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*A talk with
GM Maurice
Ashley.*



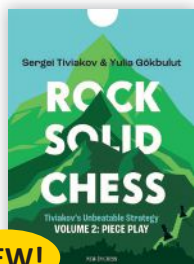


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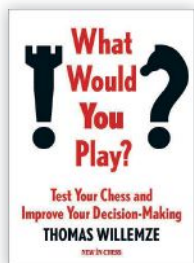
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NEW!

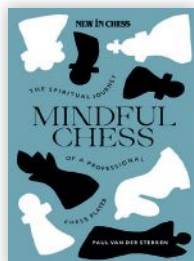
Rock Solid Chess, Volume 2 *Sergei Tivakov & Yulia Gökbulut*

The highly acclaimed first volume of his trilogy dealt with pawn structures. In this second volume, Sergei discusses piece play. Topics include the relative value of pieces, the bishop pair, opposite-colored bishops, centralization, and when to castle. Tivakov was unbeaten in a streak of more than a hundred games as a professional player. Who better to share the secrets of Rock Solid Chess than Grandmaster Tivi?



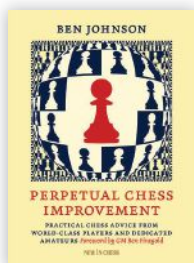
Test Your Decision-Making *Thomas Willemze*

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.



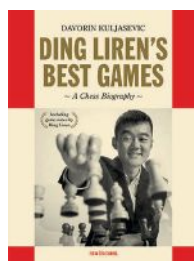
Mindful Chess *Paul van der Sterren*

Dutch GM Paul 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. The reader follows his two journeys, asking the same questions: What is chess? What is meditation? Who am I? What is I? What can we know?



The best practical advice *Ben Johnson*

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

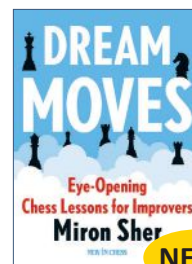


The Best Games of the World Champion *Davorin Kuljasevic*

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

Dream Moves *Miron Sher*

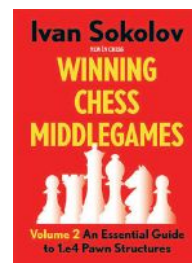
A chess manual with the homework of world-famous American grandmasters Fabiano Caruana and Robert Hess. This book will test a chess player with hundreds of positions created by Miron Sher (1952-2020), who coached Caruana and Hess and hundreds of other students in New York. He was part of the chess programs at schools such as the Dalton School, IS 318, and Stuyvesant High School.



NEW!

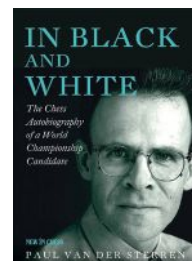
Winning Middlegames with 1.e4 *Ivan Sokolov*

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.



In Black and White *Paul van der Sterren*

The very honest autobiography describing Van der Sterren's 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 by the Dutch GM. The final part describes his decline and his shift to meditation and mindfulness.



A Rich and Dynamic Opening Repertoire for White *Christof Sielecki*

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



Magnus Carlsen & David Howell Explain the Grind

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

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



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Coach. Commentator. Hall of Famer. Legend.

GM Maurice Ashley has been one of the great promoters of our game, but he's turning on the afterburners these days, with two new books out and a just-announced television series based on his life to come. We catch up with him in this issue.

PHOTOGRAPH BY LISA NALVEN



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Top 6 sections: July 3-7, 4-7 or 5-7

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U1200 & U1000 play separate dates due to space limits.

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3) Prize limit \$1000 if post-event OTB or online rating 7/1/23-7/1/24 (6/26/23-6/26/24 in U1200 & U1000) was more than 40 points over section maximum.

4) Provisional (under 26 games) and unrated prize limits.

5) Under 2200 & U2000 sections, as well as Open, are also FIDE rated.

6) International 6/27-7/1, Philadelphia Open 6/28-30, Under 13 6/26-/27, Amateur 7/1-2, Junior 7/1-2, Senior Amateur 7/1-2, Womens Championship 7/1-2, other side events.

7) Free lectures by GM Sam Palatnik, maybe others.

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UNDER 2200: \$12000-6000-3000-1500-1000-800-600-500-400-400, top U2100 (no unrated) \$2000-1000. Unrated prize limit \$1500.

UNDER 2000: \$12000-6000-3000-1500-1000-800-600-500-400-400, top U1900 (no unrated) \$2000-1000. Unrated prize limit \$1000.

UNDER 1800: \$12000-6000-3000-1500-1000-800-600-500-400-400, top U1700 (no unrated) \$2000-1000. Unrated prize limit \$800.

UNDER 1600: \$10000-5000-2500-1300-900-700-600-500-400-400, top U1500 (no unrated) \$2000-1000. Unrated prize limit \$600.

UNDER 1400: \$7000-4000-2000-1200-900-700-600-500-400-400, top U1300 (no unrated) \$1600-800. Unrated prize limit \$500.

UNDER 1200: \$4000-2000-1000-800-600-500-400-300-300-300. Unrated prize limit \$400.

UNDER 1000: \$2000-1000-700-500-400-300-300-200-200-200, Unrated prize limit \$200.

MIXED DOUBLES: Top 6 sections \$2400-1200-700-500-300. Lower 2 sections \$500-300-200. Male/female teams averaging U2200.

Reserve hotel room early! Special chess rate \$148-148-168-188, link at chessevents.us or 215-448-2000, may sell out by early June.

July official USCF ratings used for U2200 to U1400, July FIDE for Open, June USCF for U1200 & U1000. Unofficial ratings usually used if otherwise unrated. Cannot play below USCF Online Regular Rating - 100 points.

Foreign player ratings: see www.foreignratings.com.

Unclaimed prizes usually paid by PayPal (may take around 3 weeks). For income tax reporting and withholding info, see chessevents.us.

Titled player entries: see chessevents.us

Entry fees: \$318 at chessevents.us by 5/15, \$328 by 6/29 (U1200 & U1000 6/25), \$350 online or at site until 90 min. before rd 1 (U1200 & U1000, 60 min. before).

Open Section: All \$500 more if not rated 2200/over by USCF or 2000/above FIDE.

U1200 Section entry fees: All \$100 less.

U1000 Section entry fees: All \$200 less.

Seniors 65/up: entry fee \$100 less in U1400 & above.

If any post-event regular OTB or online rating posted 7/1/23-7/1/24 (U1200 & U1000 6/26/23-6/26/24) or current regular online rating is more than 40 points over section maximum, prize limit \$1000.

If under 26 regular OTB total games rated by July 2024 official list (June official for U1200, U1000), prize limit \$500 U1000. \$1000 U1200, \$2000 U1400, \$3000 U1600-U2000.

Entries posted at chessevents.us: click "entry list" after entry. Refunds, \$15 service charge. Special USCF dues: see chessevents.us.

Bring set, board, clock- none supplied.

5-day schedule: 7/3 7 pm, 7/4-5 11 am & 6 pm, 7/6-7 10 am & 5 pm.

4-day schedule: 7/4 11 am, 2:30 pm & 6 pm, merges with 5-day 7/4 6 pm.

3-day schedule: 7/5 11, 1:30, 3:30, 6 & 8:30, merges with others 7/6 10 am..

U1200, U1000 schedule: 6/28 1, 4 & 7, 6/29 11, 2 & 5, 6/30 10, 1 & 4.

Half point byes OK all, limit 3 (limit 2 in last 4 rounds). Must commit before round 4.

PAST WINNERS

1973 Walter Browne **1974** Bent Larsen **1975** Pal Benko **1976** Anatoly Lein **1977** John Fedorowicz **1978** Peter Biyiasas **1979** Haukur Angantytsson **1980** Larry Christiansen **1981** Igor Ivanov **1982** Nick de Firmian **1983** Kevin Spraggett **1984** Joel Benjamin **1985** Maxim Dlugy **1986** Nick de Firmian **1987** Boris Gulko **1988** Maxim Dlugy **1989** Mikhail Gurevich **1990** Igor Glek **1991** Gata Kamsky **1992** Gregory Kaidanov **1993** Alex Yermolinsky **1994** Artashes Minasian **1995** Alex Yermolinsky **1996** Alex Yermolinsky **1997** Alex Shabalov **1998** Alex Goldin **1999** Gregory Serper **2000** Joel Benjamin **2001** Alex Goldin **2002** Kamil Miton **2003** Jaan Ehlfest **2004** Varuzhan Akobian **2005** Kamal Miton **2006** Gata Kamsky **2007** Varuzhan Akobian **2008** Evgeny Najer **2009** Evgeny Najer **2010** Viktor Laznicka **2011** Gata Kamsky **2012** Ivan Sokolov **2013** Varuzhan Akobian **2014** Ilya Smirin **2015** Aleks Lenderman **2016** Gabor Papp **2017** Tigran Petrosian **2018** Illia Nyzhnik **2019** Liem Quang Le **2020** P Iniyar **2021** Hans Niemann **2022** Mikhail Antipov **2023** Fidel Corrales Jimenez

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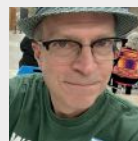
You probably noticed that "My Best Move" is on hiatus this month. Don't worry – it'll be back in the next issue!

CONTRIBUTORS



STEVE SHEINKIN
(Cover Story) is an award-winning author of history books for young adults. After attending Syracuse University, he worked for a time as a textbook writer

before moving into the world of non-text-book history. With critically acclaimed titles on Benedict Arnold, Abraham Lincoln, and Jim Thorpe, along with works on the birth of the atomic bomb and its aftermath, he has won multiple awards, including the Newbury Honor and Sibert Medal from the American Library Association. Find out more at stevesheinkin.com.

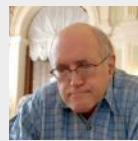


MICHAEL TISSERAND
(Jude Acers) is the author of four books; the latest, *My Father When Young*, is a collection of photographs by Michael's father, Jerry, found years later after his passing. In his journalistic work he has chronicled the lives of some of New Orleans' most important culture bearers, including Danny Barker, John Boutte, and Big Chief Tootie Montana. Learn more at michaeltisserand.com.



JULIE O'NEILL
(Senior Women's) returns to the pages of *Chess Life* after becoming its first woman editor in 1989!

Originally from San Diego, and now residing in Arizona, she has written widely, and worked in the most varied fields you can imagine. She is delighted to see senior women getting their moment in the chess spotlight!



GM LARRY KAUFMAN
(Engines and Openings) is a grandmaster, computer chess researcher, and author. Over the years he has contributed to numerous chess engines, including Mac Hack, Socrates, and most recently, Komo-odo / Dragon. His newest book is *Chess Board Options: A Memoir of Players, Games and Engines*.

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Keynote Speakers



GM Maurice Ashley



GM Garry Kasparov



GM Judit Polgár

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

Alice Lee

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



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THE BONE

IM Jay Bonin is a true gentleman in our game, and I am glad to see him back playing over the board. We did play OTB back in the 1980's and Jay defeated me twice quite handily.

I had the privilege of playing against Jay four or five times on *Chess.com*, and I think I was able to just muster a draw where Jay was about four or five moves away from checkmate, but he ran out of time. Alas, I did not have mating material!

The World Amateur Team is coming up in a few weeks [at time of writing], and Jay had been a regular competitor at these events. It will be interesting to see if Jay makes an appearance at USATE; after all, they don't call him "The Iron-man" for nothing.

Kudos to a great man, and wish Jay nothing but continued success.

David A. Cole
Via email

John Hartmann replies:

Just saw Jay at the Amateur Team East. He's doing well!

ALL HAIL!

Congrats to Team USA for winning the (U65) World Senior, which we geezers call the "mid-

COUNTERPLAY

dle-aged" championship.

I note that each member was born in the USSR, and each has humbled me over the board.

Especially GM Kaidanov, who is threatened with mate in one in the diagram on page 12 of the January issue.



WHITE TO MOVE

Instead, he mates in two, and you point out one alternative mate.

But if I'd been a little bird on his shoulder, I'd have whispered, "Gregory! Don't just mate the guy and run off. Find the most beautiful mate!"

Which, undoubtedly, is **21. Qxd7+ Rxd7 22. Rb8**. I don't recall seeing it before.

IM Anthony Saidy
Via email

DEAR ROY

In reference to Roy Mongiovi's letter of February 2024:

I read this letter and thought to myself, "I can't imagine anything either!" I close my eyes and try to think of an apple: nothing. Same thing with trying to imagine a chess board.

When I look at a chess position and try to calculate what the board will look like after a few moves, I have a very difficult time with it. I've often wondered how people can play simulms with their eyes closed. I thought they had photographic memories. This letter really hit home!

Mark Steddom
Via email

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

60 Years of Chess and Community

The Toms River Chess Club celebrates its Diamond Jubilee.

BY **NICHOLAS R. CARLSON**

F

FOUNDED ON APRIL 1, 1964, by Robert (Bob) Donaldson and 11 chess enthusiasts, the Toms River Chess Club (TRCC)

in New Jersey has navigated challenges, achievements, and transformations throughout its 60 years of history. From its humble beginnings in Donaldson's residence, to its meteoric rise in the 1970s and 80s, to today's roaring revival, TRCC's journey has been a testament to resilience, community, and the timeless allure of chess.

FOUNDING YEARS AND RESILIENCE

Donaldson's vision for a local chess community in Toms River faced immediate challenges—notably, finding a sustainable meeting space. The club demonstrated its adaptability early on when its quest led to a series of unconventional locations—from playing on slanted drafting tables at South Toms River High School, to a chilly diner with the perk of flat tables, and eventually, to a furniture store with adequate heating where members built custom flat tables from old doors. The stability of the new space ended abruptly, however, when the club returned one evening to find the store had burned down—a devastating blow that could have ended the club's story. However, Toms River Mayor John Woods intervened and offered the club a space in the Toms River Municipal Building. This new venue provided the stability needed for the club to grow.

DOYLE'S ERA: TOMS RIVER CHESS CLUB'S GOLDEN AGE

The club's direction took a dramatic turn

in 1974, when 15-year-old Steve Doyle was elected as president, defeating club founder Bob Donaldson. Under Doyle's ambitious leadership, TRCC transformed into one of the largest chess clubs in the United States, a period TRCC members often refer to as the Golden Age. During Doyle's tenure, the club relocated to Riverwood Park due to construction at the municipal building. This move proved beneficial. The new site helped accommodate the club's growing membership, which exceeded 250 active members, and led to the largest tournament in club history in 1983 with 140 US Chess-rated players.

Doyle's impact extended beyond membership and tournament numbers. He also enriched the club's cultural tapestry by hosting numerous legends like GMs Boris Spassky and Mikhail Botvinnik, marking the world champion's sole U.S. club appearance. This era also was home to other chess luminaries such as Carol Jarecki, Pete Tamburro, and Frank Camaratta, all of whom have contributed significantly to the broader chess community.

TRANSITION YEARS

Following Doyle's departure in 1984, the presidency passed through several capable hands, including Mark Bennett (1984-1988), Dave Koval (1988-1998), and Lou Dispensiere (1998-2000), all of whom upheld the club's traditions and kept the club's spirit alive despite dwindling numbers. In the late 1990s, the TRCC returned to the newly-constructed



municipal building, symbolizing a new chapter for the club. However, this period of renewal was soon overshadowed by a tragic event that would have a profound impact on the club.

In January 2002, the club was struck by the sudden and saddening loss of its then-president, Bob Green. Without Green's leadership and direction, the club experienced complications and uncertainty. For the decade following 2002, the club faced dwindling attendance and frequent changes in leadership. It also lost important documents and traditions—the 2003 club championship was the last club championship for nearly 15 years. The club was on the verge of collapse several times during this decade-long period; however, thanks to the resilience of the remaining members and the leadership of Art Aiken, Brian Meinders,

PHOTOS: COURTESY AUTHOR



Left: A young Steve Doyle and an older Edward Lasker. Above: The club receives the 2021 Club of the Year award from US Chess.

Rene Brown, and Bob Garrison, the club stubbornly held on to preserve the continuity and community of the historic chess organization.

SHOSHIN'S ERA: CLUB RESURGENCE

In October 2013, the club's luck was finally about to change. A man named Stephen Shoshin walked into the Toms River Chess Club and quickly found himself acting as the de facto president of the club. Shoshin's official appointment as president in 2015 marked a new dawn for the TRCC. He focused on rebuilding the club's foundations and fostering a sense of community, leading to a resurgence in memberships and club activities. During Shoshin's era, the club championship was restarted in 2017 and active memberships peaked near 100 members for the first time in decades. Notable events from this period included simulms from grandmasters like Irina Krush and Fabiano Caruana, further signaling the club's return to prominence.

The club and its ability to adapt was tested once again with the COVID-19 pandemic. Toms River Chess Club was proactive and partnered with Stockton University's Osprey Chess Club to form the New Jersey Crown Chess League. The league, run by

the then-Osprey Chess Club President Nick Carlson, kept the Toms River Chess Club community connected during the COVID-19 pandemic. (See our April 2021 "First Moves" for more on this league — ~ed.) The league would later expand to include Hamilton and Rowan University chess clubs.

In one of his last acts as president, Shoshin and several club members, on behalf of the TRCC, accepted US Chess' "Chess Club of the Year" at the 2021 U.S. Open. The award reflected, in part, Shoshin's work to revive the Toms River Chess Club. In November 2021, Shoshin passed club leadership to 21-year-old Nick Carlson, alongside an almost entirely new executive board.

PRESENT DAY

Since January 1st, 2023, the Club has had 170 members sign up or renew with the club, numbers not seen since Steve Doyle's presidency. The club is expanding operations and has opened a southern branch in Manahawkin, New Jersey, with plans to expand to at least one more location in late 2024 or early 2025.

The TRCC today can be explained best by the words of former president, Steve Doyle, in the club's 20th-anniversary booklet: "More importantly, we are friends — good friends. This is the underlying strength of the Toms River Chess Club — we, the members." At its core, the club is a tight-knit community, a family brought together by the common allure and interest in chess. While the true secret of the club's success lies in the work

and contributions of its many volunteer members, a special thank you goes to the club's current executive board, Jim Carter, Steve D'Agostino, James Paguigilan, Vinnie Pizzimenti, and Erik Stroin. Every board member has played a major role in the club's continued growth and success.

CONCLUSION

As we look to the future, the Toms River Chess Club stands on the threshold of exciting new opportunities for growth and community engagement. The expansion into new locations and the planning of major tournaments indicate a vibrant club that not only cherishes its storied past, but is also committed to fostering the next generation of chess enthusiasts.

In every move and with every game, the TRCC embodies the essence of chess as not just a game of strategy, but as a means of building connections and friendships that transcend the chessboard. It's a place where members, old and new, come together to share their passion for the game, learn from one another, and create memories that last a lifetime.

As we celebrate 60 years of the Toms River Chess Club, we are reminded of the power of community and the unbreakable bonds formed around the love of chess. Here's to many more years of checkmates, championships, and camaraderie. The TRCC isn't just a club; it's a family, a community, and a home for anyone inspired by the game of chess. ♠

Saint Louis Chess Conference Announced for October 2024

THE SAINT LOUIS CHESS CLUB, US CHESS AND KASPAROV Chess Foundation today announced an innovative educational chess event — the Saint Louis Chess Conference, which will bring together the leading voices in chess with chess educators, researchers and enthusiasts to learn best practices, to explore the latest research, and to celebrate the game of chess.

The Saint Louis Chess Conference will be held October 24-26, 2024 at the Chase Park Plaza in Saint Louis, Mo., and will feature leading keynote speakers including:

- GM Garry Kasparov, legendary World Champion and founder of the Kasparov Chess Foundation
- GM Judit Polgár, the strongest female chess player of all time
- GM Maurice Ashley, the first African American in chess history to earn the Grandmaster title

In addition to Keynote sessions, the conference schedule will include both plenary and concurrent sessions focused on chess research and education. A full schedule will be released in the summer, but illustrative sessions are:

- Findings from rigorous studies investigating the educational benefits of chess
- Gender and chess: data, policy, and practice
- Chess instruction and programming in unique contexts: senior citizens, prisons, and students with disabilities

“Chess is a life changing endeavor that can take people to heights they never dreamed of — whether professionally, scholastically or even personally,” said Kasparov. “I am honored to speak at the upcoming Saint Louis Chess Conference as we work collectively to harness the power of chess through the lens of education and advancing the sport we all love so much.”

In addition to hearing these world-renowned keynote speakers, attendees will learn from and contribute to presentations about chess instructional models, best practices, and resources, as well as hear about recent and current research projects exploring the impact of chess in schools and other topics.

“In collaboration with US Chess and Kasparov Chess Foundation, we are proud to bring together chess thought leaders for dynamic discussions and learning opportunities centered around education, research and the broader impact our beloved sport has on individuals and communities,” said Professor Michael Podgursky, Saint Louis Chess Club Board Member and Conference Chair.

While in Saint Louis, attendees will have the opportunity to visit the world-renowned Saint Louis Chess Campus, including the Saint Louis Chess Club and World Chess Hall of Fame. Further, attendees can make plans to attend the closing ceremony of the 2024 U.S. Championships to recognize the 2024 Champions, as well as the opening ceremony for Chess 9LX.

Attendees can also visit the US Chess Federation headquarters located at the Union Station office plaza, right next to the St. Louis Aquarium and the St. Louis Wheel. For more, visit: registration.stlchessconference.org/the-saint-louis-chess-conference.

CALL FOR ADMS

Advance delegate motions (ADMs) for the delegates’ meeting at this year’s U.S. Open are due before May 10, 2024. They can be mailed to Rose McMahon, c/o US Chess, P.O. Box 775308, St. Louis, MO 63177; or emailed to governance@uschess.org.

REMINDER ABOUT SAFESPORT TRAINING

SafeSport Training Deadline: June 1, 2024

June 1, 2024, is the deadline for all US Chess-certified Tournament Directors (TDs) to complete authorized core training from the U.S. Center for SafeSport.

TDs who have not completed training by June 1, 2024, **will be made inactive** and must complete SafeSport core training before their TD certification will be reactivated. Requests to reactivate must be submitted in writing to tdcert-group@uschess.org and can take up

to 10 business days to process, so plan your schedule accordingly.

With both the June 1 deadline and the spring scholastic tournament season rapidly approaching, those who have not already completed the SafeSport core training should visit new.uschess.org/safesport-training to download instructions for the core course.

SAFESPORT REFRESHER TRAINING

Refresher training is required to maintain TD certification. Look for details about Refresher 1 and how to access the training at new.uschess.org/safesport-training. ↗



KCF 19th ANNUAL 2024 ALL-GIRLS NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIPS



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The Champion in each age category, qualifies to represent the USA at the World Cadets, and World Youth Championships

MAIN EVENT

6-SS, G/90,d5

Friday April 12

2:30 PM Opening Ceremony

3:00 PM Round 1

Saturday April 13

10:00 AM Round 2

2:30 PM Round 3

6:30 PM Round 4

Sunday April 14

9:00 AM Round 5

1:00 PM Round 6

5:00 PM Awards Ceremony

ENTRY FEE

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

SIDE EVENTS

Bughouse Tournament

Fri. April 12 11:00 AM

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

Blitz Tournament (G/5,d0)

Fri. April 12 7:00 PM

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



SECTION/AWARDS

Age as of 1/1/2024

Under 8 top 15 individuals

top 500 – 799, top U500, top 6 schools

Under 10 top 15 individuals

top 700 – 999, top U700, top 6 schools

Under 12 top 15 individuals

top 900 – 1199, top U900, top 6 schools

Under 14 top 15 individuals

top 1100 – 1399, top U1100, top 4 schools

Under 16 top 8 individuals

top 1300 – 1599, top U1300, top 3 schools

Under 18 top 8 individuals,

top 1500 – 1799, top U1500, top 3 schools

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www.kasparovchessfoundation.org

Expect the Unexpected

Objectivity can overcome the nastiest surprises.

BY GM ANDY SOLTIS

IT DOESN'T MATTER WHETHER you're a novice or a grand-master: Several times in each game your opponent will make a move you didn't consider.

Whether a surprise move is an "Oh, well" moment — or an "Oh, (expletive)!" moment — depends on two factors.

One factor, of course, is whether the surprise move is a good one. The other is whether it is forcing — a check, a capture or a threat. A good but non-forcing move drops the surprise into the "Oh, well" category.

