYAKHTENKO
(Learning the Nimzo) has just completed his first year of undergraduate

work in mathematics at Brown University. He is currently the 19th ranked (with IM Gus Huston) American junior as of the May 2024 US Chess rating list. In 2023 he won a Chess Journalists of America honorable mention for "Best Story of the Year."



GM ANDY WOODWARD
(Jeddah Young Masters) became the second youngest American grandmaster

in history when he earned his final norm at the 2024 Jeddah Young Masters at the age of 13 years, eight months. Rated seventh on the May 2024 US Chess rating list among American Juniors, he is a frequent contributor to *Chess Life*.



ABHINAV SURESH
(Candidates: On the Scene) is a Growth Equity Associate at InterAlpen Partners in Omaha, Nebraska.

Previously he worked as an investment analyst in New York, after earning a BA in Financial Economics from Columbia University in 2020. He is the current co-chair of the US Chess Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee, and he serves as a delegate from Nebraska.



U.S. OPEN WORKSHOPS & COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Visit <https://new.uschess.org/delegates> and click on “Workshop Schedule” under the Important Documents section, or scan the QR code at right to stay up-to-date on our workshops and committee meetings schedule.







The world's largest chess community
Play with millions from around the world!



Improve with Lessons, Videos & Tactics
FREE Unlimited Play on Web & Mobile!



Titled Players get Free Diamond Membership &
\$2500 Titled Tuesday Tournaments





EDITORIAL

CHESS LIFE/CLK EDITOR **John Hartmann** (john.hartmann@uschess.org)
ART DIRECTOR **Natasha Roberts**
MANAGING EDITOR **Melinda Matthews**
GRAPHICS ASSISTANT **Nicole Esaltare**
TECHNICAL EDITOR **IM Ron Burnett**
SENIOR DIRECTOR OF STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION **Dan Lucas**

EXECUTIVE BOARD

PRESIDENT **Randy Bauer** (president@uschess.org)
VICE PRESIDENT **Kevin Pryor** (vp@uschess.org)
VICE PRESIDENT OF FINANCE **Chuck Unruh** (chunruh@aol.com)
SECRETARY **Mike Hoffpauir** (secretary@uschess.org)
MEMBER AT LARGE **Leila D'Aquin** (chessnola@gmail.com)
MEMBER AT LARGE **John Fernandez** (john.fernandez@gmail.com)
MEMBER AT LARGE **David Hater** (dhater1@aol.com)
MEMBER AT LARGE **Lakshmana "Vish" Viswanath** (vish@viswanath.us)
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR **Ranae Bartlett** (ranae.bartlett@uschess.org)

Contact membership@uschess.org or call 1-800-903-8723 for assistance and see uschess.org for the full staff listing.

CHESS LIFE IS THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE US CHESS FEDERATION

U.S. CHESS TRUST



**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."



The Trust is a separate 501(c)(3) organization operating independently of US Chess.

US CHESS TRUST
www.uschesstrust.org

COUNTERPLAY



MIGHTY MAURICE

What a great issue! Your lead article (April 2024) was particularly appropriate. Now that the computer has damaged our game, the real chess is being played in the clubs and parks.

I think *Chess Life* is the best that it's ever been, and I go all the way back to Col. Edmondson. Thanks.

Scott Knoke
Via email

TURN THAT FROWN...

I find it very aggravating to look at chess positions, such as offered in the "Chess to Enjoy" articles, where beneath a board position is "Black to Move," but the depiction of the board position is from the white side of the board. Consequently, one must try to judge Black's position and the best move but from the opposite side of the board. This is not how one plays chess.

In the May 2024 issue, for example, the "Chess to Enjoy" article shows six positions, four of which are "Black to move." Naturally, all four are shown from the white perspective.

Turning the magazine page upside down won't work, because then the images of the chess pieces

are also upside down.

Please consider requiring all chess board depictions be shown from the side that the reader is being asked to evaluate the position. On the first rank, the small letter "a" and "h" could be added to the appropriate square, and on the eighth rank the numeral "8" could be added to both the "a" and the "h" column, making it easier for the reader to scan the board.

Erick Porter
Via email

John Hartmann responds:

We have discussed this, but we will adhere to chess tradition and keep White at the bottom of the diagram.

Think of those irksome positions as exercises in understanding the opponent's threats. (That's what I do, for what it's worth.)

BRICKS

In March of 2022 I questioned whether the "engraved bricks" from the Crossville location would be transplanted to the new home of US Chess in St. Louis. Paraphrasing the published reply: "Transplanting wasn't feasible. An appropriate solution is contemplated, but the possibilities of the new location haven't been sorted out."

It's now 2024. I am left to wonder if I missed the response or if the resolution has been abandoned along with the bricks.

Bill Evans
Via email

Dan Lucas responds:

We hired a photographer to memorialize each individual brick digitally. If you happen to know of anyone else looking for their brick image, they can write to me at dlucas@uschess.org.

Thank you for your support of US Chess.

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

From Three Boards to Baltimore

Lenoir City Chess receives travel grant to attend Nationals.

BY **SARENA BEMIS**

D

ESPITE ITS RECENT SUCCESS, Lenoir City Chess comes from humble beginnings.

Christina Mullinax, who now serves as president of the Tennessee Chess Association (TCA), was hired by Lenoir City High School in 2014 to teach mathematics. In her first year at Lenoir City, she took over the chess group and shepherded them to their first tournaments. She was assisted by her husband, Danny Mullinax, who became their primary club tournament director. He now serves as tournament coordinator for TCA.

To grow chess at Lenoir City, Christian began working with Tammy Burroughs, the middle school sponsor, and Katie Swope, the elementary school group's leader. This led to an increased number of events for students to attend, and it helped build a relationship with the high school and middle school groups.

From 2017 to 2019, Lenoir City Chess was able to accomplish many great things.

Lenoir City High School qualified for the

Tennessee high school team championship in 2017, placing ninth in their first state-level tournament. This was an amazing accomplishment for them, and it provided the spark the program needed to accelerate its development.

In 2018, two teams (K-12 and K-9) qualified for the state championships. Both saw success: the K-9 team placed sixth, while the K-12 team finished in ninth place. The K-9 team also became the regional champion. This feat was impressive on its own, but it takes on a new tenor when you realize that Mason Pafunda played on *both teams*. Mason played each game of the four rounds in both events at the same time, and he played multiple rounds of tie-breaks too. This earned him the Lenoir City record for playing the most games at a four-round tournament!

In 2019, both the K-9 and K-12 teams qualified for state again, and the Lenoir City Intermediate Middle School team also qualified in the K-9 section for the first time. Both high school teams placed in the state tournament with the K-9 team again taking sixth, while the K-12 team climbed the ranks to finish fifth.

Things were looking up for Lenoir City chess.

And then came 2020.

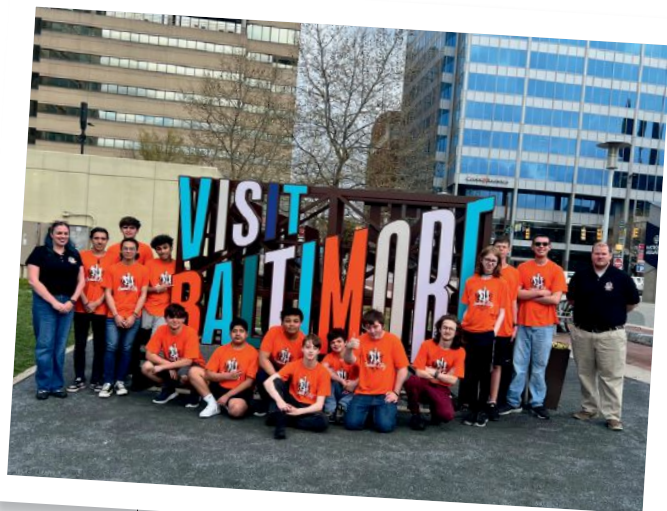
With the challenges presented by the COVID-19 pandemic, students were not able to be together, and in-person tournaments

were out of the question. But a grant from *ChessKid.com* was a life preserver — free gold memberships gave the Intermediate School students the chance to use the tools on ChessKid to sharpen their skills against bots and foes. The accounts created in those early days of COVID are still being used by some of the players to this day.

All of us remember how different the chess world looked during 2020 and 2021. The same restrictions that kept people safe also prevented over-the-board tournaments from happening, at least in the forms we knew them. The students had to adapt, and so did their coaches!

Over the past three years, many students competed in individual tournaments, both scholastic and open, as the number of team events were limited. But team competition has always been part of Lenoir City's DNA, and it was with great happiness that the teams returned to Tennessee Tech this spring for the annual Harry D. Sabine state team tournament for the first time in four years.

This year the high school, junior high, and middle school teams all qualified to





the very real costs associated with travel and participation. These grants, made possible by a number of generous donors, aim to allow recipients to experience the thrill of growing their knowledge of the game along with their playing abilities, and to do so in new places and against new opponents. For these students, such an opportunity was invaluable.

play, and the students enjoyed a wonderful competitive environment. Adding to the meaningfulness of the experience was the presence of the many Lenoir City alumni who assisted in running the tournament.

With so much growth in such a short time, the one thing that remained for Lenoir City Chess was a trip to Nationals. And so leadership applied for a US Chess travel grant, with the hopes of participating in the 2024 National High School (K-12) Championships in Baltimore.

Lenoir City Chess was awarded one of the Title I School grants, helping to alleviate

Lenoir City Chess did themselves proud at Nationals. Across three days of competition, they played seven rounds of chess, with games lasting up to three and a half hours. The U800 team collectively earned a total of 17½ points, which landed them in seventh place out of the 73 competing teams. And Richie Thomas scored a strong 5½/7, making him the 25th placed finisher among the 403 U800 competitors.

A few students shared their experiences from the trip to Baltimore:

One seventh-grader said that “[t]he most enjoyment I got was from just getting to

Facing page: teammate fist bumps in April 2021, and the team in Baltimore. This page: the next generation of Lenoir City champions, and three Lenoir City players (Cho Nakagawa, Alexander Bonnett, and Exzavier Shelton) at the board in Baltimore.

play other people I have not played against before.” He shared that this trip was very exciting for him, and he was very happy to travel with the high school.

A high school student told us that “[he] enjoyed playing in the top of my sections the most, and [he] learned new ways to play against the opponent’s threats.” He also remarked that this has been his favorite experience with the club, and that he is looking forward to his final year with Lenoir City Chess, hoping for it to be his best one yet.

Being able to attend Nationals was a dream come true for Lenoir City Chess. This has been an amazing competitive year for them, and being able to attend Nationals in Baltimore made it that much better. Lenoir City Chess hopes to return to Nationals in the future years to come, and wishes to express its gratitude for the support from US Chess and from their community. ♠



THE 2024 SAMFORD AWARD

Eight winners announced in award's 38th year.

BY **IM JOHN DONALDSON**

THE FRANK P. SAMFORD, JR. CHESS Fellowship, marking its thirty-eighth annual award, has selected Grandmasters Abhimanyu Mishra of Englishtown, New Jersey, Andy Woodward of McKinney, Texas, Christopher Yoo of Dublin, California, Andrew Hong of Saratoga, California, Bryce Tiglon of Woodinville, Washington; International Masters Carissa Yip of Andover, Massachusetts, Alice Lee of North Oaks, Minnesota, and Gulruhbegim Tohirjonova of St. Louis, as its 2024 Fellows. The Samford is the most important chess fellowship in the United States having awarded over two and a half million dollars in nearly four decades.

Since its 1987 inception, the Fellowship has proven very useful. The total value of the Fellowships has been increased several times over the years and is now \$70,000 annually. Mishra will receive \$20,000, Woodward \$10,000, Yoo, Hong, Tiglon, Lee, and Yip each \$7,000 apiece and Tokhirjonova \$5,000. Fellows are eligible to receive up to a maximum of \$84,000 in total support. The winners' terms begin June 1, 2024.

The winners were chosen by the Samford Fellowship Committee, consisting of Paul Samford (son of Frank P. Samford III and grandson of Samford Fellowship founder Frank P. Samford, Jr.), former U.S. Chess Champion and GM Yury Shulman, and International Master John Donaldson. The winners' potential was determined based on their chess talent, work ethic, dedication and accomplishments. The Fellowship is

administered by the U.S. Chess Trust with particularly valuable services provided by Al Lawrence.

The Samford Chess Fellowship was created by the late Frank P. Samford, Jr. of Birmingham Alabama. Mr. Samford was a distinguished attorney and CEO of Liberty National Life Insurance Company (now Torchmark). He was active in civic, business, political, educational and cultural affairs. Mr. Samford was also an enthusiastic competitor in chess tournaments. After providing financial support for several chess projects, he decided to do something significant for American chess. The result was the Samford Fellowship.

Since its inception the Fellowship has proven very successful. Many Samford Fellows have become strong grandmasters, members of the United States Olympiad team and U.S. Champions. Four of the five members (Hikaru Nakamura, Wesley So, Sam Shankland and Ray Robson) of the 2016 and 2018 U.S. Olympiad teams which finished respectively first and tied for first, are former Samford Fellows.

Generous contributions from the late Mrs. Virginia Samford and the Torchmark Corporation continue to support the Fellowship. The Samford Fellowship is a fitting memorial to an extraordinary man. The dedication, creativity and achievement that marked Mr. Frank P. Samford, Jr.'s life are examples for all chess players to admire and emulate. ♠

RECENT SAMFORD WINNERS

2021	Praveen Balakrishnan
2021	Akshat Chandra
2021	Nicholas Checa
2021	Abhimanyu Mishra
2021	Hans Niemann
2021	Carissa Yip
2021	Christopher Yoo
2022	Alice Lee
2022	Abhimanyu Mishra
2022	Hans Niemann
2022	Carissa Yip
2022	Christopher Yoo
2023	Alice Lee
2023	Jason Liang
2023	Abhimanyu Mishra
2023	Hans Niemann
2023	Carissa Yip
2023	Christopher Yoo
2023	Jennifer Yu
2024	Andrew Hong
2024	Alice Lee
2024	Abhimanyu Mishra
2024	Bryce Tiglon
2024	Gulruhbegim Tokhirjonova
2024	Andy Woodward
2024	Carissa Yip
2024	Christopher Yoo



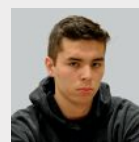
Hong



Lee



Mishra



Tiglon



Tokhirjonova



Woodward



Yip



Yoo

CHESS LIFE AND CHESS LIFE KIDS

JOIN NOW FOR ACCESS TO:

Columns by
Abrahamyan,
Benjamin,
Hansen,
Pandolfini,
Soltis, Watson

Features by
Foisor, Mishra,
Moradiabadi,
Shlyakhtenko,
Woodward,
Yip, Yu

Instructional
articles by
Coakley, King,
Ntirlis, Thybo
Translations
and **puzzles**



CHESS JOURNALISTS OF AMERICA

**BEST STORY
BEST COLUMN**

2023

Included with your



US CHESS membership!

All US Chess members have **free access** to digital editions of US Chess' award-winning magazines, **Chess Life** and **Chess Life Kids**.

Printed copies of **Chess Life** or **Chess Life Kids** can be added on to any membership for a small fee, currently (as of 01.01.23) \$12/year (12 issues) for *Chess Life* and \$6/year (6 issues) for *Chess Life Kids*. **Join today at uschess.org.**

Impossible Dreams

Pickleball chess? Maybe not.

BY GM ANDY SOLTIS

D

DO YOU REMEMBER BOBBY Fischer's exhibition match with Britney Spears?

No? Nobody does. It was one of Fischer's brainstorms during his final years.

"A match between me and Britney Spears would be a fine business idea," he told his friend GM Helgi Olafsson. "A sort of Beauty and the Beast contest!"

It never happened. But that is par for the course. Whether it is "Let's put chess in the Olympic Games!" — or "What if we combined chess and pickleball?" — chess players seem to have more impossible dreams than anyone else.

One idea had only a slightly better shot at reality than Britney versus Bobby was "International Chess City." This was to be a multi-billion-dollar hodge-podge of 32 skyscrapers shaped like chess pieces in the Arabian desert. Standing up to 64 stories tall, they would spread over 64,000 square meters in Dubai.

This plan was announced in 2004 by FIDE president Kirsan Ilyumzhinov, who said the city would draw 60 million visitors annually, several times more than any other tourist attraction in the world. But there is no sign that it will ever be built.

In contrast, "Advanced chess" got off the drawing board to become a briefly-lived curiosity. Instead of a human playing against a computer, the two would form a team. A grandmaster's intuition was supposed to combine with an engine's calculation powers to become a kind of 3000-rated cyborg.

The idea was taken so seriously that world champion Garry Kasparov called it the "Chess of the Future" and played an "Advanced" match against GM Veselin Topalov in 1998. But the games "were far from

perfect," Kasparov conceded after the match ended in a 3-3 tie. Similar matches continued for a while but the quality of moves did not improve.

FRENCH DEFENSE, BURN VARIATION (C11)

GM Veselin Topalov

GM Alexey Shirov

Advanced chess match, Leon

06.08.2001

1. e4 e6 2. d4 d5 3. Nc3 Nf6 4. Bg5 dxe4 5. Nxe4 Nbd7 6. Nf3 Be7 7. Nxf6+ Bxf6 8. h4 c5 9. Qd2 cxd4 10. Nxd4 O-O 11. O-O-O h6 12. Nf3

This was a new move in master chess, based on 12. ... hxg5? 13. hxg5 Be7? 14. Qf4, with a decisive mating threat of Qf4-h4-h8.

12. ... Qb6! 13. c3 e5 14. Be3 Qa5



15. g4

A rationale for "Advanced chess" is a human may want to play 15. Kb1. "No," says the computer, "because 15. ... Nb6! followed by 16. ... Bf5+ or 16. ... Be6 would be strong."

But a computer would have added, "Hey, what about 15. Ng5 with the idea of 16. Qc2?"

Did the human half of White mistrust his collaborator? And did Black place too much trust in his machine when he made their next moves?

15. ... e4? 16. g5! Be7 17. gxh6 Qxa2??

"Advanced" advocates excused blunders like this by saying humans get so caught up in the game that they stopped looking at the computers.

18. Qd4! Nf6 19. hxg7

It doesn't take a computer to point out how 19. ... Rd8 would allow a winning attack after 20. Qxd8+! Bxd8 21. Rxd8+ Kxg7 22. Rg1+.

Black lingered for while after 19. ... Re8 20. Bc4 Qa1+ 21. Kc2 Qa4+ 22. Bb3 Qxd4 23. Nxd4 Kxg7 24. Rdg1+ Kh7 25. Bxf7 before resigning on move 35.

"Advanced chess" soon disappeared from anyone's news feed. Today's best computers play at the 3800 level. They don't need our help any more.

But some strange ideas aren't so crazy. Here's a quiz: Which of the following never happened?

- **Dive chess:** Players compete by taking turns diving into a pool to make moves with magnetic pieces on an underwater board. After a player moves, he resurfaces and his opponent dives to make a reply.
- **Predictamove:** Watching an on-line tournament becomes a game show for spectators. They guess the next moves played by grandmasters and win prizes if they guess correctly.
- **Neo-Elo:** An improved algorithm would replace Elo ratings by considering

QUIZ FOR JULY

▶ **A WORLD-FAMOUS ARTIST,** Marcel Duchamp, played in it. A world-class player, Alexander Alekhine, directed it. And only amateurs, like schoolteacher Max Euwe, were allowed to enter it. It was the first world team tournament, held 100 years ago this month in Paris, at the same time as the nearby Olympic Games. This month's quiz features six puzzlers from Paris 1924, including Duchamp's misfired brilliancy. Try to find the fastest winning line of play. This will usually be a forced win of a decisive amount of material, such as a rook or minor pieces. Solutions on Page 63.



PROBLEM 1

John James O'Hanlon
Georges Renaud



BLACK TO MOVE

PROBLEM 2

Stanislaw Kohn
Roberto Grau



BLACK TO MOVE

PROBLEM 3

Alexander Rueb
Marcel Duchamp



BLACK TO MOVE

PROBLEM 4

Fricis Apsenieks
Frederic Lazard



WHITE TO MOVE

PROBLEM 5

Jan Schulz Sr.
Valentine Fernandez Coria



WHITE TO MOVE

PROBLEM 6

Leon Loewenton
Jan Kleczynski



BLACK TO MOVE

factors such as playing style and the difference in a player's results with White and Black.

- **Bright chess:** In an over-the-board game, each of White's pieces is illuminated when it is his turn. After he moves, they turn dark, and Black's pieces light up. This provides drama that is literally electric to speed games.
- **Grandmaster Progressive Chess:** White makes one move, Black makes two moves in a row, then White makes three and so. Only the final move in a series can be a check.
- **Warning clock:** A voice synthesizer is added to your clock. When in time pressure, it tells you how many minutes or seconds you have left before you forfeit.

Which of these are impossible dreams? You'd be surprised:

International Dive Chess tournaments have been held since at least 2013, when the underwater event was part of the "Mind Sports Olympiad." Strong lungs help.

Predictamove was launched with much

fanfare during the 1993 world championship match. The top prize was an all-expenses-paid trip to London to play the match winner. But Predictamove died after three games when fewer than 100 predictors signed up.

The "Intel World Chess Ratings" was supposed to bring "an unprecedented level of accuracy to player evaluation." It lasted as long as the Intel corporation's interest in chess in the 1990s.

Progressive Chess became a popular variant, played in on-line tournaments and analyzed by computer programs. California master Alan Benson said he played several Progressive games with fascinated grandmasters including one against GM Walter Browne in 1975.

It began with 1. e4 and Black's reply 2. ... Nc6, ... Ne5. Browne played 3. Nf3, Nxe5 and Nd3. Benson countered with 4. ... d5, ... dxe4, ... Qxd3 and ... Qxf1+. Sacrifices are common in Progressive, as the multiple moves accelerate.

It quickly became an endgame when White went 5. Rxf1, f3, fxe4, Qf3 and Qxf7+. Black answered 6. ... Kd7, ... a5, ... Ra6, ... Rf6, ... Rxf7 and ... Rxf1+. After move 12

Browne had only his king and two pawns. He resigned when Black promoted a pawn. Both players made moves blindfolded.

While Progressive Chess is still a thing, the "Lighted chess game," with illuminated pieces, never seemed to go beyond the patent that inventor William Lloyd got for it in 1976. A patent with a better pedigree was the talking chess clock and its audio "countdown timer."

The patent application said a player in time pressure could concentrate "fully on the game rather than being forced to continuously turn his head to look at the clock to see how much time he has left."

Who came up with this idea? None other than Britney Spears' would-be opponent.

It was part of the working prototype of a version of Bobby Fischer's clock. But it was a bulky thing with more than 20 switches. It never made it to the marketplace. ♠

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

Unbreakable

Fortresses do exist... and they come in many forms.

BY GM JOEL BENJAMIN

S

SETTING UP AN IMPREG-nable defensive formation is an often-surprising method of saving a difficult position.

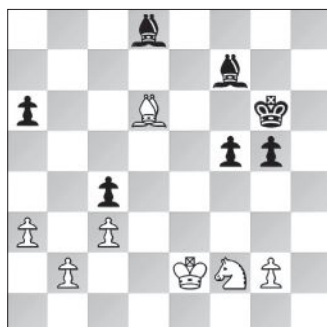
Fortresses can arise with many different combinations of pieces on the board. This month we will explore just how varied the world of endgame fortresses can be.

REASON TO BELIEVE

GM Sergey Karjakin (2769)

GM Magnus Carlsen (2857)

World Championship (4), New York,
11.15.2016



WHITE TO MOVE

Magnus seems to have everything here — the bishop pair, a mobile pawn majority, and a crippled opposing majority that offers targets to attack. But before Karjakin earned notoriety as the number one Putin fan in the chess world he was known as the “Minister of Defense.”

43. g4!

White cannot stem the tide by normal means, e.g., 43. g3 Kf6 44. Bb8 (44. Bc5 Bc7) 44. ... Bh5+ 45. Ke1 Bb6 46. Bd6 Bf3 47. Bb8 Be3 and the bishops are utterly raking.

For the moment, Carlsen ignores the bait.

43. ... Bb6 44. Be5 a5 45. Nd1



45. ... f4?

Magnus said he didn't believe in fortresses, but here he encounters one he can't crack.

He did avoid a different fortress after 45. ... fxg4? 46. Ne3 Be6 47. Bg3. The bishop stops both pawns in their track while the knight guards all possible invasion squares. Black cannot trade the knight because bishops of opposite colors will maintain the fortress. 47. ... Kf7 48. Nc2! Ke7 49. Nd4 (strengthening the blockade) 49. ... Kd7 50. Kd2 Bc5 51. Ke3 Bd6 (there is no other way to make progress) 52. Bxd6 Kxd6 53. Ne2 and the blockade remains airtight.

But Black could stay on the path to victory by keeping his options open with 45. ... Be6! White has no valid waiting options. (a) 46. Ne3 f4 loses on the spot, while (b) 46. Bd4 Bc7 doesn't help, as Black plans ... f5xg4-g3. White resists a little better with (c) 46. Nf2 fxg4 47. Nd1, but the key move is 47. ... g3! opening up the crucial h5-d1 diagonal. After 48. Ne3 (48. Bxg3? Bg4+ 49. Ke1 Bxd1 50. Kxd1 a4 wins routinely) 48. ... g2! 49. Nxc2 Kf5 50. Bd4 (just as bad is 50. Bd6 Ke4) 50. ... Bxd4 51. cxd4 Ke4 Black wins easily.

So the best try is 46. gxf5+ Kxf5 47. Bd6 a4 48. Bg3 Bf7 49. Ne3+ (or 49. Nf2 Bh5+ 50. Kd2 Bf3 with a lethal squeeze) 49. ... Ke4 50. Nc2 Bh5+ 51. Ke1 Bc5 52. Bc7 Bf3 53. Bh2 g4 54. Bg3 Be7 55. Nb4 Bg5 and Black combines threats of bringing the bishop to c1 with trading bishops and advancing the g-pawn.

46. Bd4 Bc7 47. Nf2 Be6 48. Kf3 Bd5+

49. Ke2

Black has no way forward and Carlsen's protracted maneuvers come to nothing.

49. ... Bg2 50. Kd2 Kf7 51. Kc2 Bd5 52.

Kd2 Bd8 53. Kc2 Ke6 54. Kd2 Kd7 55. Kc2

Kc6 56. Kd2 Kb5 57. Kc1 Ka4 58. Kc2 Bf7

59. Kc1 Bg6 60. Kd2 Kb3 61. Kc1 Bd3 62.

Nh3 Ka2 63. Bc5 Be2 64. Nf2 Bf3 65. Kc2

Bc6 66. Bd4 Bd7 67. Bc5 Bc7 68. Bd4 Be6

69. Bc5 f3 70. Be3 Bd7 71. Kc1 Bc8 72. Kc2

Bd7 73. Kc1 Bf4 74. Bxf4 gxf4 75. Kc2 Be6

76. Kc1 Bc8 77. Kc2 Be6 78. Kc1 Kb3 79.

Kb1 Ka4 80. Kc2 Kb5 81. Kd2 Kc6 82. Ke1

Kd5 83. Kf1 Ke5 84. Kg1 Kf6 85. Ne4+ Kg6

86. Kf2 Bxg4 87. Nd2 Be6 88. Kxf3 Kf5 89.

a4 Bd5+ 90. Kf2 Kg4 91. Nf1 Kg5 92. Nd2

Kf5 93. Ke2

Karjakin does not fall for 93. b3?! cxb3 94. c4

Bf7 95. Nxb3 Bxc4 96. Nxa5?? Bd5.

93. ... Kg4 94. Kf2, draw.

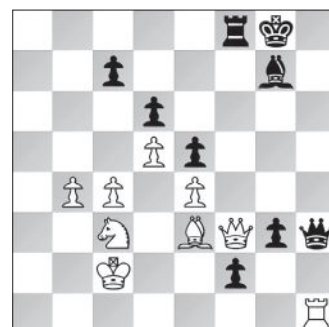
Carlsen narrowly escaped falling victim to another fortress recently. A queen can only do so much on her own.

QUEEN DRAMA

GM Daniel Fridman (2590)

GM Magnus Carlsen (2830)

GRENKE Chess Classic (2), Karlsruhe,
03.26.2024



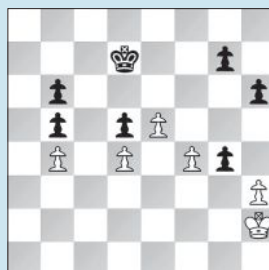
WHITE TO MOVE

ENDGAME HOMEWORK

IT WOULDN'T BE ENDGAME School without a bit of homework. Test your mettle on these "all the way" liquidations.

Try your hand at these two problems, which are based on analysis from the game in this month's column. Answers appear on page 63.

PROBLEM 1 Should White recapture on g4, or...?



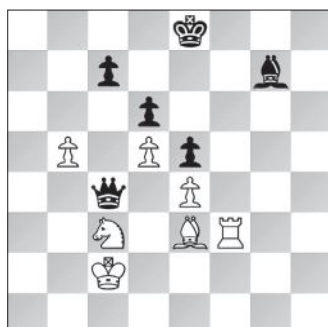
WHITE TO MOVE

PROBLEM 2 What is White's clearest path to a draw?



WHITE TO MOVE

Fridman opted for **36. Rxh3? Rxf3 37. Bxf2 Rxf2+ 38. Kb3 g2** (38. ... Rf3 would have been more accurate) and Black won a seesaw game. But he could have saved a half-point with **36. Qxf8+! Kxf8 37. Rxh3 f1=Q 38. Rxc4 Qxc4 39. Rf3+ Ke8 40. b5**.



White has only a rook and knight for the queen, and his structure looks rather vulnerable. The problem is that Black's bishop doesn't offer much help in breaking down the defense.

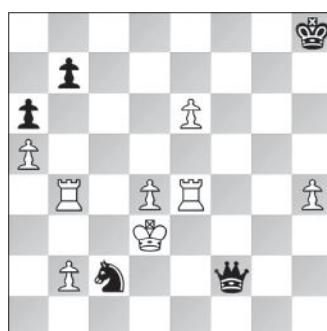
A chance for a fortress can lie hidden among great complications, and Hans Niemann found out the hard way.

ONE PAWN IS ENOUGH

GM Hans Niemann (2659)
GM Mateusz Bartel (2651)
London Chess Classic (7), 12.08.2023

(see diagram top of next column)

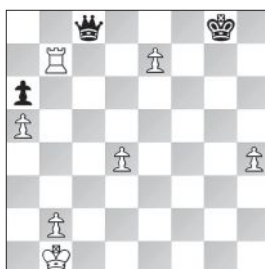
In one of the most thrilling games of 2023, Black's desperation attack bore fruit when White missed an opportunity to win. The queen is boss, but White has some promising passed pawns to work with. Niemann went for the very plausible continuation **48. d5 Nxb4+ 49. Rxb4 Qc5 50. Rd4 Qd6**, and with the pawns blockaded, Bartel was able to



WHITE TO MOVE

gradually work his king in and pick up White pawns one by one.

White has a surprising forced draw with **48. Rxb7! Qf3+ 49. Kd2 Qxe4 50. e7 Qg2+ 51. Kc1 Qg8 52. Kxc2!** (The direct attempt with 52. Rd7 is tempting, but precise checking picks up the rook: 52. ... Qg1+ 53. Kxc2 Qg2+! 54. Kb1 Qe4+ 55. Ka1 Qe1+ 56. Ka2 Qe6+ etc.) **52. ... Qc8+ 53. Kd3 Kg8.**



POSITION AFTER 53. ... Kg8

White's mess of pawns seem to offer hope for counterplay, but Black's king and queen can manage them easily enough. In actuality, White's pawns just distract him from the essential aspects of the position — the only pawn that matters is the b2-pawn.

After **54. Rb3!** White sets up a fortress well-known to endgame theory. He can shuttle the rook between a3 and c3 as nec-

essary; Black can chomp all the other pawns without any chance of breaking down the defense. (See our March issue for another take on this game. ~ed.)

In the following classic Smyslov finds a magical way to keep the opposing king at bay.

FORCE FIELD

Lev Aronin
Vassily Smyslov
USSR Championship, Moscow 1951

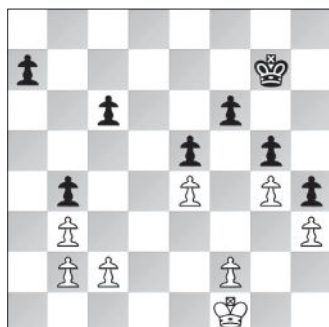


WHITE TO MOVE

White is in total command, with a dominant knight against a putrid bishop. The simple **42. Ke2** suggests itself, keeping out the Black rook while preparing to munch the c6-pawn. Black can continue to grovel, but White will easily overcome any resistance.