SLAV DEFENSE (D11)

GM Magnus Carlsen

IM L. R. Srihari

Qatar Masters Open 10.11.2023

1. c4 c6 2. d4 d5 3. Nf3 Nf6 4. g3 Bf5 5. Nc3 e6 6. Nh4 dxc4 7. Nxf5 exf5 8. e3 Bd6 9. Bxc4 O-O 10. Qf3 g6 11. h3 Qe7!

Carlsen said he was surprised by Black's new move. It's a good one with a fine idea of supporting ... Nf6-e4!. But it isn't forcing. The cost to White of being surprised was getting no opening edge.

12. O-O h5 13. Re1 Ne4 14. g4 hxg4 15. hxg4 Bb4?

(see diagram top of next column)

This wastes the surprise and allows Magnus to bring out his inner Morphy.

16. gxf5! Nxc3 17. bxc3 Bxc3 18. Qg4
It's mate or loss of the queen after 18. ...



Bxe1 19. Qxg6+ Kh8 20. Qh6+ Kg8 21. f6!. Black only deferred that outcome:

18. ... Kg7 19. e4! Bxa1 20. Bg5 Qb4 21. f6+ Kg8 22. Rxa1 Nd7 23. Qh3!, Black resigned.

But what if your opponent's surprise move is not only good but also forcing? In speed chess, you will probably panic. In slower games you have more time to think. Or rather, to regain what's left of your composure.

DEEP BREATHS

GM Ian Nepomniachtchi

GM Alexander Grischuk

Russian Team Championship, Sochi, 05.07.2016

(see diagram top of next column)

White felt certain he was winning. There were good reasons to choose 32. Qg5. But there were better ones to play 32. Bxg6! or 32. Qf7!.

"Having thought several minutes, R(d1)-h1 came into my head," he recalled. This



WHITE TO MOVE

seemed to end the game in view of 32. Rh1 Qg4 33. Rd8!.

Black immediately replied to 32. Rh1? with 32. ... Qh3!. The point is 33. Rxh3 allows perpetual check via 33. ... Re1+ 34. Ka2 Ra1+ 35. Kb3 Rb1+.

It took White five minutes to recover from the shock "and the next 10 minutes to count up all the forced wins I passed up," he wrote in 64 magazine.

But then he realized his position was still very strong. Once he stopped ... Qh3xh1+ he could pick off the pawns at g6 and a6 and might still have a matting attack.

In fact, after the humble 33. Rd1 he got a chance to finish off neatly. Play went 33. ... Qg3 34. Bxg6 Qc3 and now 35. Qxd4! Rxd4 36. R6xd4. Black resigned after 36. ... Rf8 37. Rh4+ Kg8 38. Rdh1!.

What White did immediately after 32. Rh1?! was both bad and good. Bad because he wasted time on regret. Good because he understood he was still winning.

Unless your last move hangs your queen, a surprise response by your opponent is probably not fatal. Life goes on.

Consider this opening trap:



WHITE TO MOVE

Do you see Black's threat? It is neatly hidden — 15. ... Nxe4! is based on 16. Nxe4 Qxe1! 17. Qxe1 Nf3+ and Black emerges with a significant material advantage after 18. ... Nxe1.

Several grandmasters have fallen into the trap. The best-known is Anatoly Kar-

QUIZ FOR APRIL

LONG BEFORE THERE WERE Sinquefield and Piatigorsky Cups, the grandest international tournament held in America was New York 1924. Three world champions were among the 11 legendary players who competed for a first prize of \$1,500 (about \$27,000 in today's dollars). Several immortal games were played in the tournament, which ended 100 years ago this month with Emanuel Lasker's victory. But this month's quiz is based on six of the lesser-known finishes. In each diagram you are asked to find the fastest winning line of play. Solutions on Page 63.



PROBLEM 1
Jose Capablanca
Frederick Yates



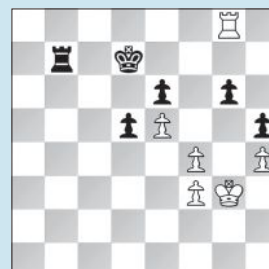
WHITE TO MOVE

PROBLEM 2
Frederick Yates
Richard Reti



WHITE TO MOVE

PROBLEM 3
Yefim Bogolyubov
Savielly Tartakower



WHITE TO MOVE

PROBLEM 4
Savielly Tartakower
Yefim Bogolyubov



WHITE TO MOVE

PROBLEM 5
David Janowski
Yefim Bogolyubov



BLACK TO MOVE

PROBLEM 6
Edward Lasker
Frank Marshall



BLACK TO MOVE

pov. He was the world's second-best player when he allowed **15. a3? Nxe4!** against GM Pia Cramling.

But he calmed down and replied **16. Rc1**. His position was worse after **16. ... Nxc3 17. Rxc3 Rae8 18. b4 Qd8 19. Rc2**. But he had little difficulty drawing an endgame after **19. ... a6 20. Bg2 Qf6 21. Rf1 Qf5 22. g4 Qd3? 23. Qxd3 Nxd3 24. Rd1**.

This was humbling for Karpov. But it was downright embarrassing when he played **15. a3??** again, eight years later.

This time it was against an elite GM, Teimour Radjabov. Again the game went **15... Nxe4 16. Rc1**. Karpov managed to steer towards the safety of bishops of opposite color after **16. ... Rae8 17. b4 Nxc3 18. Rxc3 Qc7 19. Rc2 a6 20. Kh1 Qd7 21. Bf4 b5 22. Bxe5!**. Again he drew.

Great players have shown us that objectivity can trump the most shocking surprises.

ENGLISH OPENING (A30)

GM Rafael Vaganian
GM Artashes Minasian
Soviet Championship, Moscow 1991

1. Nf3 Nf6 2. c4 e6 3. g3 b6 4. Bg2 Bb7 5. O-O c5 6. Nc3 Be7 7. Re1 d6 8. e4 e5 9. Nh4 Nc6 10. Nf5 Bf8 11. Qa4 g6



White's **12. d4!** was stunning. It threatens **13. d5** and prepares to exploit an opened center after **12. ... exd4 13. e5!** and **Bg2xc6+ or e5xf6+**.

A natural reaction, if you're sitting in Black's chair, is to mutter a choice expletive as you count the ways you could lose. This includes **12. ... cxd4 13. Nxd4! exd4 14. e5**. And **12. ... gxf5 13. exf5!**, when White has **Bg2xc6+** on tap, as well as **14. dxe5 dxe5 15. Bg5** followed by **Ra1-d1**.

But the right way to react is with objec-

tivity. Yes, **12. d4** is a wicked surprise. But if Black can keep the position fairly closed, he should reach a playable middlegame. That explains **12. ... Nd7!** and **13. dxe5 dxe5**.



In this position White was better, of course. But after **14. Nh6 Nd4!** Black's crisis was over.

White's initiative began to sputter: **15. Nd5 Bc6 16. Qd1 Bg7 17. h4 Nf8 18. Bg5 f6 19. Be3 Qd6 20. Rb1 Nfe6 21. a3?**. After several twists and turns, Black won.

No matter how strong you become, you will never stop being surprised. So, get used to it and find a solid reply. Life does go on. ♠

Not Always Drawish

Opposite-colored bishops can be attacking tools.

BY **WGM TATEV ABRAHAMYAN**

With opposite-colored bishops the attacking side has in effect an extra piece in the shape of his bishop.
– Mikhail Botvinnik

I HAVE NO WAY OF VERIFYING WHETHER the quote above, found somewhere on the interwebs, is accurate, but I do agree with it in principle. Whenever I ask any of my students what they know about positions with opposite-colored bishops, the answer is always “they’re very drawish.” While this rings true for many endgames, having opposite-colored bishops in the middlegame presents an excellent opportunity to build an attack against the enemy king.

Translating Botvinnik’s quote into layman’s terms: if I have a dark-squared bishop and my opponent has a light-squared bishop, attacking my opponent’s dark squares around their king can render their bishop completely useless.

The optimal way to build an attack with opposite colored bishops is to provoke a pawn push in front of your opponent’s king, one that give access to your bishop. For the White side, the dark-squared bishop is a monster if ... g7-g6 can be provoked; for Black, provoking g2-g3 would make the light squared bishop a force to reckon with.

Let’s look at an example where Black already has weakened the dark squares.

ABLAZE

GM Alexei Shirov (2705)
GM Jozsef Pinter (2555)
French Team Ch, France, 1994



WHITE TO MOVE

Shirov isn’t afraid to give up the bishop pair in order to be left with a dominant bishop.

27. Bxc6 Bxc6 28. Rg3

White doesn’t have to give up the a-pawn — 28. a5 is also strong — but I presume that Shirov was eager to set fire to the board!

28. ... e5

A nice attempt to conjure counterplay. With this move Black gives himself the e6 -square for the rook and a possibility to sacrifice a rook for White’s dark-squared bishop.

29. Bxe5 Bxa4 30. Qg5 Re6 31. h4!

White needs to open lines in order to fully utilize the bishop.

31. ... Be8 32. h5 a5 33. c4! Qd7

Here 33. ... dxc4 34. d5 Rea6 35. d6 disconnects the a6-rook from the kingside. White is attacking with all his might, while Black’s only defensive resources are the queen and the bishop. How helpless the dark squares around the black king look!

34. cxd5 Qxd5 35. Rc1 Rxe5

An Exchange sacrifice wrought of desperation, but it can’t change the outcome of the game. Standard moves like 35. ... a4 36. Rc7 Bf7 37. hxc6 hxc6 38. Qh6 leads to checkmate.

36. dxe5 Qd8 37. hxc6 hxc6 38. Qxf5 Qb6+ 39. Kh1 Ra7 40. Qc8, Black resigned.

The benefit of studying the classics is you might find the same patterns in your own games!

REMOVE THE GUARD

GM Vladimir Kramnik (2777)

GM Veselin Topalov (2813)

European Cup (5), Skopje, 10.22.2015



WHITE TO MOVE

20. Bg5 Qf7 21. Bxd7!

Like Shirov, Kramnik is happy to part ways with his bishop. Here he does so in order to be rid of the piece that was guarding the f6-square.

21. ... Qxd7 22. Bf6 Qf7 23. b3 Qf8 24. Qf4 Rc2 25. h4

Kramnik uses the same methodology. Let’s discuss the d5-bishop: it’s a centralized piece, living on a square that a French bishop could only dream of! Yet this same bishop is absolutely useless. It does not target anything meaningful in White’s camp and, worse still, it does not contribute to the defense of his own king.

25. ... Rac8 26. h5 Qe8 27. Rd3 R2c3 28. Rad1 gxf5

If Black tries to exchange pieces with 28. ... Rxd3 29. Rxd3, the attack is still devastating. The remaining rook will swing to g3, leaving the g6-pawn helpless.

29. Rxd5

Putting the final touches on this very nice attack.

29. ... exd5 30. e6 R3c7 31. Rxd5 Qxe6 32.

Qg5+ Kf8 33. Rxf5 Rf7 34. Qh6+ Ke8 35. Re5 Rc6 36. Qxh5, Black resigned.

Of course, don't forget the menacing fianchettoed bishop.

CLEAR IDEAS

GM Gata Kamsky (2655)
GM Garry Kasparov (2780)
30th FIDE Olympiad (7), Manila,
06.15.1992



BLACK TO MOVE

29. ... Bxc4 30. Bxc4 Bxe5

Now Black wins the game by making simple, natural moves, putting the heavy pieces on the open file.

31. Qe2 Qa7 32. Rc1 Ra8 33. b3 Bf4 34. Kc2 Re7 35. Qd3 Qc5 36. Rb1 Re3 37. Qd4 Ra2+ 38. Kd1 Rxf3 39. Qxf4 Rxf4 40. Rxa2 Qg1+ 41. Kc2 Qxh2+, White resigned.

GM Humpy Koneru won the inaugural Cairns Cup in 2020, but not without first suffering an instructive loss at the hands of GM Mariya Muzychuk. Opposite-colored bishops played a vital role in the game.

PETROFF DEFENSE (C43)

GM Mariya Muzychuk (2552)
GM Humpy Koneru (2580)
Cairns Cup (2), Saint Louis, 02.08.2020

1. e4 e5 2. Nf3 Nf6 3. d4 Nxe4 4. Bd3 d5 5. Nxe5 Nd7 6. Nc3 Nxc3 7. bxc3 Bd6 8. 0-0 0-0 9. Re1 Bxe5 10. dxe5 Nc5 11. Rb1 Nxd3 12. cxd3 b6

(see diagram top of next column)

The players have arrived in an opposite-colored bishop position with only the heavy pieces remaining. Objectively, the position is fine for Black, but it does require some precision to keep things that way.



13. Rb4!

Admittedly I am partial to rook lifts, but I really like Muzychuk's approach to finishing her development. In what follows, pay close attention to the c1-bishop.

13. ... Bf5 14. Qf3 c5 15. Rf4 Bg6 16. h4 h5

If instead 16. ... h6? 17. h5 Bh7 18. Rg4 the position is starting to look difficult for Black, as both the g7- and h6-pawns are clear targets.

Play might continue (even the tempting 18. Rf6!?, as suggested by one of my students, is playable for White as the rook is untouchable) 18. ... Kh8 19. d4! as White can shift gears and play on the other side of the board. If 19. ... c4? 20. Ba3! White will win the f7-pawn with devastating consequences for Black, due to the flexibility of the bishop.

17. g4

All of White's pieces are perfectly positioned to blast open the kingside.

17. ... Qxh4 18. Qg2

With the not-so-subtle threat of g4-g5, trapping the queen. After 18. gxh5 Qxh5 19. Qg3 Bf5! Black has to keep control of the light squares and evacuate the g6-square for the queen, so as to offer a trade.

18. ... Qe7?

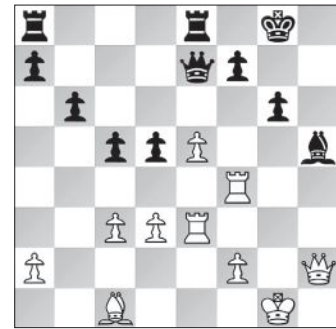
A losing move. The queen absolutely cannot abandon the kingside.

Necessary, if terrifying, was 18. ... Qg5. Black must keep an eye on the g4-pawn and maintain the opportunity to trade queens. After 19. Ra4 (worse is 19. Rxf7 Qxg4, giving Black the welcome chance to trade queens. After 20. Qxg4 hxg4 21. Rxf8+ Rxf8 Black enjoys an extra pawn with a safe king) 19. ... Qh4! the g4-g5 pawn push is not a threat, as the rook on the fourth rank is not defended.

19. gxh5 Bxh5 20. Re3

White is attacking with full force.

20. ... Rfe8 21. Qh2 g6 22. Rf5 Bg4 23. Rf4 Bh5



24. e6!

A strong move, with which White shuts down the e-file and further weakens the black king. The problem with the hasty 24. Rg3 is 24. ... Qxe5, conveniently defending the h5-bishop.

24. ... fxe6 25. Rg3 Kh7 26. Rh4

A typical attacking motif. White is ready to sacrifice on h5.

26. ... Qf7 27. Rg5

Hopefully you noticed 27. Rxg6?? Qxg6+ 28. Kh1 Rh8 29. Rxh5+ Qxh5 30. Qxh5+ Kg7 when Black wins.

27. ... Rg8 28. Kf1!

Sidestepping the pin on the g-file.

Black rightly avoids 28. Rhxh5+? gxh5 when suddenly the g5-rook is pinned.

28. ... Qf3 29. Rhxh5+ gxh5 30. Qc7+

Black is completely helpless on the dark squares.

30. ... Kh8 31. Qe5+ Kh7 32. Rxh5+ Kg6 33. Qg5+ Kf7 34. Rh7+, Black resigned.

What stands out most to me in this game is the fact that Muzychuk never moved her dark-squared bishop, yet it was a powerful attacking piece. From defending the white rooks, to covering the escape squares of the enemy king, the bishop proved to be a vital participant in the attack.

Sometimes we develop our pieces in superficial ways. We move them from their initial squares to "complete development" without any actual purpose. The dark-squared bishop did its job from the c1-square, and it would not have been more effective had Muzychuk moved it to d2 or e3.

I hope the above examples will encourage you not only to enter positions with opposite-colored bishops, but also to think about piece development in a more meaningful way. Your next attacking masterpiece might be a simple "giving up a bishop for a knight decision" away! ♠



Being Jude Acers

A DAY IN THE LIFE OF A LEGEND

BY MICHAEL TISSERAND

PHOTOS (UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED)
BY JAMES CULLEN

**FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 9, 2024
12:10 P.M.**

JUDE ACERS' RED BERET FLOATS ABOVE the food shelves at the Quarter Grocery & Deli on Burgundy Street in New Orleans' French Quarter. A round, open, improbably youthful face comes into view. Then a booming voice.

"Are you ready for your first lesson?"

There is no reaction behind the po-boy counter, where they're accustomed to Jude. This is his neighborhood grocer and it's where, when I asked Jude if I could join him for a full day at his World Chess Table, he agreed to meet.

Jude agreed to this, like he does everything, in his own fashion. When away from his table, Jude's preferred mode of communication is email. And more than anyone I know, he has found a way to type an email that perfectly matches the way he speaks. Here's how he responded:

MR. MICHAEL TISSERAND BLOOD HOUND MEDIA REPORTER/ WORLD-WIDE MEDIA FEED reporter WHO WROTE THE monster 2500 word front paged JUDE ACERS MEMORIES NEW ORLEANS PICAYUNE ADVOCATE article "THE FISCHER KING',...WELCOME!.AT YOUR SERVICE KIND SIR! 12 NOON FRIDAY WE START QUARTER DELI ... 836 BURGUNDY STREET!! All will be revealed!

I've known Jude Acers (pronounced like "acres") for 20 years, ever since my daughter first played a simul with him in her elementary school cafeteria. He's given his time to scholastic chess events I've organized and, as he noted, I once wrote a story for the local newspaper about the time he drew Bobby Fischer during Fischer's visit to New Orleans in 1964, when Fischer was 21 and Jude was 20.

And now, walking out of a grocery story with Jude Acers into a bright New Orleans afternoon, I'm about to receive the day's first lesson. This one is in survival.

12:16 P.M.

Turning from Burgundy Street onto Duaine, Jude walks with short, quick steps on a brisk, zig-zag route toward Decatur Street, where the World Chess Table waits to be assembled. Then he quickly pivots. "Number one," he says, "have everything tied to your body. I needed this twice in the past 20 years."

He pulls out items from his pocket to display that each is attached by yarn. Then



he lifts his coat. “At six or seven there could be wind chills. Body heat is tremendously important for a professional player.”

He fixes me with his eyes. “For these lessons your readers will owe me for all time.”

We keep walking. Jude turns 80 years old this month on April 6, and I am working hard to keep up with his pace. He is talking about the importance of vitamins and fish oil and resveratrol, and telling me where in New Orleans you can get the best deals for each. He raises a finger. Coffee, he says, is “absolutely mandatory.”

But more than anything else, Jude says, walk everywhere. He hasn’t been in a car in more than a year.

Long ago, Jude swore off drinking and narcotics. “I’ve been to parties where I was the only one with clothes on and everyone was doing heroin,” Jude says without further elaboration.

As he says this, we pass two early Mardi Gras revelers. One is dressed as a Spanish matador and the other as a Southern plantation belle. They look at us curiously.

12:25 P.M.

Jude stops at Matassa’s Market for *The New York Times* but there’s a line and he doesn’t have time for that. We move on to another shop, Jude directing us into the middle of Dauphine Street. This is another lesson. “Walk in the middle of the road. These sidewalks aren’t made for walking. At my age I can’t fall.”

It is the only time today he will make any concession to his age, even if this particular concession is to walk down the middle of French Quarter streets.

“And never, ever cross at the crosswalks. That’s where you die.”

12:40 P.M.

Jude now stands in the middle of Ursulines Street, having stopped just a block short of

the World Chess Table. His booming voice cascades off the stucco walls of the centuries-old Old Ursulines Convent. Both the building and Jude seem made for this place, like they could not exist anywhere else. Jude points out a wooden doorway below an iron-laced balcony. Here is where he found Wi-Fi during the pandemic.

We make it to Decatur. Jude suddenly ducks into a store called Everything New Orleans, one of many shops here selling shirts, Hurricane drink mixes, stuffed alligators, and Mardi Gras beads. Buildings in the French Quarter can hold more secret passages than a haunted house, and Everything New Orleans is no exception. Jude strides in and heads straight to the back, where he vanishes into a hidden brick-lined alley. He reaches into a corner of the alley and pulls out wooden boards and bags of chess pieces, and strides out.

“I’m 42 years here,” he says. “They also hold my mail.”

A scuffed white folding table is waiting for us, fastened to a column with a bicycle lock. Before unlocking the table, Jude straightens and points to a seafood restaurant on the corner.

“The French Market Restaurant feeds me every time I walk in, which is 100,000 dollars.”

Jude has a street hustler’s habit of naming a price for everything, and an artist’s habit of tossing numbers aside when they get in the way.

“I rolled the dice,” he says, setting down his bags. “Look at me. I’m in the last years of my life in perfect health doing exactly what I want to do.”

12:52 P.M.

On the way out of Everything New Orleans, I had offered to carry one of Jude’s bags. He held up one hand as if to signal for a complete stop.

“Do not touch my set up,” he said. “This is my exercise.”



Now he effortlessly lifts his table and snaps it into place. I will hear later that he purchased it a few years ago at a Walmart and pushed it to Decatur Street on a luggage rack. I look up the distance. It’s a two-and-a-half-mile walk.

“Notice three chairs at once.” Jude lifts the plastic molded chairs and scatters them into their places. One for himself and another for his opponents. “Always have the sun shining in your opponent’s eyes,” he says like it’s a secret, but it’s something he’ll tell his opponents about all day.

“And this,” he announces, holding up the third chair, “is the Baylee chair.”

Baylee Badawy is a local promoter and social media whiz who has done work for the New Orleans Jazz Museum and the New Orleans Jazz & Heritage Festival. She also has devoted herself to the continued well-being of Jude Acers, whom she met when she began visiting his table during the quiet days of the pandemic. Since then, she’s improved Jude’s living quarters as well as co-founded a nonprofit called “The Chess Cave,” a surreal closet of a room set off a French Quarter street and decorated floor to ceiling like a chess board. There is room in The Chess Cave for a table and two chairs, and little else. She describes it as a safety net for Jude.

Baylee is the latest in a line of people who fulfill this role for him. Jude often sponsors matches with cash prizes provided by someone he only identifies as an “anonymous benefactor.” He travels overseas for tournaments with the same unnamed assistance.

But Baylee’s not in town, Jude says. She’s off in Las Vegas with her grandfather. She’s helping him gamble or they’re seeing the Super Bowl. I can’t quite get the story straight. In the meantime, he allows me to sit in the Baylee chair.

1 P.M.

It’s now one o’clock sharp and Jude is in position for the day. I ask if he always starts



at one. "If I feel like it," he says.

Jude notates his games but not his days, making the exact origins of the World Chess Table unclear. Derek Bridges, the director of the new Jude Acers documentary *The Man in the Red Beret*, believes that Jude first set up his table in the summer of 1981, making this summer its 43rd year.

Derek's movie is as intimate a portrait of Jude as anyone is likely going to be able to make. It follows him through a painful childhood with an alcoholic father and a mother who, suffering from mental illness, died when Jude was young. "Chess saved me," Jude says, and in this, he does not seem to be exaggerating. As a student at Louisiana State University, chess gave him celebrity status. He moved to northern California and traveled the country giving exhibitions. In the mid-1970s, he twice held the world record for most games played simultaneously — 117 in Oregon and 179 in New York.

By 1978, Jude had returned to New Orleans. The newspapers reported that he was threatened with a knife in the French Quarter's Pere Antoine Alley. Jude held off the robber, who escaped empty-handed.

That year, Jude played with a chess team based out of the city's Maple Leaf Bar, a legendary music club. Soon, Jude was appearing in more music clubs than many musicians, including nights on stage at Tipitina's to play blindfold matches. In 1979, the local newspaper caught up with Acers at another storied club, the Dream Palace. Reported the newspaper: "Acers is a fixture at the Dream Palace, where the owners allow him to come and go as he pleases. They have adopted him, much as he has adopted them."

In 1983, Jude was listed as an attraction at a French Market festival, along with a balloon artist, a mime, and a troupe of Hellenic Dancers. He appears to have chosen his Decatur location both for the visibility and for an overhanging roof in case of rain.

It was around this time that Jude heard himself pointing out a local chef as a man in a black beret. Inspired, he seized on the idea of wearing a bright red beret, distinguishing himself in the most colorful of crowds.

Why did he pick this spot for the World Chess Table? In 1981, Jude said in an interview with television reporter Eric Paulsen that he likes to play chess in unusual places. "In addition to being a great, great, great player," Jude told Paulsen, "I also have the ability to create magic in the middle of the desert."

1:10 P.M.

A woman from a nearby praline shop comes to the table with two large plastic cups filled

with vanilla ice cream. It is the first of many sudden food appearances at the World Chess Table.

Photographer James Cullen has also shown up to take pictures for *Chess Life*. "Shoot as many as you want," Jude instructs. "Shoot for your private collection. They'll be worth millions of dollars when I'm gone."

1:29 P.M.

Mardi Gras traffic is well underway on Decatur Street. For the rest of the day, a steady line of cars slowly proceeds by Jude's table. Some drivers wave. A few shout out. Nearly all stare.

A vendor walks by Jude, pushing a cart of hot tamales. "I love you forever," Jude calls out to him.

Then he offers another life lesson: Always tip. In 1989, Jude says, someone showed up at the table with a suitcase filled with 100 dollar bills. They played chess all day. Jude received a 100 dollar tip each game. When the suitcase was empty, the man left.

2:03 P.M.

The World Chess Table is slow to start today. Nearby, a woman is holding a small ladder on which seven parakeets are perched for pictures and tips. It's a slow afternoon for parakeet pictures, too. She comes over to the table and plays a game with Jude, balancing the parakeet ladder on the table. Jude quickly wins but enthusiastically talks her up — as he talks up all his friends — saying the parakeet lady is usually a very strong player.

2:17 P.M.

There is a particular stance that new arrivals to the World Chess Table assume when they are hoping to play Jude. It is polite and expectant and a little unsure about what they are getting into. I've seen the same stance from people waiting to go into a confession booth.

Currently assuming the stance is a young man who just parked a Segway near the table. He wears dark sunglasses and has long sandy hair flowing out the back of a San Diego cap, and he's holding a 16-ounce can of Pabst Blue Ribbon. He introduces himself as Sam, and he used to run Segway tours in New Orleans. Now he's working to start his own company in California.

For years, Sam would wheel his tours past Jude's table. A couple years ago, inspired by "The Queen's Gambit," he started playing



Top: Tisserand and Acers, after ice cream.
Middle: Tia "the bird whisperer" drops by for a game. Bottom: Acers in his trademark pose.



"Young Upstart" matches wits with a legend.



chess more seriously. Now he's back in New Orleans for Mardi Gras and to play Jude, but not in that order.

"I had a customer take a lesson from you," Sam says, eagerly taking his seat. "He said you're a really smart guy."

The Louisiana sun beats down on Sam's face as he reaches into his pocket for a crumpled five-dollar bill.

"I know I'm dealing with an expert player here because he brought sunglasses and a billed cap," Jude says. "Double protection."

2:25 P.M.

Jude starts to narrate his own play, letting Sam know what he's doing and why he's

doing it. The game continues until Sam looks down at his position. "Tripled pawns," he says, already sensing defeat.

Jude builds him up by giving him one of his highest compliments: a new nickname. For the rest of the day, Sam will be Young Upstart.

2:32 P.M.

A group of Vanderbilt University students clusters around the table. They start peppering Jude with questions.

"Do you take Venmo?"

"Would you mind telling us your rating?"

"Who's the best player you ever played?"

Jude answers that last one. "Bobby Fischer."



Here and left, Acers entertains and instructs.

"You played Fischer? Holy s---!"

Jude looks away from them. Now into his second game with Young Upstart, he recites a list of chess books. Young Upstart writes them all down. The students keep watching. One says he started playing because of "The Queen's Gambit." The other is a fan of GothamChess on YouTube. They are all at college together but aren't on a chess team. They mostly play online.

"Only one in 100 people play a real person," Jude says. "So I'm actually a novelty."

"Has anyone ever beaten you here?" the student asks.

"Sir!" Jude springs up and walks around the table. "How are people with high breeding asking a question like this!"

He resumes his game with Young Upstart. The students watch for a while longer, then fade away.

"People talk themselves out of playing every day," Jude says.

2:47 P.M.

A man crosses the street and walks up to the table. He drops off a bag of shrimp po-boys and walks back across the street with no explanation.

2:48 P.M.

I've always considered Jude Acers to be doubly renowned: first as a chess player and, second, as a French Quarter icon.

Like the late sousaphone player Tuba Fats in Jackson Square, or the alive-and-swinging clarinet player Doreen Kitchens on Royal Street, Jude has staked out a spot of French Quarter property that he doesn't own legally, but owns in every other sense of the word.

Like those musicians, Jude is larger than life. But as a character, he seems to me to rival the legendary Ruthie the Duck Girl, who was known for roller skating through the Quarter accompanied by a varying number of ducks.

I'm not sure how Jude will like the comparison, but I ask him. His eyes light up.

"I am Ruthie!" he says. "I consider her to be the greatest feature attraction of the French Quarter in the past two hundred years. Not even Paul Morphy could compare!"

2:50 P.M.

Jude is now giving Young Upstart package deals on games. He announces that his next opening will be the Richter-Veresov. It's one of his favorites and he quickly gains a pawn.

"I'm not like Morphy. I don't give pawn odds," Jude says, placing the pawn on his side of the board.

Eighteen moves later, Young Upstart drops a queen. He stares at the board.

"I was looking at that queen the entire f--- time," he says. "But this is what I came back to New Orleans for." He reaches into his pocket for another five-dollar bill.

3:10 P.M.

Young Upstart runs across the street for another 16-ounce Pabst Blue Ribbon.

3:14 P.M.

After Jude wins the next game, he shows Young Upstart an exchange that would have equalized it. Then he dramatically pushes all the pieces off the board, with a flourish equal to Ben Kingsley in his portrayal of Bruce Pandolfini in the movie *Searching for Bobby Fischer*. Jude noisily slaps pieces on the board and sets up checkmate puzzles.

"A lesson for the Young Upstart!" he announces.

This goes on for the next half hour. At one point, I can't contain myself and I blurt out an answer. Jude holds up a hand. "Reporter Found Strangled in Alley," he narrates. "With Chess Piece in Mouth."

One of Jude's lessons includes a *zugzwang* position. Young Upstart is unfamiliar with the idea. Jude shouts.

"Zugzwang!"

Young Upstart shouts back. "Zugzwang!"

Jude, louder: "Zugzwang!"

Young Upstart, louder still: "Zugzwang!"

They keep at it. Faces peer from the slow-ly passing cars.

"You just got a 50-dollar lesson!" Jude says.

"I'm so glad I came down here!"

3:47 P.M.

Jude asks Young Upstart how he started playing chess. He says he started as a child with his grandfather, who had a handmade chess set that dated back to his days as a colonel in Vietnam.

"Where do you get your confidence? Did you always like yourself?" Jude asks.

"I've always had self-doubt. It's always been a thing for me."

"But you don't care if nobody else does it. You're going to do it."

"One hundred percent."

Young Upstart stands up. "We don't have guys like you in San Diego," he says. "We have chess clubs. But nobody like you."

They shake hands. Young Upstart then gets on his Segway and glides off.

4:06 P.M.

"Put this in your notebook," Jude says to me. "605 million people are playing chess. That's

a United Nations survey." He waits for me to write it down.

One of these 605 million, Stephen, now approaches the table. He's holding hands with his wife, Nikki. They're from Houston. He's a mechanical engineer and she's a nurse practitioner. He's been wanting to play Jude ever since seeing him in a YouTube video.

"As you see, I get to meet dynamite women," Jude says, directing his comment to Nikki.

Nikki and Stephen hold hands the entire time they sit at the table. As he plays Stephen, Jude quizzes Nikki about their marriage. How did you meet? Did he make his move fast? How did he propose? Did he chase after you?

This is not the conversation that Nikki expected. "He never had to. He's a very nice person."

Then Jude looks hard at the board. "I have given you all my positional traps," he says to Stephen. "You have avoided them all."

He looks some more. "You're doing tremendously well."

He pauses. "The reason I'm taking my time is I don't have a clear plan and it does bother me."

Jude goes back to Nikki.

"When you were a kid, when did you realize you had a lot of confidence?"

"I don't know if I ever did."

Jude returns to the board. He has a knight and a rook while Stephen has two bishops. Jude has also gained a pawn.

But Jude isn't sure where to take it from here. The game slows to a crawl. Stephen checks his watch in the manner of someone who has dinner reservations on a Friday night in New Orleans and whose wife is patiently waiting for a chess game to end.

Jude puts on his jacket. Body temperature is important for a professional player.

4:27 P.M.

The game goes on. Jude narrates his thoughts.

"I would like my pawns to go down the board, but I still have to work." He looks at Stephen. "I'm very proud of you."

Stephen asks how he could have protected the lost pawn. "Just protect it," Jude says.

Jude now seems to be mainly talking to himself as he tries to finish the game. "Keep it simple," he says. "Don't try to be a hero."

4:40 P.M.

Stephen checks his watch again.

4:49 P.M.

Another cluster of college students has

arrived. They are holding drinks and are more wobbly than the Vanderbilt students. The one in front is wearing a pink shirt, a few Mardi Gras beads, and has "Proverbs 33:6" tattooed up his arm.

"Do you take Venmo?"

"Cash only."

"I only have three dollars and 75 cents."

Jude goes back to his pawns.

The challenger sways a bit more, "Dude. How about if I win, I don't pay. If you win, I'll pay."

Jude ignores him.

"Just tell me what your first move would be."

Silence.

The would-be challenger drifts to the side of the table and watches for a while. Then he tries again.

"What's your first move?"

I can't take it any longer. "His first move is to be paid five dollars," I say quietly.

The challenger looks puzzled, as if seeing

me for the first time. He and his friends soon lose themselves in a growing Mardi Gras crowd.

5:09 P.M.

Jude finally advances his pawns, ending the game. Somehow, Jude convinces Nikki to stand on top of his table for a photo. We all help her up and then down.

"Those photos are for World Wide Media!" Jude tells her.

Stephen and Nikki depart, Nikki likely wondering what just happened, Stephen possibly still thinking about that lost pawn.

5:20 P.M.

Jude abruptly disappears across Decatur.

5:30 P.M.

"Dinner is served!"

Jude walks confidently through the slow line of cars on Decatur Street, carrying two plastic shopping bags. He takes out Styro-

foam containers of gumbo, macaroni and cheese, and fried potatoes.

Jude says his relationship with French Market Seafood really took off in the days that followed Hurricane Katrina and the city's levee breaks. Along with other journalists across the country, I had covered the story of Jude's days in the French Quarter as water rose in nearby neighborhoods. He narrates the events that followed, slipping into third person:

"Jude is all alone, pulls his table out, the only people around were Red Cross workers. Mr. Marullo is passing out menus. Jude, with his beginner kitchen skills, started to help him clean up. Says Mr. Marullo: 'You really helped us out. You're eating in my restaurant free.'"

A man leans out his car window. "There's the champ for life!" he shouts.

Jude waves his arm.

"With the food, the people, where I am," he says. "I know I am a millionaire."

5:57 P.M.

The street lamp over the World Chess Table turns on for the night.

5:58 P.M.

The table is quiet. It's littered with newspapers, gumbo containers, and Young Upstart's beer cans. No more players arrive. Jude begins a new story, then stops himself. He waves his arms around like propellers. "Yes! Yes!" he shouts.

Baylee Badawy leans in and sets a Mardi Gras king cake on the table. She doesn't leave for Las Vegas until tomorrow, she explains. The two catch up on the latest news. They talk about the table and how it is still standing after five years of street play, which makes it a miracle table. They talk about when Hikaru Nakamura visited the Chess Cave, and they talk about the viral Jude Acers posts that Baylee has made. They talk about everything and nothing, the way only best friends can talk.

"No funeral when I die," Jude says. "I want to be buried in the Louisiana swamp with a big party where people are telling Jude Acers stories."

On the other side of Canal Street, parades are lining up, kicking off the start of the last weekend of Carnival. But Baylee, who also lives in the French Quarter, is on her way home. "Jude always walks me back," she says.

The table not yet locked down, they disappear down Decatur, keeping to the center of streets, never crossing at crosswalks, walking arm and arm into a perfect French Quarter night. ♡



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Trailblazers in Berkeley

Belakovskaia wins inaugural U.S. Senior Women's Championship!

BY JULIE O'NEILL



CHESPLAYERS ARE ALL THE same ... *only some of them are women.*

The first U.S. Senior Women's Championship was held November 3-5, 2023, at the Berkeley Chess School in Berkeley, California. This inaugural event came to fruition through the efforts and cooperation of the Eade Foundation, the Berkeley Chess School, and US Chess.

What does it take to implement something great that is also long overdue? It takes a spark to light the fire, along with teamwork and perseverance to fan the flames and bring the idea to fruition. The tournament was in the works for several years starting in 2019, when it was initially brought up to the US Chess Executive Board by Dr. Alexey Root, WIM, and FM Jim Eade. Although it was not approved at that time, a seed was planted.

At the annual delegates meeting in 2022, Jim made a motion to start a women's senior championship, and it passed. The Eade Foundation and Elizabeth Shaughnessy, who started

the Berkeley Chess School, bid on the tournament and it was awarded to them.

This invitational championship brought together 12 of the top women players in the country, ranging in age from 54 to 82, to compete in the five-round Swiss system tournament. The women, who came from all walks of life, had one thing in common: love of the game.

The tournament featured an \$8,000 prize fund with no entry fees. The time control was G/90+30. FIDE Arbiter and Life Master Richard Koepcke directed the event.

Aside from being the first of its kind,

the tournament was special in many ways. The camaraderie between the players was amazing. Those of us who had not played in tournaments for awhile were once again bitten by the chess bug. We were reminded why we initially fell in love with the game. And Elizabeth Shaughnessy was truly the "hostess with the mostest." The playing venue was well lit and comfortable, food and lodging were provided, as well as transportation between the hotel and the playing site. Jim and Elizabeth could not have done more to make us feel welcome and comfortable.

THE OPENING

As the saying goes, "Man plans and God laughs." My early morning flight from Phoenix to Oakland was canceled for mechanical issues, causing me to wait most of the day for another flight. I arrived at the Oakland airport in time for rush-hour traffic, feeling stressed, tired, and hungry, but able to make the opening ceremony.

US Chess Executive Director Carol Meyer addressed the group and introduced Executive Board member Leila D'Aquin and Women's Committee Chair Kimberly Doo. Jim Eade and Elizabeth Shaughnessy also shared some thoughts with us and Richard Koepcke reviewed the rules. Commem-

Below: The participants in the inaugural U.S. Senior Women's Chess Championship.



orative baseball caps were given to all participants.

It was a nice surprise for me to learn that IM Elliott Winslow would be commenting on the games, along with Jim Eade and WFM Ivona Jezierska. Elliott was assistant editor when I was editing *Chess Life* and it was great to see him!

THE MIDDLE GAME

WGM Anjelina Belakovskaia was the pre-tournament favorite and in the end she prevailed. It was not clear sailing and she faced a few obstacles along the way, but with her resourcefulness and a little luck, she persevered and took clear first place.

The following game, played in round five versus Varinia Cabrera, was critical.

CARO-KANN DEFENSE (B15)

Varinia Cabrera (1815)

WGM Anjelina Belakovskaia (2218)

U.S. Senior Women's Ch (5), Berkeley, 11.05.2023

Annotations by WGM Belakovskaia

1. e4 c6 2. d4 d5 3. Nc3 dxe4 4. Nxe4 Nf6 5. Nxf6+ exf6 6. Nf3 Bd6 7. h3 0-0 8. Be2 Re8 9. Be3 Qc7 10. 0-0 Nd7 11. Qd2 f5

With the idea of 12. ... f4 to win the white bishop. This move also takes control of the e4-square, which the knight can reach via the f6-square.

12. Qd3 Nf6 13. c4 Qe7 14. Rfe1 Ne4 15. a3 f4

The position is equal after 15. ... Qf6 16. Qc2 Qg6 17. Nh4 Qf6 18. Nf3.

16. Bc1 Bf5 17. Qb3 Rad8



After 17. ... Qd7 18. c5 Bc7 19. Qxb7? is a mistake in light of 19. ... Rab8 20. Qa6 (20. Qxa7?? Ra8 21. Qb7 Reb8 drops the queen) 20. ... Bxh3 21. gxh3 Qxh3 22. Qd3 (worse is 22. Nh2?? f3! 23. Nxf3 Re6 with checkmate in a few moves) 22. ... Re6! and Black will crash through.

18. Bd3 Bg6??

Black blundered a piece!

19. Bxe4! Bxe4 20. Nd2 Bc2

There's no salvation to be found after 20. ... f5 21. c5+ Kh8 22. cxd6 Qxd6 23. Nxe4 fxe4 24. Qxb7.

21. Rxe7 Bxb3 22. Rxe8+ Rxe8 23. Nxb3



Black is down a piece in the endgame with no compensation, but my motto is "**NEVER RESIGN!**", so I am continuing the game, trying to create some threats.

23. ... Re1+ 24. Kh2 f3+ 25. g3 Re2 26. Be3 26. Kg1 Re1+ 27. Kh2 Re2 would repeat the position.

26. ... h5!

With the idea of ... h5-h4 next. Black avoids 26. ... Rxb2 27. Nd2 when the f3-pawn is falling.

27. Kg1

Also playable was 27. h4 g5 28. hxg5 h4 29. Bf4.

27. ... Bxg3

Winning back one pawn.

28. Nc5

The alternative 28. fxg3 Rxe3 29. Nc5 Re2 30. Nxb7 Rg2+ 31. Kf1 Rxd3 32. Kf2 Rxd3 33. Na5 g5 34. Nxc6 g4 gives some activity, but it's hardly enough.

28. ... f5!

Creating another threat of ... f5-f4.

29. fxg3 Rxe3 30. Kf2 Re2+ 31. Kxf3 Rxb2

The fewer white pawns, the better!

32. Re1 Kf7

As bad as the position is, an active king is a must!

33. Re3 b6 34. Nd3 Rc2 35. h4 Kf6!

Of course not 35. ... Rxc4? 36. Ne5+.



Varinia Cabrera



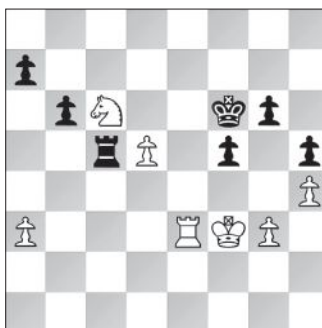
WGM Anjelina Belakovskaia



WFM Olga Sagalchik

WIM Beatriz
Marinello**36. Ne5 g6 37. Nxc6**

More straightforward was 37. d5 cxd5 38. cxd5 Rd2 39. Nd3 (or 39. Rd3).

37. ... Rxc4 38. d5 Rc5

Still hanging in there!

39. Re6+?

This move gave me hope! After 39. Rd3 the game would be over in a few moves.

39. ... Kg7 40. d6?!

While this move still wins the game, it gives Black a chance. Better in my opinion was 40. Kf4 Rxd5 41. Rxg6+.

40. ... Rc3+!

It's important to give this check first!

41. Kg2??

After 41. Kf4 Rc4+ 42. Ke5 (42. Kg5?? Rg4 mate would be a bizarre ending) 42. ... Rc5+ 43. Kd4 Rxc6 44. d7 Rxe6 45. d8=Q White has a winning queen versus rook endgame but Black would have some hopes to hold the position.

41. ... Rxc6! 42. d7 Rc2+! 43. Kf3 Rd2

Below, left to right: Teasley, Dimitrijevic, Kennedy, and O'Neill — the "super seniors!"

WFM Natalya
Tsodikova

And suddenly, against all odds, Black is slightly better!

44. Re7+ Kf6 45. Rh7?

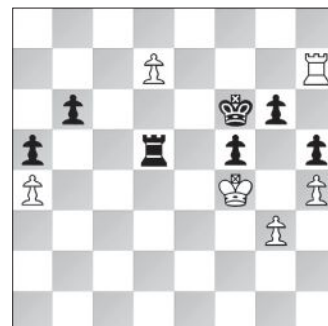
White does not switch gears, and instead continues to play for a win in a worse position. Now the rook is extremely passive. Here 45. d8=Q Rxd8 46. Rxa7 was equal, but Black is up a pawn.

45. ... a5?

Black got overly excited! The correct 45. ... a6 was much better.

46. Ke3 Rd1 47. Ke2 Rd5 48. Ke3?

Another mistake, giving Black the opportunity to play 48. ... b5 or 48. ... a4 with winning positions in both cases.

48. ... Rd6? 49. a4! Rd5 50. Kf4?

The final blunder! What an improbable turnaround!

50. ... Rd3!

White is in zugzwang!

51. Rh8 Rd4+ 52. Ke3 Rxd7 53. Rf8+ Ke5**54. Re8+ Kd5 55. Kf4 Kc5 56. Kg5**

Black wins after 56. Re6 Rd6 57. Rxd6 Kxd6 58. Kg5 b5.

56. ... Rd6 57. Rg8 b5 58. Rxg6 Rxg6+ 59. Kxg6 bxa4 60. Kxh5 a3 61. Kg6 a2 62. h5 a1=Q 63. Kxf5 a4 64. g4 Qg7 65. g5 Qf7+ 66. Kg4 a3 67. g6 Qf6, White resigned.

I had a great rapport with Dolly. We were the two oldest participants in the event and we had plenty of fun reminiscing about the old days.

LONDON SYSTEM (A48)

WIM Dorothy "Dolly" Teasley (2000)

Julie O'Neill (1800)

U.S. Senior Women's Ch (5), Berkeley, 11.05.2023

1. d4 Nf6 2. Nf3 g6 3. Bf4 Bg7 4. e3 Nh5 5. Bg3 Nxc3 6. hxc3 c5 7. c3 cxd4 8. exd4 d5 9. Nbd2 Nd7 10. Be2 Nf6 11. 0-0 Qb6 12. Qb3 Qxb3 13. axb3 0-0 14. Ne5 e6 15. b4 Nd7 16. Nxd7 Bxd7 17. f4 a6 18. Nb3 Rfc8 19. Nc5 Bc6 20. Ra3 Bf8 21. Rfa1 Bxc5 22. bxc5 Rab8 23. Rb3 Ra8 24. Ra5 f6 25. Rb6 Kg7 26. b4 Kf7 27. Kf2 f5 28. Bd1 Kf6 29. Ba4 Bxa4 30. Rxa4 Rab8 31. Ke3 h6 32. Ra1 g5 33. Rh1 gxf4+ 34. gxf4 Rh8 35. Kf3 h5 36. Re1 Rhe8 37. g3 Kf7 38. Rh1 Rh8 39. c6 bxc6 40. Rxa6 Ra8 41. Rxc6 Rac8 42. Rc5 Ke7 43. Ra1 Ra8 44. Raa5 Rhc8 45. Rxc8 Rxc8 46. Ra3 Rb8 47. Rb3 Kd6 48. b5 Kc7 49. Kg2 Kb6 50. Kh3 Rg8 51. Rb2 Rg7 52. Re2 Rg6 53. Kh4 Rg4+ 54. Kxh5 Rxc3 55. Rxe6+ Kxb5 56. Re5 Kc4 57. Rxf5 Rxc3 58. Rg5 Kxd4 59. Kg6 Kc4 60. f5 d4 61. f6 Rf3 62. Rg4+ Kc3 63. f7 d3 64. Rg5 d2 65. Rd5 Ke2 66. Rxd2+, draw.