Aronin gets sidetracked by an apparently winning pawn ending. The flaw was indeed very hard to find, but giving up so many advantages to liquidate was a huge risk. Was he trying to impress his opponent, an acknowledged endgame wizard?

42. Rg8 Kh7 43. Rxc7+?? Rxc7 44. Nxc7 Kxc7 45. g4



Without this move Black will open the kingside and obtain sufficient counterplay to draw. But now it looks hopeless for Black, as White will win the race to the queenside and decide the game with reserve tempo moves: 45. ... Kf7 46. Ke2 Ke6 47. Kd3 Kd6 48. Kc4 a5 49. c3 bxc3 50. bxc3 Kd7 51. Kc5 Kc7 52. c4 Kb7 53. Kd6 Kb6 54. f3! Kb7 55. c5, etc.

45. ... hxg3! e.p.

On the surface this trade seems unlikely to help, as the potential of an outside passed pawn only seems to increase White's winning chances.

46. fxg3 g4!!

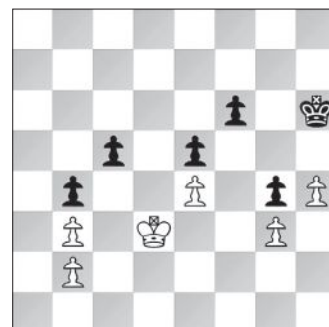
And now Smyslov presents his opponent an outside protected passed pawn! But this move creates an opportunity for Black to make a passed pawn, which he holds for the perfect moment.

47. h4 c5 48. Ke2 Kh7!

Remarkably, Black's king keeps its opposite number restrained by simply waiting.

49. Kd3 Kh6 50. c3 a5! 51. cxb4 axb4, draw.

The last trade of pawns made no difference, as the unbelievable truth sinks in.



The players shook hands here, as Black will build a deadly picket fence if the king ventures any further: 52. Kc4?? f5 53. exf5 (53. Kd3 f4 54. Ke2 fxg3 55. Kf1 Kh5 56. Kg1 Kxh4 57. Kg2 Kh5! 58. Kxg3 Kg5 and wins) 53. ... e4 and zugzwang will ensure a pawn promotion for Black as soon as White's pawn moves are exhausted. An incredible "invisible" fortress! ♠



THANK YOU TO OUR BENEFACTORS



Thank-you for being the sustaining force behind all our initiatives, and for making all of our programs possible.

US Chess Benefactor Members as of December, 2023:

Paul M. Albert Jr.	Jonathan Crumiller	David Lazarus	Ross Nickel	Aaron Straub
Mark Randall Bates	Jeffrey Davidson	Andrew Lerner	Bernard Novatt	Henry L. Terrie
Randy Bauer	Martin Dean	Warren Lerner	Edward M. Pabalan	Henry J. Thompson
Jim Bedenbaugh	Kenneth Duffy	Christopher Lewis	Scott R. Parker	Harmon D. Throneberry Sr.
Michael Belovesick	Tom Durbin	Jennie S. Liu	William E. Perry III	Thomas N. Thrush
Jim Blackwood	E. Tomlinson Fort	Edward Martin	Kevin Pryor	Harold Torrance
Robert J. Borel	Michael Fry	William McClain	David H. Raymond	Charles Unruh
Thomas E. Boyd	Gregory Gliner	John McCrary	Timothy P. Redman	John Walton
Joseph Boyle	Bill Goichberg	Kenton McNall	Danny Rosa	Bill Witmer
C. Martin Bradford	Bernard Goodman	Robert D. Messenger	Timothy M. Sawyier	Bernard Wojnowski
John J. Brendel	Calvin Halsey	Andrew Metrick	Michael Schulte	Edward Wycoff
William H Brock	Stephen David Hensley	Timur Milgrom	Edward Seid	Brian Yang
Kate Canessa	Robert E. Hux	David C. Miller	Daryl Skinner	
David E. Carter	In Memory of	Michael A. Miller	Phillip Smith	
Fabiano Caruana	David Kaplan	Daniel Mohamed Mohid	Christopher P. Snell	
Carl Cohen	David Kochman	Parker Montgomery	Adam Christopher Snow	
Bill N. Costaras	Vincent E. Kreutz, Jr.	Brian Mullis	Joe Strang	



US CHESS

For a full list of our Benefactors please visit <https://new.uschess.org/benefactor-members>

Putting It All Together

Key games and concrete analysis are essential to learning openings. Part three of a three-part series.

BY **IM ROBERT SHLYAKHTENKO**



OVER THE COURSE OF the past two issues, we have surveyed the history of the so-called “Botvinnik variation” of the Nimzo-Indian Defense. By studying this variation in context, i.e., through important games in which the theory was worked out, we have learned quite a bit about the key positional ideas and tactical motifs.

Here, in the final installment of this series, I will examine two recent games in this line and see how they relate to the main takeaways from the last two articles. If you have read the previous two articles, you may be surprised by how much you already understand!

In the first game, played in this year’s American Cup, IM Nazi Paikidze (playing Black) reached the move 14 tabiya, but didn’t essay either of the critical responses. In response, eight-time U.S. Women’s Champion GM Irina Krush seized the chance to execute a typical Exchange sacrifice motif — an idea familiar to her from a game she played against GM Ivan Sokolov 24 years ago — and soon achieved a dominating position, winning easily.

NIMZO-INDIAN DEFENSE, BOTVINNIK VARIATION (E49)

GM Irina Krush (2500)

IM Nazi Paikidze (2412)

American Cup (2), St. Louis, 03.14.2024

1. c4 e6 2. Nc3 d5 3. d4 Bb4 4. a3

Trying to get the Botvinnik structure via a Ragozin-like move order.

4. ... Bxc3+ 5. bxc3 Nf6

One way for Black to deviate from theory is 5. ... Ne7, with the idea 6. cxd5 exd5 7. e3 0-0 8. Bd3 Bf5!, perhaps followed by ... Nd7-b6.

6. e3 0-0

Black can vary with 6. ... c6. In the 2024 Candidates tournament, Caruana easily equalized as Black: 7. a4 0-0 8. Bd3 e5!? 9. dxe5 dxc4 10. Bxc4 Qxd1+ 11. Kxd1 Ng4 12. Ke1 (12. f4!? Nf2+ 13. Ke2 Nxb1 14. Ba3 Re8 15. Nf3 is more interesting) 12. ... Nxe5 (Abasov – Caruana, Candidates 2024) and Black was at least fine.

7. cxd5 exd5 8. Bd3 c5

Krush had played a similar Exchange sacrifice in a previous game: 8. ... Bg4 9. Ne2 Qc8?! 10. 0-0 c5 11. f3 Bf5 and now 12. e4! dxe4 13. fxe4 Bg6 (the point is 13. ... Nxe4? 14. Qc2 Re8 15. Rxf5! Qxf5 16. Ng3 and wins, or 13. ... Bxe4 14. Rxf6 Bxd3 15. Qxd3 gxf6 16. Bh6 Kh8 17. Qf3 Nd7 18. Bxf8 Qxf8 19. Qxb7 with a clearly better position) 14. Rxf6?! (thematic, but not necessary; 14. Nf4! was strongest, the point being 14. ... Bxe4 15. Nh5! Nxb5 16. Bxe4 g6 [16. ... Nf6? 17. Rxf6! gxf6 18. Qh5 is decisive] 17. Bh6 with a strong attack) 14. ... gxf6 (Krush – Sokolov, Hastings 2000) with unclear chances.

9. Ne2 b6 10. 0-0 Ba6 11. f3 Re8 12. Ng3 Bxd3 13. Qxd3 Nc6 14. Bb2

(see diagram top of next column)

Paikidze had reached this position once



before in 2013, but did not seem very familiar with the nuances. As we might suspect from last month’s article, her next move is a mistake.

14. ... Qd7?

Allowing e3-e4 without challenge.

15. e4!

Krush does not need to be asked twice.

15. ... dxe4 16. fxe4 Ne5

Relatively best is 16. ... Qg4, but it is met with the same Exchange sacrifice as in the game: 17. Rxf6! gxf6 18. h3 Qg6 19. Rf1, followed by Rf1-f4.

17. Qe2 Ng6

(see diagram next page)

18. Rxf6!

The clearest and most convincing. White permanently ruins Black’s kingside cover, gains an outpost for her knight, and deprives Black of any counterplay against White’s center.



POSITION AFTER 17. ... Ng6

18. ... gxf6 19. Nh5 Re6 20. d5!

Activating the b2-bishop.



Irina Krush



Nazi Paikidze

20. ... Rd6

Note that 20. ... Qxd5? does not work because of 21. Nxf6+!

21. c4 Ne5 22. h3!?

I like this patient move a lot. Black had no meaningful ideas besides ... Qd7-g4, so Krush takes away this possibility as well.

Admittedly, White is winning after 22. Rf1 as well, but only for concrete reasons: 22. ... Qg4 23. Nxf6+! Rxf6 24. Qxg4+ Nxf4 25. Bxf6 Re8 26. Bc3! Rxe4 27. d6! Kf8 28. d7 Ke7 29. Rxf7+. And 22. Qf2 was also strong.

22. ... Qe7 23. Rf1 Re8 24. Ng3! Qf8 25. Nf5 Kh8



26. Qh5!

There is no reason to regain the Exchange so soon — the knight on f5 is much stronger than the rook on d6.

26. ... b5

Desperation.

27. Nh6 Kg7 28. cxb5 c4 29. Ng4!

Exchanging the best defender. Now Black's position collapses.

29. ... Qe7

Of course 29. ... Nxg4 30. Qxg4+ Kh8 31. Rxf6 wins immediately.

30. Nxe5 c3

If 30. ... fxe5 31. Bxe5+! wins in all variations: 31. ... Qxe5 (or 31. ... f6 32. Bxd6 Qxd6 33. Qxe8) 32. Rxf7+ Kg8 33. Qxh7 mate.

31. Bxc3 Qc7 32. Nc6

White is now up material in addition to her positional domination; her victory is imminent.

32. ... Rxe4 33. Qg5+ Kf8 34. Bxf6, Black resigned.

In the second game, GM Christopher Yoo took up the Black side of the line against GM Gleb Dudin and showed decent preparation,

achieving equality. However, he soon chose the wrong strategic plan and got into difficulties. Later, Dudin gave Black some chances during the conversion, but won anyway with a direct attack in the endgame. The way Black went astray was very instructive.

NIMZO-INDIAN DEFENSE, BOTVINNIK VARIATION (E49)

GM Gleb Dudin (2596)

GM Christopher Yoo (2677)

Southwest Class Ch (5), 02.17.2024

1. d4 Nf6 2. c4 e6 3. Nc3 Bb4 4. e3 0-0 5. Bd3 d5 6. a3 Bxc3+ 7. bxc3 c5 8. cxd5 exd5 9. f3 b6 10. Ne2 Ba6 11. 0-0 Bxd3 12. Qxd3 Re8 13. Ng3 Nc6

It should be mentioned that the immediate 13. ... h5?! is bad because of the (implied) pawn sacrifice 14. e4!.

14. Bb2 h5 15. Rae1 h4

Avoiding the common mistake 15. ... g6?! 16. e4!.

16. Nf5 h3 17. g4!?

For 17. Re2 and other moves, see last month's article.

17. ... g6

In the June edition of *Chess Life* I gave 17. ... Ne7 18. Ng3 Rc8, assessing the position as equal. Yoo has a different plan in mind, wanting to use the knight for queenside operations.

18. Ng3 Rc8 19. Qd1 cxd4 20. cxd4 Na5 21. e4



A critical moment, as Black needs to decide how to react to the central break.

21. ... Qc7?!

This move doesn't capture the essence of the position. White doesn't mind trading queens, since in an endgame it will be much more difficult for Black to generate counterplay that prevents White from making use of his

kingside majority and/or surrounding the weak h3-pawn.

Correct was 21. ... Nc4! 22. Bc1 (22. Ba1? is bad in view of 22. ... Qd6! 23. e5 Qxa3, with the idea 24. exf6? Ne3 25. Qd2 Nxf1 26. Qh6 Qf8) 22. ... dxe4 23. fxe4 (or 23. Bg5 Nb2 24. Qd2 Nc4 with a repetition) 23. ... Nh7!.



POSITION AFTER 23. ... Nh7

It's difficult to evaluate this position from a distance, but Black is fine here. White's center is weak and any advance there (either e4-e5 or d4-d5) creates an outpost for Black's pieces. At the same, there is only one immediate target in Black's camp (the f7-pawn), which Black can defend from the seventh rank. White's most constructive idea is to attack on the dark-squares with 24. Rf2! (not the immediate 24. e5? Qd5 25. Rf2 Rcd8 when Black is much better) and now 24. ... Rc7 25. e5 b5 (25. ... Qd5 is strongly met by 26. Ne2!) 26. Ne4 a5 27. g5 Rd7 28. Qf3 with an extremely sharp position.

22. Rf2

The transition into an endgame was also tempting: 22. e5 Qc2 23. Qxc2 Rxc2 24. Re2 (or 24. Rf2!? Rc4 25. Rd1 Nh7 26. Rd3 as suggested by JJ Lang at *Chess Life Online*) 24. ... Rxe2 25. Nxe2 Nh7 26. Kf2 Rc8 27. Rc1 Rxc1 28. Bxc1 and Black must resign himself to the loss of the h3-pawn.

22. ... Nh7?

This allows White to fully neutralize Black's counterplay.

Necessary and consistent was 22. ... Nc4!, intending 23. e5 (or 23. Bc1 dxe4 24. fxe4 Nh7 with an unclear position.) 23. ... Nxb2! (exchanging the defender of the c-file) 24. Rxb2 Qc3! 25. Rb3 Qc2! 26. Qxc2 Rxc2 27. Re2 Rc1+ 28. Kf2 Nh7 and Black's activity compensates for his poor structure.

23. e5 Qc4

Black has to spend two extra tempos to offer the trade of the queens, resulting in a much worse version of the endgames examined above.

24. f4 Qb3 25. Qxb3 Nxb3



26. Nf1?

The moment right after you sense that you have a big advantage is always the most dangerous! White should have first played 26. Re3 Na5 and only then 27. Nf1.

26. ... Na5?

As in Grischuk – Maghsoodloo, both players missed or underestimated the move 26. ... Nf6!, which secures strong counterplay after the likely variation 27. Re3 (or 27. Ne3 Ne4 28. Rf3 Red8 29. Rxh3 [29. Nxd5? Nbd2] 29. ... Nbd2 with counterplay) 27. ... Nxg4 28. Rxb3 Nxf2 29. Kxf2 Rc2+ 30. Kg3 Rg2+ 31. Kxh3 Rg1 32. Ne3 Kg7 33. Ng2! Rb1! with an unclear position.

27. Re3

Now White is basically just a pawn up.

27. ... Nf8 28. Rxh3 Ne6



29. Ne3!

Dudin finds a tactical way to improve his position.

29. ... Red8 30. Nf5!

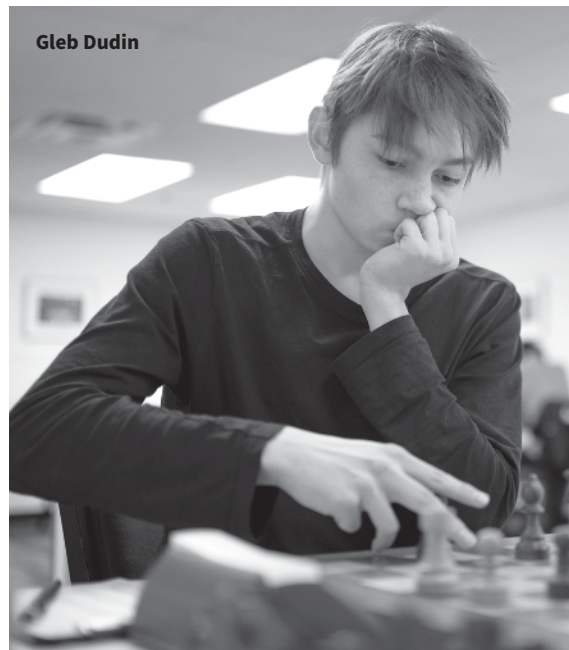
The point. The knight is untouchable. To wit: 30. ... gxf5? 31. gxf5 Ng7 32. f6 and mate is incoming.

30. ... Rc7 31. Nh6+?

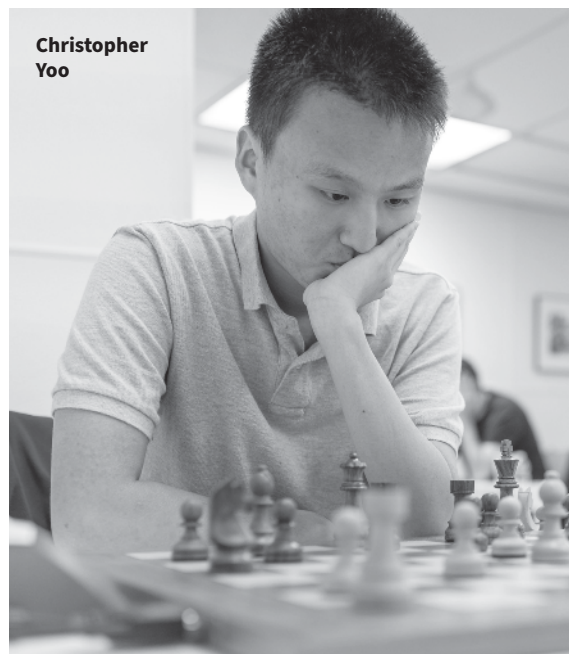
It's tempting to play for an attack, but this is not the best way to do it.

One possibility was 31. Nd6!?, intending 31. ... Nc4 (31. ... a6!? 32. f5 Ng5 33. Rh6! Kg7 34. Rh4 is also good for White) 32. Nb5! Rcd7 33. Bc1 with f4-f5 next.

Gleb Dudin



Christopher Yoo



However, even stronger is 31. Rh4!! as pointed out by JJ Lang. There are two ideas; one is to prepare Rf3-Rh3, and the other is more prophylactic — White is now ready to give a check on h6 and play f4-f5 without having to worry about ... Ne6-g5 in response. For instance, 31. ... Rdc8 (or 31. ... b5 32. Rf3!?) 32. Nh6+ Kg7 33. f5 Ng5 34. f6+ Kf8 35. Nf5, winning material.

31. ... Kg7 32. g5?!

Now Black is back in the game.

After 32. f5!? Ng5! Black escapes. White should have tried to revert to the previous



position with 32. Nf5+, though now Black has the option 32. ... gxf5 33. gxf5 Rg8! 34. fxe6 Kf8+ 35. Kf1 fxe6, when White still is better.

32. ... Nc4

Also possible was 32. ... Nc6!?

33. Bc3 Nxa3?

A blunder. After 33. ... Rdc8! the position remains unclear.

34. f5!

Played at the right moment, when Black cannot capture on g5.

34. ... gxf5

If 34. ... Nxg5 35. f6+ Kf8 36. Bb4+ Ke8 37. Rxa3 wins a piece.

35. Nxf5+ Kg8 36. Nh6+

Repeating twice to reach move 40.

36. ... Kg7 37. Nf5+ Kg8 38. Bb4!

White is finally able to activate the bishop. As usual, this is the deciding factor.

38. ... Rc1+

After 38. ... Nc4 39. Be7! the transfer of the bishop is decisive.

39. Kg2 Rc2 40. Rxa3, Black resigned.

This concludes the theoretical component of this series. However, there are still questions left unanswered; in particular, I have not touched on Black's other plans (e.g., early deviations with 9. ... Nc6 or 9. ... Bg4). For this reason, I have collected a multitude of

other games in this variation that I consider to be worth analyzing. Below is a list of the most important among them; you can also find them in a Lichess study available at lichess.org/study/8QNbV1o2 or via the Chess

Life Online Lichess profile: lichess.org/study/by/ChessLifeOnline.

By way of conclusion, I present a few exercises based on games that were all played in this variation. The solutions are

KEY AND ADDITIONAL GAMES FOR STUDY

LIGHT-SQUARED BISHOPS ARE TRADED

I. BLACK PLAYS ... c5-c4: Botvinnik – Capablanca, AVRO 1938. Herrmann – Esser, Luebek 1939. Botvinnik – Alexander, ENG vs USSR radio match 1946. Euwe – Denker, Staunton Memorial 1946. Szabo – Kottbauer, Staunton Memorial 1946. Gutman – Gelfer, Israel 1980. Atalik – Masango, Bhopal Open 2017.

II. BLACK DOESN'T PLAY ... c5-c4: Euwe – Van den Bosch, Amsterdam 1934. Mengarini – Pinkus, US Open 1948. Ragozin – Taimanov, Soviet Ch 1948. Furman – Lilienthal, Soviet Ch 1949. Petrosian – Kan, Moscow 1950. Kotov – Unzicker, Interzonal 1952. Averbakh – Golombek, Interzonal 1952.

III. MODERN INTERPRETATION WITH ... h7-h5: Eljanov – Bologan, Poikovsky 2014. Berkes – Kovacevic, Hungarian Ch 2014. Shankland – Sanikidze, Baku 2016. Bu – Wang, Chinese Ch 2017. Vocaturo – Postny, Chania Open 2019. Le Quang Liem – Aleksandrov, World Cup 2019.

BLACK REFRAINS FROM ... Bc8-a6

Lilienthal – Eliskases, Ujpest 1934. Lilienthal – Ragozin, Moscow 1934. Euwe – Golombek, Hastings 1938. Roedl – Habermann, Bad Elster 1940. Stahlberg – Bolbochan, Mar del Plata 1941. Reshevsky – Steiner, U.S. Ch 1946. Euwe – Steiner, Staunton Memorial 1946. Keene – Purdy, Sydney 1979.

WHITE KEEPS THE LIGHT-SQUARED BISHOP

Stahlberg – Keres, Bad Nauheim 1936. Spassky – Stoliar, Soviet Ch 1957.

THE PLAN WITH d4xc5 AND c3-c4

Fine – Steiner, U.S. Open 1940.

on the following pages. In general, I find that solving positions carrying a direct relationship to an opening is one of the best ways to better understand the opening in question, since in these puzzles you will be confronted with problems similar to those that you may face over the board. However, the positions below should not be thought of as a comprehensive set of exercises — they vary far too much in theme and difficulty for this to be the case. I nevertheless hope they will be both interesting and instructive.

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



DIAGRAM 1



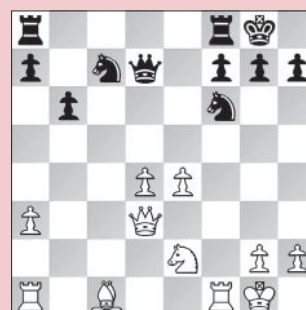
BLACK TO MOVE

DIAGRAM 2



WHITE TO MOVE

DIAGRAM 3



BLACK TO MOVE

DIAGRAM 4



BLACK TO MOVE

DIAGRAM 5



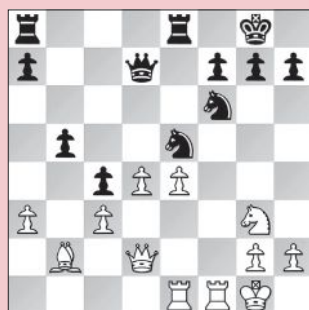
WHITE TO MOVE

DIAGRAM 6



WHITE TO MOVE

DIAGRAM 7



WHITE TO MOVE

DIAGRAM 8



BLACK TO MOVE

DIAGRAM 9



WHITE TO MOVE

SOLUTIONS

(1) Black has blockaded the light squares, but still risks coming under an attack on the kingside. For example, the regrouping Ng3-f5 and Qd3-g3 or the doubling of rooks on the f-file are both especially dangerous. How should Black continue?

1. ... f6!

Black has to break in the center, or he will be worse despite the “nice” positions of the knights.

Instead 1. ... Re6 was played in the game. White did not find the most incisive way of continuing the attack: 2. Ne4!? (stronger is 2. Nf5 -- the knight is simply more dangerous for Black on this square) 2. ... Rg6 3. Qf3 h6 4. h4!? and now (the prophylactic 4. h3 was a better try) 4. ... Qg4! 5. Qxf7+ Kh7 6. Qf3 Qxh4 leads to an unbalanced position where Black is certainly not worse.

2. exf6

2. a4!? is another interesting option: 2. ... fxe5 3. axb5 Qxb5 4. Nf5 with some attacking chances for the pawn. The clearest defense seems to be 4. ... Nd6 5. Qxb5 Nxb5 6. dxe5 Ndc7!? with rough equality.

2. ... Nxf6 3. Bg5 Nb2!

This is the real point. Black is able to simplify the position through tactics.

4. Qb3+ Qd5 5. Qxb2 Qxg5 6. Nf5 Rd5

with equality. (Brodsky – Ardt, European Online CC 2021, analysis)

(2) Black just played ... Rd8-b8. What is the clearest refutation of this move?

1. Qg3! Rg6 2. e6!

This move is easy to see, but difficult to calculate.

2. ... Rxxg3 3. exd7 Rg6 4. Rde1 Kf8

Not 4. ... Re6? 5. Bg5.

5. Nxg7!!

A nice deflecting combination.

5. ... Rxxg7

Note that 5. ... Nde3 6. Bxe3 Kxxg7 7. Bg5! Rxxg5 8. Re8 does not help Black.

6. Bh6

Black will not be able to stop the infiltration of White's rooks for long. For instance:

6. ... Nde3

Or 6. ... Nce3 7. Rc1! Rd8 8. Rfe1 Nc4 9. Re8+ Rxe8 10. Bxxg7+ and wins.

7. Rf6! Rd8 8. Rc6!

With a winning position. (Brodsky – Ardt, European Online CC 2021, analysis)

(3) How should Black fight against White's center?

1. ... Qb5! 2. Qf3?

After the trade of queens, the position is equal: 2. Qxb5 Nxb5 3. a4 Nc7 4. Ng3 Rfe8 5. Re1 Ne6 6. Bb2 Ng5 7. e5 Nd5 and the pawns are blockaded.

White could have tried 2. Qc2 Ne6 3. a4 Qb4! 4. Qd3 (4. Ba3? Nxd4! is the point) 4. ... Rfc8, reaching a later exercise.

2. ... Nxe4!

The key idea.

3. Qxe4? Rae8 4. Qf4 Rxe2!

A calm move. Avoiding 4. ... Nd5? 5. Qg3 Rxe2 6. Bh6 when White is the one that wins.

5. Qxc7 Qd5

And Black is winning. (Shen Yang – Tan Zhongyi, Wuxi 2014, analysis)

(4) How should Black continue?

1. ... Ng5!

For the position after 1. ... Rae8, see the next exercise.

2. Qg4 Nce6

White does not have enough compensation. Black can secure the position of the knights with ... f7-f5 and ... Ng5-e4. (Shen Yang – Tan Zhongyi, Wuxi 2014, analysis)

(5) Black's last move is a tactical error that allows white to seize the advantage. How?

1. Ng3!

In the game White lost quickly: 1. Bxc7 Nd2 2. Qf5 Qxe2 3. Rfe1 Qxe1+ 4. Rxe1 Rxe1+ 5. Kf2 Rf1+ and White resigned (Shen Yang – Tan Zhongyi, Wuxi 2014)

1. ... Nxg3

Here 1. ... Ng5 2. Qg4 Nce6 3. Bd6 does not help.

2. Qxxg3 Ne6 3. Bd6 Nxd4

Maybe Black thought that this position was in her favor, in view of the dual threats of ... Nd4-e2+ and ... Nd4-f5. But after the simple move...

4. Qf2!

White will win the Exchange.

(6) White has a strong center, but for the moment her pieces are uncoordinated and she needs to think prophylactically. What is the best setup for White, and how should she achieve it?

1. h3!!

The key to solving this exercise is understanding that Black wants to play ... Qb4-c4 and trade queens. White's only way to sidestep this without losing one of the two central pawns is Qd3-e3, but then ... Nf6-g4 is annoying. For example: 1. Bd2? Qc4 2. Qe3? Ng4 3. Qf3 Nxd4. This is why we need to play h2-h3.

1. ... Qc4 2. Qe3 Rd8

It seems that Black still has strong counterplay. White does not want to move either central pawn, because Black's knights will immediately get blockading squares. Nor does the natural 3. Bb2 work, in view of the strong reply 3. ... Qc2! How should White proceed?

3. Rxf6!

A beautiful sacrifice to take the pressure off the center. White has typical compensation against the kingside dark squares.

3. ... gxf6 4. Bb2 Qc2!

Now this is not nearly as strong, because there is no longer any threat to the e4-pawn. However, for better or for worse, Black has to keep attacking White's center.

5. Bc3 Ng5! 6. Ng3 Rac8! 7. Rc1 Rxc3**8. Qxc3 Qxc3 9. Rxc3**

The final critical moment. It seems that White has consolidated the position, since 9. ... Rxd4 is met by 10. Rc8+ Kg7 11. Nf5+. However...

9. ... f5!

That's one way of dealing with an outpost!

10. Nxf5

Here 10. exf5 Rxd4 11. Nh5 Kf8 12. Rc8+ Ke7 13. Rc7+ Rd7 does not achieve anything.

10. ... Nxe4 11. Rc6!?

Paralyzing Black's pieces. White still has some winning chances, even if Black can hold a draw objectively.

11. Rc7 allows 11. ... Nd6! 12. Ne7+ Kg7 13. Rxa7 (13. Nc6 Rc8!) 13. ... b5! 14. a5 and now the following line forces a draw: (14. axb5 Nxb5 15. Ra4 Kf6 16. Nc6 Rd6 17. Rc4

should not be a difficult draw) 14. ... b4 15. Rc7 b3 16. Rc1 b2 17. Rb1 Nc4 18. Nc6 Ra8 19. Kf2 Ra6! 20. d5 Nxa5 21. Nxa5 Rxa5 22. Rxb2 Rxd5 is equal. (Shen Yang – Tan Zhongyi, Wuxi 2014, analysis)

(7) 1. Rxf6!

The clearest and most decisive.

Apparently White's position was so strong that he could even afford to first defend the queen with 1. Re2, and only then take on f6.

1. ... gxf6 2. Nh5, Black resigned.

Black cannot deal with both Nh5xf6+ and Qd2-h6, and 2. ... Ng4 is refuted by 3. h3. (Karsa – Kiss, Eger 1987)

(8) How should Black fight against White's center?

17. ... Rxc2!

Black may still be worse after this move, but it absolutely has to be tried.

The stem game went 17. ... Nc6? 18. Bb2 happened in the game. Black has no counterplay and is essentially dead lost. White won after 18. ... h5 19. Nxh5 Nxe4 20. Bxe4

Rxe4 21. d5 Ne5 22. Ng3 Re3 23. Nf5 Re4 24. Ng3 Re3 25. Qd4 Qg5 26. d6 Bb7 27. Rf5 Rxe3 28. Rxe5 Nf3+ 29. Kf2 Nxd4 30. Kxe3 Ne6 31. Re5 Rd8 32. Rd1 Nc5 33. h3 Ne4+ 34. Kh2 Nc5 35. Bc3 Ne6 36. d7 Rxd7 37. Rxd7. (Kuzubov – Perez Gormaz, *Chess.com* 2021)

18. Rxc2

Here 18. Qxc2 Ng4! is an important point. White cannot keep the Exchange with 19. Rd2? in view of 19. ... Qh4! 20. h3 Qxe3 21. hxg4 Nb3.

18. ... Nxe4 19. d5

If 19. Nxe4 Rxe4 20. Bb2 Nc4 21. Qf3 Qe8 also gives Black significant counterplay.

19. ... Nb3 20. Rb1 Nec5! 21. Rc3 Nxc1 22.

Rbxc1 Bb7

Black defends.

(9) 17. e4!

This works tactically, as the knight on f6 is short of squares. As always, if this move works, White should play it!

17. ... dxe4

The key variation is 17. ... cxd4 18. Rb4 dxc3 19. Qf4! Qc6 20. e5 and White wins. Also bad for Black is 17. ... Nb3 18. Rxb3! Qxb3 19. e5 is also bad for Black.

18. fxe4 cxd4 19. Rb4 Qc6

Here 19. ... dxc3 now fails to 20. Qg5! and the a5-knight is lost.

20. cxd4

White has a dominant center and is easily winning. Black tried a desperate sacrifice in an effort to confuse matters, but Petrosian had no problems converting the advantage.

20. ... Nxe4 21. Nxe4 Rxe4 22. Qf2!

Continuing to play energetically. The game finished in a flurry of tactics.

22. ... f5

Or 22. ... Re7 23. Qh4!.