SICILIAN DEFENSE (B50)

WCM Mary Kuhner (1738)

WIM Olga Sagalchik (2100)

U.S. Senior Women's Ch (2), Berkeley, 11.04.2023

1. e4 c5 2. Nf3 d6 3. c3 Nf6 4. h3 Nc6 5. Bd3 d5 6. exd5 Qxd5 7. Bb5 Bf5 8. Na3 e6 9. 0-0 Be7 10. d4 Be4 11. Be3 cxd4 12. Bxc6+ bxc6 13. Bxd4 Bxf3 14. Qxf3 Qxf3 15. gxf3 Bxa3 16. bxa3 Nd5 17. Rfe1 0-0 18. Rab1 Rfc8 19. c4 Nf4 20. Kh2 Rd8 21. Be3 Nd3 22. Red1 Ne5 23. Bxa7 Nxf3+ 24. Kg3 Nd2 25. Bb6 Rd3+ 26. Kg2 Nxb1 27. Rxd3 Nxa3 28. c5 Kf8 29. Rd8+ Rxd8 30. Bxd8 Ke8 31. Bb6 e5 32. Kf3 Kd7 33. Ke4 Ke6 34. Kd3 Kd5 35. f3 f5 36. Kc3 f4 37. Kb3 Nb5 38. a4 Nd4+ 39. Kb2 e4 40. a5 exf3 41. a6 f2 42. a7 f1=Q 43. a8=Q Qe2+ 44. Ka3 Qd3+, White resigned.

KING'S INDIAN DEFENSE (E60)

WIM Beatriz Marinello (2200)

WFM Natalya Tsodikova (2181)

U.S. Senior Women's Ch (3), Berkeley, 11.04.2023

1. d4 Nf6 2. Nf3 g6 3. e3 Bg7 4. Be2 0-0 5. 0-0 d6 6. b3 c6 7. Bb2 Qc7 8. c4 Nbd7 9. Nc3 Re8 10. Rc1 e5 11. d5 c5 12. Qc2 a6 13. a3 Nf8 14. b4 b6 15. Nd2 Bd7 16. e4 Rab8 17. b5 a5 18. Rcd1 g5 19. Rfe1 Ng6 20. Nf1 Nf4 21. Ne3 Qc8 22. Bc1 h6 23. Bf1 Kh8 24. Ne2 N6h5 25. Ng3 Nxc3 26. fxg3 Ng6 27. Be2 Ne7 28. Rf1 Rf8 29. g4 f6 30. Rf2 Kg8 31. Rdf1 Be8 32. g3 Bg6 33. Qd3 Qe8 34. Bd2 Bh7 35. Bf3 Kh8 36. Qe2 Qd7 37. Nf5 Nxf5 38. gxf5 Rg8 39. Bh5 Bf8 40. Rg2 Qg7 41. Qg4 Be7 42. Kf2 Rgf8 43. Rh1 Rg8 44.

h3 Bf8 45. h4 Rb7 46. Ke2 Qe7 47. hxc3 fxg5 48. Rf2 Qf6 49. Rfh2 Re7 50. Rh3 Rc7 51. R1h2 Rd7 52. Qf3 Re7 53. Bg4 Rc7 54. Qh1 Re7 55. Rxh6 Bxh6 56. Rxh6 Qf7 57. f6 Rc7 58. Bf5 Ra7 59. Bxh7 Qxh7 60. Rxh7+ Rxh7 61. Qf3 Rf8 62. Qf5 Rh2+ 63. Kd3 g4 64. Bg5, Black resigned.

FRENCH DEFENSE, FORT KNOX VARIATION (C10)

WCM Natasha Christiansen (1821)

WIM Alexey Root (2000)

U.S. Senior Women's Ch (3), Berkeley, 11.04.2023

1. e4 e6 2. d4 d5 3. Nd2 dxe4 4. Nxe4 Bd7 5. Nf3 Bc6 6. Bd3 Nd7 7. Bf4 Ngf6 8. Qe2 Nxe4 9. Bxe4 Bxe4 10. Qxe4 c6 11. 0-0-0 Nf6 12. Qe2 Nd5 13. Bd2 Be7 14. Kb1 0-0 15. h4 a5 16. g4 b5 17. g5 b4 18. h5 a4 19. g6 fxg6 20. hxg6 Rf6 21. Rxh7 Rxg6 22. Rdh1 Kf7 23. Ne5+ Kf6 24. Qf3+, Black resigned.

BUDAPEST GAMBIT (A52)

WIM Shernaz Kennedy (1900)

WIM Vesna Dimitrijevic (1907)

U.S. Senior Women's Ch (5), Berkeley, 11.05.2023

1. d4 Nf6 2. c4 e5 3. dxe5 Ng4 4. Bf4 Nc6 5. Nf3 Bb4+ 6. Nbd2 Qe7 7. a3 Bc5 8. e3 a5 9. Nb3 Bb6 10. Qd5 f6 11. c5 a4 12. cxb6 axb3 13. exf6 Nxf6 14. Qxb3 cxb6 15. 0-0-0 d5 16. Bg5 Be6 17. Nd4 Nxd4 18. Rxd4 Rc8+ 19. Kb1 Qc5 20. Bb5+ Kf7 21. Bd3 Rc6 22. Bxf6 gxf6 23. Qb4 h6 24. Qxc5 bxc5 25. Ra4 c4 26. Bc2 Rhc8 27. Ra7 R8c7 28. Rd1 c3 29. b4 f5 30. Rd4 Kf6 31. Kc1 Rg7 32. g3 Rcc7 33. a4 Rg4 34. Rxg4 fxg4 35. a5 Rf7 36. Kd1 Ke5 37. Ke2 d4 38. exd4+ Kxd4 39. b5 Bc4+ 40. Ke1 Bxb5 41. Ra8 Re7+ 42. Kd1 Be2+ 43. Kc1 Bf3 44. Rd8+ Kc4 45. Bd3+ Kb4 46. Kc2 Rc7

47. Rd4+ Kxa5 48. Be4 Be2 49. Kb3 b5 50. Rd8 Rc5 51. Rd6 h5 52. Bb7 Bc4+ 53. Kxc3 b4+ 54. Kd4 Rc7 55. Be4 b3 56. Rh6 b2 57. Rxh5+ Kb4 58. Re5 Rd7+ 59. Ke3 Bd3 60. Re6 Bxe4 61. Rb6+ Ka3 62. Kxe4 Rd2 63. Ke3 Rd5 64. f4 gxf3 e.p. 65. Kxf3 Rd3+ 66. Ke4 Rb3 67. Ra6+ Kb4 68. Rb6+ Kc4 69. Rxb3 Kxb3 70. h4 b1=Q+ 71. Kf4 Qg6 72. g4 Qh6+ 73. Kg3 Kc4 74. g5 Qh5 75. Kf4 Qxh4+ 76. Kf5 Qh7+ 77. Kf6 Qg8 78. g6 Kd5 79. g7 Kd6 80. Kg6 Ke6 81. Kh6 Kf6, White resigned.

THE ENDGAME

Celebration time! On Sunday evening, after the final moves were played, US Chess and Jim Eade generously hosted a dinner for the players and presented monetary awards to the winners, most notably the \$4,000 first place prize to Anjelina. Glasses were raised and toasts were made.

To commemorate the event, we each signed 12 chess boards, and everyone received one to keep as souvenirs. In addition, Jim presented everyone with commemorative t-shirts. There were hugs all around and promises to meet up again.

As a result of this tournament, good things are continuing to evolve as US Chess has agreed to send a 50+ women's team to the 2024 World Senior Team Chess Championships, scheduled to be held in Krakow, Poland in July.

A TOAST TO THE "SUPER SENIORS"

There has never been a 65+ U.S. Senior Women's Championship. There were very few women playing chess in the early 1970s, and many consider those women to be trailblazers for a future generation of women.

Eleanor Roosevelt once said, "A woman is like a tea bag, you never know how strong she is until she gets into hot water." Our trailblazers faced adversity and chauvinism, and they persevered. Well done, ladies! ♠

2023 U.S. SENIOR WOMEN'S CHAMPIONSHIP AT A GLANCE

BEREKLEY, CA | NOVEMBER 3-5, 2023

Final Standings

1st: WGM Anjelina Belakovskaia, 4½/5. **2nd:** WFM Olga Sagalchik, 4. **3rd-4th:** WIM Beatriz Marinello, Varinia Cabrera, 3. **5th-6th:** WIM Vesna Dimitrijevic, WFM Natalya Tsodikova, 2½. **7th-9th:** WIM Alexey Root, WCM Natasha Christiansen, Julie O'Neill, 2. **10th:** WIM Shernaz Kennedy, 1½. **11th-12th:** WIM Dorothy "Dolly" Teasley, WCM Mary Kuhner, 1.

For more, visit our event coverage at *Chess Life Online*: new.uschess.org/2023-us-senior-womens-championship

What Your Engine is Trying to Tell You

Part 2: In the opening, space matters.

BY GM LARRY KAUFMAN



LAST MONTH WE TOOK AN IN-DEPTH look at how modern engines work. More precisely, we discussed how the old standard of +1.00 being equivalent to “being up a pawn with no additional positional advantage” no

longer holds. In its place, today’s engines, using different versions of neural nets for their evaluation functions, have unhitched any strict relationship between material and evaluation; instead, a score of +1.00 is now defined as a position where White is expected to win 50% of games from that position, with Black drawing or winning the other half. The result is a normalized evaluation that does not drift as neural nets evolve and change, but one that also “feels right” to human users.

While I recommend you read last month’s installment for more on this important shift in computer chess, and on the key differences between today’s top engines, this month

I want to focus on the opening and think about what these new engines are revealing in that phase of the game.

This last part is important. We knew well before Crafty or Fritz were developed that certain positions were bad. As engines have improved, they have helped humans refine opening theory, and with the great leap taken in recent years via AI-enhanced evaluation functions, certain truths about a number of opening positions are being clarified faster than ever.

Consider the Berlin Defense — **1. e4 e5 2. Nf3 Nc6 3. Bb5 Nf6 4. 0-0 Nxe4 5. d4 Nd6 6. Bxc6 dxc6 7. dxe5 Nf5 8. Qxd8+ Kxd8** — which GM Vladimir Kramnik used to such great effect in his 2000 world championship victory over GM Garry Kasparov.



Here the top engines of the day (Fritz 6 and Junior 6) both saw White as being better by a score of around +0.35 to +0.40. Today, Leela and Stockfish recognize what Kramnik did — White’s advantage is ephemeral at +0.10 to +0.15.

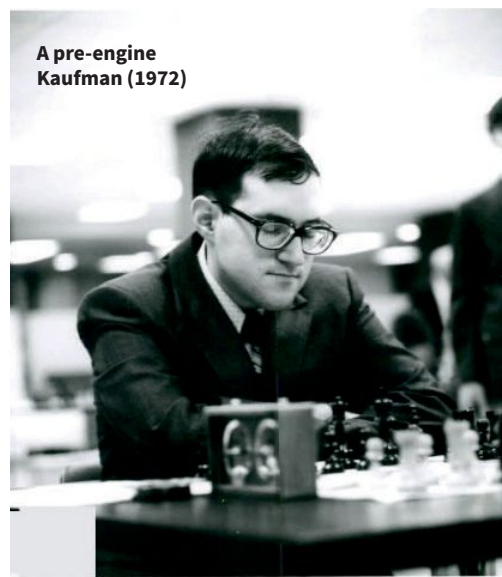
The “Elista Endgame” — **1. d4 d5 2. c4 c6 3. Nf3 Nf6 4. Nc3 dxc4 5. a4 Bf5 6. Ne5 e6 7. f3 c5 8. e4 Bg6 9. Be3 cxd4 10. Qxd4 Qxd4 11. Bxd4 Nfd7 12. Nxd7 Nxd7 13. Bxc4**, as played by Kramnik and Anand with Black in world championship matches — is a more recent example.



Hiarc 13.1, used by Anand in his match preparation in 2010, sees this position as manageable for Black, with White ahead by +0.35 or so. Contemporary engines deem it borderline lost, with Leela giving White a stable, serious advantage of around +0.55.

It turns out that many openings that were popular in the last century now fall into this “dubious” category, which explains why they are rarely seen at elite levels except in blitz or rapid play. But perhaps we should be more precise here. What is the dividing line in the opening between (from Black’s perspective) theoretically correct and theoretically dubious?

Last month I suggested that an advantage of roughly 0.7 pawns is the dividing line between a win and a draw with correct play. Humans, however, rarely play fully correct games. I submit that if the opening phase of a game ends with an engine evaluation of anywhere above +0.50, it is more likely than not that the game will reach expected winning territory (over +1.00) than reach dead equality (0.00) by move 30. In other words, an opening ending with an evaluation of +0.50 should be considered dubious for Black, as they are likely to be losing at some point given the reality of human fallibility. The opponent may not find the way to the win, but in principle, such positions are undesirable.



A pre-engine Kaufman (1972)

In what follows, I will be citing evaluations from Leela (version 0.30, net sva5230000) on a powerful graphics card (RTX 4090 mobile), in order to compare results with the circa 2008 Rybka 3 used by Anand in his preparation for the Kramnik match. I do so for reasons enumerated last month: the “Monte Carlo” style search utilized by Leela provides evaluations that are more representative of grandmaster encounters over-the-board. Please feel free to reproduce these results with current Stockfish or Komodo; in my experience, using another engine doesn’t change much.

Let’s look at some examples of major openings that have fallen from favor in the era of neural nets, and then try to understand the reasons why they have done so.

KING’S INDIAN, MAR DEL PLATA VARIATION

1. d4 Nf6 2. c4 g6 3. Nc3 Bg7 4. e4 d6 5. Nf3 0-0 6. Be2 e5 7. 0-0 Nc6

Here 7. ... Na6 is now looking better at +0.45, which, while bad, is at least above the “dubious” mark for Black.

8. d5 Ne7

This was a major defense to 1. d4 throughout the last century.

Now the Bayonet Attack, beginning with **9. b4**, gives a +0.58 eval, well into the dubious range. The most popular variation runs **9. ... Nh5** (relatively better per Leela is 9. ... a5) **10. Re1 f5**. Now the recent move **11. a4** scores highly for White; after **11. ... a5 12. bxa5 Rxa5 13. exf5 Nxf5 14. Bg5 Nf6 15. Bd3**



White has more space, more active pieces, and a +0.60 eval per Leela, while the 2008 Rybka 3 thinks White can only claim a +0.19 advantage! Of course this position is not lost for Black, but it is obviously more pleasant for White and it will not be easy for Black to hold. Don’t expect many King’s Indians in the Candidates’ tournament!

PIRC DEFENSE

1. e4 d6 2. d4 Nf6 3. Nc3 g6

The Pirc and Modern together were moderately popular in the last century in high-level play; now they are generally only seen in Rapid/Blitz games. (The “Modern Defense,” 1. ... g6, is apt to transpose eventually though there are independent options which are in general not objectively better.)

Here both 4. f4 and 4. Be3 give evals above +0.50; I’ll show:

4. Be3 Bg7 5. Qd2 c6 6. a4 0-0 7. f3 (Top players of the last century would not have approved this combination of a2-a4 and f3-f3, but engines like it and we can see why now.) **7. ... Qa5 8. Nge2 e5 9. g4 Nbd7 10. g5 exd4 11. Bxd4 Nh5** (11. ... Ne8 should transpose) **12. Bxg7 Nxg7 13. 0-0-0**



Leela evaluates this as +0.52, while Rybka returns just +0.19. Both the a4- and d6-pawns are weak, but White has more space and a head start in the attacking race with g2-g4-g5 already played.

BENKO GAMBIT

1. d4 Nf6 2. c4 c5 3. d5 b5!?

This was quite popular in the last century — I was one of Pal Benko’s earliest victims of the gambit in the 1960s! — but has almost disappeared from high level play.

4. cxb5 a6 5. bxa6

Here 5. e3, as I played versus Benko, is also good, giving back the pawn but keeping a positional edge that approaches the “dubious” line.

5. ... Bxa6

Similar is 5. ... g6, while 5. ... e6 may keep White’s edge below the dubious line, but it moves outside the Benko Gambit proper, and it is not very pleasant for Black.

6. Nc3 g6 7. e4 Bxf1 8. Kxf1 g6 9. g3 Bg7 10. Nf3 0-0 11. Kg2 Nbd7 12. a4!



Rybka believes Black has some play for the pawn with a +0.50 evaluation, while Leela rightly sees this as +0.80. With moves like Ra1-a3, Qd1-c2, and Nc3-b5 likely, White is consolidating the extra pawn for just mild compensation, with a space advantage to boot. Black may be able to hold with perfect play, but it will be very difficult.

PHILIDOR’S DEFENSE

1. e4 e5 2. Nf3 d6 3. d4 exd4 4. Nxd4 Nf6 5. Nc3 Be7

This had a bit of popularity about 15 years ago — I took it up myself then — but now it is in the “dubious” bag.

6. Bf4 0-0 7. Qd2 Nc6 8. 0-0-0 Nxd4 9. Qxd4 a6 10. e5

Also fine for White is 10. f3 with a pawn storm coming.

10. ... dxe5 11. Qxe5 Bd6 12. Qd4 Bxf4+ 13. Qxf4 Qe7 14. Bc4 Be6 15. Rhe1 Rad8

GM Larry Kaufman today



16. Rxd8 Rxd8 17. Bxe6 fxe6 18. Ne4



This is evaluated by Leela at +0.58, or a 65% White score. Rybka is more sanguine at +0.32. To my eye, the black pawn on e6 is isolated and very weak, and if it is lost without compensation, White should win with pawns on both sides of the board. Perhaps Black can draw with perfect play, but no one would want to defend this over-the-board.

BUDAPEST GAMBIT

1. d4 Nf6 2. c4 e5

This gambit has always had a decent amount of popularity, and was strongly recommended in a book by GM Moskalenko a few years ago.

3. dxe5 Ng4

The Fajarowicz Gambit, 3. ... Ne4?, is clearly losing after 4. a3 per Leela at +1.33.

4. e4 Nxe5 5. f4 Nec6 6. Nc3

White's space advantage used to be considered only enough for a small plus, but engines love space. Over time, they have convinced us that they are right!

6. ... Bc5 7. Qg4 0-0 8. f5 d6 9. Nf3 Re8 10. Nd5 Kh8 11. Bg5 f6 12. Bd2 Nd7 13. 0-0-0



White's space and development advantages are far more significant than the backward e4-pawn. Leela's evaluation of +0.58 is much closer to the truth than Rybka's +0.10.

SICILIAN DRAGON

1. e4 c5 2. Nf3 d6 3. d4 cxd4 4. Nxd4 Nf6 5. Nc3 g6

Always popular, but it fell out of fashion due to the Yugoslav Attack.

6. Be3 Bg7 7. f3 0-0 8. Qd2 Nc6 9. 0-0-0

Here 9. Bc4 was the main move in Fischer's heyday, but now it seems that the text move is the only way to prove it "dubious."

9. ... d5 10. exd5

10. Qe1 is also quite good.

10. ... Nxd5 11. Nxc6 bxc6 12. Bd4 Bxd4 13. Qxd4 Qb6 14. Na4 Qc7 15. Bc4 Rd8 16. Nc5



White has both better development and a better pawn structure. This is +0.51 for White per Leela, while Rybka thinks the position is basically equal at +0.08.

MODERN BENONI

1. d4 Nf6 2. c4 c5 3. d5 e6 4. Nc3 exd5 5. cxd5 d6

A favorite of dynamic players, especially GM Mikhail Tal in the last century. It now looks nearly lost.

6. e4 g6 7. f4

Note that when White has played an early Ng1-f3, this move is illegal; here, the Benoni isn't quite as bad.

7. ... Bg7 8. Bb5+ Nfd7 (other moves lose to 9. e5) 9. a4 0-0 10. Nf3 Na6 11. 0-0 Nb4 12. h3 a6 13. Bc4 f5 14. e5 dxe5 15. d6+ Kh8 16. Ng5 e4 17. Be3 Qf6 18. Qe2 Qxd6 19. Rfd1 Qc6 20. Nd5

(see diagram top of next column)

This position is a striking example of how engine evaluations have progressed. Rybka thinks that the position is fully unclear, returning an evaluation of -0.11. Leela believes



this position is nearly winning for White at +0.85, and White scored 5/7 in my database.

It is difficult for humans to judge whether White's large lead in development or Black's two extra pawns are more weighty here, but modern engines quickly see that development is key here, not the pawn count.

RUY LOPEZ, STEINITZ DEFENSE

1. e4 e5 2. Nf3 Nc6 3. Bb5 d6

Good enough for the first World Champion, it retained some popularity into the 1900s, especially among amateurs, as it is easy to play and only concedes space.

4. d4 exd4 5. Nxd4 Bd7 6. Nc3 Nf6 7. Bxc6 bxc6 8. Qf3 Qb8 9. 0-0 Qb6 10. Be3 Ng4 11. Rab1 a5 12. a3



White's huge lead in development is worth far more than the bishop pair, making Black's opening dubious. Rybka says +0.36, while Leela gives White a +0.64 advantage.



So which defenses are deemed satisfactory now? The engines strongly believe that after 1. e4, pushing the king's pawn with 1. ... e5 2. Nf3 Nc6 is the only path to near-equality, but the Petroff, the Sicilian (Najdorf and Sveshnikov), and the Caro-Kann give evals of around +0.30, which is at least not near "dubious" territory. Speaking generally, White will get some tangible but modest advantage (usually space, central control,

or better pawn structure) in these lines, but not two small advantages or one large one.

The French usually ends up around +0.40 — still not “dubious,” but starting to get uncomfortably close to it, and so it is not very popular anymore at high level. The main problem is that Black usually gets two “strikes”: less space and a bad (light-squared) bishop.

Playing 1. ... Nc6 is also around +0.40 after 2. d4 but has little merit since if White plays 2. Nf3 Black's only non-dubious option is 2. ... e5, transposing to normal 1. e4 lines. Other moves are in or near the dubious zone.

Pretty much all Black gambits against 1. e4 are dubious per the computer, except the Marshall Gambit in the Ruy Lopez, which the engines now approve of! In summary, you have at least five defenses to 1. e4 that are not deemed dubious. This is sufficient to provide variety and cater to differing tastes.

Against 1. d4 only 1. ... d5 and 1. ... Nf6 are near-equal. Both 1. ... c6 and 1. ... e6 allow White to play 2. e4, without gaining anything tangible in return.

The Dutch, rather popular in the past among amateurs, didn't quite make my dubious list, but both 2. g3 and 2. Bg5 give White something like +0.45, very near that line.

The basic problem is that 1. ... f5 doesn't aid development, and in the opening every move is precious. Many tests have shown that if Black wastes even a single tempo at the start, he is dangerously close to losing, i.e., 1. e4, Black “passes” (illegal, I know), 2. d4 is around +0.90. It's true that 1. ... f5 is much better than “passing,” as it does gain space, but the move is only half-useful.

After the two best Black first moves, the best defenses to the Queen's Gambit, namely the Queen's Gambit Accepted and Declined, Slav, and Nimzo-Indian all give comfortable evals below +0.20, with the Grunfeld only slightly above this. Players often concede the bishop-pair for mild compensation in Nimzo lines, and the others mostly concede a bit of space, but all in manageable amounts.

Pretty much everything else is dubious or nearly so, except perhaps the Queen's Indian Defense, which is evaluated at around +0.30. As with king's pawn openings, we have about five satisfactory defenses to choose between versus the queen's pawn. The engines have greatly reduced the number of “approved” defenses to the two leading initial moves, but there is still ample variety to keep the opening phase of the game interesting.

What does this tell us about the age-old question of whether 1. d4 or 1. e4 is “best?” (Note that 1. Nf3 usually transposes to 1. d4 lines, and 1. c4, although a good move, is not

generally thought to be “best.”) We can see from the above that the path to near-equality is much narrower against 1. e4 — only 1. e4 e5 2. Nf3 Nc6 is in that range — but if it is chosen, White may have trouble getting even the little he can expect with 1. d4.

In other words, if White expects a variety of defenses, as is typical in open tournaments, 1. e4 is probably the best move statistically. But if White expects most opponents to reply to 1. e4 with 1. ... e5 2. Nf3 Nc6, as in top-level events, then the argument for 1. d4 becomes stronger. The recent general preference for 1. e4 can perhaps best be explained by the observation that it is much easier to prepare for one specific defense than for five!

What does all this mean for the practical tournament player? If you are picking an opening for a specific game to avoid preparation, or if you are playing in an event where preparation is not practical or likely, it's fine to play defenses in the “dubious” zone. I would avoid any that are in the “losing” zone (above +1.0), unless you expect to know them much better than your opponent.

If you are playing an opponent with Black who is likely to have prepared for you, beware of repeating a previously played “dubious” variation. They only need to check it with an engine before the game, and repeat their analysis, to likely reach a position where you are at serious risk of losing without doing anything obviously wrong. When you have the white pieces, there is far less reason to play anything “dubious.”

By simply playing engine-approved moves, you can expect to get a position where you are at least slightly better, and can play for a win, against an imperfect opponent.



One final question: why are so many defenses of the 20th century now deemed dubious by today's engines? This is difficult to answer succinctly. Leela, Komodo, and Stockfish — all equipped with neural nets for evaluative functions — have multiple and significant advantages over traditional engines with hand-crafted evaluations. They are better in closed positions. They can sense issues with *zugzwang* much more accurately. They have much better understanding of non-forcing play.

If I was asked to give one answer, however, I would say they more accurately understand the value of *space*.

Space in chess has many definitions, but for our purposes, there's one from a Seirawan book that is easy to apply. Space, he says (and here I'm paraphrasing), involves attacks on squares on the opponent's half of the board.

Black defenses like the Pirc / Modern, the Alekhine (1. e4 Nf6 2. e5 Nd5 3. d4 d6 4. c4 Nb6, also in the “dubious” zone at +0.61), or the Scandinavian (1. e4 d5 2. exd5 Qxd5 3. Nc3 Qa5 [or 3. ... Qd6] 4. d4 at +0.57) concede a clear space advantage to White. Fans of these openings will argue that this isn't anything tangible like material, so what's the problem? Engines may say that space matters, but is this true for humans playing



Kaufman
in 1996

over-the-board without silicon assistance?

Put simply: yes, it's true in human games. Statistics don't lie, and win rates against these defenses are usually much better for White than in the "approved" systems. More to the point, however, I'd like to give a concrete example of why I believe this.

Consider one of the main lines of the Smith-Morra Gambit in the Sicilian:

1. e4 c5 2. d4 cxd4 3. c3 dxc3 4. Nxc3 Nc6 5. Nf3 d6 6. Bc4 e6 7. O-O Be7 8. Qe2 Nf6 9. Rd1 e5 10. Be3 O-O



What does White have for the pawn? Both kings are safe. Black's extra pawn is backward, but central and safe, and there are no threats. The key point, however, is that

White's pieces are mostly developed to better squares, controlling more "space." I count 10 attacks on the enemy half of the board by White's bishops, four by the knights, two by a pawn, and two by a rook, for a total of 18 attacks. Black, in contrast, has just eight such attacks. I don't know how many squares of space (defined this way) equal a pawn, but the difference of 10 feels like it should be enough.

The engines evaluate this position as being a tiny bit in Black's favor, but the results of games in my database show 57% for White in 59 games. Why the incongruity?

I suspect that White would score more than Black in this position, even at amateur levels, although the balance might approach 50% as more games are decided by random blunders. I also suspect that the player with less space is more likely to blunder, and less likely to be able to convert an extra pawn without mishap, so these engine evaluations remain relevant at low levels. All things being equal, it's harder to play cramped positions, and easier to play with space.

One interesting exception would be when Black is a pawn down but has mild compensation for it. In such cases Black's chances might be equal or better in amateur games, even if they are poor at the GM level. An

example might be the Schliemann defense to the Ruy Lopez; for example:

1. e4 e5 2. Nf3 Nc6 3. Bb5 f5 4. d3 fxe4 5. dxe4 Nf6 6. O-O Bc5 7. Bxc6 bxc6 8. Nxe5 O-O



Leela returns an evaluation of +0.57, making this a "dubious" line, but only because compensation for the pawn is deemed insufficient. In any event, White can decline the pawn and settle for a small positional plus.

So what's the big takeaway? Well, if White can achieve a plus from a pawn-down position with just space to compensate, imagine how well White would do with the same space advantage, but equal material. Modern engines have taught us many lessons, and one of the most important is that space matters! ♠



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"An Advanced Beginner"

GM Maurice Ashley in conversation with **Steve Sheinkin**

This month sees the publication of two new books from GM Maurice Ashley. The first, *Move by Move: Life Lessons On and Off the Chessboard*, is a thoughtful meditation on the game we love, its broader relevance, and its powerful lessons. You'll find an excerpt accompanying this interview.

The second, *The Life-Changing Magic of Chess: A Beginner's Guide with Grandmaster Maurice Ashley*, is a youth-oriented introduction to the game, illustrated by Denis Angelov. Both titles are scheduled to hit bookshelves on April 2, and should be widely available by the time you read these words.

To honor this accomplishment, we have asked Newbery Honor winning author Steve Sheinkin, who is (shhh!) collaborating with Ashley on a future project, to talk through some of the themes in these books with Ashley. The result is a wide-ranging discussion that will make you think about just what you're doing when you push those pawns. ~ed.

Steve Sheinkin: I love a good chess superhero origin story — you know, six-year-old Garry Kasparov looking at a chess board and solving a puzzle that's got his father stumped. For a grandmaster, you didn't really have an experience like that until relatively late, right? About 14?

Maurice Ashley: I learned how to play the game when I was a kid in Jamaica, when I was about eight or nine years old. And I remember beating an older boy, a friend of my brother's, because I figured out the Scholar's Mate.

No one showed it to you?

No, I just saw it. If I could have seen me then, I'd have taken that kid to the side and said, "This kid's going to be a player." But to me back then it was just a trick in the game; I didn't think I had done something special. It wasn't until I was 14, in high school in Brooklyn, that I saw a friend playing, and

I thought I knew what I was doing. But I didn't have a clue.

So you got crushed.

First in school. Then in Prospect Park. But especially to members of the Black Bear School. (The Black Bear School was a group of mostly African American males in Brooklyn in the 1970s and 80s who studied chess very seriously. ~ed.) This last group was the most influential on my chess — they taught me how to fight to the bitter end and to really study intensely, not by any formal lessons, but by just crushing me mercilessly. Truly the school of hard knocks.

That lesson fits in so well with your new book, *Move by Move*, which is all about how thinking like a chess player can change your life. One of the main points you make is how much we can learn from our mistakes, our imperfections — our

losses. That's hard to appreciate as a teen, but maybe you did it without thinking about the life lesson.

At first my main motivation was, "I just wanted to whip my friend's a--." Then I found a chess book in the library — I didn't know there *were* books on chess. That entranced me. I started playing every day after school, reading at night. I was just hooked. And I had no idea that the odds were long of ever becoming a decent player.

There's a great moment you describe in *Move by Move* where you realize, as a pretty new player, that you can see entire games in your head without looking at the board. (*Move by Move*, 32) Did you stop and think, "Wait a minute, I might have a gift for this"?

No, no. The entire time I was studying chess, it was pure obsession, wanting to learn more, see more. And the other thing was the



competitive mindset — if other people can beat you, you're not that good. I knew I had a lot of work to do. That's true of everyone, including grandmasters. As I talk about in the book, we're all advanced beginners.

That's one of my favorite things in the book, that insight. The power of humility. Another thing jumped out at me, because at first it seems like a contradiction — but maybe in your thinking it's not. As you say, chess is meant to be fun, it's meant to provide a lifetime of joyful entertainment. But you learn most by losing. And most people, especially elite competitors, hate losing. Is that a contradiction?

There's depth in paradox. To me, there's no need to search for holistic, coordinated truth. And so, I appreciate losing. I don't want to lose, but I appreciate it when it happens.

But is it really fun?

Yes, even with the torture you might go through, even sitting there suffering for hours before finally losing in the most embarrassing way, it's still satisfying in the end. There's so much you gain — if you come away and say, "Wait, I just learned something. I just took myself to another level." If you define yourself only by winning, it's a sad state for you. Winning is a byproduct of effort, dedication, focus, passion. But so is losing.

And you can learn from all of it.

All of it. As long as you have that mindset.

"Flexibility is one of the most difficult qualities to develop in chess and life," you write. (*Move by Move*, 33) New players are told to control the center, castle early, don't bring out your queen too soon. But you have to be ready for exceptions, for times you need to look past the basic rules. Is that something you can apply to life as well?

Yep. As I said, I'm not seeking absolute truth. As a person, I seek the best insights that I can get. And sometimes one truth competes with another. That's one of the biggest lessons chess teaches. Sometimes one truth competes with another truth, and you just can't do the thing that's supposed to work here.

There's a great book called *The Half-Life of Facts*. What you thought was a fact lasts only so long — the tallest building in the world, for example. I find insights far more valuable than facts. It's similar to what Einstein says: "Imagination is more important than knowledge."

You talk a lot about professional athletes, quoting the likes of Kobe Bryant and the chess-playing tennis star Carlos Alcaraz. As a competitive player, aspiring to reach grandmaster level, did you approach chess like an athlete?

Absolutely. You're in the gym or doing martial arts. For me it was aikido that really put me over the top in terms of becoming a grandmaster.

Where do you fall in the "Is chess a sport?" debate?

It's sport, it's science, it's art... it's also war. You have an opponent who is trying to destroy you. Not only your best ideas, but your spirit too. Bobby Fischer said, "I like the moment when I crush a man's ego." So you may say, "Well that's not really a sport." Well okay, sit across from me and see how it feels when you're done getting a train run over your face. That's what you're up against, so you have to train for stamina, you have to train for intensity, focus. If you're not fit enough, I'll take you into the sixth hour and we'll see how you feel. That's what Magnus Carlson does.

I've seen studies that show top chess players at tournaments burn calories at rates comparable to Olympic athletes.

[laughing] I'm not sure I buy that, exactly. Because I wasn't exactly losing a ton of weight at tournaments. But it is absolutely taxing on the body and the nervous system.

Well, one way or another you made it. You battled your way up through the ranks, and at the age of 33 you were in a tournament in New York, needing to win one more game to get the grandmaster title.

Yes. In the eighth round against Romanian IM Adrian Negulescu. March 14, 1999.

Yeah, I figured you might remember. In your book you say that you won the game with a "beginner's play." (*Move by Move*, 164) But that's hard to believe. Would a beginner, or even a casual player like me, really have seen the winning move?

THE FINAL STEP

IM Maurice Ashley (2473)
IM Adrian Negulescu (2452)
Manhattan CC Intl (8), New York,
03.14.1999



WHITE TO MOVE

32. Be7!, Black resigned.

Oh, totally. He walked into something silly, because I was pressuring him from so many different directions.

Okay, so what happens then? You become a GM, what next? I want to picture some sort of ceremony, a secret initiation...

That would be so nice! No, it's sort of anticlimactic, actually. There's no hurrah, there's no party, no money. You get a certificate and a pin in the mail from FIDE. But for me, I already got my reward, which was getting the final norm that I needed after all those years and years of trying.

And your life in chess has gone far beyond just competing. You've been a teacher. You've coached kids' teams to national titles. You're an ambassador of the game, traveling the world. You've done live commentary at world championship matches — and, most famously, at the showdown between Garry Kasparov and Deep Blue. And now you've got not one, but two, books coming out: *Move by Move*, and a kids' book too.

Yes, the kids' book is called *The Life-Changing Magic of Chess*. They both speak to my own journey, with an introduction to the joys of the game, and strategies that work on and off the board for any age. Both books come out on April 2. A coincidence, but it works out well.

Chess wisdom for the whole family.

Absolutely.

Okay, so you have all of this going on. And yet you devote a chapter in *Move by Move* to the importance of setting aside your accomplishments — you urge us to “become like a child” and to “learn from beginners.” What can we learn from beginners?

It's one of the best pieces of advice you can

get. It's really about being open, about the things you can see when you have a beginner's mind. I'll give you a specific example, something that happened very recently.

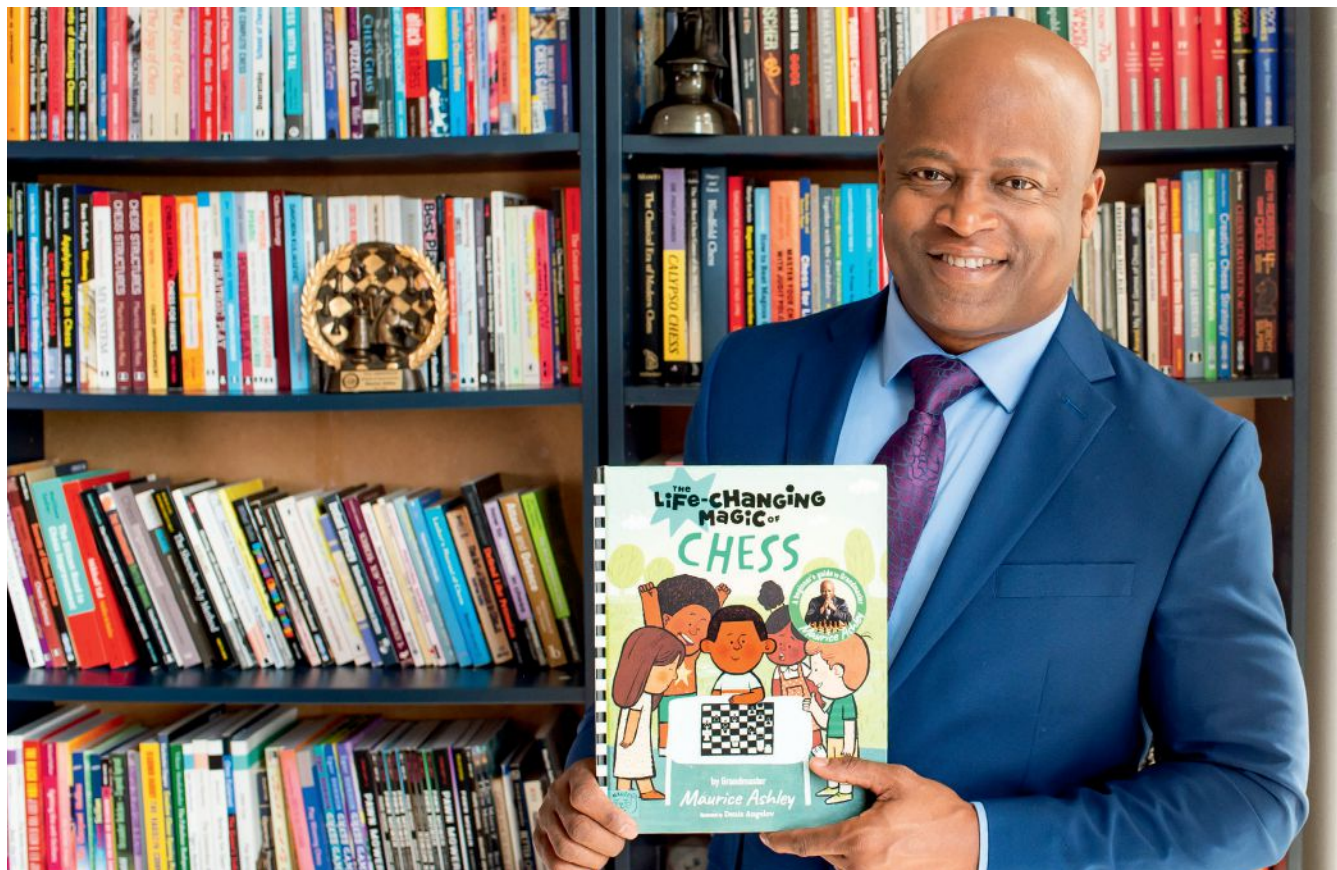
It actually started with a puzzle I was thinking of. The black king is in the middle of an empty board, let's say e5. You have the white pieces and can place them wherever you want. Using the usual point system — pawns are one unit, knights and bishops three, and so on — what is the lowest number of points necessary to place the black king in checkmate?

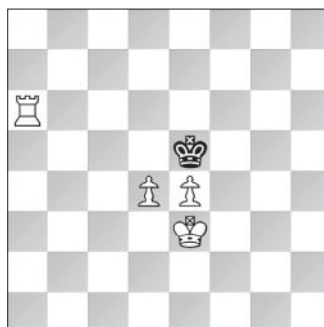
That's not something I can do in my head.

I thought I knew the answer. I lazily thought the answer was seven, basically a rook and two pawns, though it can actually be done using a total of just six points with a minor piece and three pawns.

(see diagram next page)

I was talking about this to a number of amateur players in the Chessable offices in Barcelona, and a woman named Anna Khudayarova — she's a graphic designer and is close to beginner as a chess player — she said, “Can't you do it with all pawns?”



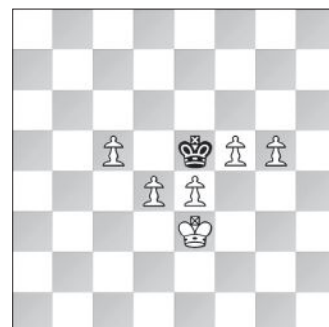


BLACK IS CHECKMATED

And I went, “Oh %*#\$. Yeah, you’re right!” She didn’t even know what it looked like. And at first, we thought it was six, and we set it up and realized it was five.

(see diagram top of next column)

And we were all stunned by the fact that this beginner, with her curiosity, said, “Can’t



ANNA’S MATE

you just...”. And that’s what beginners do. They ask naïve questions, but there’s gold in there.

As someone who loves creating chess studies and puzzles, that question has opened up a new vista of possibilities, so now I’ve been creating other puzzles based on Anna’s idea of a position being interesting from a design point of view.

FOCUS IS A FULL-TIME JOB

An excerpt from *Move by Move: Life Lessons On and Off the Chessboard*

You don’t get results by focusing on results. You get results by focusing on the actions that produce results.”

—MIKE HAWKINS

“The successful warrior is the average man, with laser-like focus.”

—BRUCE LEE

“When you are preparing for a tournament, you have to treat it like the most important event in your life. But while you are playing that game — the most important of your life — that is when you have to just take it easy and just do it.”

—VISWANATHAN ANAND, FIFTEENTH WORLD CHESS CHAMPION

Human beings have a natural tendency to relax when things seem to be going really well. When people’s needs have been sufficiently met, it’s hard to see mental toughness as an imperative. We like to carve out a comfortable space for ourselves and then

return to it again and again and again.

Chess players often suffer from this “sin of complacency.” Once we have built up a big enough advantage, our “sloth brain” kicks in and tells us that danger has passed and there is no longer a need to exert maximum effort. What we forget is that the exact opposite is going on inside the opponent’s head! They can hear the grim reaper knocking, and every bit of instinct to survive is coursing through their veins to stave off defeat. As Grandmaster Daniel Naroditsky describes it: “It is important to recognize that the defender has nothing to lose. Your opponent will do everything in his power to trick you, prolong the game, or pounce on your fatigue.”

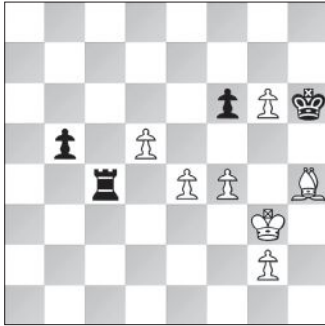
Many years ago, I played a game against a lower-ranked opponent. I had made a huge mistake earlier in the game, and he had exploited it masterfully. I was in a seemingly hopeless endgame, two pawns down, with little to no chance of survival. My opponent’s eyes were lit up like a kid in a candy store. Defeating a grandmaster is a moment any player cherishes forever.

It was precisely at this moment that I took advantage of my opponent’s desire to exhale. Studying the board intently, I noticed the possibility of a devious trap that would stave off defeat. The chance of the play actually working was remote, and it was absurdly easy to stop if my opponent noticed it was coming. Knowing this, I proceeded to do my best Denzel Washington impression and act as though

I could see the writing on the wall. I sighed just a touch more deeply, wrote my moves down with a little less care, and stared off into the distance with a look of hopelessness bordering on disgust. Reading my reactions as a man heading to the electric chair, my opponent gleefully made all the natural moves that should have forced my resignation. In his mind, the game was over and there was no longer any need to stay focused, buckle down, sniff out danger, or avoid traps. It wasn’t until he made the final natural move that allowed me to sacrifice a rook and force a stalemate that he suddenly realized that he had been tricked. Chess teaches brutally painful lessons.

My opponent’s behavior is an example of “the principle of least effort.” Simply stated, it postulates that in most situations people and animals will often choose the path of least resistance. Our brains and bodies naturally seek to conserve energy, and once we ascertain that intense effort is no longer needed to accomplish a goal, we have the tendency to shut down our emergency response systems in order to retain our valuable resources for future activities. There is no need to run at top speed if a light jog will get us to our destination just the same.

Even elite athletes have the tendency to get comfortable, even in the height of competition. The desire to keep playing at full tilt wanes as the goal seems more certain. (There’s a reason it’s called

MAURICE ASHLEY, 2024**WHITE TO MOVE AND WIN**

White has a lot of pawns, but Black has a very powerful b-pawn that gives massive counterplay. The fun part of this position is to try to guess the hero.

1. d6 Rd4

“a comfortable lead.”) One of the most famous examples of this in sports history occurred during the 100-meter finals at the 2008 Olympics in Beijing when legendary Jamaican sprinter Usain Bolt realized he was guaranteed to win gold. What did he do at his moment of triumph? He cruised to the finish line. He won, but calculations show that if he had maintained his speed, he would have clocked in at 9.55 seconds, a world record that would still be standing today.

Is there a way to fight the desire to relax when everything seems to be going well? Sort of. The human mind is constantly looking for ways to make life easier, so your sloth mind will always keep looking for the first exit to its mental sofa. As is often the case, we are our own worst enemy.

Though our awareness of our own tendencies won't necessarily solve the problem, it at least allows us to try to fight against it with whatever tools we can muster. One such technique is to establish when and where we wish to remain hyper-focused. If I'm playing a long chess game, I want to remain in the zone the entire time. It's the same for any athletic competition, musical performance, or sales pitch. This is not the case when I'm speaking to my children, lying on a beach, or salsa dancing for fun. Intense focus and concentration have a time and place.

A second tool is to monitor your over-confidence level. This is very difficult to do on your own, so it's nice to have someone

No better are (a) 1. ... Kxg6 2. f5+ Kf7 3. e5 Rxh4 4. Kxh4 b4 5. exf6 Kxf6 6. g4 b3 7. g5+ Kxf5 8. d7 b2 9. d8=Q b1=Q 10. Qf6+ Ke4 11. Qg6+, and (b) 1. ... b4 2. Bxf6.

2. Bxf6 Rxd6 3. e5 Rxf6

White is just winning after 3. ... Rd3+ 4. Kg4 b4 5. g7 Kh7 6. e6.

4. exf6 b4

After 4. ... Kxg6 5. Kf3 White catches the pawn.

5. f5 b3 6. Kh4! b2 7. g4 b1=Q 8. g5, mate.

The g2-pawn becomes the unlikely hero that delivers an unusual pawn cube mate.

The fact that I was open to what a beginner could reveal to me is what led me down this path. And I think that's the case in everything. You see something in a slightly different way — and if you're open to it, you'll learn something.

close to us who knows us well and can warn us when we seem to be getting too comfortable. Coaches often call timeout when they can see their team is just going through the motions. It's up to the coach to remind the players of the dangers of complacency and re-ignite their will to play at full intensity.

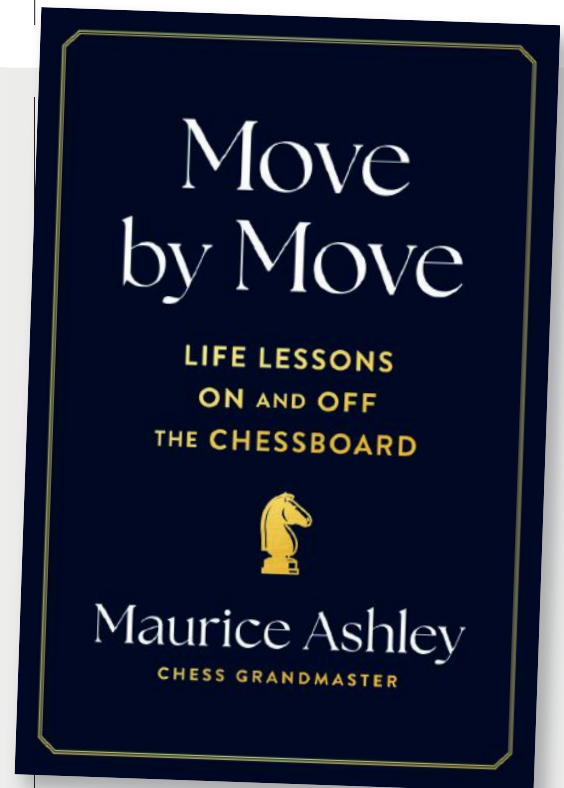
One way to do this is to intentionally shift the goalposts by posing additional in-game challenges for yourself or your team. If you have a big lead by the end of the first half, the challenge might be to increase the lead in the second half by the same amount. The Golden State Warriors, led by coach Steve Kerr, have a special knack for flustering their opponents in the third quarter of games by playing with hyper-aggression and a killer mentality as soon as the game restarts. Instead of resting on their laurels, they attack with an increased sense of urgency as though the game itself were on the line in those first crucial minutes, even though there is a full half remaining. This style of “orchestrated desperation” when it doesn't seem necessary helped them win four NBA titles in eight years.