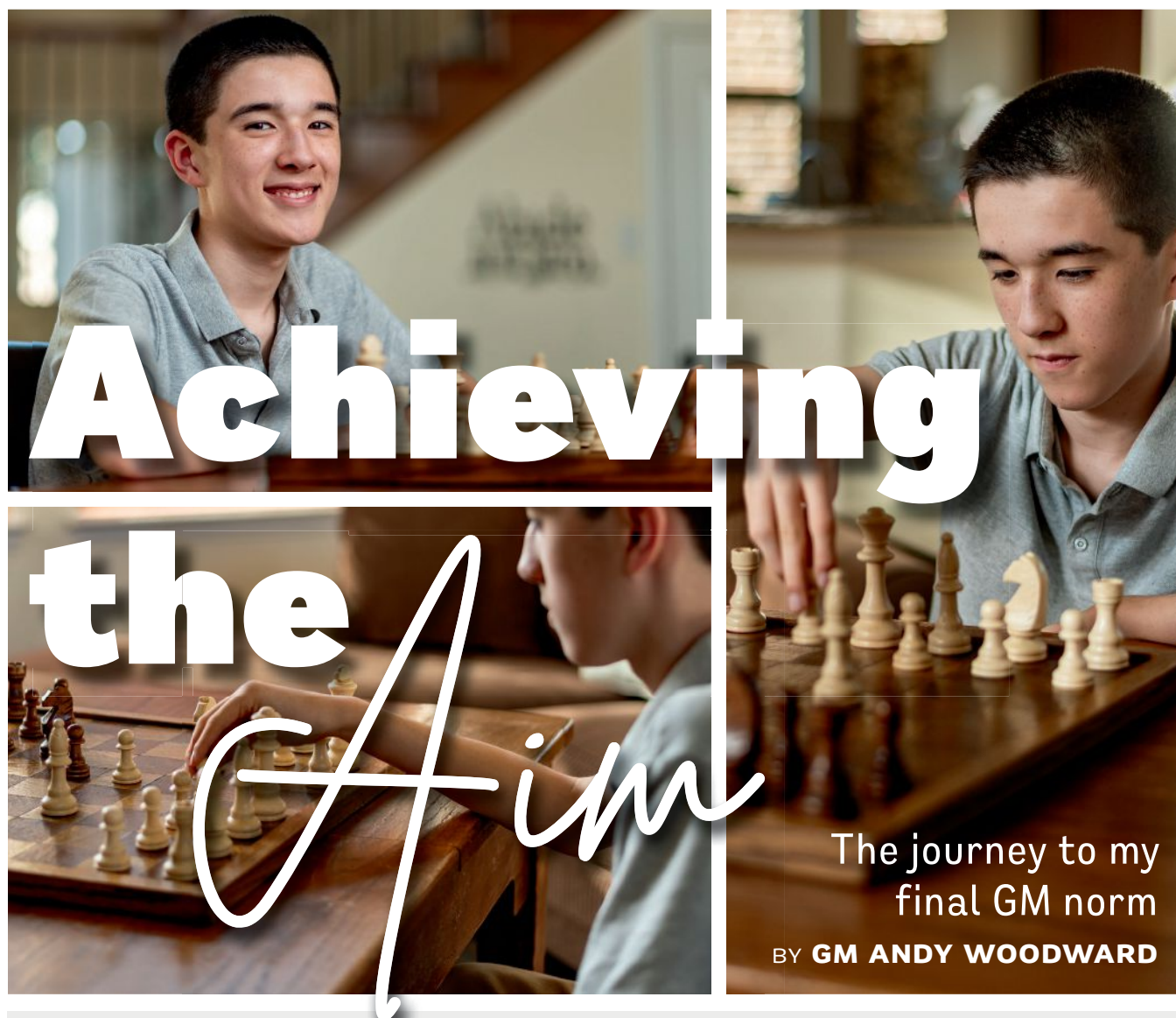
23. d5! Qxd5 24. Bxe4 fxe4 25. Rd4 Qe6

26. Rxe4! Qg6 27. Re7 Bb5 28. Qf7+, Black resigned.

This is Petrosian – Ljubojevic, Niksic 1983 – Petrosian's final victory before his death. ♠

Ljubomir
Ljubojevic





Editor's note: We have gotten to know Andy Woodward these past few years through an interview (*Chess Life*, November 2022), analysis (*Chess Life*, February 2024), and features (*Chess Life Kids*, April 2024). His games are impressive indeed, and his talent is undeniable, but we've been even more impressed by his character and modesty in our interactions with him and his family.

With his result in the 2024 Jeddah Young Masters, Andy became — for a brief, shining moment, anyway! — the youngest grandmaster in the world. (GM Abhimanyu Mishra still holds the

record for the youngest GM ever.) His place was soon taken by the Turkish phenom Yagiz Kaan Erdogmus, who earned his third and final norm at the Grenke Open in April. This does not diminish Andy's achievement; rather, it just goes to underscore just how strong the bench is for young talent around the globe, and how strong the competition will be for the rest of us!

We're pleased to be able to bring you Andy's account of his trip to Saudi Arabia and his thoughts on earning the title, along with analysis of key games from the event.



THE GRANDMASTER (GM) TITLE is the highest a chess player can receive. Pursuing it is a long, grueling process that requires work, dedication, and persistence. To get the title, you must fulfill a few requirements:

A 2500 FIDE rating and three exceptional performances, for which you can get norms. To get each of those norms, a 2600 performance rating is needed, and

the tournament must meet a few necessary technical conditions.

I earned my first GM norm at the Hollywood Masters tournament in the fall of 2022. A year or so later, I got my second GM norm in Hungary. As luck would have it, I had surpassed the rating requirement at the SPICE Cup in December 2023, so I only needed one more norm. After many close encounters, I trusted that it was simply a matter of time.

In November of 2023, Chief TD and IA Laurent Freyd contacted me about the Young Masters tournament in Saudi Arabia. It was my first all-expense paid tournament, and I was excited to have the chance to gain my last norm. As the event drew closer, though, a feeling of unease crept in. Saudi Arabia was very far away, and we were worried about visa requirements and jet lag. But it was reassuring that the organizers seemed to be on top of everything. I appreciated

the conditions and their hospitality, and it was a tournament where I could play good games against some of the world's strongest young players.

So off to Saudi Arabia it was.

The journey was exhausting. Our flight was 19 hours long with a four-hour layover in Turkey. When my mom and I arrived in Jeddah, it was already 1:30 a.m. As a show of their hospitality, Freyd came to the airport to pick us up. Since we were the first to arrive, Freyd took a picture of us in front of an aquarium as a reference point for the later pickups. (See page 27 for the photo. ~ed.)

We finally checked into the hotel at 2 a.m. The hotel was located at the intersection of two major highways. We thought it might take a while to get used to the noise, but we later found out the noise didn't die down at all in the middle of the night. Soon enough, we also realized the extent of our jet lag. For about four days, I woke up multiple times a night and I couldn't fall back asleep. Finally, thinking that my poor sleep affected my performance, my mom insisted on changing our room to a quieter side of the hotel. It made a big difference! I was finally able to sleep through the night.

To my knowledge, most players arrived the day before the tournament started. The field also underwent a slight change. GM Bardiya Daneshvar from Iran could not come because of a visa problem, so FM Jaime Rey Martinez from Spain took his place.

The night before the tournament began, the organizers surprised us with a dinner in the desert. It was great fun as we got to dip our heads in the local culture and experience authentic Saudi food and coffee. The drawing of lots occurred after dinner, and I found out I had two blacks in the first two rounds. It was not encouraging, but I have learned not to be affected by the pairings as they are not in my control.

The next day, at the opening ceremony, people mingled around coffee, candies, and roses, and local talents sang and danced. One of the Saudi princes was supposed to come, but it turned out that he couldn't make it. I was in good spirits at the start of the tournament, and I was optimistic about the upcoming games.

My first two rounds, unfortunately, went far out of my expectations. My first-round opponent, IM (and now GM) Yagiz Erdogmus, was a 12-year-old prodigy from Turkey. He had had several great tournaments recently, so I knew he was in good form. In our game, he surprised me on move two in the opening. I chose to play a line that

looked interesting to me. Unfortunately, I made a bad move immediately after that, overlooking my opponent's reply. I ended up losing that first game.

TROMPOWSKY OPENING (D00)

IM Yagiz Kaan Erdogmus (2524)
IM Andy Woodward (2501)
Jeddah Young Masters (1), Jeddah,
01.24.2024

1. d4 Nf6 2. Bg5!?

The Trompowsky! I wasn't expecting this line.

2. ... d5 3. Nd2 g6 4. Bxf6 exf6 5. e3 Bd6 6. c4 dxc4 7. Bxc4 0-0 8. Ngf3



8. ... a6?!

A step in the wrong direction. Black should be playing on the kingside. A typical plan is ... c7-c6, ... f6-f5, ... Nb8-d7-f6, ... Kg8-g7, ... h7-h5, and ... Qd8-e7, when Black is doing fine. A sample line: 8. ... c6 9. 0-0 f5 10. Qc2 Nd7 11. Rfe1 Nf6 12. Rab1 Qe7 13. a3 Kg7.

9. 0-0 b5?!

This move makes Black's position even worse. White will now play on the queenside with extra weaknesses to target. The a5- and c5-squares are permanent weaknesses.

10. Bd3 Bb7 11. a4 bxa4?!

White is a bit better after 11. ... c6!? 12. Ne4 Be7.

12. Rxa4 c5 13. Be4!

I underestimated this move. White immediately takes control of the two open files in the center while Black's pieces are left undeveloped.

13. ... Ra7!

After 13. ... Qe7?! White has 14. Bxb7 Qxb7 15. Ne4!!, making use of the fact that Black can't take the knight. Why not? If 15. ... Qxe4 16. dxc5 Bxh2+ 17. Nxh2 Qe7 18. Qc2 with advantage.

14. Qc2 cxd4! 15. Rxd4 Qe7 16. Rd1 Rc8
17. Nc4 Bc5 18. Bxb7



Here, I made a terrible blunder.

18. ... Rxb7??

Black is fully equal after 18. ... Qxb7! 19. Rd5 Bf8.

19. Nd6! Rcc7 20. Nf5!, Black resigned.

Accurate until the end. Black can't take the knight! The line runs 20. Nf5 gxf5 21. Rd8+ Kg7 22. Nh4! and with Nh4xf5+ followed by Rd8-g8+ coming, I gave up.

My second-round opponent was a Russian prodigy, GM Volodar Murzin, the second



GM Andy Woodward

seed in this tournament. I equalized out of the opening but on moves 16 and 17, I blundered, giving him an early advantage which he converted into a win.

With this tough start, I felt my norm chance was going to fly by again this time. My mom told me to push the reset button and start a new tournament, which helped with my mindset. It was also at this point that we changed our hotel room to a quieter one.

The third round was the turning point in this tournament — I finally won a game against Argentine talent FM Faustino Oro. It felt good to have a change of fortune! I continued to win rounds four and five against GM Pranav Venkatesh and WGM Candela Belén Francisco Guecamburu, respectively. At the midpoint, I was at 3/5, and I needed to score 3/4 for a norm.

SICILIAN DEFENSE, SOZIN VARIATION (B88)

GM Pranav Venkatesh (2611)

IM Andy Woodward (2501)

Jeddah Young Masters (4), Jeddah, 01.26.2024

1. e4 c5 2. Nf3 d6 3. d4 cxd4 4. Nxd4 Nf6 5. Nc3 a6

Here my opponent went for Bobby Fischer's favorite variation.

6. Bc4!? e6 7. a4!?

White plays a sideline that has only been played about 1000 times according to the databases. The main line continues 7. Bb3 b5 8. 0-0 Be7 with lots of theory.

7. ... Bd7!?

I was not prepared against White's a-pawn push, so I decided to just develop normally.

8. 0-0 Nc6 9. Be3 Rc8 10. Qe2 Qc7 11. Ba2 Be7

Another path is 11. ... Ne5!? 12. f4 Nc4 13. Bxc4 Qxc4 14. Qf3 Be7 15. e5 Nd5 with equality.

12. f4 0-0 13. Kh1

A typical move, getting the king off of the a7-g1 diagonal.

13. ... Nxd4 14. Bxd4 e5 15. Be3 Be6!

Challenging the a2-bishop, which dominates Black's position. This also tries to punish White's aggressive f2-f4 play by punching back in the center.

16. Bb3 Bc4!

Both needed and strong, forcing the bishop trade and helping target the weak white pawns.

17. Bxc4 Qxc4 18. Qf3?!



During the game I was thinking more about 18. Qd3, and I wasn't fully sure how to continue. Black should be fine after 18. ... Rfe8.

18. ... d5!

Black needs to create counterplay before White crushes him positionally with f4xe5, ... d6xe5, and then Be3-g5.

19. fxe5

Black is much better after 19. exd5?! e4 20. Qd1 Bb4!, and can claim a solid edge as well after 19. Nxd5 Nxd5 20. exd5 e4 21. Qd1 Rfd8.

19. ... Nxe4 20. Ne2 Bc5?!

Naturally 20. ... Qxc2?? is too greedy after 21. Rac1! Qd3 22. Rxc8 Rxc8 23. Qxf7+ Kh8 24. Qxe7 when White is up a piece, and his pieces are untouchable due to the back-rank issues for Black.

The engine's top choice is 20. ... f6!, and I considered it at the board. But after 21. e6 I missed the correct 21. ... Ng5! 22. Bxg5 (22. Qf2 Nxe6 is nice for Black) 22. ... fxg5 23. Qe3 (or 23. Qd3 Rxf1+ 24. Rxf1 Qxc2) 23. ... Qxc2 and Black is doing very well.

21. c3 Rce8 22. b3

Trying to create counter-chances against the black king. Unfortunately, Black can secure a winning advantage with the right set of forcing moves.



22. ... Qxb3!

White's bluff would have paid off after 22. ... Qd3?! 23. Bd4! Qxf3 24. gxf3 Bxd4 25. Nxd4 Nxc3 26. Rfc1 Rc8 27. Rc2 b5 when the position is equal.

23. Bxc5 Nxc5 24. Nd4 Qc4

Keeping the d5-pawn protected while targeting White's weak pawns.

25. Nf5 Ne4!

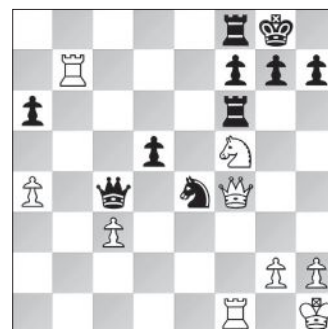
This is the move you need to see before playing 21. ... Rce8. It controls all of White's counter-chances while continuing to target the weak white pawns.

26. Rab1

Not 26. Qg4?? Nf2+! 27. Rxf2 Qxg4.

26. ... Rxe5 27. Qf4 Re6 28. Rxb7 Rf6!

Pinning White's pieces along the f-file. Now Black is easily winning.



29. Rf3 g6 30. Rb4 Qa2!

It's true that 30. ... Qc5 also wins, but the ride is not as smooth. A sample line runs 31. Qe5 Nf2+ 32. Rxf2 Qxf2 33. Rf4 Qxf4 34. Qxf4 Rxf5 35. Qc1 Rc8 with a winning position.

31. Ne7+ Kg7 32. Qc1 Nf2+ 33. Kg1 Nd3!

Forking the queen and rook. Now the game is over.

34. Qd1

If 34. Rxd3? Qf2+ 35. Kh1 Qf1+ 36. Qxf1, then 36. ... Rxf1 mate.

34. ... Rxf3 35. gxf3 Qf2+ 36. Kh1 Nxb4 37. cxb4 Re8, White resigned.

The white queen will be lost.

I held a lucky draw in round six against Polish IM Jan Klimkowski. I was worse throughout most of the game, but fortunately, he blundered right at the end. This was followed by a very long and tiring endgame versus Polish IM Jakub Seemann, which I was able to win with some precise moves.



QUEEN'S GAMBIT ACCEPTED (D20)

IM Andy Woodward (2501)

IM Jakub Seemann (2439)

Jeddah Young Masters (7), Jeddah, 01.28.2024

1. d4 d5 2. c4 dxc4 3. e4 b5 4. a4 c6
5. axb5 cxb5 6. Nc3 Qb6



A new, trendy line. Here, I decided to go for a less risky approach to the position.

7. b3

The alternative was 7. Nd5!? Qb7 8. Bf4 e5 9. Bxe5 Nd7 10. Bf4 Ngf6 11. Nc7+ Kd8 12. Nxa8 Qxe4+ 13. Ne2 Qxa8 14. f3 Nd5 with chances for both sides.

7. ... e6 8. bxc4 Bb4 9. Bd2 bxc4

Avoiding 9. ... Qxd4? 10. Nf3 Qc5 11. Nxb5 with a great position for White.

10. Bxc4 Ne7 11. Nge2 0-0 12. 0-0 a5

13. Na4 Qc6 14. Bd3 Ba6 15. Rc1 Bxd3?!

A brave decision, creating a material imbalance. Black is closer to a draw after 15. ... Qe8 16. Nb6 Ra7.

16. Rxc6 Nbx6 17. Bxb4?!

Even stronger was 17. Nb6! Rad8 18. Bf4! Bxe2 19. Qxe2 Nxd4 20. Qc4 with a serious edge.

17. ... Bxe2 18. Qxe2 axb4 19. Nb6 Rad8
20. d5 exd5 21. e5



21. ... Kh8?!

Even now, I'm not sure I understand the idea behind this move.

After the correct 21. ... d4! 22. Rd1 d3 23. Rxd3 Nxe5 the knight is immune due to back-rank threats, and I don't think White can ultimately win. The b-pawn will be secure and a persistent thorn in White's side.

22. f4 Rfe8?!

Black equalizes with 22. ... f6! 23. e6 Rd6! 24. Nd7 Ra8! 25. g4 d4!, although of course it's very complex.

23. Qd3 Rb8 24. Nd7 Rb7 25. Nc5 Ra7

26. Qd2 Rb8 27. Rb1 Rba8 28. Qd1

The engine only gives White a slight advantage, but from a human perspective, I think White is doing very well!

28. ... Ra2 29. Nb7?! R8a3?!

Black could have gotten right back into the game with 29. ... Nf5!. After 30. Qxd5 Ra1 31. Rxa1 Rxa1+ 32. Kf2 Rf1+! 33. Ke2 Ncd4+ 34. Kd3 Rd1+ 35. Ke4 Re1+ 36. Kd3 Rd1+ White must take the draw.

30. Nd6! Kg8?



The damage is limited after 30. ... h6! 31. Nxf7+ Kh7 when White is just a little better.

31. Qh5! g6 32. Qg5 Ra1 33. Rxa1 Rxa1+

34. Kf2 Ra8 35. Qf6 Rf8 36. Ke1!

Since Black's pieces are tied up, White brings the king over to deal with the pawns.

36. ... b3 37. Kd2 d4 38. e6?

The win was clearer with 38. Nc4! Ra8 39. e6 fxe6 40. Qxe6+ Kg7 41. Ne5.

38. ... fxe6 39. Qxe6+ Kg7 40. f5!

I think 40. Qxb3 Rxf4 is also good, but the text is stronger.

40. ... gxf5 41. Qxb3

We were both down to five or so minutes here, and because there was no second time control, White is practically winning. A queen is a queen!

41. ... Kf6 42. Nc4 Rg8 43. Qh3 Ke6 44. g3 Kd5 45. Nb6+ Kc5 46. Na4+ Kb4 47. Nb2 Ra8 48. Qf1 Kc5 49. Nd3+ Kd6 50. Qf4+ Kd5 51. Nb4+!?

The knight is immune because of the skewer.

51. ... Kc4

Not 51. ... Nxb4? 52. Qf3+!

52. Nc2?

This slip could have been costly. White had to find 52. Na6!! Ra7 53. Qf1+ Kd5 54. h4.

52. ... Ra5?

Whew! With 52. ... Kc5 Black keeps control over the d6-square, and should hold.

53. Qd6! Rd5 54. Qe6 Kc5 55. Ne1 Kb6 56. Nd3 Ra5 57. h4 h5 58. Nf4

White picks up the h5-pawn. Now the rest is a matter of technique.

58. ... Kc5 59. Qb3 Rb5 60. Qa3+ Kc4 61. Nxb5 Rb3 62. Qa6+ Kc5 63. Nf4 Rb2+ 64. Kc1 Rh2 65. Qa3+ Kc4 66. Qd6 Rh1+ 67. Kd2 Rh2+ 68. Ke1 Rh1+ 69. Kf2 Rh2+ 70. Kf3 Rb2 71. Qe6+ Kb5 72. Nd3 Rd2 73. Qb3+ Ka5 74. Kf4 Rh2 75. Kg5 Re2 76. Nb2 Nb4 77. Qa4+, Black resigned.

In the penultimate round, I had Black against FM Jaime Rey Martinez. I knew I had to win for a good chance at a norm, so I summoned all my fighting spirit. I couldn't help but regret starting 0/2, but I tried to put it out of my mind — luckily I still had chances. And indeed, he made some crucial mistakes which led to my victory.

SICILIAN DEFENSE, NAJDORF VARIATION (B90)

FM Jaime Rey Martinez (2342)

IM Andy Woodward (2501)

Jeddah Young Masters (8), Jeddah, 01.29.2024

1. e4 c5 2. Nf3 d6 3. d4 cxd4 4. Nxd4 Nf6 5. Nc3 a6 6. Rg1!?

An interesting sideline in the Najdorf. I was prepared because he had played it before online a few times!

6. ... b5!?

A more aggressive approach. The main line is 6. ... e5 7. Nb3 Be6 8. g4 d5 9. exd5 Nxd5 10. Nxd5 Qxd5 11. Qxd5 Bxd5 12. Be3 with a slightly more pleasant endgame for White.

7. a4 b4 8. Nd5 Nxd5 9. exd5 Bb7 10. Bc4 Nd7**11. a5?!**

FM Jaime Rey
Martinez

IM Andy
Woodward

Stronger would be 11. Qe2! as a bit of hidden prophylaxis against ... Nd7-b6. For example, if 11. ... Nb6!? 12. Bb5+! axb5 13. Qxb5+ Qd7 (not 13. ... Nd7?? 14. Qxb7) 14. Qxb6 g6 15. b3 Bg7 16. Bb2 0-0 17. 0-0-0 Rfc8 Black is equal despite being a pawn down.

11. ... Qc7! 12. Qe2 g6! 13. Bg5

Preventing Black from developing the dark-squared bishop.

13. ... h6! 14. Bh4 Nc5?

The right move was 14. ... Rc8! when White has to be careful. If 15. Bxa6? Bxa6 16. Qxa6 Bg7 17. Nc6 Nb8 18. Nxb8 Qxb8 and Black is completely winning despite being down the pawn. White's queenside pawns are very weak, while Black will castle and activate his final piece. So the best move is 15. Nc6! Bxc6 16. dxc6 Qxc6 17. Bxa6 Rb8! 18. Bc4 g5! 19. Bg3 Bg7! when Black is better.

15. f4?

We both saw 15. Bf6! but misevaluated it. White dislocates the rook and prevents Black from fluently completing development, e.g., 15. ... Rg8 16. 0-0-0 0-0-0 17. Bh4 with a slight edge.

15. ... Bg7 16. Bf2 0-0 17. f5 Ne4!

Making use of the fact that the c4-bishop is hanging, Black improves the position of his knight.

18. Be3

Things fall apart after 18. Qxe4?? Qxc4.

18. ... Rac8! 19. Bd3 Nc3!

Picking up a pawn, while weakening White's position.

20. Qg4

If 20. bxc3 Qxc3+ 21. Kf2 Bxd4 with a tremendous position.

20. ... Nxd5?



I missed a nice intermediate move with 20. ... h5! — it prevents the tactical resource that

my opponent found on the next move. Black is winning after 21. Qg5 Nxd5 22. fxc6 Nxe3 23. gxf7+ Rxf7 24. Qxe3 Qc5.

21. Bxh6! Nf6?

This lets White back into the game. I should have just taken the bishop:

21. ... Bxh6 22.

fxg6 Bg7 23. gxf7+

Rxf7 24. Ne6 Nf6!

25. Bh7+ Kxh7 26.

Qh3+ Kg8 27. Nxc7

Rxc7 and with three pieces for the queen, Black remains in the driver's seat.

22. Qh4?!

White is fully equal after 22. Qf4! e5 23. fxe6 fxe6 e.p. 24. Bxg7 Qxg7 25. Qxd6 Qh6.

22. ... Bxh6?!

More precise was 22. ... Qc5! 23. fxc6 Qe5+ 24. Ne2 (not 24. Kd1? Be4 25. gxf7+ Kxf7 26. Nf3 Qxb2 and Black is winning) 24. ... fxc6 with an edge for Black.

23. Qxh6 Qc5



24. Ne2?

After 24. fxc6! Qxd4 25. 0-0-0?! is met by 25. ... Qg4! 26. Rgf1 fxc6 27. Bxg6 (27. Rf4 Qh5) 27. ... Be4!. But we both underestimated 25. Rf1! when White holds in all lines. Two examples: 25. ... Qxb2 (or 25. ... Qe5+ 26. Kd2 Qh5 27. gxf7+ Rxf7 28. Rxf6! Rxc2+ 29. Kxc2 Qc5+ 30. Kd2 Rxf6 31. Qh7+ Kf8 32. Re1 Qg5+ with wild equality) 26. Rxf6! Qxa1+ 27. Ke2 Qe5+ 28. Kd1 Qa1+ 29. Ke2 is a perpetual.

24. ... Ng4!

Shifting the knight from f6 to e5 is a big improvement. Now the position is winning again.

25. Qh4 Ne5 26. fxc6 fxc6 27. Qg3 Kg7



28. 0-0-0 Rf2 29. Rge1 Rxg2 30. Qh3 Rxh2 31. Qg3 Rg2 32. Qh3 Bf3 33. Nd4 Qxd4 34. Qxc8 Bxd1 35. Kxd1 Qf4 36. Re2 Rg1+, White resigned.

And here he resigned in view of 36. ... Rg1+ 37. Re1 Qc1+! 38. Kxc1 Rxe1+ 39. Kd2 Nf3 mate.

In the last round, I had the white pieces against the top seed GM Raunak Sadhwani. At this point, I "just" needed a draw. Now the psychological factor set in. Before this tournament, I had had several tournaments in which I almost got the norms. My nerves manifested themselves — what if I were a half-point short again? Should I play for a win, maximizing my chances, or try to secure the norm with a draw?

In the end I decided to prepare as much as possible to play for a win, but I would offer an early draw in case my opponent was fine with a draw. If he rejected my draw offer, I would get the draw out of my mind early on and switch to play for a win.

Sitting down at the board, I felt pretty confident after my preparation, but I offered a draw on move nine as per the plan. To my surprise, he accepted! A sense of relief took over me. The final GM norm was mine!

As the shock that I was finally a grandmaster set in, my mom took me to the Red Sea. My grandpa had wanted me to dip my toes in its waters, and I was excited to see it in person. After going back to the hotel, I had a couple of short interviews with a European chess magazine and *ChessKid.com*. In hindsight, I'm extremely thankful I achieved my last norm in late January. It allowed me to withdraw from a tournament two weeks later to spend some time with my grandparents. My grandpa passed away unexpectedly two days later, making our time together even more precious.

I took a break from chess to recover from the sickness I caught on the trip back from Saudi Arabia. (I also had to catch up with my schoolwork!) I had a disappointing performance in the Spring Classic at the Saint Louis Chess Club in April, but that was OK. As one of my coaches reminded me, “We are here for both the good times and the bad moments.” Learning to control emotions and nerves during the ups and downs is a big part of the chess journey.

It took me one and a half years to fulfill all the GM title requirements after I became an IM. As a norm hunter, I flew to all kinds of norm tournaments at least once a month with my mom most of the time, leaving my father and sister at home. It was not easy. Illnesses, travel difficulties, and stress remained obstacles in the journey. Yet nothing compares to the joy of making new friends or embarking on a new adventure. My perseverance paid off after 190 chess tournaments over seven years.

Ultimately, my chess journey is not one I have taken alone. I am thankful for the support of my parents. They have played a big role, taking me to tournaments and backing me mentally and financially. I am grateful for the support and help my coaches (special shout out to GM Yaroslav Zhrebukh!) provided throughout the journey. I would also like to thank GM Hikaru Nakamura for his support — he sponsored extra chess lessons for half a year. This generosity motivated me immensely, and as I get older, I hope I’ll be able to impact the next generation of upcoming players as he did for me.

I have often thought of Galatians 6:9 on

this journey: “Do not be weary in doing good, for in due time you will reap the harvest.” It takes work and persistence, but confidence is the most important. For everyone on the journey to becoming a GM, I wish you the best of success!

Postscript: *Since these words were written, Andy rebounded with a strong showing at the 2024 Summer Classic hosted by the Saint Louis Chess Club. He scored 6½/9 in the B Group to share first place with GM Steven Zierk, who won the blitz playoff. We asked Andy if he had annotated any of his games from the event, and here’s what he sent. Enjoy. ~ed.*

CATALAN OPENING (E11)

GM Andy Woodward (2580)

GM Akshat Chandra (2556)

Summer Classic B (3), St. Louis,
05.30.2024

1. d4 Nf6 2. c4 e6 3. g3 d5 4. Bg2 Bb4+ 5. Bd2 Be7 6. Nf3 0-0 7. 0-0 Nbd7 8. Qc2 c6 9. Rc1 a5 10. a4 h6



11. Na3!?

An interesting idea, preventing Black from developing with ... b7-b6.

11. ... Ne4 12. Be3 b6?!

I’m not sure about this move. I was more definitely familiar with positions that included ... f7-f5, like 12. ... f5 13. Ne1 Bf6 14. f3 Nd6 15. Nd3 when White is a bit better.

13. cxd5 cxd5 14. Nb5 Ba6 15. Qb3 Nd6?!

This move helps me get what I want with a tempo. Instead I was considering 15. ... Bb4!, preparing to take on b5 followed by ... Ne4-d6. I was planning on 16. Bf4!? (16. Qd1 Rc8 is equal) but then Black has counterplay with 16. ... g5! 17. Bc7 Qf6.

16. Bf4 Bxb5 17. axb5 g5!



Black needs to act fast, as otherwise White will have a decisive advantage.

18. Bd2?!

The engine doesn’t like this move, but I think it’s an interesting practical choice.



The blitz playoff
between GM Steven
Zierk and GM Andy
Woodward

White keeps the bishop with a specific idea in mind. I should also note that Black had 26 minutes here to my 109!

The engine choice is 18. Bxd6! Bxd6 19. Rc6 Nf6 20. Rac1, and with the c-file and Black's weak king, White has a great position.

18. ... Nc4 19. Rxc4!?

I spent 23 minutes on this move calculating the consequences of the sacrifice. Practically it is very interesting, especially as Black was low on the clock.

Other ideas include 19. Be1 Rc8 20. Rc2 Nf6 21. Rac1 Qd7 and now 22. Ne5 (22. Qa4? Nxb2) 22. ... Nxe5 23. dxe5 Ng4 24. Bc3 Bc5, and 19. e4!?

19. ... dxc4 20. Qxc4 Rc8 21. Qd3 Qc7

Black is trying to take control over the c-file and trade queens on either c4 or c2. Therefore I try to prevent it!

22. Rc1 Qxc1+!

The only resource for Black.

The alternative 22. ... Qd6? is bad as White puts a major piece on c6: 23. Rc6! Rxc6 24. bxc6 and if 24. ... Qxc6? 25. Nxc6! when the dual threats of Qd3-h7 mate and Bg2xc6 can't both be defended.

23. Bxc1 Rxc1+ 24. Bf1

(see diagram top of next column)

24. ... g4!

This move does open up the black king, but again Black must act quickly before White consolidates.



POSITION AFTER 24. Bf1

25. Nd2 Rfc8!?

My opponent defended quite well up to this point.

The easiest way to keep equality was via a tactical resource: 25. ... Rd8! 26. Nb3!? (the engine recommends the inhuman 26. h4!? when Black keeps equality with 26. ... gxh3 e.p. 27. Kh2 Bg5 28. f4 Ne5!! 29. fxe5 Bxd2 30. Bxh3 Bg5 31. Bg4) 26. ... Nc5! 27. Nxc5 bxc5! 28. Qe3 Bg5 is equal.

26. d5



26. ... exd5??

An unfortunate oversight. Better was 26. ... Nf8!? 27. Qd4 h5!, defending the g4-pawn. Black holds on after 28. Qxb6 R8c2! 29. d6 Bg5! 30. Ne4 Rxe2!! 31. Nxc5 Re1 32. Kg2 Rxf1 33. f4.

27. Qf5!

This move was hard to foresee. White doesn't have to take the pawn, but instead, he can push back all of Black's pieces.

27. ... Nf6 28. Nb3! R1c7 29. Nd4! Kg7 30. Qe5!

Centralizing the queen, and opening the f5-square for the knight.

30. ... Bc5?

Still losing, but of greater resistance, was 30. ... Bf8!? 31. Nf5+ Kg6 32. Ne3.

31. Nf5+! Kg6 32. Nh4+ Kg7 33. e3!

To bring the bishop to d3.

33. ... Bf8 34. Nf5+!

It's true that 34. Bd3?! is good for the win, but White needs to see a resource. Play continues 34. ... Rc1+ 35. Kg2 Rd1 36. Nf5+ Kg8! 37. Qxf6 Rcc1 38. Ne7+! Bxe7 39. Bh7+!! Kxh7 40. Qxf7+ Kh8 41. Qe8+ Kg7 42. Qxe7+ Kg6 43. Qe6+ when White picks up the g4-pawn and wins the game.

34. ... Kg6 35. Bd3 Rc1+ 36. Kg2, Black resigned.

All kinds of knight checks are threatened, and Black's king can't get off the diagonal, so Black threw in the towel. ♠

Jeddah Young Masters

JEDDAH, JANUARY 24-30, 2024

			1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
1	IM Yagiz Kaan Erdogmus	2524	*	0	½	1	1	½	½	1	1	1	6½/9
2	GM Volodar Murzin	2635	1	*	½	1	0	1	0	1	1	½	6/9
3	GM Raunak Sadhwani	2654	½	½	*	½	½	½	½	1	1	1	6/9
4	IM Andy Woodward	2501	0	0	½	*	1	1	½	1	1	1	6/9
5	IM Jakub Seemann	2439	0	1	½	0	*	½	1	0	1	1	5/9
6	GM Pranav V	2611	½	0	½	0	½	*	½	1	1	1	5/9
7	IM Jan Klimkowski	2531	½	1	½	½	0	½	*	½	½	½	4½/9
8	FM Jaime Rey Martinez	2342	0	0	0	0	1	0	½	*	0	1	2½/9
9	WGM Candela Belén Francisco Guecamburu	2295	0	0	0	0	0	0	½	1	*	½	2/9
10	FM Faustino Oro	2357	0	½	0	0	0	0	½	0	½	*	1½/9

WATCH LIVE

2024 U.S. GIRLS'

junior
CHAMPIONSHIP

2024 U.S.

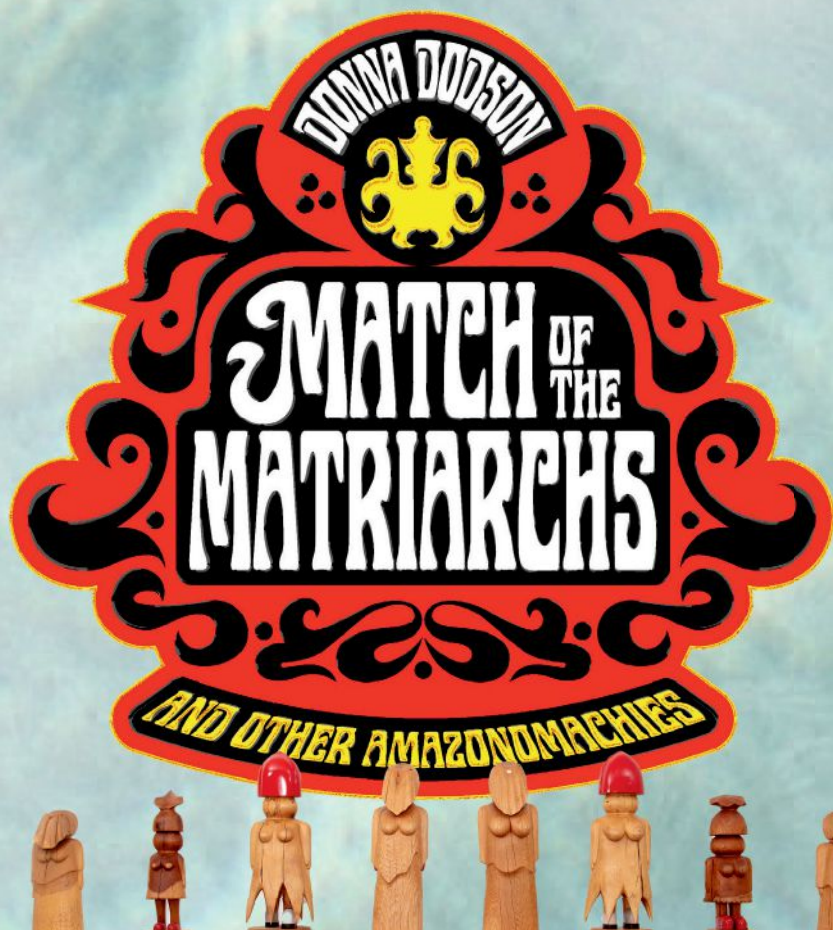
senior
CHAMPIONSHIP

2024 U.S.

junior
CHAMPIONSHIP

USCHESSCHAMPS.COM | YOUTUBE | TWITCH

7.16	1:00PM	ROUND 1
7.17	1:00PM	ROUND 2
7.18	1:00PM	ROUND 3
7.19	1:00PM	ROUND 4
7.20	1:00PM	ROUND 5
7.21	REST	DAY
7.22	1:00PM	ROUND 6
7.23	1:00PM	ROUND 7
7.24	1:00PM	ROUND 8
7.25	1:00PM	ROUND 9
7.26	1:00PM	PLAYOFF



ON VIEW
February 15 –
September 15, 2024

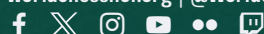
Donna Dodson: Match of the Matriarchs and other Amazonomachies is the first solo exhibition by a woman artist hosted by the World Chess Hall of Fame. Centering on women's stories, women's lives, and their place in the history of chess, the show includes Dodson's monumental, life-sized chess set *Match of the Matriarchs*—32-large scale wooden sculptures representing all-female representations of cephalopods battling cetaceans.



ON VIEW
April 11, 2024 –
January 12, 2025

Clash for the Crown: Celebrating Chess Champions explores the histories of the World Chess Championship and Women's World Chess Championship. This exhibition coincides with the 100th anniversary of FIDE's founding and includes never-before-exhibited artifacts related to many of the game's most accomplished players.

worldchesshof.org | [@WorldChessHOF](https://twitter.com/WorldChessHOF)



The mission of the World Chess Hall of Fame is to educate visitors, fans, players, and scholars by preserving, exhibiting and interpreting the game of chess and its continuing cultural and artistic significance.

The Museum does not discriminate or permit harassment or discrimination on the basis of gender, race, color, national and ethnic origin in the treatment of individuals with respect to employment, or admission or access to Museum facilities, programs or activities.



THE CANDIDATES



GUKESH AND TAN
WIN IN TORONTO
TO ADVANCE TO
THE WORLD
CHAMPIONSHIP

BY **GM EUGENE
PERELSHTEYN**

Top: GMs Tan Zhongyi and Dommaraju Gukesh with their awards. Left: The friendly rivalry between GMs Fabiano Caruana and Hikaru Nakamura continued in Toronto.

PHOTOS: COURTESY FIDE / MICHAL WALUSZA



WITH HUNDREDS OF thousands of chess fans watching around the world — more than 200,000 were watching the English language Chess.com stream

alone! — and some of the chess world's elite onsite in Toronto, the final round of the 2024 Candidates tournament was everything the organizers could have hoped for.

Entering the final round with a half-point lead, GM Dommaraju Gukesh only needed a draw to guarantee at least a rapid tiebreak match for the overall victory. His final round opponent, GM Hikaru Nakamura, as well as GMs Fabiano Caruana and Ian Nepomniachtchi, who faced off with one another, all needed to win to get to the tiebreak.

The Fates could not have designed a more dramatic finale.

With Gukesh comfortably holding the draw as Black in a fighting game against Nakamura, all eyes turned to the battle between Caruana and Nepomniachtchi. And this game did not disappoint, with Caruana gaining a winning position with elegant play, only for tragedy to strike:

QUEEN'S GAMBIT, EXCHANGE VARIATION (D35)

GM Fabiano Caruana (2803)

GM Ian Nepomniachtchi (2758)

FIDE Candidates (14), Toronto, 04.21.2024

Caruana opted for 1. e4 in all his previous games in Toronto, but now he decides to surprise Nepo and possibly avoid facing the Petroff. It turned out to be the right decision!

1. d4 Nf6 2. c4 e6 3. Nc3 d5

Slightly surprisingly, Nepo sticks to his guns for now, as he has used this move order to reach Queen's Gambit Declined structures before. But, given that he is in a must-win situation, perhaps the Nimzo-Indian would have been a good option?

4. cxd5 exd5 5. Bg5 Bb4!?

Nepo goes for the Ragozin Defense setup, a much sharper option for Black. 5. ... Be7 is the classic QGD approach.

6. e3 h6 7. Bh4 g5 8. Bg3 Ne4

Black goes for the sharpest option. This position is quite topical, with many recent GM battles.

9. Qc2 h5! 10. f3

A necessary move to save the bishop.

10. ... Nxg3 11. hxc3



Both players must have been happy in this position. Nepo has reached an imbalanced position due to the bishop pair, providing him a way to play for a win. At the same time, Fabi also had reason for optimism, since Black has significantly weakened his kingside.

11. ... Be6

A rare move. Strangely enough, Gukesh once used this move in a rapid game to beat none other than "Mr. Theory" — Anish Giri — himself!

12. Bd3

Now 12. 0-0-0 is perhaps less accurate as after 12. ... Nd7 13. a3 Bxc3! (improving on 13. ... Bd6 14. e4 Nb6 15. e5 Be7 16. f4 with complex play as in Giri – Gukesh, chess24.com 2022) gives Black an easy game, for example: 14. Qxc3 Qe7! 15. Bd3 (after 15. Qxc7 Bf5! White's king is quite weak) 15. ... 0-0-0 16. Ne2 Kb8 17. e4 dxe4 18. fxe4 Bg4 with a nice edge for Black.

12. ... c6 13. 0-0-0

Fabi goes for the most complex line. The alternative 13. a3 Bxc3+ 14. Qxc3 feels safer for White. He has the better bishop but Black is rock-solid with plenty of fight left.

13. ... Nd7 14. f4!

While objectively the position may be equal per the engines, our considerations are quite different when humans are involved. Black has to solve many practical problems, including (a) should he trade on f4?; (b) how should he deal with the threat of f4-f5, trapping the bishop?; and finally, (c) how to castle queenside?

14. ... Bg4 15. Nf3!?

Caruana plays the most logical move, developing his last piece. But Black is fine with accurate play.

The unusual backwards move 15. Be2! is best! After 15. ... Bxe2 16. Ngxe2 gxf4 17. gxf4 Nf6 18. e4!? dxe4 19. d5! White's attack is very promising from a human perspective, even if the engine spits out triple zeros.

15. ... Qe7

Inserting 15. ... gxf4! is much stronger; for example, 16. gxf4 Qe7 17. e4 dxe4 18. Bxe4 0-0-0 19. Nd5 Qd6 20. Nxb4 Qxb4 and Black is totally fine.

16. e4



16. ... Bxc3?

A decision that Nepo probably regretted after the game. After this move, White firmly takes over the initiative.

The right way was 16. ... dxe4! 17. Bxe4 gxf4 and now perhaps Fabi's idea was 18. Bxc6!?. It turns out that survival requires engine-like precision with 18. ... bxc6 19. Rhe1 Be6 20. gxf4 0-0-0 21. d5 Nb6! but Black should hold.

17. Qxc3 Bxf3

Likely Nepo also calculated 17. ... dxe4 18. Bxe4 0-0-0 (18. ... Qxe4?? 19. Rhe1) and here 19. Rde1! is a tough move to find, but this rook shift is most uncomfortable for Black to meet. After 19. ... Qf6 20. fxg5 Qg7 21. Kb1 White has an extra pawn, but with tripled pawns it's not easy to press for a big edge.

18. gxf3 dxe4 19. Bxe4!



Fabi shows great poise and finds the most

accurate move. When I was doing live commentary of this game, 19. fxe4 felt like an autopilot move, obtaining a massive center. Yes, White is a bit better after 19. ... 0-0-0, but it's not clear how to breakthrough. Instead Fabi uses precise calculation to get an even bigger edge!

19. ... gxf4 20. g4!

The key idea. Black now has too many problems to solve.

20. ... 0-0-0

A practical decision by Nepo to abandon the h-pawn.

21. d5!

The only move to maintain the advantage. Now Fabi played many moves of perfect chess, and everyone was certain of his impending victory.

21. ... h4 22. dxc6 Nc5 23. Bf5+ Kb8 24. Kb1!

An excellent time for prophylaxis.

24. ... b6 25. Rd7! Rxd7

Of course 25. ... Nxd7 26. c7+! wins for White.

26. cxd7 Rd8 27. Qd4 Nxd7 28. Rd1

Excellent centralization. Black is hopelessly pinned.

28. ... Qc5 29. Qxf4+ Qc7 30. Qd2!

Keeping the pin alive.

30. ... h3



Black is totally lost, but Nepo saved so many lost positions in this tournament that one should never underestimate his defensive

skills. And with time pressure starting to become a factor...

31. Be4!

A nice idea, with a threat of Qd2-d5.

31. ... a5 32. Qd5 Ka7 33. Qxf7

Many moves win, but why not snack on another pawn?

33. ... h2 34. Qh7 Kb8 35. a3

The natural instinct for a practical player. Fabi knows he's winning, and with Black totally paralyzed he makes *Luft* for the king. However, he could have finished the game in one move with the simple, strong 35. Rd2!. Once the h2-pawn falls, it's all over. White will easily convert his two pawn advantage.

35. ... Qe5!

Nepo plays for tricks.

36. Qh6!

Here 36. Rd2? would fail to 36. ... Rh8!.

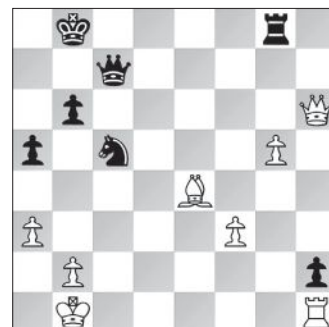
36. ... Qc7

Now 36. ... Rh8 would be met by 37. Qc6! and Black gets mated.

37. g5

Again, 37. Rd2! would be an easy win.

37. ... Rg8 38. Rh1 Nc5



39. Bh7?

While this move doesn't let go of the win, it makes it exponentially more difficult, allowing Nepo a tricky Exchange sacrifice to muddy the waters. 39. Bc2! would have finished the game on the spot. Now the h2-pawn falls.

39. ... Rxc5!

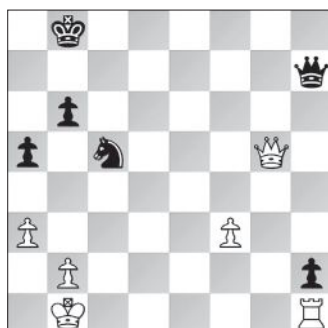
A great defensive resource!

The many faces of "Nepo": utter relief at holding the draw against Caruana (middle) and the pain of not qualifying (bottom).





40. Qxg5 Qxh7+



41. Ka1?

Fabi makes the time control... and immediately goes wrong. In truth, the game has become incredibly complex, and even strong GMs in the comfort of their homes would have trouble figuring it out.

Paradoxically, the winning path begins with 41. Ka2!, walking into a check from the queen! After 41. ... Qf7+ 42. Ka1! Nb3+ 43. Kb1 Qh7+ 44. Ka2! White uses an odd triangulation to bring the king to a2 and threaten the knight, winning an important tempo. Now after 44. ... Qf7 45. Rxh2! Black has no good discoveries and finds himself totally lost! This is not at all easy to see from afar, of course.

41. ... Qc2! 42. Qg8+ Ka7 43. Ka2 a4!

(see diagram top next column)

Black has reached a fortress, but the game is far from over!

44. f4 Nb3?

A logical move with the idea of ... Nb3-c1+, but it's wrong. The only move that maintains equality is 44. ... Ka6!.



POSITION AFTER 43. ... a4

45. Qg7+ Ka6 46. Qc3!

Fabi spots the key idea.

46. ... Qg2 47. Qc4+ Kb7 48. Re1!

Now the threats against Black's king are real.

48. ... Nc5 49. Qf1!

This beautiful regrouping to rescue the rook from h1 is complete. White is winning again!

49. ... Qd5+ 50. Kb1 Qf5+ 51. Ka1 Qc2 52. f5 Nd3 53. Rb1 Nc5 54. f6 Nb3+ 55. Ka2 Nd2 56. Qh1+ Ka7 57. Rc1 Qb3+ 58. Ka1 Qe6



59. Rc7+?

The position is so hard, and inevitably errors

like this one will creep in.

The win is there with 59. Rd1 Nb3+ 60. Kb1 Qxf6 (or 60. ... Qf5+ 61. Ka2 Qe6 62. Qxh2) 61. Qxh2, while 59. Re1 also wins.

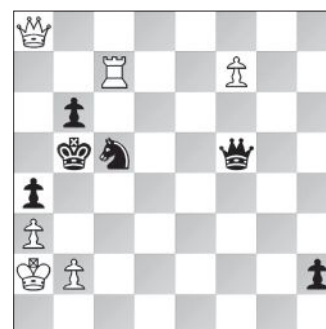
59. ... Ka6 60. f7 Nb3+ 61. Kb1 Qf5+?

Nepo returns the favor! White can't escape the checks after 61. ... Nd2+! 62. Kc2 (62. Ka1 Nb3+ is just a repetition) 62. ... Qf5+ 63. Kxd2 Qf2+ 64. Kd3 Qf5+ 65. Ke2 Qg4+ and the position will repeat.

62. Ka2 Nc5 63. Qa8+ Kb5 64. Qc6+

Fabi repeats to gain time.

64. ... Ka6 65. Qa8+ Kb5

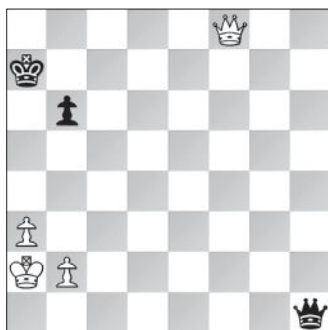


66. Qc6+?

Time pressure and Nepo's defensive tenacity take their toll. Now the game is drawn.

66. Qe8+! is the only winning move, but the key idea is 66. ... Ka6 67. Qe2+! — the black king is too open, and White wins in all lines. For instance, 67. ... b5 (alternatives: 67. ... Ka5 68. Ra7+; 67. ... Nd3 68. Qxh2) 68. Rc6+ Ka7 (68. ... Ka5 69. Qe1+ b4 70. Qxb4 mate; 68. ... Kb7 69. Qxb5+ also leads to mate) 69. Qe7+ Nb7 70. Qe3+ Kb8 71. Qe6! Qxe6+ 72. Rxe6 h1=Q 73. f8=Q+ and White should win.

66. ... Ka6 67. Re7 Qf1 68. Qa8+ Kb5
69. Qe8+ Ka6 70. Qa8+ Kb5 71. Qe8+ Ka6
72. Re4 Nxe4 73. Qxa4+ Kb7 74. Qxe4+
Ka7 75. Qa4+ Kb7 76. Qd7+ Ka6 77. Qc8+
Ka7 78. f8=Q Qxf8 79. Qxf8 h1=Q



The dust has settled, and while Caruana has an extra pawn, this is an easy draw for Nepo. The plan is simple: just wait and keep checking White's king. If White trades one of his pawns then an easy draw is reached, even with the trade of queens.

80. a4 Qd5+ 81. Ka3 Qd3+ 82. b3 Qd4
83. Qf7+ Kb8 84. Qe8+ Ka7 85. Qe7+ Kb8
86. Qe1 Qd6+ 87. Qb4 Qf6 88. Qd2 Qe7+
89. b4 Qe6 90. Qd3 Ka7 91. Qc3 Kb8
92. Qb3 Qf6 93. Qe3

Not much has changed, and Fabi knows it's a draw. Yet he continues to play out of sheer inertia.

93. ... Qd6 94. Kb3 Qd5+ 95. Kb2 Qd6

96. Qe8+ Ka7 97. Qf7+ Kb8 98. Kc3 Qe5+
99. Kd3 Qd6+ 100. Kc4 Qc6+ 101. Kb3 Qd6
102. Qf3 Qd4 103. Qe2 Qd5+ 104. Ka3
Qd6 105. Qb5 Qd4 106. Kb3 Ka7 107. Qe2
Qd5+ 108. Ka3 Qd4 109. Kb3, draw.

Fabi called it a day and offered a draw. Both players clearly were emotionally drained. Those watching the livestream could see the mutual distress — Nepo could be heard saying “I’m so sorry,” to which Fabi stoically replied, “My fault.”

This was a heartbreaking result for Caruana and his fans. But this kind of scenario is played out in every tournament, from weekend amateur event up to the Candidates. Nepomniachtchi's tricky and resourceful play managed to set problems, and the combination of nerves and time pressure led to blunders. Once given the chance, Nepomniachtchi grabbed it with both hands.

As soon as the clocks were stopped in the Caruana – Nepomniachtchi game, Gukesh could finally exhale as the tournament winner. The 17-year-old Indian is the youngest-ever challenger for the World Championship, a fact that is not completely surprising for a game that has gotten younger and younger with every passing year! He will face Ding Liren in the next World Championship match this coming fall.

One could hardly ascribe the youngster's success to luck. Gukesh simply played the best chess in Toronto. A combination of deep — but not boring! — solidity, a steadiness of nerves, and some high-level opening preparation combined to bring him his greatest success so far. Witness his smooth victory against his countryman, GM Santosh Vidit Gujrathi, with the black pieces. Gukesh was able to subtly exploit his opponent's overextension and conclude with an elegant king hunt.

GIUOCO PIANO (C55)

GM Vidit Santosh Gujrathi (2727)

GM Dommaraju Gukesh (2743)

FIDE Candidates (8), Toronto,
04.13.2024

1. e4 e5 2. Nf3 Nc6 3. Bc4 Nf6 4. d3 a6!?

A fresh idea from Gukesh and his team. I was watching the game live on-site with a few GM friends, and we were trying to guess the point. It will be clear in a few more moves...

5. 0-0 h6!?

Another waiting move from Black, stopping the aggressive Bc1-g5 pin setup. The point is also to wait for White to determine which



plan he will choose (6. a4 or 6. c3) and then decide where to put the bishop (6. ... Bc5 or 6. ... Be7).

6. a4

I suspect that Gukesh prepared 6. c3 Be7, when he would meet 7. d4 with 7. ... d6 and a solid structure.

6. ... Bc5!

The point! Gukesh transposes to a well-known Italian Game setup known to be good for Black.

7. Be3?!

Vidit was clearly out of book as he burnt about 40 minutes on his previous moves. But this plan is totally harmless for Black. Standard is 7. c3 with complex play.

7. ... d6 8. Nbd2 0-0 9. c3

Here 9. Bxc5 dxc5 leads to a roughly even position, despite White's nominally better pawn structure.

9. ... Re8

A slightly risky decision from Gukesh, which ultimately paid off. Instead 9. ... Bxe3 10. fxe3 Ne7 is a standard plan for these positions. Black reroutes the knight to g6, followed by ... c7-c6 and ... d6-d5.

10. b4?!

This push is more common with bishop still on c1. Here Black can capture on e3, which he wants to do anyways. 10. Qb3!? is an interesting idea to push pressure on f7, for example: 10. ... Re7 11. Bxc5 dxc5 12. Qc2 with a slightly better structure for White, but Black is solid.

10. ... Bxe3 11. fxe3 Be6

Black has obtained easy equality. Being lower on time, Vidit should have started to be more careful.

12. b5?



It's clear that Vidit was in a fighting mood,

but unfortunately this only creates more weaknesses, overextending the white position. White could still keep equality with 12. Bxe6 Rxe6 13. Qc2.

12. ... Nb8 13. Bxe6 Rxe6 14. Qc2 Nbd7

15. d4

Fighting for the center in this way was presumably Vidit's idea, but White's pawn mass is totally harmless.

15. ... Qe8 16. Rae1?

Giving up the a-file is a big strategic concession, but already it's hard to come up with an active plan.

The engine recommendation is 16. d5, but to me it feels like strategic suicide to give up the c5-outpost. White has counterplay after 16. ... Re7 17. c4 Nc5 (17. ... b6!?) 18. Nh4!.

16. ... axb5 17. axb5 Ra5 18. c4 Qa8 19. h3 Re8



Black's simple regrouping gives him a nice edge, while White is still struggling to come up with a plan.

20. Kh2 b6 21. Rf2 Ra2 22. Qd3 Ra3

23. Qb1 Qa4 24. Nh4

White's last hope for counterplay is to put the knight on f5, but in reality, even that knight would be just a paper tiger. Meanwhile Gukesh continues with straightforward play on the queenside.

24. ... Ra8!

Letting White do his worst. Perhaps 24. ... g6 25. Ref1 Kg7 would be a more prudent approach, when Black is still clearly better.

25. Nf5



25. ... Kf8!

An amazing move. The idea is simple: Black stops any Nf5-e7+ counterplay and is ready to invade with ... Ra3-a1 next.

26. Ref1 Ra1 27. Qd3 Qb4 28. Rxa1 Rxa1

29. c5?

A move that smacks of desperation, but it's hard to give White good advice here.

29. ... bxc5 30. Nc4 Qe1!

The new Challenger was a popular figure in the fan zone.



All of a sudden, White's king finds himself in a mating net. There's no defense against ... Qe1-g1+ and ... Nf6-h5+.

31. Re2 Qg1+ 32. Kg3 Nh5+ 33. Kh4 Ndf6



34. Nxh6 Qh2!

The most direct win, although there was nothing wrong with taking the knight.

35. Nf5 Rf1 36. g4

The central capture 36. dxe5 would give Black a choice of which checkmate to execute: 36. ... Rf4+ (or 36. ... Rxf5 37. exf5 Qg3 mate) 37. exf4 (alternatives: 37. g4 Rxg4 mate; 37. Kg5 Rg4+! 38. hxg4 Nh7 mate is another attractive checkmate) 37. ... Qxf4+ 38. g4 g5 mate.

36. ... Rxf5! 37. exf5

If 37. Rxh2 g5 mate is a pretty finale! Some players would be happy to allow fans the joy

Below: Firouzja and Gukesh stare intently at the computer screen, while FIDE Press officer Anna Burtasova looks on.

of seeing this mate played out on the board.

37. ... Qg3+ 38. Kg5 Nh7+, White resigned.

Gukesh only lost one game, but it was one that — for a player with less strength of character — could have ruined the tournament:

GET THAT MOJO WORKING

GM Alireza Firouzja (2760)

GM Dommaraju Gukesh (2743)

FIDE Candidates (7), Toronto,
04.11.2024



Through this point Gukesh had played very well, and it looks like Black is cruising to victory with the strong e4-knight and an extra pawn. But Firouzja finds a way to muddy the waters.

26. b4!

This strong pawn sacrifice is objectively best.

26. ... Qxb4 27. cxd5 Nxf2!

Gukesh finds the best reply. Black gets three pawns for the piece, and White will be tied up on the d-file. After 27. ... exd5 28. Rb3 Qa4 29. Rxb7 Qxd1+ 30. Rxd1 White has enough counterplay to keep the balance.

28. Kxf2 Rxd5 29. Re4

Black's position looks better, and it seems like the d4-knight may fall due to the pin. In truth, however, the game is close to even!

29. ... Rad8 30. Be3 Bc5 31. Qb3!

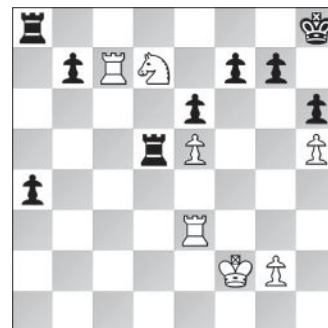
The only move to keep equality.

31. ... Qxb3 32. Nxb3 Bxe3+ 33. Rxe3 a5

34. Rc7!

Activity at any cost!

34. ... a4 35. Nc5 Ra8 36. Nd7



36. ... Kh7??

The losing move, played amidst horrible time pressure. One of the unusual things about this tournament is that there was no increment or delay in the first time control.

After the game, Gukesh mentioned 36. ...



a3 37. Rxa3 Rd8 38. Nc5 Rxe5, which likely leads to a draw, but clearly he was still trying to play for a win.

The alternative 36. ... b5! is a fun way to make a draw: 37. Rf3 b4 38. Rxf7 Rxd7! (the key move!) 39. Rfxd7 b3! 40. Rxc7 a3. Now White can't stop the pawns and has to settle for a perpetual, i.e., 41. Rh7+ Kg8 42. Rhg7+.

37. Rf3! a3 38. Rxf7 Kh8 39. Nf8!

Now, Black is getting mated.

39. ... a2 40. Ng6+, Black resigned.

And yet, paradoxically, this was the moment that Gukesh later said he felt he had a chance to win the tournament. Going into the rest day after such a loss would normally only magnify the suffering. But Gukesh realized that he was playing well, feeling his best, and that this loss was just a spot of bad luck — a black swan. As he said, “Maybe this loss gave me so much motivation.” What amazing poise, and especially for a 17-year-old!

When asked about the respective qualities of the great Indian players Viswanathan Anand and Gukesh, GM Grzegorz Gajewski (who has seconded both of them) expressed the opinion that while Anand's greatest strength was his ability to rapidly find brilliant ideas, Gukesh's main strength was his calm nerves and ability to keep his composure even in the most stressful moments.

Gukesh's closest pursuers were the winner of the previous two Candidates tournaments — Nepomniachtchi, as well as Americans Caruana and Nakamura.

Caruana started off slowly, but won consecutive games in rounds 12 and 13 against Vidit and GM Rameshbabu Pragganandhaa. Had he converted his winning position against Nepomniachtchi in the 14th and final round, it would surely have been one of the great comebacks in Candidates history!

Throughout the three Candidates tournaments in which he has participated, the only time Nepomniachtchi trailed another player was during the last round in Toronto! He went undefeated in this tournament, and his play was solid, showing great resourcefulness in the few games where he stood worse.

Nakamura, the oldest player in the tournament at 36(!!!), showed a bit of the wild and uncompromising chess for which he has been known since his earliest days. Between rounds eight and 12, all of his games were decisive. Were it not for his two losses against his “kryptonite” Vidit, we might have seen Nakamura in the World Championship match.

RUY LOPEZ, CLASSICAL DEFENSE (C65)

GM Hikaru Nakamura (2789)
GM Vidit Santosh Gujrathi (2727)
FIDE Candidates (2), Toronto,
04.05.2024

This game from round two was highlighted by Vidit's excellent opening preparation, which allowed him to obtain an advantage as Black after only 12 moves.

1. e4 e5 2. Nf3 Nc6 3. Bb5 Nf6 4. d3 Bc5 5. c3 0-0 6. 0-0 d6 7. h3 Ne7 8. d4

We've reached one of the topical lines of the 4. d3 Anti-Berlin, and now Vidit surprises Hikaru with some home cooking.

8. ... c6!?

The autopilot move has always been 8. ... Bb6, but after 9. Re1 c6 White has the extra option of 10. Bf1.

9. Bd3

Here 9. dxc5 cxb5 10. cxd6 Ng6 is what Vidit had in mind. The position is about even, despite the disruptive pawn on d6.

9. ... Bb6 10. dxe5?!

It's unclear what Nakamura had in mind when he decided to win the pawn, as clearly Vidit was loaded for bear. Hikaru is known as a good practical player, so it's strange that he didn't choose something simpler like 10. Re1 or 10. Nbd2.

Middle: Nakamura looks up at the spectators above the playing hall. Bottom: Vidit blocks everything out to concentrate.

10. ... dxe5 11. Nxe5



11. ... Bxh3!!

A shocking sacrifice that Hikaru likely missed. Now White faces a tough task to defend against a well-prepared opponent.



12. Nc4?

A serious mistake, after which Black is clearly better. After 12. gxh3 Qb8! 13. Bf4 Bc7 14. Bg3 Bxe5 15. f4 Bc7 the game is balanced, with plenty of fight left.

12. ... Bg4 13. Qc2 Bc7 14. e5 Nd7!?

Vidit doesn't mind giving up the h7-pawn as he correctly sees that it is White who has the weaker king.

15. Bxh7+ Kh8 16. Bd3 b5! 17. Ne3 Nxe5 18. Be2 f5!

Black has obtained a winning advantage. Now he proceeds to win the game with strong, energetic play.

19. f4 Bb6 20. Kf2 Nd5 21. Rh1+ Kg8 22. fxe5 Qg5 23. Ke1 Bxe3 24. Bxg4 Qxg4 25. Bxe3 Nxe3 26. Qe2 Qg3+ 27. Kd2 Rad8+ 28. Kc1 Qg5 29. b3 Nf1+, White resigned.

A shocking loss for the American, and with the white pieces! Despite losing his other game to Vidit as well, Nakamura was nevertheless able to forge an amazing run in the second half, putting himself position to fight for first in the final round!