It's important to note that being hyper-focused is not the opposite of staying loose. Being too tense can kill effectiveness as much as losing focus can. Deep breathing or meditation techniques can calm the mind without causing focus to wane. Staying well-hydrated and getting

Not that you need more to do, but what other projects are you working on? What goals motivate you?

We talked about that game I won in March 1999. So March 2024 marks my 25th anniversary of becoming a GM, a huge day for me. I became the first African American to accomplish that title. When people asked me at the time, “How does it feel to become the first?” I said, “You know, it's cool to be the first. But what excites me is that there's going to be a second, a third, a fourth, and a 10th.” And 25 years later, I'm still the only one. For me, that's a challenge. That's unacceptable.

There are Black players around the world who have gotten the grandmaster title, but not in the U.S., and not in my native country, Jamaica. The U.S. currently has a couple of really strong young Black players. Brewington Hardaway has gotten two grandmaster norms, and he'll be 15 years old this year.



enough rest are also positive ways to prepare the nervous system to maintain energy when the mind just wants to ease up and take a break.

We risk losing all our hard-won gains when we let our focus flag, sometimes for even an instant. The truth lies in the Zen proverb: “When walking, walk. When eating, eat.” In today's hyper-distracted times, nothing could be simpler or more difficult.

It's very likely he'll become a grandmaster by his 16th birthday. Tani Adewumi, born in Nigeria, has been in the U.S. since he was eight. He's an FM now, and he's also got very good chances to become a grandmaster in the next few years. (Adewumi notched his third IM norm at the Southwest Class Championship in February, and only needs to raise his rating above 2400 to become an IM. ~ed.) So we have a couple who are on their way, but not enough, and no Black girls in that rarified air.

So lately I've really been focused on this. I'm starting to take on a few students. I've started working with the Jamaican government and their chess federation to create the next Jamaican grandmaster — or the first, really, because I'm a U.S. citizen. I plan to travel to various African countries too, and teach chess there, to train top juniors.

Is it easy to spot young talent? If you're sitting with someone who's seven or eight, can you pick out kids who have a gift for the game?

I don't know that there's a magic formula, but certain things have to be in place. They have to absolutely hate losing. But even though they hate losing, they keep coming

back. That's already a huge sign. And also, they love it, they love the game. They see chess and just want to eat it up. And then you hope that that kid is willing to do the work, to sit down and do 100 or even 1,000 puzzles over and over. Then you've got a live one. We're looking for live ones.

So you can't be a kid who likes to play a little chess one day, a little soccer the next day...

It's nice to have diverse talents, that's great. But it's not the way to become a grandmaster, I'll tell you right now. When the bug hits them, the obsession is inside, and they just want it — that's where it really begins. And that kind of kid will let you know.

Then they too can start this lifelong journey, setting off into what's still partly the unknown. You say in your book that no single chess player knows even 10 percent of what there is to know about the game. I was shocked by that.

Well, it's easy to prove. The number of possible positions in chess is equal to 10 to the 120th power. Now, much of that is garbage, positions that don't make any sense, but still — 10 to the 120th power! That's greater

than the number of atoms in the observable universe.

I see where you're going. So take 10 percent of that number and it's still far beyond human knowledge.

Exactly. How many zeroes do we have to take off before you get to us? To what mere mortals can hold in our heads? So actually, we're not anywhere near knowing one 10th of what there is to know about chess.

It all comes back to that central lesson: You have to humble yourself. Try to learn a little bit every day.

Astrophysicist Neil DeGrasse Tyson said this to me — he said, "Maybe there's a planet where they've already figured out chess, and chess to them is like tic-tac-toe." We would be like children to them. And that's okay, because we have fun, and we grow. And that's what counts, having fun and growing. It's not about the glory. It's about the growth.

No matter where you are, you're an advanced beginner at best. That's a pretty powerful way to approach each day.

That's the wisdom I get from chess. ♠



*"... that's what counts,
having fun and growing.
It's not about the glory.
It's about the growth."*

MAKE → YOUR → MOVE

BY **FM CARSTEN HANSEN**

THIS MONTH'S PUZZLES ARE TAKEN FROM THE ANNUAL TATA Steel tournament that took place in Wijk aan Zee earlier this year.

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

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

TACTIC 1.



BLACK TO MOVE

TACTIC 2.



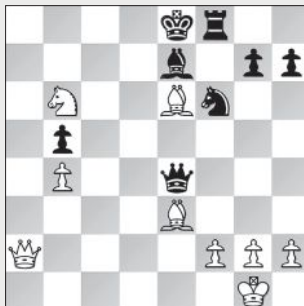
BLACK TO MOVE

TACTIC 3.



BLACK TO MOVE

TACTIC 4.



WHITE TO MOVE

TACTIC 5.



WHITE TO MOVE

TACTIC 6.



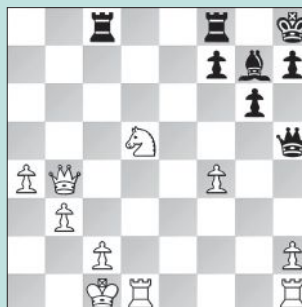
BLACK TO MOVE

TACTIC 7.



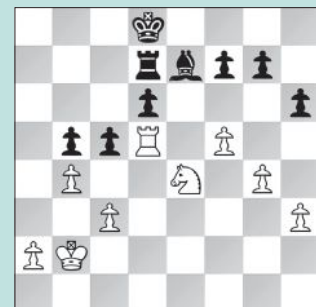
WHITE TO MOVE

TACTIC 8.



BLACK TO MOVE

TACTIC 9.



WHITE TO MOVE

Position 1: RIP THE DOOR OFF

Position 2: PINS HURT

Position 3: POOR DEFENDERS

Position 4: BREAK THE COORDINATION

Position 5: BREAK THE BOND

Position 6: ATTACK THE WEAKEST SPOT

Position 7: DEEP HOLES

Position 8: HEAVY INTERRUPTION

Position 9: FIND THE WAY

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DONNA DODSON MATCH OF THE MATRIARCHS AND OTHER AMAZONOMACHIES



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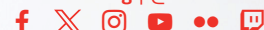


Photo by Brian Wilson



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
February 15 –
September 15, 2024

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.

OUR HERITAGE 2023 US CHESS YEARBOOK

The information in this yearbook is substantially correct and current as of December 31, 2023. For the full yearbook, please see the community section at uschess.org. To notify US Chess of corrections or updates, please email mmatthews@uschess.org.

US CHESS ANNUAL MEETINGS, MEMBERSHIP NUMBERS, AND FUND BALANCES

Year	U.S. Open Business Meeting	Membership (1)	Fund Balance (2)
2022	Rancho Mirage, CA	84,574	\$3,723,041
2023	Grand Rapids, MI	107,232	\$4,373,842

(1) Membership totals are given as of May 31. Totals exclude Junior Tournament Players and tournament members. (2) Figures enclosed in parentheses are deficits.

US CHESS PRESIDENT & EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

President	Executive Director
2022-current Randy Bauer	2017-current Carol Meyer

U.S. NATIONAL CHAMPIONS

U.S. CHAMPION

2022 Fabiano Caruana
2023 Fabiano Caruana
St. Louis, Missouri • October 2023

U.S. WOMEN'S

2022 Jennifer Yu
2023 Carissa Yip
St. Louis, Missouri • October 2023

U.S. CADET

2022 Nico Chasin
2023 Erick Zhao
Schaumburg, Illinois • June 2023

U.S. JUNIOR

2022 Christopher Yoo
2023 Abhimanyu Mishra
St. Louis, Missouri • July 2023

U.S. GIRLS' JUNIOR

2022 Jennifer Yu
2023 Alice Lee
St. Louis, Missouri • July 2023

U.S. SENIOR

2022 Alexander Shabalov
2023 Melikset Khachiyani
St. Louis, Missouri • July 2023

U.S. SENIOR WOMEN'S

2023 Anjelina Belakovskaia
Berkeley, California • September 2023

OTHER NATIONAL CHAMPIONS

U.S. OPEN

2022 Aleksey Sorokin, Elshan Moradiabadi
2023 Andrew Tang*, Aleksey Sorokin
Grand Rapids, Michigan • July-August 2023

U.S. WOMEN'S OPEN

2022 Badamkhand Norovsambuu, Carissa Angela Zheng, WCM Sandhya Goli
2023 Zijun Zhou
Las Vegas, Nevada • June 2023

U.S. JUNIOR OPEN

2022 U8: Lucas Silvestre; **U11:** William Ahn, Allen Li; **U15:** Sunav Adhikari, Andrey Dmitriev; **U21:** Tugstumur Yesuntumur, Arthur Xu, Rohit Guha, Mitch Fishbein
2023 U8: Siddharth Parthasarathyn; **U11:** William Ahn; **U15:** Vidyuth Kamesh; **U21:** Nicholas Ladan
Elmhurst, Illinois • July 2023

U.S. SENIOR OPEN

2022 Dmitry Gurevich
2023 Jesse Kraai, Doug Eckert, Alexander Fishbein, Nikola Mitkov, Steven Szpisjak, Peter Gilruth
Elmhurst, Illinois • July 2023

ARMED FORCES OPEN

(Individual* Team)
2022 Addison Lee* Army
2023 Peter Jackson* Army
Dulles, Virginia • October 2023

NATIONAL OPEN

Edmondson Cup winner*
2022 Semen Khanin
2023 Illia Nyzhnyk*, Vasif Durarbayli, Yasser Quesada, Mikhail Antipov
Las Vegas, Nevada • June 2023

U.S. MASTERS

2022 Christopher Yoo*, Alejandro Ramirez, Mikhail Antipov, Emilio Cordova, Cristhian Cruz
2023 Mikhail Antipov*, Gleb Dudin, Justin Wang, Bryce Tiglon
Charlotte, North Carolina • November 2023

U.S. CLASS

2022 Open: Enrico Sevillano; **Expert:** Jashith Karthi; **A:** Ashkan Dehghani Zahedani; **B:** Anders Thomas Kostrub; **C:** Vrishank Peddireddi; **D:** Kanishk Jain; **E:** Yash Shah
2023 Master: Jianchao Zhou, Arman Mikaelyan, Sharvesh Deviprasath; **Expert:** Avery Yu, Max England, Neil Bhaduri; **A:** Yuqi Wang, Davit Gevorgyan; **B:** Ryan McCloskey, Noah McQueen; **C:** Mark Torosyan; **D:** Iniya Mathivanan; Nandha Rajesh
Los Angeles, California • September 2023

U.S. BLIND

2022 Not Held
2023 Alexander Barrasso
Elmhurst, Illinois • July 2023

U.S. BLITZ

2022 Naveen Prabhu
2023 George Li
Grand Rapids, Michigan • August 2023

U.S. GAME/10

2022 Not Held
2023 Not Held

U.S. GAME/15

2022 Stephen Willy
2023 Jackson Wahl, Hersh Singh
Grand Rapids, Michigan • August 2023

U.S. GAME/30

2022 Not Held
2023 Not Held

U.S. GAME/60

2022 Not Held
2023 Not Held

U.S. AMATEUR CHAMPIONS

2022 East: Henry Pu; **North:** Peyton Smith; **South:** Mihir A. Kotbagi; **West:** Joshua Lu
2023 East: Timothy Xie

U.S. AMATEUR TEAM – NATIONAL PLAYOFF WINNERS*

2022 East: East: ICN (Lev Paciorek, Bahadur Khodzhamkuliev, Kenneth Fernandez, Jon Rigai); **North:** UChicago B (Awonder Liang, Praveen Balakrishnan, William Graif, Brian Hu); **South:** NAction Chess (Raghav Venkat, Yan Miellier, Ryan E. Hamley, Ezra Etzel); **West:** Cal A (Kesav Viswanadha, Daniel Lin, Christopher Pan, Sadia Qureshi, Junior Mejia, Michael Franco)*
2023 East: Bacon, Egg, and Cheese En Passant (Gus Huston, Nathaniel Shuman, Sumit Dhar, Ryan Peterson); **North:** UChicago B (Awonder Liang, Praveen Balakrishnan, Kapil Chandran, Will Eastwick, Runzhe Cui)*; **South:** Deep Blue Devils (Kevin Wang, Eduard Shamilov, Zubin M. Baliga, Alexander Tong, Luke F. Triplett); **West:** UC Davis Team A (Derek Wu, Brandon Yang Xia, Manas Manu, Abhishek Handigol)
February 2023 (E, N, W), April 2023 (S) • Playoffs: November 2023 (online)

STATE INVITATIONALS

JOHN T. IRWIN NATIONAL TOURNAMENT OF SENIOR STATE CHAMPIONS

2022 Douglas Root, Enrico Sevillano
2023 Jesse Kraai, Nikoloz Managadze
Grand Rapids, Michigan • July-August 2023

GM ARNOLD DENKER NATIONAL TOURNAMENT OF HIGH SCHOOL STATE CHAMPIONS

2022 Arthur Guo, Andrew Hong, Sandeep Sethuraman
2023 Arthur Guo
Grand Rapids, Michigan • July-August 2023

WIM RUTH HARING NATIONAL TOURNAMENT OF GIRLS STATE CHAMPIONS

2022 Ruiyang Yan
2023 Ruiyang Yan
Grand Rapids, Michigan • July-August 2023

DEWAIN BARBER NATIONAL TOURNAMENT OF MIDDLE SCHOOL STATE CHAMPIONS

2022 Brewington Hardaway
2023 Erick Zhao, Brewington Hardaway, Jasmine Su
Grand Rapids, Michigan • July-August 2023

JOHN D. ROCKEFELLER III NATIONAL TOURNAMENT OF ELEMENTARY SCHOOL CHAMPIONS

2022 Andrew Jiang, Benjamin Benchen Tang, Sam Luger
2023 John Abraham, Andrew Jing, Harshin Jagirapu
Grand Rapids, Michigan • July-August 2023

**FM SUNIL WEERAMANTRY
NATIONAL BLITZ TOURNAMENT
OF STATE CHAMPIONS**

2022 Andrew Hong (2200+); Kaustubh Kodihalli, Vaseegaran Nandhakumar, Alexander J. Wang, Jacob Chiang (1800-2199); Jwalanthi Ram (1400-1799) Elijah Cummings (U1400)

2023 **Championship:** Terry Luo, Gus Huston; **1800-2199:** Eric Feng; **1400-1799:** Kushagra Bhargava; **Under 1400:** Varun Iyengar
Grand Rapids, Michigan • July-August 2023

SCHOLASTIC CHAMPIONS**NATIONAL ELEMENTARY (K-6)**

2022 **K-6:** Eric Chang Liu, Isaac Wang; **K-5:** Aiden Liu, Carter Ho, Yusuf Mansurov; **K-3:** Elliott Goodrich; **K-1:** Aakash Jani, Rocky Wang; Umar Mansurov; Matthew Yu

2023 **K-6:** Nathan Yan; **K-5:** Sharath Radhakrishnan, Krishna Rallabandi, Anson Leong, Andrew Wu; **K-3:** Ted Wang, Lev Shangin; **K-1:** Asher Kirschbaum
Baltimore, Maryland • May 2023

**NATIONAL ELEMENTARY (K-6)
TEAM**

2022 **K-6:** Success Academy Midtown West (NY); **K-5:** Anderson School (NY); **K-3:** Lower Lab School (NY); **K-1:** Lower Lab School (NY)

2023 **K-6:** Anderson School (NY); **K-5:** Tag Young Scholars (NY); **K-3 and K-1:** The Speyer Legacy School (NY)
Baltimore, Maryland • May 2023

**NATIONAL ELEMENTARY (K-6)
BLITZ**

2022 **K-6:** Eric Chang Liu, Anjaneya Sripathy Rao; **K-3:** Sivavishnu Srinivasan, Yuvraj Singh Sawhney
2023 **K-6:** Vihaan Jammalamadaka; **K-3:** Linxi Zhu
Baltimore, Maryland • May 2023

**NATIONAL ELEMENTARY (K-6)
BLITZ TEAM**

2022 **K-6:** Rodeph Sholom School (NY); **K-3:** Anderson School (NY)
2023 **K-6:** Bates Academy (MI); **K-3:** The Greene School (FL)
Baltimore, Maryland • May 2023

**NATIONAL ELEMENTARY (K-6)
BUGHOUSE**

2022 M. Aaron-B. Oliver
2023 B. Lin-T. Yue
Baltimore, Maryland • May 2023

**NATIONAL MIDDLE SCHOOL (K-8)
(FORMERLY JUNIOR HIGH)**

2022 Brewington Hardaway, Jonathan Chen, Troy Cavanah, Vaseegaran Nandhakumar, Ilya Levkov
2023 Eric Chang Liu
Round Rock, Texas • April 2023

**NATIONAL MIDDLE SCHOOL
(K-8) TEAM**

2022 Hunter College Campus School (NY)
2023 Millburn Middle School (NJ)
Round Rock, Texas • April 2023

**NATIONAL MIDDLE SCHOOL
(K-8) BLITZ**

2022 Vaseegaran Nanehakumar, Ethan Guo
2023 Brewington Hardaway
Round Rock, Texas • April 2023

**NATIONAL MIDDLE SCHOOL
(K-8) BLITZ TEAM**

2022 I.S. 318 (NY)
2023 Nicollet Middle School (MN), The Speyer Legacy School (NY)
Round Rock, Texas • April 2023

**NATIONAL MIDDLE SCHOOL
(K-8) BUGHOUSE**

2022 A. Bianchi-L, Shafer; A. Nair-A. Suresh
2023 Ronen Wilson-Julian Colville
Round Rock, Texas • April 2023

NATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL (K-12)

2022 Arthur Guo, Vishnu Vanapalli, Gus Huston, Anthony He, Bijan Tahmassebi, Nico Chasin, Advait Karthik
2023 Jason Wang, Sharvesh R. Deviprasath
Washington, D.C. • March-April 2023

**NATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL (K-12)
TEAM**

2022 The Dalton School (NY)
2023 The Dalton School (NY)
Washington, D.C. • March-April 2023

**NATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL (K-12)
BLITZ**

2022 Anthony He, Hersh Singh
2023 Aarush Vinod, Nico Werner Chasin
Washington, D.C. • March-April 2023

**NATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL (K-12)
BLITZ TEAM**

2022 Columbia Grammar & Prep (NY)
2023 Columbia Grammar & Prep (NY)
Washington, D.C. • March-April 2023

**NATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL (K-12)
BUGHOUSE**

2022 L. Liu-D. Levkov; A. Costello-N. Chasin
2023 Leo Jiang-Kitana Olson
Washington, D.C. • March-April 2023

**NATIONAL ONLINE SCHOLASTIC
CHAMPIONSHIP**

2022-23 **K-3:** Tariq Yue; **K-6:** Kishan Karthigeyan; **K-8:** Luke Widjaja, Alexander Zlodorev, Saharsh Darsh Shetty, Muhammad Rizky Nugraha; **K-12:** Sandeep Sethuraman
Online • November 2022

NATIONAL K-12 GRADE

2022 **K:** Mihal Holcomb, Alex Sedlock, Darren Wu, Daniel Zhu, Jack Zhang; **1st:** Srinash Katta; **2nd:** Alice Shen; **3rd:** Ted Wang, Shawn Xu; **4th:** Kyle Qiye Dong; **5th:** Roshan Sethuraman; **6th:** Andrew Jiang; **7th:** Eric Chang Liu; **8th:** Brewington Hardaway; **9th:** Evan Park, Rohan Padhye, Michael Xukun Guan; **10th:** Eddy Tian, Nico Werner Chasin; **11th:** Sandeep Sethuramen; **12th:** Raghav Venkat

2023 **K:** Mehmet Yilanli; **1:** Darren Wu, Mustafa Muhammad; **2:** Sriansh Katta, Samanyu Alluri; **3:** Sasha Schaefer; **4:** Linxi Zhu, Santhosh Ayyappan; **5:** Tariq Yue, Megan Paragua, Kyle Dong, Yuvraj Sawhney, Glenn Zhang, Derek Zhang, Phineas Weingarten; **6:** Kyle Wang; **7:** Aditeya Das, Bobby Qian, Andrew Jiang, Vihaan Saxena, Alexander Sukhiashvili; **8:** Eric Chang Liu; **9:** Brewington Hardaway, Aiden Reiss, Erick Zhao; **10:** Marvin Gao, Bach Ngo; **11:** Avi Kaplan; **12:** Gus Huston, Maximilian Lu
Orlando, Florida • December 2023

NATIONAL K-12 GRADE TEAM

2022 **K:** Oak Hall (FL); **1st:** The Speyer Legacy School (NY); **2nd:** Oak Hall (FL); **3rd:** The Speyer Legacy School (NY); **4th:** The Speyer Legacy School (NY); **5th:** Hunter College Campus School (NY), P.S. 10 (NY); **6th:** Millburn Middle School (NJ); **7th:** Hunter College Campus School (NY); **8th:** Success Academy Hudson yards (NY); **9th:** American Heritage School (FL), Stuyvesant High School (NY); **10th:** Thomas Jefferson High School (VA), Columbia Grammar & Prep (NY); **11th:** The Dalton School (NY); **12th:** Columbia Grammar & Prep (NY)

2023 **K:** Oak Hall (FL); **1:** Oak Hall (FL); **2:** The Speyer Legacy School (NY); **3:** Oak Hall (FL); **4:** The Speyer Legacy School (NY); **5:** The Speyer Legacy School (NY); **6:** Collegiate School (NY); **7:** Millburn Middle School (NJ); **8:** Hunter College Campus School (NY); **9:** Columbia Grammar & Prep (NY); **10:** American Heritage (FL); **11:** Columbia Grammar & Prep (NY); **12:** The Dalton School (NY)
Orlando, Florida • December 2023

NATIONAL JUNIOR CONGRESS

2022 **6 & Under:** Andrew Zou, Owen Xu, Tariq Yue; **8 & Under:** Harvey Hanke, Vijay Srinivas Anandh, Jayden Wu, Suhas Indukuri, Sharath Radhakrishnan; **10 & Under:** Aaradhya Panda, Jocelyn Chen, Alexander Braun, Aavi Bharucha; **12 & Under:** Matthew Gao, Sean Kelly, Derin Goktepe; **14 & Under:** Hersh Singh, Nitish Sg Nathan; **16/18 & Under:** Terry Luo, Brejesh Chakrabarti

2023 **6 & Under:** Steven Yan, Chloe Dong; **8 & Under:** Winston Wu; **10 & Under:** Aashish Jagan; **12 & Under:** Wesley Luo; **14 & Under:** William Wu; **16/18 & Under:** Akshat Suresh
Orlando, Florida • July 2023

**TOP 50 FIDE-
RATED AMERICANS**

Active players from the January 2024 FIDE Rating List.