Looking back, this Candidates tournament was marked by a high percentage of decisive games to accompany its dramatic finish. Stale, safe draws were hardly seen, and every round featured enterprising chess.

FORTUNE FAVORS THE BOLD

Along with the "Open" Candidates was the Women's Candidates. As with its twin, this tournament consisted of a double round robin between eight players. One curious difference was in its time controls. While the "Open" event was played at a rate of 40/120 (without increment) followed by G/30+30, the women voted to play 40/90,

G/30 with a 30 second increment beginning on move one.

A quick glance at the crosstable suggests that GM Tan Zhongyi of China ran away with the tournament, scoring +4 while nobody else finished above +1. But I have learned that the battle of chess is never really as simple as a crude tally of points.

Tan took the lead from the start, and after seven rounds she was in clear first. In the eighth round, however, she faced her compatriot GM Lei Tingjie and made a risky — in retrospect, even incorrect — choice to play for a win, suffering a bad loss as a result:

LONDON SYSTEM (D02)

GM Tan Zhongyi (2521)

GM Lei Tingjie (2550)

FIDE Women's Candidates (8), Toronto, 04.13.2024

With this game Lei was able to take revenge for her first round loss to Tan, and thereby catch her in shared first place.

1. d4 d5 2. Nf3 Nf6 3. Bf4

Another London System! We saw Firouzja use it against Gukesh in round seven, but there the opening didn't go smoothly for Firouzja. Tan also won with the Jobava London in round two against Vaishali.

3. ... c5 4. e3 Nc6 5. Nbd2 Bg4

This solid system is a good choice for those who don't want to learn too much theory and prefer their bishop outside the pawn chain. Another option is 5. ... cxd4 6. exd4 and here Black can play 6. ... Bg4 or 6. ... Bf5.

6. c3 e6 7. Qb3 Qc8

Typically, White is happy to force the queen to c8. However, in this system it's not easy

for White to put pressure on the c-file with the pawns being on c3 and c5.

8. h3 Bh5 9. Nh4

The idea is to win the bishop pair with g2-g4 followed by Nh4xg6.

9. ... Be7 10. g4 Bg6 11. Nxg6 hxg6

Now the game resembles a normal Slav structure: White has the bishop pair but Black is rock-solid.

12. Be2 a6 13. h4

An aggressive approach, but so long as Black doesn't castle short, she will be fine.

13. ... b5 14. h5 c4 15. Qd1 Qd8**16. Rg1**

Now 16. Bf3! would have been a clever waiting move, since Black can't immediately play 16. ... b4? due to 17. Nxc4.

16. ... gxh5!

A good decision from Lei, as she correctly saw that giving White the g-file was not a big deal.

17. gxh5 Bd6! 18. Bg5

Watching live, I thought White was making a good practical decision with this move to



The round eight matchup between Tan and Lei

force the repetition, as in doing so Tan would maintain her lead in first place.

18. ... Be7 19. Bf4 Bd6 20. Bg5 Be7 21. f4?



Baffling! White could have claimed a draw by threefold repetition, but instead she goes for it! While it's a brave decision, objectively Black is better as she has a clear plan with ... b5-b4, and it's not obvious how White plans on attacking, since Nd2-f3 weakens the e4-outpost.

21. ... Rb8

Preparing the logical ... b5-b4 push. Naturally 21. ... b4! right away is also quite strong.

22. a3 a5 23. Bh4?!

A dubious regrouping.

23. ... Kf8 24. Bg3 Bd6

Black is clearly better now. I don't understand what Tan was thinking in playing for the win.

25. Bh4 Ne7!

Excellent play from Lei — she's making good progress.

26. Bxf6 gxf6 27. Bf1



27. ... b4!

Black breaks through.

28. axb4 axb4 29. Bh3 f5!

No counterplay for you! The bishop on h3 is quite sad.

30. Qf3 Bc7 31. Ke2 Ng8!

A clever regrouping. The knight heads to e4 via the f6-square.

32. Qg3 Nf6 33. h6 Ke7!

The king is quite safe on e7.

34. Qg5 Qf8

Even stronger was 34. ... Kd7!.

35. Ra7 Rc8



36. Bg2

White had one last chance to garner counterplay with the surprising sacrifice 36. Bxf5! exf5 37. Rh1!, when Black is so tied up that she's not winning despite her material advantage! The resulting position is a great example of domination!

36. ... Rxh6

Now, as my coach GM Roman Dzindzichashvili used to say, Black has the pawn *and* the compensation! It's not hard to see that White is totally lost.

37. Nf3 Rh5 38. Qg3 Ne4 39. Qe1 bxc3 40. bxc3 Qg7 41. Bf1 Qh8 42. Qa1 Kf6 43. Rg2 Rh3 44. Ne5 Qh5+ 45. Ke1 Rxe3+

Now it's all over...

46. Re2 Qh4+ 47. Kd1 Rxe2 48. Bxe2 Qxf4 49. Qb2 Rh8 50. Bf3 Rh2 51. Qc1, and White resigned.

A great game from Lei!

But fortune, as they say, favors the bold. Tan's uncompromising play might not have worked out in this game, but over the course of an entire tournament it brought her success. One example: she bounced back in the very next round with a nice miniature against GM Vaishali Rameshbabu:

SICILIAN DEFENSE, ALAPIN VARIATION (B22)

GM Vaishali Rameshbabu (2475)

GM Tan Zhongyi (2521)

FIDE Women's Candidates (9), Toronto, 04.14.2024

1. e4 c5 2. c3 e6 3. d4 d5 4. exd5 exd5 5. Nf3

This pawn structure commonly arises from the Exchange French. Surprisingly, this setup was a big hit as in several games White essayed it vs the Petroff as well.

5. ... a6

Here 5. ... Nf6 6. Bd3 is Nakamura – Abasov from round 10 via transposition from a Petroff. Hikaru got a dream position out the opening: 6. ... c4 7. Bc2 Bd6 8. 0-0 0-0 9. h3 Nc6 10. Bg5 h6 11. Bh4 b5 12. Re1 a5 13. Ne5 Ra6 14. Nd2 Bc7 15. Qf3 and White won on move 58.

6. Bd3 c4 7. Bc2 Bd6 8. 0-0 Ne7 9. b3 cxb3 10. axb3 0-0

Black has obtained a comfortable position and just needs to finish her development to claim full equality. How can White drum up some chances?



Tan studies the board in her round nine game with Vaishali.

**11. Ng5!?**

Sensing that she's about to lose the initiative, Vaishali launches a probing knight jump to induce some weaknesses around the black king.

11. ... g6

Naturally 11. ... Bf5 is also fine, as White runs out of attacking resources after 12. Bxf5 Nxf5 13. Qh5 h6.

12. Qf3

Perhaps a bit too straightforward, as neither this nor the next move manage to create any real threats. The typical plan would be 12. Na3 with the idea of Na3-b5.

12. ... Qc7 13. h4

White is desperately trying to create an attack, but Black's position is rock-solid.

13. ... Nbc6 14. Ba3 Kg7!

A strong reaction from Tan — the king protects the key dark squares.

15. Re1 h5!

Another solid move, preparing ... Bc8-g4.

16. c4?

Now White must have miscalculated something as she gives up the d4-pawn without good reason. After 16. Bxd6 Qxd6 17. Nh3! Bg4 18. Qf4! it's time for White to circle the wagons and seek equality.

16. ... f6!

A nice intermezzo!

17. Bxd6 Qxd6 18. c5 Qc7 19. Nh3 Nxd4

And just like that, White is totally lost.

20. Qe3 Nxc2 21. Qxe7+ Rf7, White resigned.

A tough loss for Vaishali, but a great win for Tan. With this quick win she regained the sole lead in the tournament.

Vaishali is the older sister of Praggnanand-

haa, and it was very nice to see both siblings competing for the highest honors in their respective tournaments. While she started poorly, Vaishali had an incredible finish, winning five games on the bounce! Here is how she played spoiler for Lei:

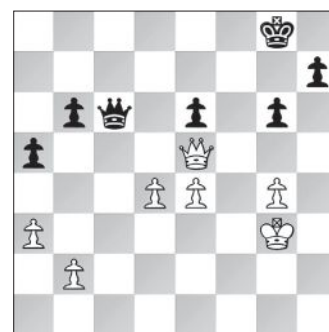
ONE FALSE MOVE

GM Vaishali Rameshbabu (2475)

GM Lei Tingjie (2550)

FIDE Women's Candidates (13),

Toronto, 04.20.2024



Deep into the endgame, and with time ticking away, Black now blunders with an innocuous-looking king move.

61. ... Kf7?

The careful 61. ... h6! keeps equality.

62. g5!

White fixes Black's pawns. Now all pawn endgames are winning for White.

62. ... Qc1?

Another blunder, but Black is already objectively lost.

63. Qf4+ Qxf4+ 64. Kxf4

White is essentially playing with an extra pawn. The remainder is easy.

64. ... a4 65. Ke5 Ke7 66. d5 exd5 67. exd5, Black resigned.

I was deeply impressed by Vaishali's play. After recently receiving her GM title, she has joined her brother to establish the first ever brother-sister grandmaster combination in history!

BEING THERE

It's not often that you get to see an event of this caliber in North America, so I decided



The final moments of the game between Lei and Vaishali

to visit Toronto with my friends and witness the Candidates first-hand.

The tournament took place in the historic Great Hall, established in 1889 — five years prior to Lasker defeating Steinitz in Montreal as part of the first World Championship match. Upon arriving, I was worried when I was told that the tickets for the match were already sold out. But Caïssa was with me. I was able to get a VIP pass, and I met so many interesting people. One of the most memorable was Professor Ken Regan, who was in charge of the anti-cheating committee.

Given all of the events of the last few years, the organizers implemented reasonable and robust anti-cheating measures. All spectators had to check their electronics, and each person was searched with a wand prior to entering the playing hall.

One curious feature of the tournament hall was its setup. Fans were able to observe the playing hall from a surrounding balcony. Not surprisingly the area was always filled with fans of all ages, who managed to patiently observe the games without making any real noise!

Kudos to the volunteers and organizers for creating a fun and friendly atmosphere, including a “Fan Zone” where attendees could meet with the players, ask questions, and get autographs. All the top players were approachable and happy to interact with the fans, even after long and grueling games. Such access really added to the welcoming feel of the tournament.

The Candidates were a great success, and I hope to see more world-class events on our continent in the future! ♠



2024 FIDE Candidates

TORONTO, APRIL 3-22, 2024

			1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	
1	GM Gukesh Dommaraju	2743	**	½½	½½	½½	1½	½1	01	11	9/14
2	GM Hikaru Nakamura	2789	½½	**	½½	½1	½1	00	11	½1	8½/14
3	GM Ian Nepomniachtchi	2758	½½	½½	**	½½	½½	11	1½	½½	8½/14
4	GM Fabiano Caruana	2803	½½	½0	½½	**	½1	½1	½1	1½	8½/14
5	GM Praggnanandhaa Rameshbabu	2747	0½	½0	½½	½0	**	1½	½½	11	7/14
6	GM Vidit Santosh Gujrathi	2727	½0	11	00	½0	0½	**	1½	½½	6/14
7	GM Alireza Firouzja	2760	10	00	0½	½0	½½	0½	**	½1	5/14
8	GM Nijat Abasov	2632	00	½0	½½	0½	00	½½	½0	**	3½/14

2024 FIDE Women's Candidates

TORONTO, APRIL 3-22, 2024

			1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	
1	GM Tan Zhongyi	2521	**	½½	10	11	½½	½1	½½	1½	9/14
2	GM Humpy Koneru	2546	½½	**	01	½1	½½	½½	01	½½	7½/14
3	GM Lei Tingjie	2550	01	10	**	10	½1	½½	½½	½½	7½/14
4	GM Vaishali Rameshbabu	2475	00	½0	01	**	½1	01	11	½1	7½/14
5	GM Aleksandra Goryachkina	2553	½½	½½	½0	½0	**	½½	1½	1½	7/14
6	GM Kateryna Lagno	2542	½0	½½	½½	10	½½	**	½½	½½	6½/14
7	IM Nurgul Salimova	2432	½½	10	½½	00	0½	½½	**	½½	5½/14
8	GM Anna Muzychuk	2520	0½	½½	½½	½0	0½	½½	½½	**	5½/14

Chess is HARD

Our intrepid reporter spent two weeks in the press room at the Candidates in Toronto. Here's what he saw and learned.

BY **ABHINAV SURESH**



I WORK IN PRIVATE EQUITY, and what drives me in my work is *excitement*. Investors are constantly on the search for compelling businesses that do well by doing good. I've never once thought that what we do is boring,

because to me, discovering something new never gets old.

In our shared realm of 64 squares, however, this is not often the case. Too many times we pull up a stream from a big event just to see the infamous Berlin draw once more. We click through the game to confirm that yes, these players are doing the same thing *again*, and we groan when we discover the players have left the board before the kings have been placed in the center.

There was no hint of this malaise in Toronto.

It is no exaggeration to say that the 2024 Candidates Tournament was the most exciting competition I've ever witnessed. It was stuffed with on-and-off the board drama, nail-biting finishes, and — best of all — fundamentally compelling chess.

Like the last Candidates in Madrid, I only managed to arrive after the first round; this time, however, I bettered my record by arriving for the beginning of the second, rather than the end of the third. I watched

Hikaru Nakamura get gorgeously crushed before move 10 with the white pieces, and I was one of the first interviewers to catch Vidit after one of the most spectacular wins of his career. When I asked — probably impolitely — what his strategy was after wins *and* losses, to bounce back, I received a jovial laugh along with a “It’s too early for that.”

As the middle rounds progressed, it turned out I would be proven right. Vidit lost his next two games, then bounced back in round six against a highly tilted Alireza. It was after round seven, where Gukesh lost to a swindling Alireza, that multiple players remarked how different this was from 2022. Here the tournament remained extremely tight at the top, with only Alireza and Abasov essentially out of contention. A sparkling round eight impressed not only the commentators, but several of my new chess friends as well, with Hikaru downing Fabiano and Gukesh playing “a perfect game” — Hikaru’s words to me after the tournament — against Vidit.

The Candidates is about the chess, but it’s also about relationships, and just as in Madrid, I made a number of new friends in Toronto. How could I not? The journalists’ room was chock-full of enthusiasts from local publications, big chess websites, and

even a translator, Yilin, who quickly became my best friend at the tournament. Midway through every round, after the time control was reached, she and I would go down to the spectators’ zone to play blitz. Thankfully I’ve been working on my chess; due to my recent training, I managed to hold my own, and even build up a positive score by the time I’d left!

There were too many other friends to count. I played GM Aryan Tari in a blitz game, where he humorously employed the Norwegian defense to my Ruy Lopez, crushing me after I sac’d a piece for highly dubious compensation. In Madrid I met and played WFM Anna Cramling on her stream; here, I met another popular streamer, WGM Qiyu (Nemo) Zhou, and defeated her in the final game of the day on her channel. I could tell she wasn’t pleased, but at least she didn’t award the point to her boyfriend.

I also met several legends of the game, both players and commentators, who had surrounded chess for years. Theo Wait, the director of operations at LiChess, became my regular dinner buddy. GM Ivan Cheparinov was only too happy to join us for drinks after, regaling us with stories from the Topalov world championships, the early days of his chess career, and (like parents everywhere) what he now was most proud

of — his six-year-old daughter, whom he told us had become quite the athlete.

I managed to grab pizza with both IM Sagar Shah, the head of ChessBase India, and the legendary GM Vishwanathan Anand, who took off his commentator's hat to remark that he'd never met a person from Nebraska! My friends Aba and Mattia became regular blitz sparring partners, goading me on whenever I took on Yilin, and cursing me good-naturedly when I managed to beat them.

The end of the tournament proved to be a roaring drama. If my friends and I were only half-watching the first 10 rounds, the last four saw us glued to our screens, analyzing every move and coming up with ideas. A suddenly monstrous Fabiano managed to win two games in a row in rounds 12 and 13 to keep his chances alive after a lackluster start. Hikaru managed to win three games in a row in rounds 10 through 12 after yet another poor performance against Vidit in round nine. And GM Ian Nepomniachtchi, the dazzling demon of the Candidates, held tight in one bad position after another, nursing a +2 score until he played a suddenly resurgent Vidit — or, better put, until Vidit

gave the game away, and Ian took the lead.

At this point in the Madrid Candidates, the atmosphere was almost pure levity. After all, Nepo had essentially won the tournament, so why stress? Every player loosened up and played aggressively, wanting to put on a show.

Caïssa had other plans in Toronto. Four players had an opportunity to win the tournament, and they were all playing each other in the final round. Hikaru desperately needed a win against Gukesh with white, while both Fabiano and Ian needed a win in their last round game to at least secure a tiebreak. I know this will sound cliché, but being there that day, watching those games with old and new friends... it was one of the most memorable days of my life.

Gukesh held Hikaru to a draw, seemingly without effort, and I slipped off to the press conference. There a visibly disappointed, but entirely gracious, Hikaru praised Gukesh's nerves, skill, and innate ability.

So Hikaru's dream, along with his tournament, was over, but there was still an American hope.

Essaying 1. d4 for the first time in recent

memory, Fabiano got a significantly better position right out of the opening and seemed to be well on his way to victory and a tiebreak showdown with Gukesh. But just one slip — 39. Bh7 — allowed Ian to muddy the waters, finding an ingenious Exchange sacrifice to create a maddeningly difficult endgame to convert.

Fabiano went from winning, to drawing, to winning again, to drawing again; all the while, my friends and I were glued to the screen, watching what would happen. I can still see the exact moment the game ended in a draw. Fabiano walked in for the press conference before Ian, his face clearly conveying his agony at squandering a potential pivot-point in his chess career. He plopped down into a player's chair and clicked through the pre-set computer at a rapid clip, searching desperately for the win that he knew was there not just once, but several times over the game.

Someone asked him how he felt, and Fabiano did not mince his words: "Well, I feel like an idiot!" When other members of the press were asked if we had any questions, I was moved by our silence. We knew it was

The scene in Toronto, where spectators had a true bird's-eye view!



PHOTO: COURTESY FIDE / MICHAL WALUSZA



not the time. Not now, not in this place.

I was awed by Ian's mindset in Madrid. Here, I was similarly impressed with Gukesh. The 17-year-old had a maturity beyond his years, and when I asked him if he'd thought about how he'd train for the upcoming World Championship, he humbly admitted that he hadn't thought about it much. He wasn't overly excited, or obviously relieved. It was clear that the reality of the win hadn't yet sunk in. But after meeting him several times in Toronto, I'm confident that when he turns his focus to the match, we're all going to be treated to something special.

I didn't have the time two years ago to stay for much of the closing ceremonies. This year, I'm so glad that I did. I spoke to nearly every single player during the festivities. Hikaru remarked, again, that it's hard to do something when your opponent plays nearly perfectly. Vidit mentioned an upcoming move and his excitement at such a life change. Abasov was the consummate gentleman, correcting me that he was "the lowest rated" — not "one of the lowest rated" players in recent Candidates memory. I mentioned that I hoped to see him at this level again, and he graciously accepted my words, knowing that his chances of doing so are slim.

Pragg and Gukesh were both polite and friendly with each other. They left early to play card games with Vaishali, all three laughing along the way. An obviously dejected Fabiano skipped the afterparty, while his famous "C-Squared" podcast counterpart, GM Cristian Chirila, was more than happy to exchange a few words. We spoke a bit about women's chess, especially from his vantage point as coach at Mizzou — when

From top left: Cheparinov plays blitz with Mattia, Suresh studies the games, Naka meets fans, Caruana obliges, and Vidit high-fives.

Nepomniachtchi sidled up to us, whiskey in hand. Cristian turned to him and asked with a grin, "What a hell of a Candidates, yeah?" to which Ian merely responded with a sardonic smile. He held his glass up to Cristian and me, where we clinked glasses one final time.

At the Madrid Candidates, it was Ian's display of dominance at the board that prompted me to take my chess more seriously. His champion's mindset impressed me then, and I felt it again here. But this time, my inspiration came from disappointment. It was stirring to see the faces and thoughts Fabiano, Hikaru, and Ian — three greats of this golden generation of chess — as they wrestled with the realization that this opportunity had passed them by. As I get older, I understand this kind of thing more. Later I saw Hikaru mention on stream that he was closer to the end of his chess career than its beginning, and the heartbreak of his tournament washed over me once more.

I'm bringing a lot back from Toronto. Since Madrid, I'd begun working with a coach to improve my game and the results showed up slowly, then drastically. I feel the pains and joys of chess more acutely now. I watched some of the giants of the game, arguably at the top of their career, fall short in the most brutal way. I'm consistently reminded of a blunt mantra from my coach — "Chess is hard" — and my feelings around that are continually reinforced.

Chess is indeed hard. It was hard for Hikaru and Fabiano to miss their shots, but I know they will keep playing. After all, what choice do they possibly have? They're chess players. It's what they do.

I ask myself that too, when I'm tired and don't want to study, or when I suffer a setback at the board. What choice do I possibly have? None other than to keep at it. It's what I do, too. ♠



MAKE → YOUR → MOVE

BY **FM CARSTEN HANSEN**

THIS MONTH'S PUZZLES ARE TAKEN FROM THIS YEAR'S TWO Candidates Tournaments that took place in Toronto in April.

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.

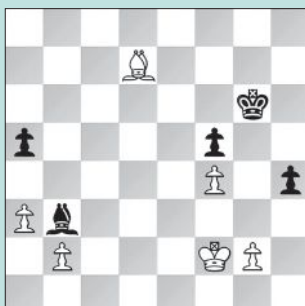
Try first to solve the puzzle before reading the text at the bottom of the page. If unsuccessful, play through the solution, but return to the puzzle in one or two weeks to see if you can now solve it. That way you gradually expand your tactical vision, and it will be more likely that you will spot tactics 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.



WHITE TO MOVE

TACTIC 2.



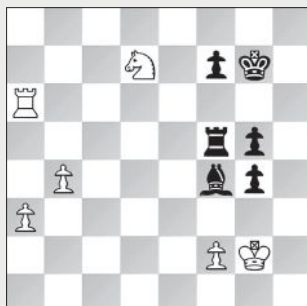
WHITE TO MOVE

TACTIC 3.



WHITE TO MOVE

TACTIC 4.



WHITE TO MOVE

TACTIC 5.



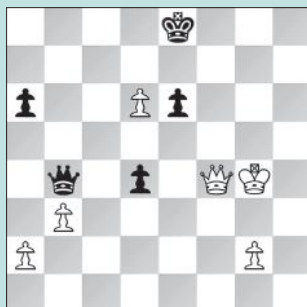
BLACK TO MOVE

TACTIC 6.



BLACK TO MOVE

TACTIC 7.



WHITE TO MOVE

TACTIC 8.



WHITE TO MOVE

TACTIC 9.



WHITE TO MOVE

Position 1: LOOSEN WHERE IT HURTS

Position 2: THROUGH THE DOOR

Position 3: HOLE, THEN BIGGER

Position 4: PURE SIMPLICITY

Position 5: SACRIFICE TO TRAP

Position 6: TANGOING WITHOUT COVER

Position 7: DOOR-OPENING KEY

Position 8: A WALK ON THE WILD SIDE

Position 9: BRUTE FORCE

Caro-Kanning à la Bronstein

You've got to risk it to get the biscuit.

BY BRUCE PANDOLFINI

A

POPULAR CARO-KANN IDEA is to challenge a white knight on e4 with a direct attack from the king-knight. After 5. Nxf6+,

Black has two ways to recapture. Taking away from the center by 5. ... exf6, the so-called Korchnoi-Tartakower Variation, is actually thought to be sounder, though White does get a healthy queenside pawn majority. Riskier, yet not unreasonable, is to capture toward the center, 5. ... gxf6, isolating the h-pawn. This is known as the Bronstein-Larsen Variation. It can lead to rather exciting play, as in this month's encounter played in Budapest in 1955 between Istvan Bilek (White) and David Bronstein, whose name adorns the line. To be sure, Bronstein provides a model contest on which to further Caro-Kann study.

CARO-KANN DEFENSE, BRONSTEIN-LARSEN VARIATION (B16)

Istvan Bilek
GM David Bronstein
Budapest, 1955

1. e4 c6 2. d4 d5 3. Nc3 dxe4 4. Nxe4 Nf6
5. Nxf6+ gxf6 6. c3



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. **

6. **Par Score 5** **Bf5**
Black develops the queen-bishop before playing ... e7-e6, which would enclose it inside the pawn chain.

7. **Ne2**
This is fine, though White certainly had other moves at his disposal. **

7. **Par Score 5** **h5**
Black anticipates White's kingside maneuvering. You may accept **full credit** for 7. ... Nd7 or 7. ... e6.

8. **Nf4**
White launches an attack to the exposed h-pawn. **

8. **Par Score 5** **h4**
This is really the only logical parry.

9. **Qf3**
White plays it safely, but both 9. Bd3 and 9. Qb3 were reasonable. **

9. **Par Score 5** **Nd7**
Black develops, while overprotecting e5 and f6. You may accept **full credit** for either 9. ... Qd6 or 9. ... e6.

10. **g4**
White pushes a kingside attack, but Black is okay. **

10. **Par Score 5** **hxg3 e.p.**
By capturing *en passant*, Black gets rid of his isolated h-pawn. You may, however, accept **full credit** for the simple retreat, 10. ... Bh7.

11. **fxg3**
White opts to keep a passed h-pawn by capturing away from the center. More prudent was capturing toward it, 11. hxg3. **

11. **Par Score 5** **e5**
An energetic advance, but you may accept **full credit** for 11. ... Qa5, which protects the f5-bishop.

12. **g4**
Reprising this attack looks promising, but it's also weakening. Better was the straightforward development, 12. Bd3. **

12. **Par Score 5** **Bh7**
Black has the edge after this retreat. White's position is looser.

13. **Ne2**
White saves the knight. He could have tried 13. Bd3. Give yourself **1 bonus point** if you realized that the alternative 13. Bd3 exf4 14. Bxh7 Rxh7 15. Qe4+ (better is 15. Bxf4) fails to 15. ... Qe7. **

13. **Par Score 5** **exd4**
Black plays to open lines. You may accept **full credit** for 13. ... Bd6.

14. **cx d4**
On 14. Nxd4, Black has 14. ... Qe7+, with promising possibilities in the air. **

14. **Par Score 5** **Bb4+**
Bronstein hopes to take advantage of White's uncastled king.

15. **Kf2**
This is actually better than 15. Bd2, when Black has 15. ... Ne5, since 16. dxe5 allows 16. ... Qxd2+ (**1 bonus point**). **

15. **Par Score 5** **Qe7**
By clearing the home rank, Bronstein can castle queenside, plus he does have the threat of 16. ... Be4.

16. **Bg2**
White develops and avoids the skewer at e4. **

16. **Par Score 5** **0-0-0**

ABCS OF CHESS

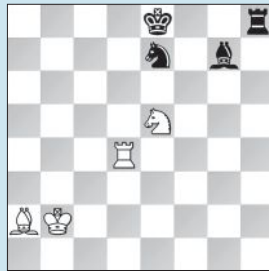
THESE PROBLEMS ARE ALL related to key positions in this month's game. In each case, White is to move. The answers can be found in Solutions on page 63.

JULY EXERCISE:

Throughout your chess career, you are likely to encounter positions worthy of further investigation and analysis. A good exercise is to think of another position from that is similar, whether from your own play or from that of another player. Ask pertinent questions about these positions. How are they similar? How are they different? What openings did they arise from? Such thinking will make you more attuned to helpful analogous setups in the future.

PROBLEM 1

Mating net



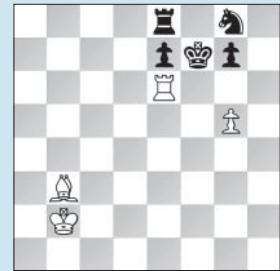
PROBLEM 2

Mating net



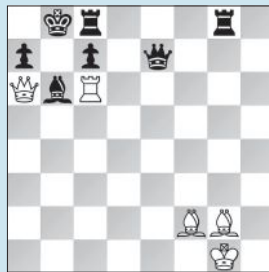
PROBLEM 3

Mating net



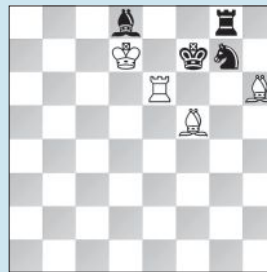
PROBLEM 4

Mating net



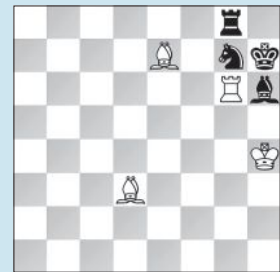
PROBLEM 5

Mating net



PROBLEM 6

Mating net



With the king safely out of the way, and the rooks now connected, Black is ready for action.

17. a3

This is a natural attack, though safer and sturdier was 17. Be3. **

17. Par Score 7 Bc5

It's possible this move wasn't considered, since Black had another good retreat. You may accept 5 points part credit for playing 17. ... Bd6.

18. Be3

White develops and protects the d-pawn. Also good was 18. Rd1. **

18. Par Score 6 Ne5

With this surprising intrusion, White's position begins to crumble.

19. dxe5

It's hard to turn down a gift horse. Just ask the Trojans. **

19. Par Score 6 Rd3

A crushing pin, to which there is no good answer.

20. Qxf6

White hopes to break Black's attack by trading off queens. **

20. Par Score 5 Qxf6+

This wins, as does 20. ... Bxe3+ (full credit).

21. exf6**

21. Par Score 6 Rxe3

This is a twinge better than 21. ... Bxe3+, though you may accept full credit for playing that alternative.

22. Rhc1

Both 22. Rac1 and 22. b4 were just as playable, though White's position would not be salvageable. **

22. Par Score 5 Bb6

23. Bf3

On 23. Bxc6, Black had 23. ... Re6+ (1 bonus point). **

23. Par Score 6 Be4

The win is becoming clearer now. Black has multiple threats.

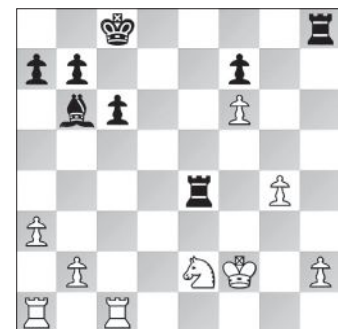
24. Bxe4**

24. Par Score 5 Rxe4+

The position is hopeless. If 24. Kf3, then 24. ... Re3+ wins at least the knight.

25. White resigned.

A neat little win by Bronstein. ♠



POSITION AFTER 24. ... Rxe4+

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

Good and Bad Bishops

It's nothing personal, but some bishops are better than others.

BY **WGM TATEV ABRAHAMYAN**

P

AWN STRUCTURES DETERMINE piece play. You are already probably familiar with the general rule that one should not

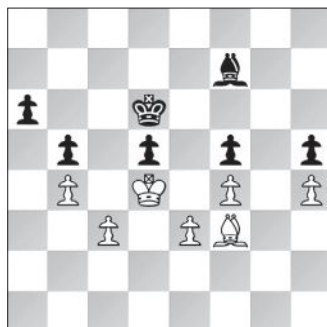
put pawns on the same color as your bishop, but instead, put them on the same color as the opponent's bishop in order to limit it.

This is linked to the concept of good and bad bishops. A good bishop is free to slide around the board, while a bad bishop is one that is stuck behind a pawn chain.

To help make this clear, consider this classic example from GM Yuri Averbakh's *Chess Endings: Essential Knowledge*. The material is equal, but the black bishop is limited by its own pawns, and it faces the impossible task of defending several weak pawns. Its counterpart, on the other hand, enjoys freedom of movement, and it doesn't have to worry about a counterattack as all the pawns are on the dark squares. White wins a pawn by putting Black in *zugzwang*.

AVERBAKH

White to play and win, 1954



WHITE TO MOVE

Black is barely hanging on here. If it were her move here, one of the pawns already would fall.

1. Be2!

The beginning of a maneuver to lose a tempo.

1. ... Be8

One of just two moves that don't immediately lose a pawn. Both king moves are hopeless. After 1. ... Ke6 2. Kc5 the white king scoops up the queenside pawns, and after 1. ... Kc6 2. Ke5 the kingside pawns fall.

At least 1. ... Bg6 holds on a bit longer, but after 2. Bd3! Bh7 3. Bf1 Black again has just two moves that don't immediately lose. If 3. ... Bg8 (or 3. ... Bg6 4. Bg2!, forcing the bishop to f7, when White wins with 5. Bf3) 4. Be2 Bf7 5. Bf3 White has successfully passed the turn to Black.

2. Bd3

Now Black has to play only moves, and none are happy.

2. ... Bg6

Or 2. ... Bd7 3. Bc2 Be6 (3. ... Bc8 loses a pawn immediately to 4. Bd1) 4. Bd1 Bf7 5. Bf3 and wins.

3. Bc2 Bh7 4. Bb3 Bg8 5. Bd1 Bf7 6. Bf3

Black is in *zugzwang*.

There are several openings, including the French Defense and the King's Indian Defense, that leave Black with a problematic bishop. In a typical French structure, such as the one we see here, the c8-bishop gets stuck behind the pawn chain, while White's

light-squared bishop can menace the black kingside from the d3-square.



BLACK TO MOVE

In the King's Indian Defense, there are many lines where Black plays counterintuitively by locking the diagonal for his own dark-squared bishop.



WHITE TO MOVE

I think the future of the "KID bishop" is more dire than that of the French bishop, as Black needs to not only trade the e4-pawn but also push his own e5-pawn to free it. The point of locking the center in the King's Indian is to launch a kingside attack. There

are tradeoffs involved in this decision: the g7-bishop becomes a long-term problem, but the c8-bishop is a key contributor to the attack. From White's point of view, the light-squared bishop is limited by the pawn structure, while the dark-squared bishop is key to helping White advance on the queenside.

As a French Defense aficionado, I feel compelled to make a case for the French bishop. In my last column, I suggested that the reader consider the long-term potential of the pieces when thinking about the position. While it's difficult to make this argument about a bishop trapped behind a pawn chain, the pawn structure in the French is dynamic, leaving hope that the bishop can come to life. When it does join the action, it feels as though Black has an extra piece.

THE FRENCH BISHOP

Deimante Daulytė-Cornette (2406)

IM Elisabeth Paeltz (2443)

French Women's Teams (3), Mulhouse, 05.10.2014



BLACK TO MOVE

15. ... Be8

Whenever I have played this move in a French position, I feel hopeful about the future of my bishop. Here Black defends the d4-pawn by simply getting the bishop out of the way!

16. h6 Ng6 17. h7 Rh8 18. Ng3 f6!



Blowing the position open, but also — and most importantly — opening a path for the bishop.

19. exf6 Nxf4 20. Qf3 Nd5 21. Ne4 Bg6!

Finally the bishop has joined the action, and on the most dangerous diagonal for White.

22. Rh4 Rxh7 23. Rxh7 Bxh7 24. Nc5 Qe5+ 25. Be2 Bxc2

How quickly White's position fell apart! Although her position was objectively better, the position was risky for White with the king in the center and the unstable central pawn structure. Now the French bishop has done its job by picking up a very important pawn.

26. f7 Bxb1 27. f8=Q Rxf8 28. Qxf8+ Nd8 29. Qe8 Nf6 30. Qe7 d3, White resigned.

I would also ask the reader to consider whether their pieces are good, or whether they simply *look* good. Recently I was reading through GM Johan Hellsten's *Mastering Chess Strategy*, and I came across a nice game of maneuvering a knight from a passive square to an outpost. While it was quite an instructive example, what really stood out to me was the bishop play in the game.

NUANCES

GM Yannick Pelletier (2602)

IM Marie Sebag (2475)

French Teams (6), 04.30.2007



WHITE TO MOVE

When I look at this position, several things stand out to me. First, of course, is the knight on c5. Beautifully placed on an outpost, it gives White better control of the c-file and hits two targets: the pawns on b7 and e6. Next, let's compare the bishops. The bishop on h5 is a "pseudo-good" piece. Yes, it has managed to escape from behind the pawn chain and now inhabits an open diagonal, but it is not contributing to the action. The

bishop is neither attacking or defending any key squares. Contrast this to the f1-bishop, which despite retreating to its initial square, targets the part of the board where the game will be decided.

27. Nxb7

It is not surprising that White has a winning tactical shot here given the quality of his pieces. The bishop on f1 plays a large part in this.

27. ... Nxd4

Black tries to hang on tactically, but this will prove difficult.

Hopeless for Black is 27. ... Rxb7 28. Bxa6; after 28. ... Rbc7 29. Bxc8 Rxc8 30. b5 Na7 31. Rxc8+ Nxc8 32. b6 Black is completely helpless. The pawns are too far advanced, and she doesn't have the reserves to deal with their further advancement.

28. Rxc7 Rxc7 29. Nc5 Rxc5



30. Qxd4!

Also winning is 30. bxc5 Nb3 31. Qb2 Nxa1 and now White has to find the accurate 32. c6! with the idea of Qb2-b8 and c6-c7. After 32. ... Be8 33. Qb8 White is good value for the full point, but has to find a series of accurate moves to convert. The text is easier.

30. ... Rc6 31. b5!

Now the bishop comes into play. White creates a passed pawn that will be impossible to counter.

31. ... axb5 32. a6 Rc8 33. Qb6 Qf8 34. a7, Black resigned.

There is no way to stop Bf1xb5-c6.

To sum up: when thinking about the value of the pieces, keep in mind both their current contributions to the game as well as their potential as the game progresses. If the pawn structure is static, remember to take into consideration how it can be changed throughout the game before committing to piece exchanges. ♠

Subtle Strategies

A new book from Gambit helps hone your strategic sense.

BY IM JOHN WATSON

T

HE WORD “STRATEGY” in chess writing might refer to a range of different topics. Often it is

used as a rough equivalent for “positional play,” and the classic books on strategy emphasize standard positional techniques, e.g., gaining a knight outpost on d5, doubled pawn play, exploiting the bishop pair, sacrificing the Exchange for compensation, and the like. Players interested in developing an understanding for such positions can do so by studying opening theory and master games, reading instructive texts and articles, and playing a lot. Some books on chess strategy also include tactical devices, attacks, and how to form a plan.

Ukrainian GM Martyn Kravtsiv’s new book *400 Chess Strategy Puzzles* takes another approach: he presents exercises that are designed to train a student’s ability to find the right move, whether simple or subtle, in messy, real-world positions. These positions, all of which have arisen in practical play (with an emphasis on lesser-known games), don’t generally feature familiar pawn structures, so for the most part you won’t be able to rely on pattern recognition to solve the exercises. Instead, Kravtsiv’s book tests a player’s ability to assess the key features of an unfamiliar position, and in particular to analyse the position to decide what should be played, including which ideas can and can’t be allowed by the opponent.

400 Chess Strategy Puzzles is organized in three chapters: “1. Pawns and Structure,” “2.

400 Chess Strategy Puzzles

Martyn Kravtsiv

A unique exercise book to improve your all-round chess thinking

Pieces,” and

“3. Mixed Themes.” Within each chapter the exercises are divided into four difficulty levels. Kravtsiv notes that “the simplest ones (level 1) should be readily solvable by average club players, while ‘level 2-3 are primarily targeted at stronger club level or those with higher aspirations (i.e. the 2000-2300

rating range).”

Finally, level 4 puzzles “are intended to task players around 2400 and higher.” He suggests five to 10 minutes of solving time and a maximum of 15 minutes, adding that you won’t learn anything useful by jumping straight ahead to the solution.

I tried to solve a good many of these puzzles and can assure you that they aren’t easy. You probably won’t solve many of them correctly purely by relying on your chess instincts, as you might be able to do with tactical exercises or in positions with clearcut positional themes. I even failed to get a few level 1 and 2

problems right, usually because I stopped looking too quickly and failed to appreciate a tactical nuance that spoiled the strategic idea.

And that’s precisely what’s so valuable about these exercises — you feel as if you’re at the board, on your own, and you can’t

Here are a couple of the puzzles by way of example. For reasons of space, these are positions with fairly short solutions, but be aware that there are plenty of more complicated exercises to humble even the experienced master. Check your answers in the blue box below.

Martyn Kravtsiv (2598)
Vincent Keymer,
Chess.com Rapid, 08.13.2022



Ori Taichman (2297)
 Maksym Dubnevych
 European Ch, Terme Catez, 03.29.2022



In conclusion, *400 Chess Strategy Puzzles* examines a problem seldom written about in chess books, i.e., how to approach a po-

It's for this reason that I believe this book would fit perfectly into a broader chess teaching program. For example, for a specified time in each lesson, a teacher and student could work on an exercise and then compare notes and thoughts on their solutions. The student would thus gain insight into typical thought processes that guide players as well as the positional clues that inform their decisions.

Published by Gambit Publishing, Kravtsov's work can also be purchased as a Kindle e-book with an interactive board on LiChess, or as an app-book to be read on their Gambit Chess Studio App. Naturally it's available in paperback as well. ♠

Kravtsiv, Martyn. 400 Chess Strategy Puzzles. Berks: Gambit Publications, 2024. ISBN 9781805040507, 208pp. (Available at uscf-sales.com, product code B0215GB, \$24.95.)

Black has a large advantage and went on to win.

19. ... Nx13!
White had probably missed this when he played 16. Ke2.

16. Ke2?? "This is certainly natural, but better was 16. c3! "with an equal position. For example, 16. ... Rhf8 (16. ... Nxe2 17. Rg1 Nf4 [17. ... Nh4 18. Rxe7 with equality] 18. Rxe7 Nd3 19. Ke2 Nxf2 20. Nxf2 Bxf2 21. Rf1 Bb6 22. Rff7 is equal) 17. Ke2 Rd7 18. Rg1 and Black can still not take the f-pawn."

SOLUTION TO TAICHMAN - DUBNEVYCH

Kravtsov: "Black has a very passive game. There are problems finding useful moves, whereas White has many ways to strengthen his position." After showing how slow play is fruitless, he suggests

TOURNAMENT LIFE ANNOUNCEMENTS

At their March 16-17, 2024 meeting, the Executive Board made the following changes to the Grand Prix program:

1. Effective April 30, 2024, the Executive Board moved to remove the temporary change to US Chess Grand Prix rules implemented during the COVID-19 pandemic and to return to previous Grand Prix requirements. Motion Passed 8-0.
2. Effective immediately, the Executive Board moved to allow tournaments limited to seniors, juniors, women, or college students to be eligible for the US Chess Federation Grand Prix, provided they satisfy the other Grand Prix requirements. Motion Passed 8-0.

For complete information on the Grand Prix program, please visit new.uschess.org/us-chess-grand-prix-program

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/\[TLA ID\]](https://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 • HERITAGE
EVENT • GRAND PRIX • ENHANCED GRAND PRIX
• JUNIOR GRAND PRIX

U.S. Junior Open Championship

JULY 12-14, 2024, ILLINOIS

Event site: Hilton Chicago/Northbrook Address: 2855 N. Milwaukee Avenue, Northbrook, IL 60062 Overall prize fund: \$10,000 GP Points: 150 FIDE Rated: Y Handicap accessible: Y Residency restriction: N Organizer: Kevin Bachler Email: kevin_bachler@cavemanchess.com Phone: 224-985-5245 Website: cavemanchess.com TLA ID: 43470

NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP EVENT

U.S. Blind Open Championship

JULY 12-14, 2024, ILLINOIS

Event site: Hilton Chicago/Northbrook Address: 2855 N. Milwaukee Avenue, Northbrook, IL 60062 Overall prize fund: \$10,000 GP Points: n/a FIDE Rated: Y Handicap accessible: Y Residency restriction: N Organizer: Kevin Bachler Email: kevin_bachler@cavemanchess.com Phone: n/a Website: cavemanchess.com TLA ID: 43472

NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP EVENT • HERITAGE
EVENT • GRAND PRIX • ENHANCED GRAND PRIX

U.S. Senior Open Championship

JULY 12-14, 2024, ILLINOIS

Event site: Hilton Chicago/Northbrook Address: 2855 N. Milwaukee Avenue, Northbrook, IL 60062 Overall prize fund: \$13,000 GP Points: 150 FIDE Rated: Y Handicap accessible: Y Residency restriction: N Organizer: Kevin Bachler Email: kevin_bachler@cavemanchess.com Phone: 224-985-5245 Website: cavemanchess.com TLA ID: 43473

HERITAGE EVENT • AMERICAN CLASSIC •
NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP EVENT • ENHANCED
GRAND PRIX

124th Annual U.S. Open Championship

JULY 27-AUGUST 4, 2024, VIRGINIA

Event site: Norfolk Sheraton Waterside Hotel Address: 777 Waterside Drive, Norfolk, VA 23510 Overall prize fund: \$60,000 GP Points: 300 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/2024/usopen> TLA ID: 42683

Grand Prix

The Grand Prix point totals reflect all rated event information as of December 31, 2023 for the 2023 Grand Prix.

FINAL 2023 GRAND PRIX STANDINGS

Congratulations to the 2023 Grand Prix Champion

GM JIANCHAO ZHOU

Name	State/Ctry	Pts
1. GM JIANCHAO ZHOU	MA	562.94
2. GM FIDEL CORRALES JIMENEZ	NY	481.29
3. GM MIKHAIL ANTIPOV	MO	194.33
4. GM ARMAN MIKAELIAN	--	157.10
5. GM RAHUL P SRIVATSHAV	--	128.74
6. FM SHARVESH R DEVIPRASATH	TX	121.10
7. IM SAFAL BORA	MI	115.33
8. GM ALEXANDER FISHBEN	TN	111.47
9. IM JUSTIN WANG	TX	108.62
10. GM VIKTOR MATVIISHEN	TX	106.09

2023 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 2024. For information visit new.uschess.org/us-chess-grand-prix-program

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

52nd Annual World Open, top 6 sections

JULY 3-7, 2024, PENNSYLVANIA

Event site: Philadelphia Sheraton Downtown Hotel Address: 201 North 17th Street, Philadelphia, PA 19103 Overall prize fund: \$208,000 GP Points: 300 FIDE Rated: Y Handicap accessible: Y Residency restriction: N Organizer: Continental Chess Association Email: director@chess.us Phone: director@chess.us Website: chesstour.com TLA ID: 41566

HERITAGE EVENT • GRAND PRIX

26th Annual Sacramento Chess Championship

JULY 5-7, 2024, CALIFORNIA, N.

Event site: Holiday Inn Express & Suites Address: 2224 Auburn Boulevard, Sacramento, CA 95821 Overall prize fund: \$11,000 GP Points: 40 FIDE Rated: Y Handicap accessible: N Residency restriction: N Organizer: John P McCumiskey Email: sacchess@sbcglobal.net Phone: 916-524-9479 Website: sacmentochessclub.org TLA ID: 42062

HERITAGE EVENT • GRAND PRIX • ENHANCED
GRAND PRIX

32nd Annual World Open Game/10 Championship

JULY 6, 2024, PENNSYLVANIA

Event site: Philadelphia Sheraton Downtown Hotel Address: 201 North 17th Street, Philadelphia, PA 19103 Overall prize fund: \$2,200 GP Points: 20 FIDE Rated: N Handicap accessible: Y Residency restriction: N

Organizer: Continental Chess Association Email: director@chess.us Phone: director@chess.us Website: chesstour.com TLA ID: 42570

GRAND PRIX • ENHANCED GRAND PRIX

Dragon Knight Indian Independence Day Classic

JULY 6, 2024, NORTH CAROLINA

Event site: Dragon Knight Chess Center Address: 2000 Bearcat Way, Suite 104, Morrisville, NC 27560 Overall prize fund: \$580 GP Points: 10 FIDE Rated: N Handicap accessible: Y Residency restriction: N Organizer: Dragon Knight Chess Center Email: jon@dragonknightchess.com Phone: 919-422-2535 Website: DragonKnightChess.com TLA ID: 43651

GRAND PRIX • ENHANCED GRAND PRIX •
REGIONALS

35th Annual World Open Blitz Championship

JULY 7, 2024, PENNSYLVANIA

Event site: Philadelphia Sheraton Downtown Hotel Address: 201 North 17th Street, Philadelphia, PA 19103 Overall prize fund: \$3,000 GP Points: 30 FIDE Rated: N Handicap accessible: Y Residency restriction: N Organizer: Continental Chess Association Email: director@chess.us Phone: director@chess.us Website: chesstour.com TLA ID: 42571

GRAND PRIX • ENHANCED GRAND PRIX

Dragon Knight Embrace Your Geekness Day Classic

JULY 13, 2024, NORTH CAROLINA

Event site: Dragon Knight Chess Center Address: 2000 Bearcat Way, Suite 104, Morrisville, NC 27560 Overall prize fund: \$580 GP Points: 10 FIDE Rated: N Handicap accessible: Y Residency restriction: N Organizer: Dragon Knight Chess Center Email: jon@dragonknightchess.com Phone: 919-422-2535 Website: DragonKnightChess.com TLA ID: 43652

GRAND PRIX • JUNIOR GRAND PRIX

7th Annual Queen City of the Prairie Open including Tarrant County & Fort Worth Championships

JULY 19-21, 2024, TEXAS

Event site: Radisson Hotel Fort Worth North-Fossil Creek Address: 2540 Meacham Blvd, Fort Worth, TX 76106 Overall prize fund: \$3,600 GP Points: 10 FIDE

Rated: Y Handicap accessible: Y Residency restriction: N Organizer: Louis Reed Email: alliancechess@gmail.com Phone: 817-752-4788 Website: facebook.com/events/695302329815920 TLA ID: 42565

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

29th Annual Pacific Coast Open

JULY 19-21, 2024, CALIFORNIA, S.

Event site: Hilton Orange County Airport Address: 18800 Macarthur Blvd, Irvine CA 92612 Overall prize fund: \$30,000 GP Points: 150 FIDE Rated: Y Handicap accessible: N Residency restriction: N Organizer: Continental Chess Association Email: director@chess.us Phone: director@chess.us Website: chesstour.com TLA ID: 42922

GRAND PRIX • ENHANCED GRAND PRIX •
JUNIOR GRAND PRIX

17th Annual Chicago Class Championships

JULY 19-21, 2024, ILLINOIS

Event site: Westin Chicago North Shore Hotel Address: 601 N Milwaukee Avenue, Wheeling IL 60090 Overall prize fund: \$30,000 GP Points: 150 FIDE Rated: Y Handicap accessible: Y Residency restriction: N Organizer: Continental Chess Association Email: director@chess.us Phone: director@chess.us Website: chesstour.com TLA ID: 42770

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

32nd Annual Southern Open

JULY 19-21, 2024, FLORIDA

Event site: Wyndham Orlando Resort Address: 8001 International Drive, Orlando, FL 32819 Overall prize fund: \$20,000 GP Points: 150 FIDE Rated: Y Handicap accessible: Y Residency restriction: N Organizer: Continental Chess Association Email: director@chess.us Phone: director@chess.us Website: chesstour.com TLA ID: 42771

GRAND PRIX • ENHANCED GRAND PRIX

9th annual Chicago Class Blitz Championship

JULY 20, 2024, ILLINOIS

Event site: Westin Chicago North Shore Hotel Address: 601 N Milwaukee Avenue, Wheeling IL 60090 Overall prize fund: \$500 GP Points: 10 FIDE Rated: N Handicap accessible: Y Residency restriction: N

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.

Organizer: Continental Chess Association **Email:** director@chess.us **Phone:** [202-234-0700](tel:202-234-0700) **Website:** chess.us **TLA ID:** 44012

GRAND PRIX • ENHANCED GRAND PRIX

10th annual Pacific Coast Open Blitz Championship

JULY 20, 2024, CALIFORNIA, S.

Event site: Hilton Orange County Airport **Address:** 18800 MacArthur Blvd, Irvine CA 92612 **Overall prize fund:** \$500 **GP Points:** 10 **FIDE Rated:** Y **Handicap accessible:** N **Residency restriction:** N **Organizer:** Continental Chess Association **Email:** director@chess.us **Phone:** [202-234-0700](tel:202-234-0700) **Website:** chess.us **TLA ID:** 44013

GRAND PRIX • ENHANCED GRAND PRIX

Central North Carolina Open Championship

JULY 20, 2024, NORTH CAROLINA

Event site: Dragon Knight Chess Center **Address:** 2000 Bearcat Way, Suite 104, Morrisville, NC 27560 **Overall prize fund:** \$1,390 **GP Points:** 20 **FIDE Rated:** N **Handicap accessible:** Y **Residency restriction:** N **Organizer:** Dragon Knight Chess Center **Email:** jon@dragonknightchess.com **Phone:** 9194222535 **Website:** DragonKnightChess.com **TLA ID:** 44145

GRAND PRIX

Summer Swiss

JULY 20-21, 2024, MICHIGAN

Event site: Ed Mandell Chess Club **Address:** 22011 Coolidge, Oak Park, MI 48237 **Overall prize fund:** \$1,350 **GP Points:** 10 **FIDE Rated:** Y **Handicap accessible:** Y **Residency restriction:** N **Organizer:** Edward Mandell **Email:** eman1943@aol.com **Phone:** 2486352375 **Website:** n/a **TLA ID:** 43974

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

25th Annual Pittsburgh Open

JULY 26-28, 2024, PENNSYLVANIA

Event site: Doubletree Green Tree Hotel **Address:** 500 Mansfield Ave, Pittsburgh, PA 15205 **Overall prize fund:** \$13,000 **GP Points:** 80 **FIDE Rated:** Y **Handicap**

accessible: N **Residency restriction:** N **Organizer:** Continental Chess Association **Email:** director@chess.us **Phone:** [202-234-0700](tel:202-234-0700) **Website:** chess.us **TLA ID:** 43154

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

29th Annual Bradley Open

JULY 26-28, 2024, CONNECTICUT

Event site: Sheraton Hartford Hotel at Bradley International Airport **Address:** 1 Bradley Airport, Windsor Locks CT 06096 **Overall prize fund:** \$15,000 **GP Points:** 120 **FIDE Rated:** Y **Handicap accessible:** N **Residency restriction:** N **Organizer:** Continental Chess Association **Email:** director@chess.us **Phone:** [202-234-0700](tel:202-234-0700) **Website:** chess.us **TLA ID:** 43155

GRAND PRIX • ENHANCED GRAND PRIX

Dragon Knight National Cowboy Day Classic

JULY 27, 2024, NORTH CAROLINA

Event site: Dragon Knight Chess Center **Address:** 2000 Bearcat Way, Suite 104, Morrisville, NC 27560 **Overall prize fund:** \$580 **GP Points:** 10 **FIDE Rated:** N **Handicap accessible:** Y **Residency restriction:** N **Organizer:** Dragon Knight Chess Center **Email:** jon@dragonknightchess.com **Phone:** 9194222535 **Website:** DragonKnightChess.com **TLA ID:** 44131

GRAND PRIX

Wilkins Cup

AUGUST 3, 2024, NEBRASKA

Event site: LaVista Hotel and Conference Center **Address:** 12520 Westport Parkway, La Vista, NE 68128 **Overall prize fund:** \$1,000 **GP Points:** 15 **FIDE Rated:** N **Handicap accessible:** Y **Residency restriction:** N **Organizer:** Bruce G Draney **Email:** bruceykins49@hotmail.com **Phone:** 4023126335 **Website:** kingregistration.com **TLA ID:** 44420

GRAND PRIX • ENHANCED GRAND PRIX • JUNIOR GRAND PRIX

14th annual Central California Open

AUGUST 9-11, 2024, CALIFORNIA

Event site: Doubletree Hotel **Address:** 2233 Ventura St,

Fresno CA 93710 **Overall prize fund:** \$10,000 **GP Points:** 100 **FIDE Rated:** Y **Handicap accessible:** N **Residency restriction:** N **Organizer:** Continental Chess Association **Email:** director@chess.us **Phone:** [202-234-0700](tel:202-234-0700) **Website:** chess.us **TLA ID:** 43685

GRAND PRIX • STATE CHAMPIONSHIP EVENT

2024 Michigan Upper Peninsula Open

AUGUST 10-11, 2024, MICHIGAN

Event site: Bay Mills Community College **Address:** 12214 W Lakeshore Drive, Brimley, MI 49715 **Overall prize fund:** \$1,000 **GP Points:** 6 **FIDE Rated:** N **Handicap accessible:** N **Residency restriction:** N **Organizer:** Jim Sawaski **Email:** jsawaski@yahoo.com **Phone:** 810-955-7271 **Website:** michess.org **TLA ID:** 43975

GRAND PRIX

11th Annual Washington International

AUGUST 10-14, 2024, MARYLAND

Event site: Rockville Hilton **Address:** 21750 Rockville Pike, Rockville, MD 20852 **Overall prize fund:** \$40,650 **GP Points:** 150 **FIDE Rated:** Y **Handicap accessible:** N **Residency restriction:** N **Organizer:** Michael W Regan **Email:** mregan@stsci.edu **Phone:** 4104195130 **Website:** mdchess.com **TLA ID:** 42528

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

54th Annual Continental Open

AUGUST 15-18, 2024, MASSACHUSETTS

Event site: Best Western Royal Plaza Hotel **Address:** 181 Boston Post Road W, Marlborough MA 01752 **Overall prize fund:** \$30,000 **GP Points:** 150 **FIDE Rated:** Y **Handicap accessible:** N **Residency restriction:** N **Organizer:** Continental Chess Association **Email:** director@chess.us **Phone:** [202-234-0700](tel:202-234-0700) **Website:** chess.us **TLA ID:** 43659

STATE CHAMPIONSHIP EVENT • GRAND PRIX

96th Wisconsin Closed Championship / Marshall Rohland Memorial

AUGUST 16-18, 2024, WISCONSIN

Event site: Holiday Inn - Manitowoc **Address:** 4601 Calumet Ave., Manitowoc, WI 54220 **Overall prize fund:** \$4,500 **GP Points:** 40 **FIDE Rated:** N **Handicap**

accessible: Y **Residency restriction:** Y **Organizer:** Terran Chess Federation **Email:** terranchess@gmail.com **Phone:** 920-279-5688 **Website:** n/a **TLA ID:** 41708

GRAND PRIX

2024 Austin Chess Club Summer Open

AUGUST 16-18, 2024, TEXAS

Event site: Austin Southpark Hotel **Address:** 4140 Governors Row, Austin, TX 78744 **Overall prize fund:** \$5,000 **GP Points:** 30 **FIDE Rated:** Y **Handicap accessible:** N **Residency restriction:** Y **Organizer:** Austin Chess Club **Email:** austinchessclub@austinchess.com **Phone:** [n/a](tel:n/a) **Website:** <https://www.austinchestournaments.com/> **TLA ID:** 44084

GRAND PRIX • ENHANCED GRAND PRIX

10th annual Continental Open Blitz Championship

AUGUST 17, 2024, MASSACHUSETTS

Event site: Best Western Royal Plaza Hotel **Address:** 181 Boston Post Road W, Marlborough MA 01752 **Overall prize fund:** \$500 **GP Points:** 10 **FIDE Rated:** N **Handicap accessible:** N **Residency restriction:** N **Organizer:** Continental Chess Association **Email:** director@chess.us **Phone:** [202-234-0700](tel:202-234-0700) **Website:** chess.us **TLA ID:** 44014

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

56th annual Atlantic Open

AUGUST 23-25, 2024, DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

Event site: Omni Shoreham Hotel **Address:** 2500 Calvert St., NW, Washington, DC 20008 **Overall prize fund:** \$30,000 **GP Points:** 150 **FIDE Rated:** Y **Handicap accessible:** N **Residency restriction:** N **Organizer:** Continental Chess Association **Email:** director@chess.us **Phone:** [202-234-0700](tel:202-234-0700) **Website:** chess.us **TLA ID:** 43683

GRAND PRIX • ENHANCED GRAND PRIX • JUNIOR GRAND PRIX

19th annual Indianapolis Open

AUGUST 23-25, 2024, INDIANA

Event site: Hilton Garden Inn Indianapolis Airport **Address:** 8910 Hatfield Drive, Indianapolis IN 46241 **Over-**

56th annual Atlantic Open

August 23-25 or 24-25, 2024 - New site: Omni Shoreham Hotel, DC

A Heritage Event With \$30,000 GUARANTEED PRIZES!

5-rd Swiss, 40/80, SD/30; d30 (2-day option, rds 1-2 G/60 d10), Omni Shoreham Hotel, 2500 Calvert St. NW, Washington, DC 20008.

7 sections. 150 Grand Prix Points.

Major Section (1900/up): \$3000-1500-700-400-300, clear/tiebreak 1st \$100 bonus, top USCF Under 2300 \$1300-700. FIDE rated.

U2100: \$2000-1000-500-400-300. FIDE rated.

U1900: \$2000-1000-500-400-300.

U1700: \$1800-900-500-300-200.

U1500: \$1500-800-400-300-200.

U1300: \$1300-700-400-300-200.

U1000: \$800-400-300-200-100.

Unrated prize limits: U1000

\$150, U1300 \$300, U1500 \$450,

U1700 \$600, U1900 \$750.

Mixed doubles: best male/female 2-player team combined score (team average under 2200): \$1000-500-300-200. Different sections, schedules OK; register (no extra fee) by 2 pm Sat.

Top 6 sections entry fee: \$148 at chessaction.com by 8/21, \$170 later or at site until 1 hour before round 1 (no checks, credit cards OK). **GMs free**, \$130 from prize.

Under 1000 Section: all \$50 less.

Re-entry \$70 (no Major to Major).

Cannot play below Online Regular rating - 100 points. August official ratings used; unofficial USCF ratings usually used if otherwise unrated. **USCF membership** required. See chessevents.us for special rates.

3-day schedule: Reg. ends Fri 6 pm, rds. Fri 7 pm, Sat 11 am & 5 pm, Sun. 10 am & 3:30 pm.

2-day schedule: Reg. ends Sat 10 am, rds. Sat 11 am, 2 pm & 5 pm; Sun. 10 am & 3:30 pm.

1/2-point byes OK (limit 2), must commit before round 2.

Bring set, board, & clock if possible- **none supplied.**

Hotel rates: \$159-159, use link at chessevents.us or call 202-234-0700, reserve by 8/8 or rate may increase. Hotel parking is valet only: \$45/day; see chessevents.us for more parking.

Enter online: Chessaction.com. \$15 service charge for refunds.

Email: director@chess.us. (see also: chessevents.us, chess.us).

Blitz Sat. 9:30 pm, enter by 9:10.