	Rtg.
1. Fabiano Caruana	GM 2804
2. Hikaru Nakamura	GM 2788
3. Wesley So	GM 2757
4. Leinier Dominguez Perez	GM 2752
5. Levon Aronian	GM 2725
6. Samuel Sevian	GM 2697
7. Ray Robson	GM 2696
8. Hans Moke Niemann	GM 2692
9. Sam Shankland	GM 2675
10. Grigoriy Oparin	GM 2664
11. Jeffery Xiong	GM 2659
12. Awonder Liang	GM 2640
13. Abhimanyu Mishra	GM 2627
14. Gata Kamsky	GM 2623
15. Yaroslav Zhrebukh	GM 2620
16. Daniel Naroditsky	GM 2619
17. Darius Swiercz	GM 2612
18. Vladimir Akopian	GM 2602
19. Lazaro Bruzon Batista	GM 2597
20. Christopher Woojin Yoo	GM 2595
21. Yuniesky Quesada Perez	GM 2591
22. John M. Burke	GM 2584
23. Varuzhan Akobian	GM 2571
24. Brandon Jacobson	GM 2569
25. Gregory Kaidanov	GM 2565
26. Andrew Hong	GM 2539
27. Patrick Wolff	GM 2531
28. Arthur Guo	GM 2529
29. Anthony He	IM 2529
30. Jaan Ehvest	GM 2528
31. Sergey Erenburg	GM 2527
32. Aleksandr Lenderman	GM 2521
33. Fidel Corrales Jimenez	GM 2518
34. Nicolas Checa	GM 2517
35. Maxim Dlugy	GM 2514
36. Elshan Moradiabadi	GM 2511
37. Igor Novikov	GM 2509
38. Eugene Perelshteyn	GM 2507
39. Bryce Tiglon	IM 2506
40. Justin Wang	IM 2503
41. Andrew Tang	GM 2502
42. Andy Woodward	IM 2501
43. David Brodsky	GM 2492
44. Joel Benjamin	GM 2490
45. Akshat Chandra	GM 2489
46. Balaji Daggupati	GM 2486
47. Alexander Stripunsky	GM 2486
48. Kayden Troff	GM 2484
49. Praveen Balakrishnan	GM 2483
50. H. Hernandez Carmenate	GM 2479

ALL-GIRLS NATIONAL

2022 Under 8: Dena Wang; **Under 10:** Ananya Wadhwa; **Under 12:** Jasmine Su; **Under 14:** Kally Wen, Chloe Gaw, Ananya Ananth; **Under 16:** Asha Kumar, Yesun Lee; **Under 18:** Iris Mou
2023 Under 8: Elizabeth Xia; **Under 10:** Sophie Li; **Under 12:** Audrey Zhou, Anvitha Penagalapati, Anagha Sinkar; **Under 14:** Chloe Gaw; **Under 16:** Ellen Wang; **Under 18:** Nastassja Matus
Chicago, Illinois • April 2023

ALL-GIRLS NATIONAL TEAM

2022 Under 8: Lower Lab School (NY); **Under 10:** Anderson School (NY); **Under 12:** Hunter College Elementary (NY); **Under 14:** Success Academy Hudson Yards (NY); **Under 16:** Discovery Middle School (AL); **Under 18:** The Dalton School (NY)
2023 Under 8: Oak Hall (FL); **Under 10:** Speyer Legacy (NY); **Under 12:** Brearley (NY); **Under 14:** Success Academy Hudson Yards (NY); **Under 16:** Stuyvesant High School (NY); **Under 18:** Success Academy High School of Liberal Arts (NY)
Chicago, Illinois • April 2023

TOP 25 CORRESPONDENCE PLAYERS

(from International Correspondence Chess Federation, January 2024)

	Rtg.
1. GM Alik Samulovich Zilberberg	2597
2. GM Stephen E. Ham	2584
3. IM Denny Marbourg	2571
4. GM Tim Murray	2560
5. GM Jon Edwards	2552
6. GM Daniel M. Fleetwood	2545
7. SIM Dan Perry	2542
8. GM Jon Ostriker	2533
9. SIM Bobby Johnson	2527
10. SIM Wolff Morrow	2513
11. IM Larry Parsons	2505
12. GM Jason Bokar	2502
13. SIM Neil Kulick	2500
13. GM Carl L. Siefing	2500
15. SIM Wilbur Tseng	2494
16. SIM Kenneth M. Reinhart	2493
17. SIM Wieland Belka	2478
18. IM Kyle Biedermann	2469
19. IM Oliver Koo	2460
20. CCM John C. Walton	2455
21. IM Thomas Williams	2453
22. IM Andrew Leonard	2440
23. SIM Thomas Biedermann	2439
24. CCM Robert Cousins	2438
25. CCE Jeff Reger	2429

COLLEGE CHAMPIONS

PAN-AM INTERCOLLEGIATE INDIVIDUAL

2022 Emilio Cordova Daza, Viktor Matviishen, Gabriela Antova, Jason Shi, Benjamin Bok, Arman Baradaran, John Michael Burke
2023 Kevin Shen Yang
Seattle, Washington • January 2023

PAN-AM INTERCOLLEGIATE TEAM

2022 Saint Louis University-A
2023 Webster University-A
Seattle, Washington • January 2023

THE PRESIDENT'S CUP (FINAL FOUR)

2022 Saint Louis University
2023 Webster University
Webster Groves, Missouri • April 2023

NATIONAL COLLEGIATE RAPID/BLITZ (INDIVIDUAL*, TEAM)

2022 Blitz: Mikhail Antipov*, University of Missouri; **Rapid:** Benjamin Gledura*, Webster University
2023 **Rapid:** Grigoriy Oparin, Aram Hakobyan, Mikhail Antipov*, University of Texas Rio Grande Valley, University of Missouri; **Blitz:** Benjamin Gledura, Andrew Hong*, Webster University
Online • October 2023 (Rapid); November 2023 (Blitz)

AMERICAN CLASSICS

AMERICAN OPEN

2022 John Bryant
2023 Arman Mikaelyan*, Ehsan Ghaemmaghar, John Bryant
Orange, California • November 2023

WORLD OPEN

2022 Jeffery Xiong, Mikhail Antipov, Jianchao Zhou, Pablo Salinas Herrera, Brandon Jacobson, Semen Khanin, Minh Tuan Le, Arman Mikaelyan
2023 Fidel Corrales Jimenez
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania • June-July 2023

NORTH AMERICAN OPEN

2022 Jason Wang
2023 Grigoriy Oparin
Las Vegas, Nevada • December 2023

AMERICAN WORLD CHAMPIONS

2023 WORLD SENIOR TEAM, 50+
 Alex Shabalov, Gregory Kaidanov, Igor Novikov, Alex Yermolinsky, Jaan Ehlfest
Ohrid, North Macedonia • September 2023

CORRESPONDENCE CHESS

U.S. CORRESPONDENCE

2007-2009: Thomas Biedermann, Lawrence Coplin; **2010:** Edward Duliba;

2011: John Ballow; **2013:** Wolff Morrow, Carl Siefing; **2015:** Grayling Hill

GOLDEN KNIGHTS

2010: Michael Buss; **2011:** James Tracz; **2012:** Michael Buss; **2013:** Gary Adams; **2014:** Michael Buss; **2015:** Gary Adams; **2016:** Rick Johnson

USCF ABSOLUTE

2010: Harry Ingersol; **2011:** John Menke; **2012:** John Menke; **2013:** Wilbur Tseng; **2014:** Tony Kain; **2015:** Kristo Miettinen; **2016:** Danny Horwitz; **2017:** Harry Ingersol; **2018:** Robert Rizzo; **2020:** Mark Stephenson; **2021:** Daniel Horwitz; **2022:** Tim Corkum, John Walton

ELECTRONIC KNIGHTS

2013: Samir Alazawi; **2014:** Chris Lewis; **2015:** John Millett; **2016:** Tim Corkum; **2017:** Ferdinand Burmeister; **2018:** Tim Corkum; **2019:** Michael Buss; **2020:** Michael Buss

INTERNATIONAL TITLISTS

FIDE awards titles for outstanding achievement in three areas of chess competition: Over-the-board play, correspondence play, and composition.

GRANDMASTERS (GM)

Varuzhan Akobian • Vladimir Akopian • Lev Alburt • Babakuli Annakov • Marc Arnold • Levon Aronian • Maurice Ashley • Praveen Balakrishnan • Julio Becerra Rivero • Joel Benjamin • Vinay Bhat • Peter Biyiasas • David Brodsky • Michael Brown • Lazaro Bruzon Batista • John M. Burke • Fabiano Caruana • Akshat Chandra • Nicolas Checa • Larry Christiansen • Fidel Corrales Jimenez • Balaji Daggupati • Nick de Firmian • Maxim Dlugy • Leinier Dominguez Perez • Roman Dzindzichashvili • Jaan Ehlfest • Sergey Erenburg • John Fedorowicz • Daniel Fernandez • Benjamin Finegold • Alexander Fishbein • Joshua Friedel • Alexander Goldin • Renier Gonzalez • Boris Gulko • Arthur Guo • Dmitry Gurevich • Ilya Gurevich • Ron Henley • Holden Hernandez Carmenate • Robert Hess • Conrad Holt • Andrew Hong • Robert Hungaski • Alexander Ivanov • Zviad Izoria • Brandon Jacobson • Gregory Kaidanov • Gata Kamsky • Lawrence Kaufman • Melikset Khachiyan • Jesse Kraai • Boris Kreiman • Irina Krush • Sergey Kudrin • Aleksandr Lenderman • Ruifeng Li • Awonder Liang • Abhimanyu Mishra • Mackenzie Molner • Elshan Moradiabadi • Hikaru Nakamura • Daniel Naroditsky • Hans Moke Niemann • Igor Novikov • Alexander Onischuk • Grigoriy Oparin • Semon Palatnik • Eugene Perelshteyn • Yuniesky Quesada Perez • Ray Robson • Kenneth Rogoff • Michael Rohde • Gennadij Sagalchik • Gabriel Schwartzman • Yasser Seirawan • Grigory Serper • Samuel Sevian • Enrico Sevillano • Alexander Shabalov

• Tal Shaked • Sam Shankland • Joshua Sheng • Yury Shulman • Bryan Smith • Wesley So • Andrew Soltis • Alexander Stripunsky • Raven Sturt • Dariusz Swiercz • Andrew Tang • James Tarjan • Kayden Troff • Michael Wilder • Patrick Wolff • Jeffery Xiong • Darwin Yang • Alex Yermolinsky • Christopher Woojin Yoo • Gennadi Zaichik • Yaroslav Zherebukh • Rashid Ziatdinov • Steven Zierk

INTERNATIONAL MASTERS (IM)

Viktor Adler • Levon Altounian • Armen Ambartsoumian • Nilton Arias • Daniel Asaira • Joel Banawa • Thomas Bartell • John Bartholomew • Leonid Bass • Alexander Battey • Mikhail Baturyn • Salvijus Bercys • Gabriel Bick • Calvin Blocker • Andrei Blokhin • Michael Bodek • Jay Bonin • Safal Bora • Joseph Bradford • Michael Brooks • John Daniel Bryant • Ronald Burnett • Omar Cartagena • Teddy Coleman • Kapil Chandran • Nico Chasin • Ryo Chen • Alexander Costello • Richard Costigan • Kong Liang Deng • Dorsa Derakhshani • John Donaldson • Daniel Edelman • Teghsuren Enkhbat • Marc Esserman • Larry Evans • Joseph Fang • Ali Farahat • Florin Felcan • Andrei-Costel Florean • Edward Formanek • Igor Foygel • Sanjay Ghatti • Kirk Ghazarian • Dumitru Ghizdavu • Mark Ginsburg • Rusudan Goletiani • Aaron Grabinsky • Kyrn Griffith • Daniel Gurevich • Luke Harmon-Vellotti • Anthony He • Mark Heimann • Matthew Herman • Craig Hilby • Gus Huston • Dean Ippolito • Aaron Jacobson • Ladia Jirasek • Alexander Kaliksteyn • Albert Kapengut • Julio Kaplan • Alexander Katz • Konstantin Kavutskiy • Igor Khmelnitsky • Keaton Kiewra • Erik Kislik • Jake Kleiman • Nikhil Kumar • Cyrus Lakdawala • Yury Lapshun • Matthew Larson • Alice Lee • Michael Lee • Joseph Levine • Ben Li • Zhaozhi Li • Jason Liang • Yian Liou • Dimitri London • Maximillian Lu • Ming Lu • Daniel Ludwig • John Ludwig • Blas Lugo • Josh Manion • Dimitar Mardov • Salvatore Matera • Vincent McCambridge • Eugene Meyer • Marlo Micayabas • Lev Milman • Rade Milovanovic • Alejandro Moreno • Walter Morris • Stephen Muhammad • Michael Mulyar • Sean Nagle • Bach Ngo • Yaacov Norowitz • Steven Odendahl • Georgi Orlov • Aleksandr Ostrovskiy • Nazi Paikidze • Vignesh Panchanatham • Evan Park • William Paschall • Advait Patel • Jack Peters • Joshua Posthuma • Vladimir Prosviriakov • David Pruess • Stuart Rachels • Vasik Rajlich • Vivek Rao • Kenneth Regan • Larry Remlinger • Daniel Renschel • Guillermo Rey • Bruce Rind • James Rizzitano • Douglas Root • Eric Rosen • Levy Rozman • Anthony Saidy • Erik Santarius • Justin Sarkar • Sam Schmackel • Dmitry Schneider • Jonathan Schroer • Sandeep Sethuraman • Gregory Shahade • Arthur Shen • Victor Shen • Joshua Sheng • James T. Sherwin • Atulya Shetty • Igor Shliperman • Robert

Shlyakhtenko • Mikhail Shur • Sahil Sinha • Leonid Sokolin • Edward Song • Josiah Stearman • Alan Stein • David Strauss • Eric Tangborn • Timothy Taylor • Eddy Tian • Bryce Tiglon • Rostislav Tsodikov • Vyom Vidyarthi • David Vigorito • Alexander Velikanov • Kesav Viswanadha • Anish Vivekananthan • Mladen Vucic • Joshua Waitzkin • Annie Wang • Jason Wang • Justin Wang • Kevin Wang • Philip Wang • Tiangi Wang • John Watson • Norman Weinstein • Cameron Wheeler • Justus Williams • Elliott Winslow • Andy Woodward • Jonathan Yedidia • Carissa Yip • Vitaly Zaltsman • Anna Zatonskih • Liren Zhou • Jack Zhu • Dmitry Zilberstein • Mikhail Zlotnikov • Bernard Zuckerman

WOMEN GRANDMASTERS (WGM)

Tatev Abrahamyan • Anna Akhsharumova • Anjelina Belakovskaia • Sabina-Francesca Foisor • Anna Gershnik • Alla B. Grinfeld • Alice Lee • Irina Levitina • Katerina Nemcova • Atousa Pourkashian • Katerina Rohonyan • Jennifer Shahade • Anna Sharevich • Gulrukhbegim Tokhirjonova

WOMEN INTERNATIONAL MASTERS (WIM)

Naomi Bashkansky • Tsagaan Battsetseg • Sharon Burtman • Agata Bykovtsev • Rachel Croto • Vesna Dimitrijevic • Esther Epstein • Ashritha Eswaran • Gina L. Finegold • Akshita Gorti • Elina Groberman • Anna Hahn • Alena Kats • Shernaz Kennedy • Inna Koren • Megan Lee • Yuliya Levitan • Simone Liao • Joanna Liu • Kelsey Liu • Beatriz Marinello • Iris Mou • Elizabeth Neely • Emily Nguyen • Viktorija Ni • Alexey Root • Diane Savereide • Zoey Tang • Dorothy O. Teasley • Cindy Tsai • Julia Tverskaya • Omya Vidarthi • Ruiyang Yan • Ellen Wang • Evelyn Zhu

INTERNATIONAL ARBITERS (IA)

Rudolph Abate • Michael Atkins • Todd Barre • Christopher Bird • Harold Bogner • Leonid Bondar • Frank Brady • William Broich • Walter Brown, Jr. • Thomas Brownsbombe • William Buklis • Anand Dommalapati • Bryon Doyle • Edward Steven Doyle • Eduard Duchovny • Adam Gale • Oscar Garcia • Peter Giannatos • William Goichberg • Francisco Guadalupe • Andre Harding • Jon Haskel • David Hater • Charles Hatherill • Enrique Heurta • Mike Hoffpauir • Randall Hough • Robert Hungaski • Steve Immitt • Korey Kormick • David Kuhns • Michael Kummer • Thomas Langland • Alan Losoff • John McCumiskey • Robert Messenger • James Meyer • Martin Morrison • Maya Myers • Grant Oen • Glenn Panner • Glenn Petersen • Matthew Phelps • Boris Postovsky • Tim Redman • Boyd Reed • Alexander Relyea • Tony Rich • L. Thad Rogers • Sophia Rohde • Sam Shoykhet • Robert Singletary • Bill Sneed • Harold Stenzel • Robert Sutter • Judit Sztaray

• Robert B. Tanner • Abel Talamantez • Martha Underwood • Gregory Vaserstein • Tracey Vibbert • Brian Yang

FIDE SENIOR TRAINER (FST)

GM Lev Alburto • IM Armen Ambartsoumian • IM John Donaldson • GM Jaan Ehvest • GM Boris Gulko • GM Robert Hungaski • GM Gregory Kaidanov • GM Melikset Khachiyani • Michael Khodarkovsky • GM Semon Palatnik • Boris Postovsky • GM Yasser Seirawan • GM Miron Sher

FIDE TRAINER (FT)

Steven Abrahams • FM Robby Adamson • GM Maurice Ashley • FM Kevin Bachler • Michael Ciamarra • GM Fidel Corrales Jimenez • WGM Dorsa Derakhshani • FM Eduard Duchovny • Alex Eydelman • IM Ali Farahat • GM Renier Gonzalez • Miguel Iniguez • GM Sergey Kudrin • John MacArthur • WIM Beatriz Marinello • Lou Mercuri • GM Elshan Moradiabadi • Matan Prilleltensky • IM Vladimir Prosviriakov • Jay Stallings • Paul Swaney • Bryan Tillis • Batsaikhan Tserendorj

FIDE INSTRUCTOR (FI)

WFM Chouchanik Airapetian • Miguel Ararat • John Buky • Joseph Concepcion Calapati • Michael Ciamarra • FM Nirosh De Silva • Daniel DeLuca • FM Zivorad Djuric • Raymond Duque • IM Ali Farahat • Gregory Keener • Alexander King • Mikhail Koganov • Robert Lazorchak • Arjoe Loanzon • David MacEnulty • Sean Manross • Damian Nash • WGM Katerina Nemcova • Frank Niro • Grant Oen • Adia Onyango • Tony Pabon • Cornelius Rubsamen • Paulo Santanna • Juan Tica • Anatoly Tonkonogy • Batsaikhan Tserendorj • Daniel Vulis • F. Leon Wilson

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Russian Chess Dominance

A classic from an underappreciated player

BY BRUCE PANDOLFINI

F

FROM THE 1930s ONWARD, for many years, the vast Soviet Union dominated the world of chess. One great player after

the other, whether from Russia proper or from one of its satellite states, represented the so-called Soviet School with distinction. While initially the cream of the crop were Botvinnik, Smyslov, and the Estonian Keres, twenty or thirty other players, almost as awesome during that period, added significantly to this illustrious group of three. One very talented player during this period was Nikolay Riumin (1908-42), who died from illness tragically at the age of 34. His 1931 game played in Moscow against Solomon Slonim (White) displays Riumin's creative attacking prowess.

SCOTCH OPENING (C47)

Solomon Slonim
Nikolay Riumin
Moscow, 1931

1. e4 e5 2. Nf3 Nc6 3. d4



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. **

3. **Par Score 5** **exd4**
No other move makes sense here. The position is relatively even.

4. **Nxd4**
Alternatives for White are 4. Bc4 or 4. c3, but neither are as good as the text. **

4. **Par Score 5** **Nf6**
Black attacks the White e-pawn with a gain of time. You may accept **full credit** for 4. ... Bc5.

5. **Nxc6**
This is better than 5. Nc3, which could be met by 5. ... Bb4. **

5. **Par Score 5** **bxc6**
Naturally, Black takes back toward the center, which avoids a disadvantageous trade of queens.

6. **Nc3**
White could also have dealt with the threat to the e-pawn with 6. Bd3 or 6. e5. **

6. **Par Score 5** **Bb4**
By pinning the knight, Black renews his threat to the e-pawn.

7. **Bg5**
Assuredly, this counterpin is not the best defense of the e-pawn. More to the point was 7. Bd3, preparing kingside castling. **

7. **Par Score 5** **Qe7**
Riumin renews pressure against the e-pawn. You may accept **full credit** for 7. ... h6.

8. **Bd3**
White defends the e-pawn and makes possible kingside castling. **

8. **Par Score 5** **Qe5**
A slight slip on Riumin's part. His double attack (on c3 and g5) can be answered easily enough. Accept **full credit** for 8. ... h6.

9. **Bd2**
White's retreat deals with both threats. **

9. **Par Score 5** **d5**
Black assails the pinned e-pawn and opens another diagonal for the c8-bishop.

10. **Qe2**
This breaks the pin and adds the new wrinkle of perhaps castling on the queenside. But that's a risky decision, castling into a vulnerable b-file. More prudent would be 10. 0-0 or 10. a3. **

10. **Par Score 5** **0-0**
Black reasonably castles, though 10. ... d4 was playable and gets **full credit**, as does 11. ... Rb8, taking the half open b-file.

11. **0-0-0**
A familiar Soviet School tactic was to castle on opposite sides to free up attacking opportunities on the other wing. But here it's questionable. Better was 11. f4, harassing Black's queen. **

11. **Par Score 6** **Rb8**
It's looking as if White has castled into a growing assault. You may accept **full credit** for 11. ... d4, perhaps following with ... Ra8-b8.

12. **f4**
White dislodges the opposing queen from the center with a gain of time, but it may be a little late. **

12. **Par Score 4** **Qe7**
Although this appears to be a retreat, Black's queen is still poised to enter the fray.

13. **exd5**
With this exchange, White hopes to de-

ABCS OF CHESS

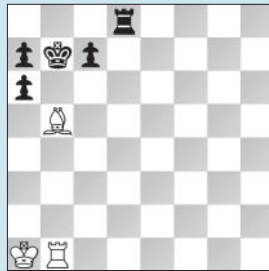
THESE PROBLEMS ARE ALL related to key positions in this month's game. In each case, White is to move. The answers can be found in Solutions on page 63.

APRIL EXERCISE:

It's not unusual for students of chess to analyze a game or a position and emerge feeling they've understood most of the key points. Even so, such feelings can be misleading. A good test would be how well we can explain what we think we've learned, and therefore know, to others. If they've come away confused, we might want to revisit what we thought we understood in the first place.

PROBLEM 1

Mating net



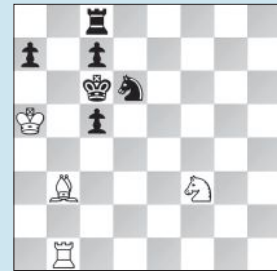
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Mating net



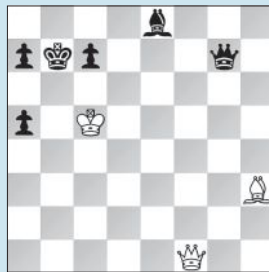
PROBLEM 3

Mating net



PROBLEM 4

Mating net



PROBLEM 5

Mating net



PROBLEM 6

Mating net



fuse Black's attack by conceivably trading queens. **

13. Par Score 7 Ba3
It's this move that busts White's bubble. Black is menacing real harm to the White position.

14. Na4
White tries to defend b2, but it doesn't quite work. Add **2 bonus points** for realizing that 14. Qxe7 could have been met by 14. ... Bxb2+ 15. Kb1 Bxc3+ 16. Kc1 Bb2+ 17. Kb1 Ba3+ 18. Bb4 Rxb4+ 19. Ka1 Re8, with a winning attack. **

14. Par Score 6 Bxb2+
A nice breakthrough sacrifice. The a3- and c3-squares are suddenly more vulnerable.

15. Nxb2
Give yourself **1 bonus point** for seeing that 15. Kb1 Bc3+ 16. Kc1 would have been answered by 16. ... Qa3+ and mate next. **

15. Par Score 6 Qa3
The threat, dear Brutus, is not in the stars, but mate in one on b2.

16. Qe5
White had to defend b2. Note that 16. Bc3 Qxc3 17. Qe5 wouldn't have saved the day either. **

16. Par Score 5 Re8
Black takes advantage of the exposed white queen to further his attack.

17. Qd4
Slonim retreats, still holding up defense of b2. **

17. Par Score 6 c5
Black attacks the white queen once again.

18. Qc3
This retreat is the only way to keep the b2-knight guarded. **

18. Par Score 5 Qxa2
Now a new mate threat emerges at a1.

19. Be1
White clears the d2-square, giving his king an escape square. **

19. Par Score 8 Re2
Mate is still threatened, since this powerful intrusion takes away that escape square. But does it work?

20. Bxe2
White captures the rook and now d2 is once again available. **

20. Par Score 7 Ne4
This small little move wins. The white

queen is hanging, while mate at a1 is still menaced.

21. White resigns
Faced with those two crushing threats, White resigned. To be sure, a rather resourcefully efficient attack. ♠

TOTAL YOUR SCORE TO DETERMINE YOUR APPROXIMATE RATING BELOW:

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

For more Solitaire Chess from Bruce Pandolfini, check out the **Chess Life** digital archives at uschess.org.