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.

all prize fund: \$15,000 GP Points: 100 FIDE Rated: Y Handicap accessible: N Residency restriction: N Organizer: Continental Chess Association Email: director@chess.us Phone: [617-254-4737](tel:617-254-4737) Website: chess.tour.com TLA ID: 43684

GRAND PRIX • ENHANCED GRAND PRIX

11th annual Atlantic Open Blitz Championship
AUGUST 24, 2024, DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
Event site: Omni Shoreham Hotel Address: 2500 Calvert St., NW, Washington, DC 20008 Overall prize fund: \$500 GP Points: 10 FIDE Rated: N Handicap accessible: N Residency restriction: N Organizer: Continental Chess Association Email: director@chess.us Phone: [617-254-4737](tel:617-254-4737) Website: chess.tour.com TLA ID: 44015

GRAND PRIX

3rd Annual Nashville Summer Classic (FIDE Championship)
AUGUST 26-SEPTEMBER 1, 2024, TENNESSEE
Event site: Nashville Chess Center (Rds. 1-4), Millennium Maxwell House Hotel (Rds. 5-9) Address: 2911 Belmont Blvd., Nashville, TN 37212 (Rds. 1-4), 2025 Rosa Parks Blvd., Nashville, TN 37208 (Rds. 5-9) Overall prize fund: \$13,000 GP Points: 120 FIDE Rated: Y Handicap accessible: N Residency restriction: N Organizer: Nashville Chess Center Email: director@nashvillechess.org Phone: [615-254-4737](tel:615-254-4737) Website: nashvillechess.org TLA ID: 43450

GRAND PRIX

3rd Annual Nashville Summer Classic (Weekend Event)
AUGUST 30-SEPTEMBER 1, 2024, TENNESSEE
Event site: Millennium Maxwell House Hotel Address: 2025 Rosa Parks Blvd., Nashville, TN 37208 Overall prize fund: \$10,000 GP Points: 40 FIDE Rated: N Handicap accessible: N Residency restriction: N Organizer: Nashville Chess Center Email: director@nashvillechess.org Phone: [615-254-4737](tel:615-254-4737) Website: nashvillechess.org TLA ID: 43452

HERITAGE EVENT • GRAND PRIX • ENHANCED GRAND PRIX • JUNIOR GRAND PRIX • STATE CHAMPIONSHIP EVENT

146th annual New York State Championship—America's oldest annual tournament!
AUGUST 30-SEPTEMBER 2, 2024, NEW YORK
Event site: Albany Marriott Address: 189 Wolf Road, Albany, NY 12205 Overall prize fund: \$18,000 GP Points: 150 FIDE Rated: Y Handicap accessible: N Residency restriction: N Organizer: Continental Chess Association Email: director@chess.us Phone: [617-254-4737](tel:617-254-4737) Website: chess.tour.com TLA ID: 43687

GRAND PRIX • STATE CHAMPIONSHIP EVENT

2024 Michigan Open
AUGUST 30-SEPTEMBER 2, 2024, MICHIGAN
Event site: Radisson Hotel Detroit Southfield Address: 26555 Telegraph Rd., Southfield, MI 48033 Overall prize fund: \$4,500 GP Points: 30 FIDE Rated: Y Handicap accessible: Y Residency restriction: N Organizer: Michigan Chess Association Email: jeffchess64@gmail.com Phone: [810-955-7271](tel:810-955-7271) Website: michess.org TLA ID: 44152

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

83rd New England Open
AUGUST 30-SEPTEMBER 2, 2024, MASSACHUSETTS
Event site: Westford Regency Inn & Conference Center Address: 219 Littleton Road, Westford, MA 01886 Overall prize fund: \$4,300 GP Points: 30 FIDE Rated: Y Handicap accessible: Y Residency restriction: N Organizer: Massachusetts Chess Association Email: info@masschess.org Phone: [603-891-2484](tel:603-891-2484) Website: masschess.org TLA ID: 44113

GRAND PRIX • ENHANCED GRAND PRIX

2024 Illinois Open
AUGUST 31-SEPTEMBER 2, 2024, ILLINOIS
Event site: DoubleTree by Hilton Lisle-Naperville Address: 3003 Corporate W Dr., Lisle, IL 60532 Overall

prize fund: \$10,000 GP Points: 50 FIDE Rated: Y Handicap accessible: N Residency restriction: N Organizer: Wilson's Chess & King Registration Email: info@kingregistration.com Phone: n/a Website: kingregistration.com/event/ilopen24 TLA ID: 44141

HERITAGE EVENT • GRAND PRIX • ENHANCED GRAND PRIX • STATE CHAMPIONSHIP EVENT

76th Annual New Jersey Open
AUGUST 31-SEPTEMBER 2, 2024, NEW JERSEY
Event site: Cherry Hill DoubleTree by Hilton Address: 2349 Marlon Pike West, Cherry Hill, NJ 08002 Overall prize fund: \$8,650 GP Points: 80 FIDE Rated: N Handicap accessible: Y Residency restriction: N Organizer: New Jersey State Chess Federation Email: tournaments@njscf.org Phone: n/a Website: n/a TLA ID: 43925

GRAND PRIX • STATE CHAMPIONSHIP EVENT

2024 Michigan Speed Championship
AUGUST 31, 2024, MICHIGAN
Event site: Radisson Hotel Detroit Southfield Address: 26555 Telegraph Rd., Southfield, MI 48033 Overall prize fund: \$600 GP Points: 10 FIDE Rated: N Handicap accessible: N Residency restriction: N Organizer: Michigan Chess Association Email: jeffchess64@gmail.com Phone: [810-955-7271](tel:810-955-7271) Website: michess.org TLA ID: 44161

GRAND PRIX • ENHANCED GRAND PRIX • STATE CHAMPIONSHIP EVENT

10th annual New York State Blitz Championship!
SEPTEMBER 1, 2024, NEW YORK
Event site: Albany Marriott Address: 189 Wolf Road, Albany, NY 12205 Overall prize fund: \$800 GP Points: 10 FIDE Rated: N Handicap accessible: N Residency restriction: N Organizer: Continental Chess Association Email: director@chess.us Phone: [617-254-4737](tel:617-254-4737) Website: chess.tour.com TLA ID: 44016

HERITAGE EVENT • GRAND PRIX • JUNIOR GRAND PRIX • STATE CHAMPIONSHIP EVENT

Thomas Bergquist Memorial, 85th WV State Championship
SEPTEMBER 14-15, 2024, WEST VIRGINIA
Event site: Harrison County Senior Citizen Center Address: 500 W Main St., Clarksburg, WV 26301 Overall prize fund: \$500 GP Points: 6 FIDE Rated: N Handicap accessible: Y Residency restriction: N Organizer: Harrison County Chess Club Email: greerlaw@aol.com Phone: [13046419241](tel:13046419241) Website: n/a TLA ID: 43199

GRAND PRIX • JUNIOR GRAND PRIX • STATE CHAMPIONSHIP EVENT

78th Peter P. Lahde Tennessee OPEN and State Championship! (2024)
SEPTEMBER 27-29, 2024, TENNESSEE
Event site: Memphis Chess Club Address: 195 Madison Avenue, Memphis, TN 38103 Overall prize fund: \$6,025 GP Points: 15 FIDE Rated: N Handicap accessible: Y Residency restriction: N Organizer: Memphis Chess Club Email: info@memphischessclub.com Phone: [9015013257](tel:9015013257) Website: memphischessclub.com TLA ID: 44142

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

41st Annual Reno Western States Open
OCTOBER 4-6, 2024, NEVADA
Event site: Circus Circus Reno Hotel/Casino Address: 500 N. Sierra Street, Reno, NV 89503 Overall prize fund: \$27,500 GP Points: 150 FIDE Rated: Y Handicap accessible: Y Residency restriction: N Organizer: Jerry Weikel Email: wackyjkl@aol.com Phone: [775-354-8728](tel:775-354-8728) Website: renocheess.org TLA ID: 44252

Regional

ALABAMA

STATE CHAMPIONSHIP EVENT
JULY 20, 2024

Alabama Dual-Rated State Chess Championship

Event site: Evangel Church Address: 3975 Vaughn Rd., Montgomery, AL 36106 Overall prize fund: \$1,350 GP Points: n/a FIDE Rated: N Handicap accessible: Y Residency restriction: N Organizer: Doug Strout Email: evangelchess@yahoo.com Phone: n/a Website: facebook.com/evangelchessclub TLA ID: 43282

SEPTEMBER 27-29, 2024

78th Peter P. Lahde Tennessee OPEN and State Championship! (2024) (TN)
See Grand Prix.

ARIZONA

JULY 5-7, 2024

26th Annual Sacramento Chess Championship (CA-N)
See Grand Prix.

JULY 19-21, 2024

29th Annual Pacific Coast Open (CA-S)
See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

ARKANSAS

STATE CHAMPIONSHIP EVENT

AUGUST 16-18, 2024

2024 Arkansas State Chess Championship
Event site: Courtyard by Marriott Address: 154 E Aspen Lane, Russellville, AR 72802 Overall prize fund: \$5,000 GP Points: n/a FIDE Rated: N Handicap accessible: Y Residency restriction: N Organizer: Tony W. Davis Email: tony64davis@yahoo.com Phone: [5017444911](tel:5017444911) Website: n/a TLA ID: 43947

SEPTEMBER 27-29, 2024

78th Peter P. Lahde Tennessee OPEN and State Championship! (2024) (TN)
See Grand Prix.

CALIFORNIA

JULY 3-7, 2024

52nd Annual World Open, top 6 sections (PA)
See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

JULY 5-7, 2024

26th Annual Sacramento Chess Championship (CA-N)
See Grand Prix.

JULY 19-21, 2024

29th Annual Pacific Coast Open (CA-S)
See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

JULY 20, 2024

10th annual Pacific Coast Open Blitz Championship (CA-S)
See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

AUGUST 9-11, 2024

14th annual Central California Open (CA)
See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

AUGUST 10-14, 2024

11th Annual Washington International (MD)
See Grand Prix.

COLORADO

AUGUST 3, 2024

Wilkins Cup (NE)
See Grand Prix.

CONNECTICUT

JULY 3-7, 2024

52nd Annual World Open, top 6 sections (PA)
See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

JULY 26-28, 2024

29th Annual Bradley Open (CT)
See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

AUGUST 10-14, 2024

11th Annual Washington International (MD)
See Grand Prix.

AUGUST 15-18, 2024

54th Annual Continental Open (MA)
See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

DELAWARE

JULY 3-7, 2024

52nd Annual World Open, top 6 sections (PA)
See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

DIST. OF COLUMBIA

AUGUST 24, 2024

11th annual Atlantic Open Blitz Championship (DC)
See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

FLORIDA

JULY 3-7, 2024

52nd Annual World Open, top 6 sections (PA)
See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

JULY 14, 2024

FREE the US Virgin Islands - Benefit #2 (TX)
See Texas.

JULY 19-21, 2024

32nd Annual Southern Open (FL)
See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

AUGUST 10-14, 2024

11th Annual Washington International (MD)
See Grand Prix.

GEORGIA

APRIL 8, 2024-MONTHLY ON SATURDAY

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](tel:770.744.8595) Website: <https://mythinkchess.com/> TLA ID: 37216

JULY 3-7, 2024

52nd Annual World Open, top 6 sections (PA)
See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

JULY 19-21, 2024

32nd Annual Southern Open (FL)
See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

AUGUST 10-14, 2024

11th Annual Washington International (MD)
See Grand Prix.

SEPTEMBER 27-29, 2024

78th Peter P. Lahde Tennessee OPEN and State Championship! (2024) (TN)
See Grand Prix.

IDAHO

JULY 5-7, 2024

26th Annual Sacramento Chess Championship (CA-N)
See Grand Prix.

ILLINOIS

JULY 3-7, 2024

52nd Annual World Open, top 6 sections (PA)
See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

JULY 12-14, 2024

U.S. Junior Open Championship (IL)

See National Events.

JULY 12-14, 2024

U.S. Senior Open Championship (IL)

See National Events.

JULY 12-14, 2024

Caveman Medior Open

Event site: Hilton Chicago/Northbrook Address: 2855 N. Milwaukee Avenue, Northbrook, IL 60062 Overall prize fund: \$10,000 GP Points: n/a FIDE Rated: Y Handicap accessible: N Residency restriction: N Organizer: Kevin Bachler Email: kevin_bachler@cavemanchess.com Phone: 224-985-5245 Website: cavemanchess.com TLAID: 43474

JULY 13, 2024

2024 US Junior Blitz -- \$1K Prizes Guaranteed

Event site: Hilton Chicago/Northbrook Address: 2855 N. Milwaukee Avenue, Northbrook, IL 60062 Overall prize fund: \$1,000 GP Points: n/a FIDE Rated: N Handicap accessible: N Residency restriction: N Organizer: Kevin Bachler Email: kevin_bachler@cavemanchess.com Phone: 224-985-5245 Website: cavemanchess.com TLAID: 43483

JULY 13, 2024

2024 US Senior and Caveman Medior Quick Chess -- \$1K guaranteed!

Event site: Hilton Chicago/Northbrook Address: 2855 N. Milwaukee Avenue, Northbrook, IL 60062 Overall prize fund: \$1,000 GP Points: n/a FIDE Rated: N Handicap accessible: N Residency restriction: N Organizer: Kevin Bachler Email: kevin_bachler@cavemanchess.com Phone: 224-985-5245 Website: cavemanchess.com TLAID: 43484

JULY 13, 2024

Caveman Beginner Open #1 (7-13-24)

Event site: Hilton Chicago/Northbrook Address: 2855 N. Milwaukee Avenue, Northbrook, IL 60062 Overall prize fund: n/a GP Points: n/a FIDE Rated: N Handicap accessible: N Residency restriction: N Organizer: Kevin Bachler Email: kevin_bachler@cavemanchess.com

com Phone: 224-985-5245 Website: cavemanchess.com TLAID: 43489

JULY 14, 2024

Caveman Beginner Open #2 (7-14-24)

Event site: Hilton Chicago/Northbrook Address: 2855 N. Milwaukee Avenue, Northbrook, IL 60062 Overall prize fund: n/a GP Points: n/a FIDE Rated: N Handicap accessible: N Residency restriction: N Organizer: Kevin Bachler Email: kevin_bachler@cavemanchess.com Phone: 224-985-5245 Website: cavemanchess.com TLAID: 43490

JULY 19-21, 2024

17th Annual Chicago Class Championships (IL)

See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

JULY 20, 2024

9th annual Chicago Class Blitz Championship (IL)

See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

JULY 20-21, 2024

Summer Swiss (MI)

See Grand Prix.

AUGUST 10-14, 2024

11th Annual Washington International (MD)

See Grand Prix.

AUGUST 23-25, 2024

19th annual Indianapolis Open (IN)

See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

AUGUST 31-SEPTEMBER 2, 2024

2024 Illinois Open (IL)

See Grand Prix.

INDIANA

JULY 3-7, 2024

52nd Annual World Open, top 6 sections (PA)

See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

JULY 12-14, 2024

U.S. Junior Open Championship (IL)

See National Events.

JULY 12-14, 2024

U.S. Senior Open Championship (IL)

See National Events.

JULY 12-14, 2024

Caveman Medior Open (IL)

See Illinois.

JULY 19-21, 2024

17th Annual Chicago Class Championships (IL)

See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

JULY 20-21, 2024

Summer Swiss (MI)

See Grand Prix.

AUGUST 23-25, 2024

19th annual Indianapolis Open (IN)

See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

AUGUST 31-SEPTEMBER 2, 2024

2024 Illinois Open (IL)

See Grand Prix.

IOWA

JULY 12-14, 2024

U.S. Junior Open Championship (IL)

See National Events.

AUGUST 3, 2024

Wilkins Cup (NE)

See Grand Prix.

AUGUST 31-SEPTEMBER 2, 2024

2024 Illinois Open (IL)

See Grand Prix.

KENTUCKY

JULY 12-14, 2024

U.S. Junior Open Championship (IL)

See National Events.

JULY 12-14, 2024

U.S. Senior Open Championship (IL)

See National Events.

JULY 12-14, 2024

Caveman Medior Open (IL)

See Illinois.

AUGUST 23-25, 2024

19th annual Indianapolis Open (IN)

See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

SEPTEMBER 27-29, 2024

78th Peter P. Lahde Tennessee OPEN and State Championship! (2024) (TN)

See Grand Prix.

KANSAS

AUGUST 3, 2024

Wilkins Cup (NE)

See Grand Prix.

LOUISIANA

SEPTEMBER 27-29, 2024

78th Peter P. Lahde Tennessee OPEN and State Championship! (2024) (TN)

See Grand Prix.

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.

54th annual CONTINENTAL OPEN

August 15-18, 16-18 or 17-18, 2024 - \$30,000 Guaranteed prizes!

7 rounds at Best Western Royal Plaza, Marlborough, Massachusetts

Best Western Royal Plaza, 181 Boston Post Road W, Marlborough MA 01752. Free parking. 7 sections.

Top 5 sections: August 15-18 or 16-18, 40/80, SD/30; d30 (3-day option, rds 1-2 G/60 d10), both schedules merge and play for same prizes within each of the sections.

Under 1300 & Under 1100 sections: August 17-18, G/60, d10.

Premier section: Open to 2000+ (see peakrating.us). Prizes \$3000-1500-800-400-300, clear/tiebreak win \$100 bonus, top USCF Under 2300 \$1300-700. FIDE rated.

U2100, U1900, U1700 sections: Prizes each section \$2000-1000-500-300-200. Under 2100 is also FIDE rated.

U1500, U1300 sections: Prizes each section \$1400-800-400-300-200.

U1100 section: \$800-500-300-200-100.

Unrated prize limits: U1100 \$100, U1300 \$200, U1500 \$300, U1700 \$400, U1900 \$500, U2100 \$600.

Mixed doubles: best male/female 2-player team combined score (team average under 2200) among all sections: \$1000-500-300. May play different sections and schedules; register (no extra fee) before both players begin round 2.

Cannot play below Online Regular rating minus 100 points. August Official ratings used, unofficial or Online Regular ratings usually used if otherwise unrated.

Top 6 sections entry fee: \$158 online by 8/13, \$180 later online or at site until 1 hour before round 1. GMs free, \$150 from prize. Re-entry \$80; no Premier to Premier.

U1100 Section EF: all \$60 less than top 6 sections fee. U1100 re-entry \$40. No checks at site, credit cards OK.

USCF membership required. Special dues with magazine paid online with entry, Adult \$43, Young Adult \$26, Youth \$19.

Online entry fee \$5 less to MACA members, join/renew at masschess.org.

4-day schedule: Reg Thu to 6 pm, rds Thu 7, Fri 11 & 5, Sat & Sun 10 & 4.

3-day schedule: Reg. Fri to 10 am, rds Fri 11, 2 & 5, merges with 4-day, Fri 5 pm.

2-day schedule (Under 1300, Under 1100 only): Reg. Sat to 9, rds Sat 10, 1, 4, 7, Sun 10, 1 & 4.

Half-point byes OK all rds (limit 2, must commit before rd 3). Bring set, board, clock if possible- **none supplied**.

Hotel rates: \$134-134, includes hot breakfast, use link at chessevents.us or call 508-460-0700, reserve by 7/31.

Entry: Chessaction.com. No mailed entry. Refunds, \$15 service charge.

Email: director@chess.us (also see chesstour.info, chessevents.us).

Blitz: Sat 9:30 pm, enter by 9:10 pm.

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.

Chess.org for tournament announcements, registration for tournaments, updated wallcharts, live standings, signup 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.

JULY 3-7, 2024

52nd Annual World Open, top 6 sections (PA)

See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

AUGUST 23-25, 2024

56th annual Atlantic Open (DC)

See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

NOVEMBER 16-17, 2024

PA Team Championship (PA)

See Pennsylvania.

MASSACHUSETTS

JULY 3-7, 2024

52nd Annual World Open, top 6 sections (PA)

See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

JULY 26-28, 2024

29th Annual Bradley Open (CT)

See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

AUGUST 10-14, 2024

11th Annual Washington International (MD)

See Grand Prix.

AUGUST 15-18, 2024

54th Annual Continental Open (MA)

See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

AUGUST 17, 2024

10th annual Continental Open Blitz Championship (MA)

See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

MICHIGAN

JULY 3-7, 2024

52nd Annual World Open, top 6 sections (PA)

See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

JULY 12-14, 2024

U.S. Junior Open Championship (IL)

See National Events.

JULY 12-14, 2024

U.S. Senior Open Championship (IL)

See National Events.

JULY 12-14, 2024

Caveman Medior Open (IL)

See Illinois.

JULY 20-21, 2024

Summer Swiss (MI)

See Grand Prix.

AUGUST 31-SEPTEMBER 2, 2024

2024 Illinois Open (IL)

See Grand Prix.

MINNESOTA

JULY 12-14, 2024

U.S. Junior Open Championship (IL)

See National Events.

JULY 12-14, 2024

U.S. Senior Open Championship (IL)

See National Events.

JULY 12-14, 2024

Caveman Medior Open (IL)

See Illinois.

AUGUST 3, 2024

Wilkins Cup (NE)

See Grand Prix.

MISSOURI

JULY 3-7, 2024

52nd Annual World Open, top 6 sections (PA)

See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

JULY 12-14, 2024

U.S. Junior Open Championship (IL)

See National Events.

JULY 12-14, 2024

U.S. Senior Open Championship (IL)

See National Events.

JULY 12-14, 2024

Caveman Medior Open (IL)

See Illinois.

AUGUST 3, 2024

Wilkins Cup (NE)

See Grand Prix.

SEPTEMBER 27-29, 2024

78th Peter P. Lahde Tennessee OPEN and State Championship! (2024) (TN)

See Grand Prix.

MONTANA

AUGUST 3, 2024

Wilkins Cup (NE)

See Grand Prix.

NEBRASKA

AUGUST 3, 2024

Wilkins Cup (NE)

See Grand Prix.

NEVADA

JULY 5-7, 2024

26th Annual Sacramento Chess Championship (CA-N)

See Grand Prix

JULY 19-21, 2024

29th Annual Pacific Coast Open (CA-S)

See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

AUGUST 9-11, 2024

14th annual Central California Open (CA)

See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

NEW JERSEY

JULY 3-7, 2024

52nd Annual World Open, top 6 sections (PA)

See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

AUGUST 10-14, 2024

11th Annual Washington International (MD)

See Grand Prix.

AUGUST 15-18, 2024

54th Annual Continental Open (MA)

See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

AUGUST 23-25, 2024

56th annual Atlantic Open (DC)

See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

AUGUST 31-SEPTEMBER 2, 2024

76th Annual New Jersey Open (NJ)

See Grand Prix.

NEW YORK

JULY 3-7, 2024

52nd Annual World Open, top 6 sections (PA)

See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

JULY 26-28, 2024

25th Annual Pittsburgh Open (PA)

See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

JULY 26-28, 2024

29th Annual Bradley Open (CT)

See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

AUGUST 10-14, 2024

11th Annual Washington International (MD)

See Grand Prix.

AUGUST 15-18, 2024

54th Annual Continental Open (MA)

See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

AUGUST 23-25, 2024

56th annual Atlantic Open (DC)

See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

AUGUST 30-SEPTEMBER 2, 2024

146th annual New York State Championship- America's oldest annual tournament! (NY)

See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

SEPTEMBER 1, 2024

10th annual New York State Blitz Championship! (NY)

See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

NORTH CAROLINA

JULY 3-7, 2024

52nd Annual World Open, top 6 sections (PA)

See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

JULY 6, 2024

Dragon Knight Indian Independence Day Classic (NC)

See Grand Prix.

JULY 13, 2024

Dragon Knight Embrace Your Geekness Day Classic (NC)

See Grand Prix.

JULY 20, 2024

Central North Carolina Open Championship (NC)

See Grand Prix.

JULY 27, 2024

Dragon Knight National Cowboy Day Classic (NC)

See Grand Prix

AUGUST 10-14, 2024

11th Annual Washington International (MD)

See Grand Prix.

OHIO

JULY 3-7, 2024

52nd Annual World Open, top 6 sections (PA)

See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

JULY 12-14, 2024

U.S. Junior Open Championship (IL)

See National Events.

2024 - 41st Annual Reno-Western States Open

An American Classic & Heritage Event!

Oct 4-6 & Oct 5-6 (3-day & 2-day schedules)

6SS; 6 Sect; Open-FIDE Rated; A Weikel Tourney

NEW LOCATION: CIRCUS CIRCUS HOTEL/CASINO, RENO, NV

Hotel Rates: Sun-Thu. \$81.32; Fri \$139.21; Sat \$177.80

Hotel Link before 9/17: <https://book.passkey.com/go/SRRWS4>

PRIZE FUND \$27,500 (b/275) Gtd. \$17,000

IM John Donaldson: "A Weikel Tournament is like a chess festival!"

Just Look! Wed.: GM Kudrin Clock Simul/Analysis! (only \$30)

Thu.: 6-7:15P Premier Chess Lecturer IM Donaldson (FREE)

7:30P GM Khachiyan - Simul (\$20); 7:30P Blitz Tourney (\$25)

Sat.: 3-4:30P IM Donaldson FREE Game/Position Analysis

Plus: Trophies, Sets & boards provided, Wall charts,

5 Demo boards, Entry under \$195!, and site of

tourney is located within a 3-hotel/casino complex

which offers many choices for food and activities!

Player: "I've played all over the US; this is the best organized chess tournament I've seen."

INFO: Email wackykl@aol.com or Web: www.renochess.org

SEE TLA on page 56

JULY 12-14, 2024

U.S. Senior Open Championship (IL)
See National Events.

JULY 12-14, 2024

Caveman Medior Open (IL)
See Illinois.

JULY 20-21, 2024

Summer Swiss (MI)
See Grand Prix.

JULY 26-28, 2024

25th Annual Pittsburgh Open (PA)
See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

AUGUST 23-25, 2024

19th annual Indianapolis Open (IN)
See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

OREGON

JULY 5-7, 2024

26th Annual Sacramento Chess Championship (CA-N)
See Grand Prix

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

JULY 3-7, 2024

52nd Annual World Open, top 6 sections (PA)
See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

AUGUST 31-SEPTEMBER 2, 2024

76th Annual New Jersey Open (NJ)
See Grand Prix.

NOVEMBER 16-17, 2024

PA Team Championship
Event site: Ceddia Union Building, Shippensburg University Address: 408 Lancaster Dr, Shippensburg, PA 17527
Overall prize fund: \$1,000 GP Points: n/a FIDE Rated: N Handicap accessible: N Residency restriction: N
Organizer: Nathan Zeigler Email: nathzeig@gmail.com
Phone: 6197481751 Website: tickettailor.com/events/shippensburguniversitychessclub/1262655 TLAID: 43247

SOUTH DAKOTA

AUGUST 3, 2024

Wilkins Cup (NE)
See Grand Prix.

TEXAS

JULY 3-7, 2024

52nd Annual World Open, top 6 sections (PA)
See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

JULY 14, 2024

FREE the US Virgin Islands - Benefit #2
Event site: The Houston Chess Studio Address: 250 Patton St, Suite Houston, TX 77009 Overall prize fund: n/a GP Points: n/a FIDE Rated: N Handicap accessible: N Residency restriction: N Organizer: David Mackey Email: houstonchessstudiogmail.com Phone: 7138163684 Website: n/a TLAID: 44005

JULY 19-21, 2024

7th Annual Queen City of the Prairie Open including Tarrant County & Fort Worth Championships (TX)
See Grand Prix.

AUGUST 10-14, 2024

11th Annual Washington International (MD)
See Grand Prix.

AUGUST 16-18, 2024

2024 Austin Chess Club Summer Open (TX)
See Grand Prix.

UTAH

JULY 5-7, 2024

26th Annual Sacramento Chess Championship (CA-N)
See Grand Prix

VIRGINIA

JULY 3-7, 2024

52nd Annual World Open, top 6 sections (PA)
See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

AUGUST 10-14, 2024

11th Annual Washington International (MD)
See Grand Prix.

AUGUST 23-25, 2024

56th annual Atlantic Open (DC)
See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

AUGUST 30, 2024

Blitz Tournament at the 86th Virginia Closed

Event site: Hilton Garden Inn - Innsbrook Address: 4050 Cox Road, Glen Allen, VA 23060 Overall prize fund: \$650 GP Points: n/a FIDE Rated: N Handicap accessible: Y Residency restriction: N Organizer: Mike Hoffpauir, NTD Email: mhoffpauir@aol.com Phone: 757-846-4805 Website: vachess.org TLAID: 44110

HERITAGE EVENT • STATE CHAMPIONSHIP EVENT

AUGUST 31-SEPTEMBER 2, 2024

2024 (86th) Virginia Closed Chess Championships

Event site: Hilton Garden Inn - Innsbrook Address: 4050 Cox Road, Glen Allen, VA 23060 Overall prize fund: \$5,000 + trophies GP Points: n/a FIDE Rated: N Handicap accessible: Y Residency restriction: N Organizer: Mike Hoffpauir, NTD Email: mhoffpauir@aol.com Phone: 757-846-4805 Website: vachess.org TLAID: 44108

WASHINGTON

JULY 5-7, 2024

26th Annual Sacramento Chess Championship (CA-N)
See Grand Prix.

JULY 19-21, 2024

29th Annual Pacific Coast Open (CA-S)
See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

WEST VIRGINIA

SEPTEMBER 14-15, 2024

Thomas Bergquist Memorial, 85th WV State Championship (WV)
See Grand Prix.

WISCONSIN

JULY 3-7, 2024

52nd Annual World Open, top 6 sections (PA)
See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

JULY 12-14, 2024

U.S. Junior Open Championship (IL)
See National Events.

JULY 19-21, 2024

17th Annual Chicago Class Championships (IL)
See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

AUGUST 16-18, 2024

96th Wisconsin Closed Championship / Marshall Rohland Memorial (WI)
See Grand Prix.

AUGUST 31-SEPTEMBER 2, 2024

2024 Illinois Open (IL)
See Grand Prix.

32nd annual Southern Open

July 19-21 or 20-21, 2024 - \$20,000 guaranteed prizes!

New Site: Holiday Inn Orlando International Airport

5 rounds, 40/80, SD/30; d30, (2-day option in all, rds 1-2 G/60 d10), NEW SITE: Holiday Inn Orlando International (note correct address), 5750 T.G. Lee Blvd. Orlando FL 32822. Free airport shuttle, free parking. In 5 sections.

Hotel rates \$130-130. Use link at chessevents.us or call 407-851-6400; reserve by 7/5 or rate may increase.

Major Section: Open to 1900/over (see peakrating.us). \$2000-1200-800-500, clear/tiebreak win \$100, top USCF U2300 \$1000-500. 150 Grand Prix pts (enhanced).

U2100 Section: \$1600-800-500-300, top U1900/Unr. \$600-300.

U1800 Section: \$1400-700-400-300, top U1600 (no unr) \$500-250.

U1500 Section: \$1200-600-400-200, top U1300 (no unr) \$400-200.

U1200 Section: \$800-400-200-150, top U1000 (no unr) \$200-100.

Unrated prize limits: \$100 in U1200, \$200 U1500, \$400 U1800.

Mixed doubles: best male/female 2-player team in all sections: \$800-400-200. Team average under 2200, different sections, schedules OK, register (no extra fee) by 2 pm Sat.

Cannot play below Online Regular rating minus 100 points. July official ratings used; unofficial USCF or Online Regular ratings usually used if otherwise unrated. Players scoring 8 or more in 2024 World Open U2200 or below must play in higher section than World Open.

Top 4 sections entry fee: \$128 online at chessaction.com by 7/17, \$150 (no checks, credit cards OK) at site, or online until 1 hours before round 1. GMs, IMs & WGMs free, \$120 deducted from prize.

U1200 Section entry fee: all \$40 less than top 4 sections entry fee.

Re-entry \$60; no Major to Major.

Special 1 year USCF memb. with magazine if paid online with entry: see chessevents.us or chessaction.com. **USCF membership required.**

3-day schedule: Reg. ends Fri 6 pm, rds. Fri 7 pm, Sat 11 am & 5 pm, Sun 10 am & 3:30 pm.

2-day schedule: Reg. ends Sat 10 am, rds. Sat 11 am, 2 pm & 5 pm; Sun. 10 am & 3:30 pm.

Half point byes OK all (limit 2), must commit before round 2.

Entry: www.chessaction.com. Refunds, \$15 service charge.

Email: director@chess.us (also see chesstour.com, chessevents.us).

Bring set, board, clock if possible- none supplied.

Blitz tournament Saturday 9:30 pm, enter at site Sat. by 9:10 pm.

ADVERTISE WITH US CHESS

US Chess accepts advertising in Chess Life, Chess Life Kids, and in our tournament programs.

US Chess has over 100,000 members, which include all ages, ethnicities and economic backgrounds. Advertising with US Chess offers a unique opportunity to reach a diverse audience.

Want to know more?

Download our Media Kit at new.uschess.org/about/advertise/



US CHESS

THANK YOU TO OUR BENEFACTORS

Thank-you for being the sustaining force behind all our initiatives, and for making all of our programs possible.

For a full list of our Benefactors please visit

<https://new.uschess.org/benefactor-members>



US CHESS

(MAP)

MEMBERSHIP APPRECIATION PROGRAM

US Chess gratefully acknowledges the support of our our Affiliates and Members and offers congratulations to these 2022 MAP Winners.

PCT GAIN STANDINGS

State	Dec20	Dec21	PCT
SD	81	172	112.35
WY	68	134	97.06
KS	402	776	93.03
DC	260	497	91.15
RI	215	409	90.23
SC	556	1,043	87.59
HI	162	296	82.72
ID	239	422	76.57
CO	952	1,607	68.80
AZ	1,293	2,162	67.21

Name	State	Count	Name	State	Count	Name	State	Count
Overall Affiliate Standings			State Chapter Affiliate Standings			Scholastic and Youth Membership Standings		
CONTINENTAL CHESS ASSOCIATION	NY	1,714	MICHIGAN CHESS ASSOCIATION	MI	222	CONTINENTAL CHESS ASSOCIATION	NY	715
PAPERCLIP PAIRINGS	TX	431	WASHINGTON CHESS FEDERATION	WA	221	PAPERCLIP PAIRINGS	TX	430
BAY AREA CHESS	CA	303	MARYLAND CHESS ASSOCIATION	MD	65	BAY AREA CHESS	CA	237
SAN DIEGO CHESS CLUB	CA	294	MASSACHUSETTS CHESS ASSOC.	MA	58	BOCA RATON CHESS CLUB	FL	221
BOCA RATON CHESS CLUB	FL	263	MINNESOTA STATE CHESS ASSOC.	MN	57	WASHINGTON CHESS FEDERATION	WA	179
CHESS CLUB & SCHOLASTIC CENTER	MO	224	UTAH CHESS ASSOCIATION	UT	56	BERKELEY CHESS SCHOOL	CA	166
MICHIGAN CHESS ASSOCIATION	MI	222	TENNESSEE CHESS ASSOCIATION	TN	49	MICHIGAN CHESS ASSOCIATION	MI	160
WASHINGTON CHESS FEDERATION	WA	221	NORTH DAKOTA CHESS ASSOC.	ND	47	NEW ENGLAND CHESS SCHOOL	MA	143
BERKELEY CHESS SCHOOL	CA	191	NEW JERSEY STATE CHESS FED.	NJ	45	ROCKS & ROOKS CHESS CLUB	TX	117
SOUTH MIAMI CHESS CLUB	FL	172	MAINE CHESS ASSOCIATION	ME	42	CINCINNATI SCHOLASTIC CHESS	OH	117
Small State Affiliate Standings			Adult Membership Standings			Member Standings		
NORTH DAKOTA CHESS ASSOC.	ND	47	CONTINENTAL CHESS ASSOCIATION	NY	990	WILLIAM GOICHBERG	NY	3
MAINE CHESS ASSOCIATION	ME	42	SAN DIEGO CHESS CLUB	CA	202	STEVEN JOSEFOWICZ	NY	3
HARRISON COUNTY CHESS CLUB	WV	28	CHESS CLUB & SCHOLASTIC CENTER	MO	186	DAMIAN NASH	HI	2
NEW MEXICO CHESS ORGANIZATION	NM	24	ROCHESTER CHESS CENTER	NY	90	BENNY N. ORMSON	OK	2
LIKENS CHESS	SD	23	CHESSPALACE	CA	83			
TOURNAMENT IN A NOX	NH	21	DOWNRIVER CHESS CLUB	LA	70			
WVSCA	WV	21	MARSHALL CHESS CLUB	NY	69			
NEW HAMPSHIRE CHESS ASSOC.	NH	18	BAY AREA CHESS	CA	64			
KNIGHTS CHESS CLUB	NH	16	MICHIGAN CHESS ASSOCIATION	MI	62			
OCEAN STATE CHESS ASSOCIATION	RI	15	SOUTH MIAMI CHESS CLUB	FL	59			



Gold & Silver Affiliates



US CHESS would like to recognize and thank all of our Affiliates for their commitment and hard work.

US CHESS GOLD AFFILIATES

Bay Area Chess

San Jose, CA
408-409-6596
www.bayareachess.com

Berkeley Chess School

Berkeley, CA
510-843-0150
www.berkeleychessschool.org

Capital Area Chess

Centreville VA
703-627-5314
www.capitalareachess.com

Caveman Chess, LLC

Park Ridge, IL
224-985-5244
www.cavemanchess.com

Charlotte Chess Center

Charlotte, NC
980-265-1156
www.charlottechesscenter.org/

CHESSanity

Jericho, NY
917-678-2077
www.chessanity.org

Continental Chess Association

Pelham, NY
201-347-2269
www.chesstour.com

Hamden Chess Club

Hamden, CT
203-680-8456
www.playmorechess.com

King Registration

Chicago, IL
773-317-8347
www.kingregistration.com

Manasota Chess Center

Sarasota, FL
941-900-3296
www.manasotachess.org

Marshall Chess Club

New York, NY
212-477-3716
www.marshallchessclub.org

New York State Chess Association

New York, NY
646-232-3155
www.nysca.net

Ocean State Chess Association

Riverside, RI
401-212-1335
www.oceanstatechess.com

PaperClip Pairings

Brownsville, TX
956-621-0377
rrferrari@bisd.us

Sacred Heart University Chess Club

Fairfield, CT
203-365-4827
www.sacredheartclub-sports.com/sports/Chess

Saint Louis Chess Club

St. Louis, MO
314-361-CHESS (2437)
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

US CHESS SILVER AFFILIATES

Boca Raton Chess Club (FL)

www.bocachess.com

CDA Collin County Chess Club (TX)

www.coramdeoacademy.org/chess

ChessPalace (CA)

www.chesspalace.com

Downriver Chess Club (LA)

www.downriverchess.com

Evangel Chess Club (AL)

www.evangelchurch.me

Little House of Chess, Inc. (NY)

www.littlehouseofchess.org

Michigan Chess Association (MI)

www.michess.org

Rochester Chess Center (NY)

www.chessset.com

Sparta Chess Club (NJ)

www.spartachessclub.org

TLA Chess (VA)

jack.scheible@verizon.net

For all information on becoming a Gold or Silver Affiliate, please visit <https://new.uschess.org/gold-and-silver-affiliates>.

CORRESPONDENCE CHESS

Check out these US Chess Rated Events!

Two ways to enter:

- Visit us online at uschess.org
- Mail in the form below

7-Player Championship Events

2024 Golden Knights (Postal) | 2024 Electronic Knights

FORMAT: Players play 6 games as single round robin, groupings based on order entries received. Players start in Preliminary round and qualify for Semi-final and then Final rounds based on scores in previous round. **ENTRY FEE:** \$35 per entry. Players can enter up to a maximum of 10 times per event. **PRIZES:** Prize fund of \$2300 based on 200 entries. \$15 correspondence chess gift certificate to players knocked out in Preliminary round.

7-Player Round Robins

Victor Palciauskas Tournament (ICCF Server)

FORMAT: Players play 6 games as single round robin, groupings based on ratings. **ENTRY FEE:** \$5 per entry. **PRIZES:** 1st place receives a signed certificate.

4-Player Quads

John W. Collins Memorial (Postal) | Walter Muir E-Quads (ICCF Server)

FORMAT: Players play 6 games as double round robin, groupings based on ratings. **ENTRY FEE:** \$10 per entry. **PRIZES:** 1st place receives \$25 correspondence chess gift certificate and signed certificate.

2-Player Matches (Postal or Email)

FORMAT: Players play either 2, 4, or 6 games against the same opponent. Selecting multiple options may facilitate faster pairings. Pairings based on ratings or players may name their own opponent.

ENTRY FEE: \$5 per entry. **PRIZES:** None.

GENERAL INFORMATION

- US Chess membership must remain current for the duration of all events.
- Postal events are open only to US Chess members who reside on the contiguous USA, Alaska, Hawaii or have an APO/FPO postal address.
- Email events are open to all US Chess members with an accessible email account.
- ICCF Server events are open to all US Chess members with access to the ICCF internet based correspondence chess server and an ICCF account (free to create) in good standing.
- For events with groupings based on ratings, the following rating classes will be used:

o Class A: 1800 and above	o Class C: 1200-1699
o Class B: 1500-1999	o Class D: 1399 and below
- If you do not have an existing correspondence rating, please estimate your playing strength when submitting your entry.
- Correspondence chess gift certificate prizes can be used on correspondence chess entries only. They cannot be used for membership renewals or at US Chess Sales.

Online entry and payment by credit card is available at new.uschess.org/correspondence-chess

Name _____ USCHESSID# _____ Est. Rating _____ Phone _____

Address _____ City _____ State _____ ZIP _____ E-mail _____

- ☐ Golden Knights EF: \$35 ☐ Palciauskas ICCF EF: \$5 ☐ Muir ICCF Quad EF: \$10 | 2-player matches, EF: \$5 per entry, see above for options
☐ Electronic Knights EF: \$35 ☐ Collins Quad EF: \$10 Postal Match: 2 ☐ 4 ☐ 6 ☐ Email Match: 2 ☐ 4 ☐ 6 ☐
☐ Check here if you do not wish to have an opponent who is incarcerated (note that this may slow down your assignment).

Make checks payable to US CHESS and mail to: US Chess Correspondence Chess, PO Box 775308, St. Louis, MO 63177

Classifieds

Chess Life accepts classified advertising in these categories: Activities, For Rent, For Sale, Games, Instruction, Miscellaneous, Services, Tournaments, Wanted. Only e-mailed copy is accepted. For additional details, including rates and deadlines, visit <https://new.uschess.org/about/advertise>.

For Sale

WORLD'S FINEST CHESS SETS

***The House of Staunton** produces unquestionably the finest Staunton Chess sets. ***Pay-Pal and all Major Credit Cards accepted.** The House of Staunton, Inc.; 288 Dunlop Blvd.; Building 400; Huntsville, AL 35824. ***Website:** www.houseofstaunton.com; phone: (256) 858-8070; email: sales@houseofstaunton.com

Instruction

ONLINE CHESS LESSONS

For the best in chess lessons: [ChessExercise.com](https://chessexercise.com).
To work on your chess technique: [ChessThinker.com](https://chessthinker.com)

CHESS EXPLAINED

Google "Lev Alburt." If you like what you see, contact me at gmlevalburt@aol.com.

Wanted

CHESS-PLAYER SCHOLARS

in top 10% of high school class with USCF > 2000 and SAT (math + reading + writing) > 1400 for possible college scholarships to UMBC. Prof. Alan Sherman, Dept. of Computer Science and Electrical Engineering, Univ. of Maryland, Baltimore County, 21250. sherman@umbc.edu.

Miscellaneous

BOLTON HILL CHESS CLUB

USCF Expert Mark Ashland's Bolton Hill Chess Club. Free. Thursdays 6-9:30 pm. All levels welcome. 1812 Eutaw Place, Baltimore, Maryland 21217. [410-807-3966](tel:410-807-3966).

Do you **LOVE** getting a print copy of **CHESS LIFE** each month? Want to avoid any service disruptions?

Be sure to **renew** your US Chess membership **at least one month before your expiration date** to ensure continued delivery of your magazine. And don't forget to purchase the print add-on as part of your membership renewal!

Solutions

PAGE 11 CHESS TO ENJOY

PROBLEM 1. After 22. ... Nc3! White resigned before 23. ... Qxg2 mate or 23. ... Nxe2+. **PROBLEM 2.** Fastest is 47. ... Nxc5! 48. bxc5 bxc5! and Black wins the d5-pawn after ... Kg5-f6-e5. (It should be said that 47. ... Nxb4 also works!) **PROBLEM 3.** 30. ... Rc3! 31. Rd1 Qa6 won slowly. But 31. ... Qxb1! 32. Rxb1 Rxb6! would have been remembered as Duchamp's brilliancy (33. Rxb6 Rc1+ mates). **PROBLEM 4.** Fastest is 30. Qg8+ Kc7 31. Qa8! and Black resigned in light of 31. ... Rxa7 32. Qxa7+ Kd8 33. Qxb6+. **PROBLEM 5.** 21. Nxc7, 21. Ne3 and 21. Bd2 are among the winning continuations. But 21. Rxf7+! Kxf7 22. Nf4+! is fastest: 22. ... Kf8 23. Qxh6+ and mate next, or 22. ... Kg7 23. Qxg6+, and 22. ... d5 23. Bxd5+ Qxd5 24. Qxg6+ Kf8 25. Nxd5. **PROBLEM 6.** Black takes the point with 49. ... Rc3! and 50. ... Rxd3!.

PAGE 13 ENDGAME SCHOOL

PROBLEM 1. The wrong-headed 1. hgx4?? g5! led to an immediate draw (Alexander – Menchik, Margate 1937) as the white king can never penetrate. Correct was 1. f5! (1. Kg3 is also good enough) 1. ... gxh3 2. Kxh3 Ke8 3. Kg4 Ke7 4. e6 Kf6 7. Kh5 and wins. **PROBLEM 2.** After 1. Rxe5! fxe5 2. Bxa7 Qxc4 3. Bf2! e4 4. h4 Kh7 5. Be3 Qc3 6. Kf2 Kg6 5. Bg5 Black eventually had to acknowledge White's successful fortress (Benjamin – Shamkovich, New York 1983).

PAGE 47 MAKE YOUR MOVE

TACTIC 1. 34. Ne7+! White has several good moves, but the text move is the best and fastest way to win. **34. ... Kh8 35. Nd5!** Black resigned. If he saves the queen, the knight on f8 is hanging with mate. (Nakamura – Caruana, FIDE Candidates 2024). **TACTIC 2. 47. Kg1!** and **Black resigned** as he has three problems and only two defenders. White is threatening to play the king to h3, winning which requires the use of the king, the f5-pawn would then need to be protected by the bishop, but once the bishop leaves the b3-square, White starts running with b-pawn, leaving White easily winning. (Caruana – Firouzja, FIDE Candidates 2024) **TACTIC 3. 28. Bxh7+! Kxh7** Black doesn't have much choice. If she avoids the capture with 28. ... Kh8 then 29. Qf5 Qe8 (to prevent Qg6) 30. Bg6 Qd8 31. Nc6 and Black resign. **29. Qf5+** White now penetrates rather easily. **29. ... Kh8** Or 29. ... Kxh6 30. Qh3+ Kg6 31. Nf5 Rh8 32. Nxe7+, and White is winning. **30. Nc6! Qe8** Black's best was 30. ... Bxe6 31. Nxd8 Bxf5 32. Rxe7 Rf4 33. Nf7+ Kg8 34. Rxf4 gxf4 35. Ng5! Bxc2 36. h7+, and White wins. **31. Qxg5 Rg8 32. Bxf6+** In the game, White blundered with **32. Rxf6?? Bxf6 33. Qxf6+ Kh7 34. Ne7 Re4?? 35. Rxe4! Nxe4 36. Nxg8 Qxg8 37. Qf7+** and **Black resigned**; after the exchange on f7, the pawn cannot be stopped. (Tan Zhongyi – A. Muzychuk FIDE Women's Candidates 2024). **32. ... Kh7** Or 32. ... Bxf6 33. Qxf6+ Kh7 34. Qf5+ Qg6 35. Qf7+ and White wins. **33. Qf5+** and White wins material. **TACTIC 4. 41. Ra5!** The only winning move. The d7-knight prevents the bishop from stopping the advance of the a-pawn to the a8-square. **41. ... Kg6** Or

41. ... Rxa5 42. bxa5 g3 43. a6 gxf2 44. a7 and the pawn will promote. **42. a4!** Again, the only winning move. **42. ... g3 43. Rxf5** Now is the right time to exchange on f5; the king on f5 is outside the square of White's a-pawn. **43. ... Kxf5 44. a5 gxf2 45. a6** and **Black resigned**; the a-pawn cannot be stopped. (R. Praggnanandhaa – Abasov, FIDE Candidates 2024) **TACTIC 5. 39. ... Qg3+** Black sacrifices her extra pawn with a particular objective in mind. **40. Qxg3 hgx3+ 41. Kxg3 e5!** This was the idea: the knight is trapped on e8. White has to sacrifice material to get it out before Black plays ... Kh6-g7, winning it. **42. e4 dxe4 43. fxe4 Bxe4!** In the game, Black instead went **43. ... Bc8? 44. d5 Kg7 45. Ne6+ Kf7 46. Kf2 b6 47. g3 Bd7 48. h4 gxh4 49. gxh4 Bxa4 50. h5 Bb5 51. Ke3 a4 52. h6 Kg6 53. Kd2 Kxh6 54. d6 Kh5 55. Nf8 Kg5 56. d7 Bxd7 57. Nxd7 a3 58. Kc2 b5 59. Kb3 b4 60. Ka2 f5 61. Nxe5?? Kf4 62. Nd3+ Kxe4 63. Nxb4 f4 64. Na6 f3 65. Nc5+ Ke3** and **White resigned** in Goryachkina – Lei Tingjie, FIDE Women's Candidates 2024. **44. dxe5 f5 45. Ne6 Bc6 46. Nc5 b6** and Black wins. **TACTIC 6. 29. ... Nd5+!** Black temporarily sacrifices a pawn to lure White's king to the middle of the board. **30. Kxe4** Or 30. Kf2 Nxc3 31. Rxc3 Bd5 32. Rb1 Rf8+ 33. Kg1 Rfb8 and Black is much better. **30. ... c5!** The game continued **30. ... Nxc3+?! 31. bxc3** (White should have played 31. Rxc3 even though Black after 31. ... Bd5+ 32. Ke3 Rxb2 33. Rf4 Rd6 has excellent winning chances.) **31. ... c5 32. Rf4 Bd5+ 33. Ke3 h5! 34. c4 Ba8 35. Nh6 Re6+ 36. Kf2 Rf6 37. Kg3 Rh8 38. Rxf6 Kxf6 39. Rf1+ Kg7 40. Nf5+ gxf5 41. Rxf5 Rc8 42. Rxh5 Bb7 43. Kf4 Bb6 44. Ke5 Kg6 45. Rh4 Kg5 46. Rh3 Bxc4 47. Rg3+ Kh6 48. e4 Rc6 49. Kf5 Bf7 50. Ke5 c4 51. Kd4 Rd6+ 52. Kc5 Rd3 53. Kb4 Rb3+ 54. Kxa4 Rxb3** and **White resigned** in R. Praggnanandhaa – Nakamura, FIDE Candidates 2024. **31. Kf3 h5! 32. Ne5** The alternatives are even worse, e.g., 32. Ne3 Rf8+ 33. Kg3 Nxe3 or 32. Nf2 Rf8+ 33. Kg2 (also 33. Kg3 Ne3 34. Rg1 h4+) 33. ... Ne3+ and Black wins. **32. ... Re6 33. Nxd5+** If 33. Nd3, then 33. ... Rf8+ 34. Kg3 Nxc3 35. bxc3 Re3+ and Black wins. **33. ... Rxd5 34. Nd3 Rf5+ 35. Kg3 Re3+ 36. Kh4 c4** and Black is winning. **TACTIC 7. 65. Qe5! d3+** The alternatives are no better: a) 65. ... Kf7 66. Qh5+ Kg7 67. Qg5+ Kh7 68. d7 d3+ 69. Kh5 and White promotes and mates; b) 65. ... Kd7 66. Qg7+ Kc6 (after 66. ... Kxd6, White wins Black's queen with the skewer 67. Qf8+) 67. Qc7+ Kd5 68. d7 d3+ 69. Qc4+, forcing the exchange of queens and leaving White with an unstoppable d-pawn. **66. Kf3 Kf7** Once more, 66. ... Kd7 runs into 67. Qg7+ as 67. ... Kxd6 loses the queen after 68. Qf8+. **67. d7 Qb7+ 68. Qe4 d2 69. d8=N+** The knight fork is tempting, but strictly speaking 69. d8=Q! is objectively much stronger. **69. ... Kf6 70. Nxb7** and **Black resigned** in R. Vaishali – Goryachkina, FIDE Women's Candidates 2024. **TACTIC 8. 34. h5!** This surprising move takes the control of the game. Suddenly, Black's king is very vulnerable while White's pieces penetrate deep into Black's camp. In the game, Vidit instead went for the pedestrian **34. Kd3** and lost after Black's 67th move. (Vidit – Nepomniachtchi, FIDE Candidates 2024). **34. ... Rxc3** If 34. ... gxh5, then 35. Kf5, and now a sample line runs 35. ... Kg7 36. Rh1 Nc8 37. Nxh5+ Kf7 38. g6+ Ke8 39. Nf6+ Kd8 40. Nd5 and

White is winning. If 34. ... Kg7, 35. h6+ Kf7 36. Kd3 is much better for White. **35. hgx6** The pursuit of Black's king is more valuable than a few queenside pawns. **35. ... Rxc4+ 36. Kf5 Rh4 37. Ne8 Kg8 38. Ke6 Rh3 39. g7 Bxg7 40. Nf6+ Kh8 41. Kxd6** and White has a decisive advantage in the endgame thanks to his active pieces, Black's vulnerable king and uncoordinated pieces. **TACTIC 9. 14. e5!** This breakthrough punishes Black for his indiscretion in capturing the f2-pawn on the previous move. **14. ... Nd7** If 14. ... dxe5, then 15. Be3 Qg2 16. Rhg1 Qxh2 17. Rh1 Qg2 18. Rdg1 Ne4 19. Qe1 wins for White. Obviously, also 14. ... Nxe5 15. Bxb5+ is out of the question. **15. exd6** White has won back the pawn, while Black cannot get his king to safety. **15. ... Qb6 16. Be3** 16. Rhf1 was also strong. **16. ... Qd8 17. Rhf1** 17. Rhe1! **17. ... Nce5 18. Nc5!** White is struggling with having too many attractive-looking continuations to consider. The game continued **18. Qd4 Rc8 19. Qa7 Bc6 20. Qxa6 Ra8 21. Ba7 g6 22. Bxb5 Bh6+ 23. Kb1 Bxb5 24. Nxb5 0-0 25. Nc7 Nxg4 26. Nxa8 Qxa8 27. Qe2 Qxa7 28. Qxg4** and White was winning easily in Vidit – Firouzja, FIDE Candidates 2024. **18. ... Nxc5 19. Bxc5 Nd7 20. Qe3** and White has a decisive advantage; one of the threats is Be2-f3 after which Black's position will collapse.

PAGE 49 ABCS OF CHESS

PROBLEM 1. Mating net: White mates in two: **1. Bf7+ Kf8 2. Rd8 mate.** **PROBLEM 2. Mating net:** Black loses in two: **1. Rb6+ Kc8 2. Rb8 mate.** **PROBLEM 3. Mating net:** White mates in one: **1. Rf6 mate.** **PROBLEM 4. Mating net:** Black is mated in two: **1. Qb7+ Kxb7 2. Rxb6 mate.** **PROBLEM 5. Mating net:** White mates in two: **1. Bg6+ Kf8 2. Re8 mate.** **PROBLEM 6. Mating net:** White mates in two: **1. Rxh6+ Kxh6 2. Bg5 mate.**

CHESS LIFE USPS # 102-840 (ISSN 0197-260X). Volume 79 No. 07. PRINTED IN THE USA. Chess Life, formerly Chess Life & Review, is published monthly by the United States Chess Federation, PO Box 775308, St. Louis, MO 63177-5308. Chess Life & Review and Chess Life remain the property of USCF. Annual subscription (without membership): \$112. Periodical postage paid at St. Louis, MO 63177-5308 and additional mailing offices. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Chess Life (USCF), PO Box 775308, St. Louis, MO 63177-5308. Entire contents ©2024 by the United States Chess Federation. All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means electronic, mechanical, photocopying, or otherwise without the prior written permission of USCF. Note: Unsolicited materials are submitted at the sender's risk and Chess Life accepts no responsibility for them. Materials will not be returned unless accompanied by appropriate postage and packaging. Address all submissions to Chess Life, PO Box 775308, St. Louis, MO 63177-5308. The opinions expressed are strictly those of the contributors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the United States Chess Federation. Send all address changes to: U.S. Chess, Membership Services, PO Box 775308, St. Louis, MO 63177-5308. Include your USCF I.D. number and a recent mailing label if possible. This information may be e-mailed to addresschange@uscf.org. Please give us eight weeks advance notice. PUBLICATIONS MAIL AGREEMENT NO. 41473530 RETURN UNDELIVERABLE CANADIAN ADDRESSES TO EXPRESS MESSENGER INTERNATIONAL P.O. BOX 25058 LONDON BRC, ONTARIO, CANADA N6C 6A8

MY BEST MOVE

TIFFANY HARRIS

TD, DELEGATE, AVIATOR

“

My sister and I instantly fell in love with the game, often pulling out our chess board wherever we happened to be.



I STARTED PLAYING CHESS WHEN I was about 10 years old. My siblings and I were homeschooled, and on Fridays, we'd attend group sessions with our local homeschool co-op where we participated in a variety of extracurricular activities. Chess was among them.

My sister and I instantly fell in love with the game, often pulling out our chess board wherever we happened to be. We developed a strong bond with the other members of the chess club, and it wasn't long before we were competing in tournaments across the state. My other siblings started playing chess as well, so even at home, I was never short of opponents.

My mother has always been our greatest supporter. She would drive us three hours each week to take private lessons from John C. Williams in Pearson, Georgia. Eventually I took a hiatus from chess for 15 years to pursue higher education and raise my son, Malachi.

Now I find myself deeply involved in the chess community once more. I recently had the opportunity to serve as Chief Tournament Director at the HBCU Classic. I represent Georgia chess on a national level as a Georgia Delegate to US Chess. I'm also newly elected on the Board of Directors for the Georgia Chess Association. One of my ultimate aspirations remains to be inducted into the Georgia Chess Hall of Fame.

Chess has not only been a recreational pursuit but also a guiding force in my career. I've found valuable insights applicable to my roles in aviation and social work, enabling me to navigate complex situations with foresight and analysis. I've had the privilege of sharing my knowledge by teaching chess in juvenile corrections systems and after-school programs, advocating for its benefits beyond the board.

One of the highlights of my chess journey has been serving as a coach alongside GM Susan Polgar at All-Girls Chess Camps in Georgia. Encouraging young girls to em-

brace chess is a cause close to my heart, as I firmly believe in the importance of gender diversity within the chess community.

While much of my chess activity goes on behind the scenes, I can play a bit too. Here's a memorable game from the 2023 Castle Chess Grand Prix, held at Emory University in Atlanta.

QUEEN'S GAMBIT, EXCHANGE VARIATION (D35)

Shivam Patel (1354)

Tiffany Harris (1409)

Castle Chess Grand Prix (1), 06.23.2023

1. d4 e6 2. c4 d5 3. Nc3 Nf6 4. cxd5 exd5
5. Bg5 Be7 6. e3 0-0 7. Bd3 c6 8. Nf3 Bg4
9. h3 Bh5 10. g4 Bg6 11. Bxg6 fxe6! 12.
Ne5 Nbd7 13. Nxd7 Nxd7 14. Bxe7 Qxe7
15. Qe2 Rf7 16. 0-0-0 Raf8 17. Rdf1 Qh4

18. Rh2 Rf3 19. Nd1 Rxh3 20. Rxh3 Qxh3
21. f4 Re8 22. Re1 Nf6 23. Nf2 Qg2 24. Kd1
Ne4 25. Nd3 Qg3 26. Rf1



26. ... Nc3+

MY BEST MOVE, winning by force!

27. bxc3 Rxe3 28. Qxe3 Qxe3 29. Nc5 Qxc3
30. Nxb7 Qxd4+, White resigned. ♠

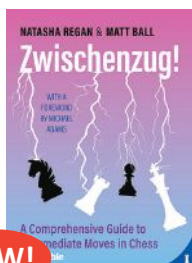
PHOTO: COURTESY SUBJECT



888.51.CHESS (512.4377)



www.USCFSales.com

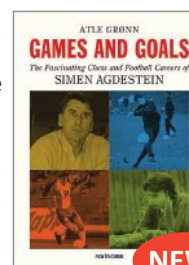


Looking for the unexpected *Natasha Regan & Matt Ball*

The first-ever comprehensive guide to the chess tactic, also known as the intermediate move, or intermezzo. This exciting manoeuvre can catch opponents off guard because it is against the expected run of play. You will learn how to spot Zwischenzugs, when to look out for them, and how to set them up in your games. On Chessable, the course was awarded 4.82 out of a five stars.

Simen Agdestein: A unique double talent *Atle Grønn*

At the age of eighteen, Simen Agdestein became the youngest Grandmaster in the world. He reached his peak as the world's number 12. His talent extended to football, where he played for the Norwegian national team. "I can't choose between my left and my right arm," he once remarked, referring to his passion for both chess and football.

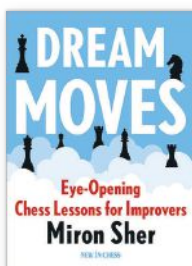
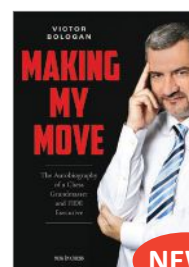


Rock Solid 2 *Sergei Tiviakov & Yulia Gökbulut*

The acclaimed first volume of his strategy trilogy dealt with pawn structures. In this second volume, Sergei discusses piece play, covering the value of pieces, the bishop pair, opposite-colored bishops, centralization, and more. Sergei Tiviakov was unbeaten in a streak of more than 100 games as a prof player. Who better to share the secrets of Rock Solid Chess and the activity and value of pieces?

Making My Move *Victor Bologan*

Victor Bologan is not only a strong and creative GM, he has also made a career in world chess and Moldovan politics. This autobiography gives a vivid account of his path, highlighting his work with coaches such as Chebanenko, Lanka and Dvoretsky, and players like Morozevich, Ponomarev, Kramnik and Kasparov. Central in this book are his extensive annotations of 88 of his most attractive games.

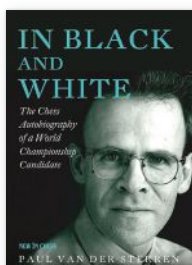
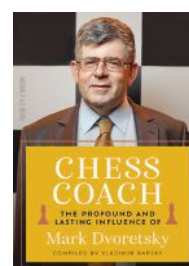


Eye-Opening Lessons for Improvers *Miron Sher*

Legendary chess coach Miron Sher, who trained GMs Robert Hess and Fabiano Caruana, collected hundreds of instructive positions for his students. This book focuses on five topics that Sher considered important for chess improvement, including Dream Moves. If you can dream about the final, decisive move that leads to a winning position, you will find your way there.

The profound influence of Mark Dvoretsky *Vladimir Barsky*

When Mark Dvoretsky started coaching, he became a kind of doctor, quickly identifying what his students needed help with. He made them better chess players, but also better people. In this book, students such as Yusupov, Kasparov, Anand, Topalov and Carlsen, to name but a few, pay tribute to the most inspiring chess coach of his generation.

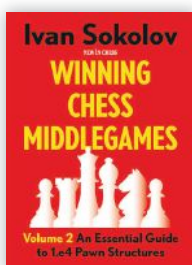
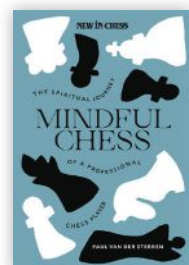


'The finest chess book I've ever read' *Matthew Sadler in New In Chess*

In this brutally honest autobiography, Dutch GM Paul van der Sterren describes his rise to the chess elite and his struggle to get better, with all the uncertainties and difficulties on his path. From his very first moves to his match against Gata Kamsky, everything is described in great detail and with the greatest frankness. Be warned: 768 pages!

Mindful Chess *Paul van der Sterren*

Van der Sterren was a professional chess player for more than twenty years. He met with both victory and defeat, joy and suffering. When, later in life, he discovered vipassana meditation, he approached meditation with the same devotion as his chess. In only 128 pages, the reader follows his two journeys, asking questions such as: What is chess? What is meditation? Who am I?

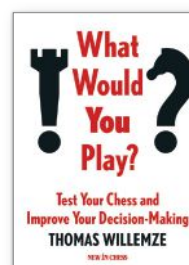


Winning Middlegames with 1.e4 *Ivan Sokolov*

In his 2010 bestseller *Winning Chess Middlegames*, GM Ivan Sokolov focused on 1.d4 openings. Now, with Volume 2, 1.e4 players get their turn. A dozen topical structures are covered (in the Ruy Lopez, the Italian, the Petroff, the Rauzer Sicilian, the Maroczy Bind, the Hedgehog, the Sveshnikov, the French Winawer and more). Deeply analyzed top-level games illustrate the motifs in all these structures.

Improve Your Decision-Making *Thomas Willemze*

The best chess training closely resembles the activity you're training for. This book provides a chess player with an essential component – decision-making in the crucial positions of a real chess game, played by club players rather than grandmasters. You have to answer the same questions that you face when you stare at the chessboard and have to find a move.





The United States' Largest Chess Specialty Retailer

888.51.CHESS (512.4377)



www.USCFSales.com

Introducing the

TAP N SET™ PRO

DIGITAL CHESS
CLOCK



THE ULTIMATE CHESS CLOCK FOR SERIOUS CHESS PLAYERS!

- Are you tired of the frustration caused by your current chess clock? Is setting it a never-ending battle? Say goodbye to confusing presets and button combinations! The TAP N SET™ Pro is here to revolutionize your chess playing experience!
- The TAP N SET™ technology offers the world's FIRST chess clock settable from your smartphone! Download our Android® or iOS® app, input your desired time controls, and simply touch your phone to the clock. With our patent-pending NFC technology, your clock is instantly programmed. It supports one-, two-, and three-time control games, increment/delay, move counters, and even Freeze for FIDE-rated events. The app features an intuitive menu for setting delay, increment, hour-glass; it even offers Scrabble timing modes, all adjustable from 1 to 40 minutes (New Feature). Choose from three different delay modes!
- Crafted with precision in the USA, the TAP N SET™ Pro Digital Chess Clock is a game-changer that every chess player needs. Simple to use, you'll master its features within minutes. Ideal for players of all ages and skill levels, it boasts a sturdy metal case, a sleek low-profile design, and massive dual displays powered by touch-sensor technology. It's the pinnacle of chess clock perfection!
- DESIGNED AND ASSEMBLED IN THE USA! It is the first ever commercially available chess clock with dual displays, allowing spectators to follow the game. The clock comes with a magnetic cover

for tournament settings. Connect it to the HOS sensory board (coming soon, sold separately) with the included cable. Stainless steel touch-sensitive buttons make your moves precise.

- Embrace the tournament atmosphere with programmable modes, including move counters. Keep three preset settings/modes in memory for quick access. Our clock is incredibly accurate, thanks to a high-precision crystal oscillator. You can even mute the sound and LED indicators, making it suitable for various two-player board games like Scrabble, Shogi, and Go.
- Say goodbye to frequent battery changes – our clock is power-efficient, providing over 900 hours of continuous use under normal conditions.
- Unsure of the time control for your event? Choose from 70 presets for the most popular US Chess time controls or create your own preset for lightning-fast setup!

CLKDZMTAPPRO

\$124.95

Don't worry if you forget your smartphone – you can still manually program the TAP N SET™ Pro clock just like any other ZmartFun chess clock. Experience the easiest chess clock ever designed!

Upgrade your chess game with the TAP N SET™ Pro Digital Chess Clock – the future of chess timing is here! Don't wait – order yours now and elevate your chess experience to new heights!



Free Ground Shipping On All Orders Over \$100.00
Excludes Clearance, Shopworn and Items Otherwise Marked