No, the Other One

When the natural pawn push is wrong

BY GM JOEL BENJAMIN

P

AWN ENDGAMES HAVE GENERAL rules which guide us to make certain moves. But we have also learned that endings

with rook pawns have their own rules, too. This month we will see a couple of endgames that surprise us with an unexpected pawn push. We may expect one move according to the “rules,” but the specifics dictate we reach for the other pawn.

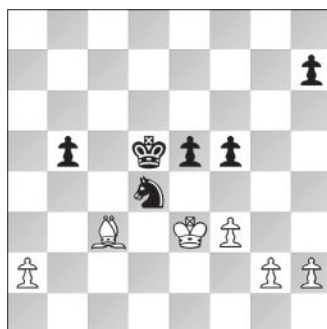
GRUNFELD DEFENSE (D82)

GM Alexey Dreev (2650)

GM Igor Stohl (2560)

Brno-A (2), 1994

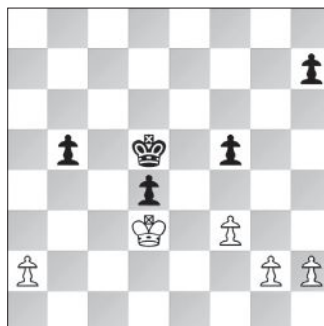
1. d4 Nf6 2. c4 g6 3. Nc3 d5 4. Bf4 Bg7 5. e3 c5 6. dxc5 Qa5 7. Qa4+ Qxa4 8. Nxa4 Na6 9. cxd5 Nxd5 10. Bb5+ Bd7 11. Bxd7+ Kxd7 12. 0-0-0 Kc6 13. Nf3 Nxc5 14. Be5 Nxa4 15. Bxg7 Rhc8 16. Kb1 f6 17. Rd4 Nc5 18. Rc1 a5 19. Bh6 b6 20. e4 Nc7 21. Rdc4 N7e6 22. Be3 Kb7 23. b4 axb4 24. Rxb4 Ra4 25. Rxa4 Nxa4 26. Rxc8 Kxc8 27. Kc2 Kc7 28. Nd2 Nac5 29. f3 Kc6 30. Nb1 Nc7 31. Nc3 b5 32. Ne2 e5 33. Bd2 N7e6 34. Bb4 f5 35. exf5 gxf5 36. Nc3 Nd4+ 37. Kd2 Nce6 38. Nd1 Nf4 39. Ne3 Nd5 40. Bc3 Nxe3 41. Kxe3 Kd5



Black's pieces are so active that White might as well go for the pawn ending, where Black

at least has to play with some accuracy for a draw.

42. Bxd4 exd4+ 43. Kd3



On the surface White appears to have the edge with a potential outside passed pawn, but Black has the chance to weaken White's kingside majority. The smart 43. ... f4! would completely neutralize White's winning chances.

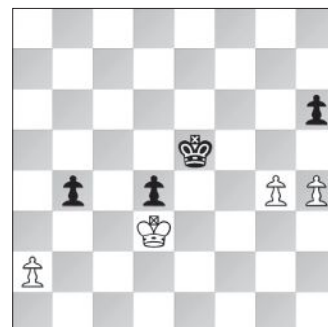
Play continues 44. g3 (on 44. a3, 44. ... Ke5, 44. ... Kc5, and 44. ... h5 all draw) 44. ... f4! 45. hxg3 h5 (Black can also draw with 45. ... b4 46. g4 Ke5 47. g5 Kf5 48. Kxd4 Kxg5 49. Ke5 h5 50. f4+ Kg6 51. Ke6 Kg7 and now both 52. Ke7 Kg6! and 52. Kf5 Kh6! 53. Ke6 Kg7 zero out) 46. a3 Ke5, and now White can try to triangulate with 47. Ke2 (after 47. f4+ Kd5 48. f5 Ke5 49. f6 Kxf6 50. Kxd4 Kf5 White will be slower in the race and has to backtrack with 51. Ke3. He can still hold after 51. ... Ke5 52. Kf3!) 47. ... Kd5 48. Kd2, when Black draws with any king move besides 48. ... Ke5? (or 48. ... Kc5) 49. Kd3 Kd5 50. f4 with a fatal zugzwang. Here 48. ... Kc4 49. f4 b4, for instance, holds the balance.

For that matter, Black can also draw with 43. ... h5 44. g3 b4 45. h3 Kc5 46. g4 fxg4 47. fxg4 hxg4 48. hxg4 Kd5 which produces the type of variation Black thought he was getting in the game.

43. ... b4??

Stohl miscalculated that this would be sufficient to draw, and we will soon understand what led him astray. But as we have seen, Black doesn't need to make any concessions at all.

44. g4 fxg4 45. fxg4 h6 46. h4 Ke5



The textbook approach here is to “scorch the earth” on the kingside and win with a passed pawn on the other side. This method is ingrained in most experienced players because it makes sense to remove all the pawns on the wing where the opponent's king is invading. Here the presence of rook pawns turns the ending upside down.

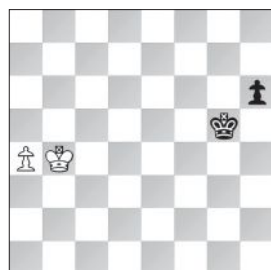
The natural 47. g5 fails because Black's king has a lot of time to get back to the queenside. After 47. ... hxg5 48. hxg5 Kf5 49. Kxd4 Kxg5 50. Kc5 Kf6 51. Kxb4 Ke7 52. Kc5 Kd7 53. Kb6 Kc8 and White comes up one tempo short.

47. h5!, Black resigned.

Going against the grain scored White a one-punch knockout. Stohl was surely stunned to find himself resigning, but the writing is clearly on the wall.

Black cannot wait because 47. ... Kd5 48. g5 leads to disaster, with his king leaving the square of the h-pawn. So Black has to run the king to the kingside, but this time

he comes up a tempo short. If 47. ... Kf4 48. Kxd4 Kxg4 49. Kc4 Kxh5 50. Kxb4 Kg5 51. a4 we see the (hopefully) familiar story of a queening rook pawn stopping its counterpart on the other side!



POSITION AFTER 51. a4

As Black is too slow in the race, he has to pull his king back without taking the h-pawn, in order to be able to stop White's a-pawn. But then we see the advantage of leaving a pawn on the kingside: 49. ... Kf5 (instead of 49. ... Kxh5) 50. Kxb4 Ke6 51. Kc5 Kd7 52. Kd5 and one of the rook pawns will promote.

In the next game, be sure to keep an eye on the g-pawn!

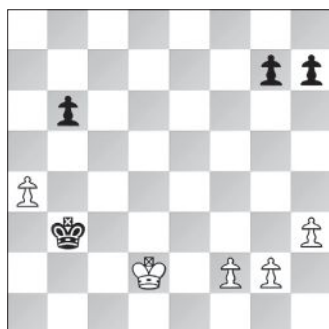
SICILIAN DEFENSE, ALAPIN VARIATION (B22)

IM Dariusz Mikrut (2372)

GM Maxime Vachier-Lagrave (2703)

EU Rapid Ch (5), Warsaw, 12.18.2010

1. e4 c5 2. c3 Nf6 3. e5 Nd5 4. Nf3 Nc6 5. d4 cxd4 6. cxd4 d6 7. exd6 Qxd6 8. Nc3 Bg4 9. Be2 e6 10. h3 Bh5 11. 0-0 Be7 12. Qb3 Nb6 13. Rd1 Rd8 14. d5 exd5 15. Be3 0-0 16. Bxb6 axb6 17. Rxd5 Qg6 18. Qxb6 Nb4 19. Qxg6 Bxg6 20. Rxd8 Rxd8 21. Rd1 Rxd1+ 22. Bxd1 Bf6 23. Bb3 Kf8 24. Nd5 Nxd5 25. Bxd5 b6 26. b3 Ke7 27. Kf1 Kd6 28. Bc4 Kc5 29. a4 Kb4 30. Ke2 Bc2 31. Nd2 Bc3 32. Bxf7 Bxd2 33. Kxd2 Bxb3 34. Bxb3 Kxb3



It's true that Black will soon enjoy an outside passed pawn, but White has the po-

tential to liquidate most, if not all of the kingside.

35. f4

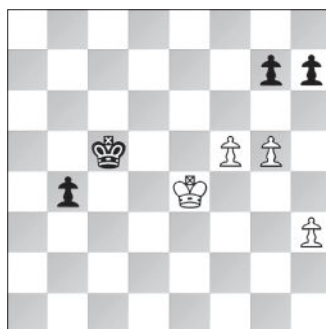
This doesn't hurt anything but begins a faulty plan. White could push any of the pawns to the fourth rank here.

35. ... Kxa4 36. f5??

There isn't much time in a rapid game to work out the right way to push the pawns. The goal for White is not to make a passed pawn, but rather to slow down the queening process when the black king inevitably comes to the kingside.

Instead of the chosen weakening move, White would draw comfortably after 36. g4 Kb5 37. Kd3 Kc5 38. Ke4 b5 39. Kd3 Kd5 40. h4 b4 41. h5! Then Black will not be able to maintain his g-pawn, while his h-pawn will be too slow after 41. ... b3 (41. ... h6 42. g5 creates the same situation) 42. h6 gxh6 43. Kc3 Ke4 44. f5 Ke5 45. Kxb3 and Black has to play 45. ... h5, when White gets his king back to the h1-corner in plenty of time. It is actually quite logical to advance White's h-pawn, as it is often critical where that pawn is captured when the white king is racing back.

36. ... Kb4 37. Kd3 Kc5 38. Ke4 b5 39. g4 b4 40. g5



40. ... b3??

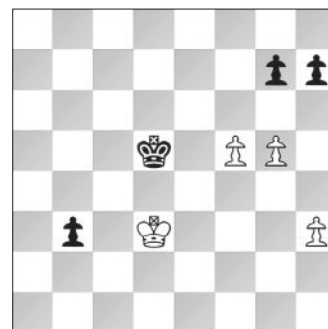
On the surface it doesn't make a difference, but 40. ... Kd6 41. Kd4 b3 42. Kc3 Ke5 was the way to get what Black wanted. Now we are in for a surprise.

41. Kd3 Kd5

(see diagram top of next column)

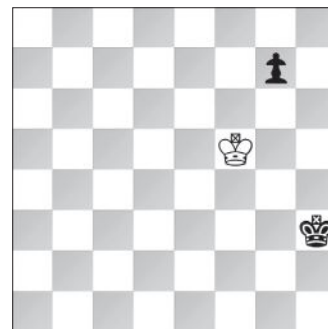
42. g6!!

This is rather counterintuitive for experienced players, as White leaves his opponent with a healthy g-pawn instead of the dreaded h-pawn. But Black takes so much longer to eat White's pawns that White's king is able to launch a surprising counterattack.



White had to abandon the standard formula because 42. Kc3 Ke5 43. f6 gxf6 44. gxf6 Kxf6 45. Kxb3 Kg5 46. Kc3 Kh4 47. Kd2 Kxh3 48. Ke2 Kg2 enables Black to keep White's king from getting to the corner. This line illustrates why it was vital to push the h-pawn!

42. ... hxg6 43. fxg6 Ke5 44. Kc3 Kf5 45. Kxb3 Kxg6 46. Kc4 Kg5 47. Kd5 Kh4 48. Ke5 Kxh3 49. Kf5



Ironically, White profits from having his g-pawn far back, as Black cannot protect his short-lived passed pawn.

49. ... g5 50. Kxg5, draw. ♪

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An Underappreciated Champion

Discover the genius of Ding Liren with this collection of his games.

BY IM JOHN WATSON

G

M DING LIREN IS THE WORLD Champion, a title to which some people might attach an asterisk, since GM Magnus Carlsen declined to defend his title in 2022. That is a legitimate consideration, but I believe that serious students of the game have come to realize what a fine successor to the crown Ding is.

To this end, GM Davorin Kuljasevic's *Ding Liren's Best Games* engages us in a detailed examination of Ding's play, and shows that he is an extraordinarily strong and interesting player. This study of his games is both erudite and entertaining.

The book is primarily an annotated games collection, but contains much more than such collections usually do. Subtitled "A Chess Biography," it includes a mass of purely biographical material as well as a deep dive into Ding's style, temperament, and unique qualities.

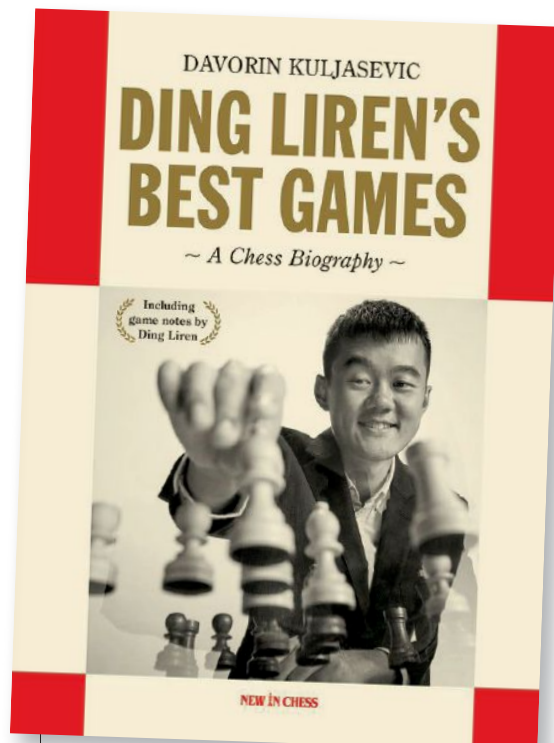
The extensive bibliography cites articles going all the way back to 2001, and Kuljasevic even scoured Chinese sources and used Google Translate to present passages that shed light upon Ding's life and career. There's a nice chapter on Ding's "early years" (1996-2009), which has an extensive discussion of chess in China as it developed in the late 20th century, culminating in both men's and women's titles in individual and team world championships.

Ding was born in 1992 and learned chess when he was four. I find it interesting that his development was so different

than other chess prodigies of the past several decades, in that he didn't play against strong adult players, or even many highly ranked players, until he was 14. That's hopelessly old by modern prodigy standards. But there's a catch: Ding dominated consistently in youth categories, beginning with the Chinese national youth championship at age five all the way up to the World Youth Championships U10 section, and finishing second in the World Youth Championships at age 12.

Conventional wisdom would have it that you can't improve too dramatically unless you're competing against players much stronger than yourself. But Ding's first opportunity to play in a strong tournament against adults was the Chinese Zonal in 2007 at age 15, where he tied for second place, despite being rated at a lowly 2289. The next year he exploded onto the chess scene by winning the 2008 Chinese Championship outright at age 16, with a 2812 performance rating. He won a second championship in 2011 with a 2850 performance rating, and swiftly moved past 2700.

While studying for a law degree at Peking University, which he completed in 2017, Ding began to compete successfully against the world's elite in super-GM tournaments. He reached back-to-back finals of the World Cup (the first player to do so), qualified for the Candidates in 2020, and set a new record by going on an amazing 100-game unbeaten streak, breaking the 2800 barrier in the pro-



cess. Ding wasn't able to participate in the qualifying events for the 2022 Candidates, but got in when GM Sergey Karjakin was banned from play.

That stroke of luck changed chess history when Ding finished second and qualified to play for the World Championship versus GM Ian Nepomniachtchi, subsequently winning an exciting and fighting match that most readers will be familiar with. The story of that match is told well here, and even those who followed it will learn something new.

Kuljasevic put a lot of time and thought into a lengthy "profile" chapter which discusses Ding's personality and chess-playing attributes, both "core" and "mature." He explains these in prose terms and uses 17 games and eight game fragments to dig deeply into them. The examples are both thoughtful and inspiring.

The rest of the games selection, chronologically organized, is excellent, eschewing

short tactical wins and emphasizing difficult contests that illustrate Ding's strengths in all areas of the game. There are 58 games in all, with 47 annotated by Kuljasevic and 11 others by Ding himself. For fun, and to give the student exercises, Kuljasevic appends a chapter at the end of the book called "Win like Ding," with combinations from his games.

Unfortunately I haven't room to show the lengthy fights that bring out the best in Ding's creative and tenacious style, but here is a critical game in Ding's career, along with a sample of Kuljasevic's notes. (For a contemporaneous view of this game, check out IM Kostya Kavutskiy's annotations in our July 2020 issue. ~ed.)

SLAV DEFENSE (D17)

GM Ding Liren (2805)

GM Fabiano Caruana (2842)

Candidates, Yekaterinburg, 03.19.2020

Annotations by Kuljasevic in BLUE

1. d4 d5 2. c4 c6 3. Nf3 Nf6 4. Nc3 dxc4 5. a4 Bf5 6. Ne5 e6 7. f3 Bb4 8. Nxc4 0-0 9. Kf2



A position well known to theory. Here Caruana produced a dangerous novelty.

9. ... e5!?

Quite a shock. Kuljasevic points out that Ding had lost two games in a row, and now faced the depressing task of trying to outplay Caruana's always deep, computer-assisted preparation. He succeeds brilliantly, despite having to consider multiple tempting options on almost every move.

10. Nxe5

DK: 10. e4 was a sharper possibility. It is understandable that Ding avoided it because 10. ... exd4 11. Na2 Bc5 leads to the kind of position where he would be at a great disadvantage against the opponent's engine analysis. For example, 12. b4 (or 12. exf5 b5 13. Na3 d3+) 12. ... b5 13. bxc5 bxc4

14. Bxc4 Be6 15. Be2 Nxe4+! 16. fxe4 d3 with compensation for the piece in both cases.

10. ... Bc2! 11. Qd2

If 11. Qxc2 Qxd4+ 12. e3 Qxe5 is equal.

11. ... c5

DK: Black continues making unpleasant pawn moves that complicate White's development. Ding had another big decision...

12. d5!?

DK: You have to be brave to play this move in such circumstances. (Especially since Ding was already falling behind on time!) In such a situation, I'd probably opt for the safer alternative 12. e3.

12. ... Bb3 13. e4 Re8 14. Qf4!

DK: Ding must have prepared this risky queen move before going 12. d5 because it is the only one that holds his position together. Naturally if 14. Nc4? Rxe4!.

14. ... c4!

DK: Another strong move blitzed out by Caruana, indicating he'd had this position on his computer screen before the game.

15. Nxc4 Nbd7



DK: Caruana has full compensation for two sacrificed pawns due to White's vulnerable king and awkwardly placed queen. White's predicament would have been even worse if his two extra pawns were not creating a central barrier for the black pieces. In a tricky situation, Ding keeps searching for the truth and finding the best resources to keep the position under control.

16. Be3! Nf8! 17. Bd4 Ng6?!

Kuljasevic points out that Caruana should have started with 17. ... Rc8 18. Ne3, which makes it impossible for the queen to go to c1 after 18. ... Ng6, leading to sharp, dynamically balanced positions.

18. Qf5?

DK: That's the move you make quickly when pressed by the clock. The engine finds 18. Qc1! Rc8 19. Nd2!, tempting sacrifices on e4 and/or d5 which are indeed dangerous, but not sufficient versus accurate defense.

18. ... Bxc4 19. Bxc4 Qc7 20. Be2 Bc5 21. Bxc5 Qxc5+ 22. Kf1

Black has compensation again.

22. ... h6?

The position after 22. ... Re5! 23. Qh3 Qb4 24. Rb1 Nf4 25. Qg3 N6h5 26. Qe1 f5 is messy and dynamically balanced.

23. Rd1 Qb6?!

Kuljasevic suggests 23. ... a6!, getting ... b7-b5 in more quickly.

24. Rd2 Qe3 25. Rc2 a6 26. Qh3 b5 27. Qg3 b4?!

Kuljasevic recommends 27. ... Rec8!.

28. Nd1 Qb3 29. Rd2 Qxa4 30. Qf2 Qd7 31. g3! Qh3+ 32. Kg1 a5 33. Qd4 Nh5 34. Nf2 Qd7 35. f4

Astonishingly well-calculated moves have avoided all tricks and brought Ding to a winning position.

35. ... Nhx4!?

Otherwise White's pawns will roll forward.

36. gxf4 Nxf4 37. Kf1 Qd6 38. Rg1 f6 39. Bb5 Re7 40. b3 ...

White went on to win in another 19 moves; a still easier path would have been 40. Ng4! Kh8 41. Ne3. This was a great performance under pressure.

I highly recommend *Ding Liren's Best Games* to those who appreciate top-level chess and want to learn from the games of the best players. In particular, Kuljasevic is an unabashed fan of Ding's play, and puts great effort into explaining why certain moves are exceptionally good and/or reflective of his style. The analysis is restrained, while the verbal notes are generous with descriptions of context, psychology, and practical decision-making. Throughout, Kuljasevic succeeds in telling the story of how Ding's chess career developed through ups and downs, while always keeping an eye on makes his play tick. ♠

Kuljasevic, Davorin. Ding Liren's Best Games: A Chess Biography. Alkmaar: New in Chess, 2023. ISBN 9789083336688. PB, 328pp. (Available from uscfsales.com, product code B0306NIC, \$27.95.)

TOURNAMENT LIFE ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Executive Board authorizes a temporary change in the US Chess Grand Prix (GP) rules for the period March 4, 2020 through April 30, 2024 out of concern for the unforeseeable impacts the COVID-19 (Coronavirus) could have on participation in GP events. The change allows organizers with guaranteed prize funds to change the status of their prize fund without first seeking US Chess permission to make the change. More specifically, organizers who have announced "XXXX in Guaranteed prizes" (or similar words) for their GP events shall be allowed to re-state their prize funds in their publicity as "XXXX in Projected prizes based on ### players," where ### represents the number of players in last year's event rounded to the nearest five players. For new GP events lacking historical attendance data, the organizer shall specify a "based on" number of players as part of the Projected Prize Fund language in their publicity. This decision includes all GP tournaments that already have been advertised in Chess Life. For any GP events being publicly advertised (whether by TLA, another website, flyers, emails, social media, etc.), organizers shall take all necessary steps to ensure their revised pre-tournament announcements call attention to this change in prize fund status and provide the appropriate "Projected based on XXX players" in the language of their updated publicity. US Chess asks that the chess community support this temporary change in the spirit that it is intended. The Executive Board shall revisit this matter as necessary.

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

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

Nationals

NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP EVENT • HERITAGE EVENT • JUNIOR GRAND PRIX

2024 National High School (K-12) Championships

APRIL 5-7, 2024, MARYLAND

Event site: Baltimore Convention Center Address: 1 West Pratt Street, Baltimore, MD 21201 Overall prize fund: n/a GP Points: n/a FIDE Rated: N Handicap accessible: Y Residency restriction: Y Organizer: Boyd Reed Email: nationalevents@uschess.org Phone: n/a Website: <http://www.uschess.org/tournaments/2024/hs> TLA ID: 41883

NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP EVENT • HERITAGE EVENT • JUNIOR GRAND PRIX

2024 National Elementary (K-6) Championships

APRIL 26-28, 2024, OHIO

Event site: Greater Columbus Convention Center Address: 1400 North High Street, Columbus, OH 43215 Overall prize fund: n/a GP Points: n/a FIDE Rated: N Handicap accessible: Y Residency restriction: Y Organizer: Boyd Reed Email: nationalevents@uschess.org Phone: n/a Website: <http://www.uschess.org/tournaments/2024/elem> TLA ID: 41941

NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP EVENT • HERITAGE EVENT • JUNIOR GRAND PRIX

2024 National Middle School (K-8) Championships

MAY 10-12, 2024, GEORGIA

Event site: Hyatt Regency Atlanta Address: 265 Peachtree Street NE, Atlanta, GA 30303 Overall prize fund: n/a GP Points: n/a FIDE Rated: N Handicap accessible: Y Residency restriction: Y Organizer: Boyd Reed Email: nationalevents@uschess.org Phone: n/a Website: <http://www.uschess.org/tournaments/2024/ms> TLA ID: 41971

NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP EVENT

78th Annual U.S. Amateur East Championship

MAY 25-27, 2024, NEW JERSEY

Event site: Hyatt Regency New Brunswick Address: Two Albany Street New Brunswick, New Jersey 08901 Overall prize fund: n/a GP Points: n/a FIDE Rated: N Handicap accessible: Y Residency restriction: Y Organizer: Aaron Kiedes Email: akiedes@gmail.com Phone: n/a Website: <https://njscf.org/> TLA ID: 42115

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

2024 U.S. Women's Open

JUNE 5-6, 2024, NEVADA

Event site: Flamingo Las Vegas Hotel & Casino Address: 3555 Las Vegas Blvd S Las Vegas NV 89109 Overall prize fund: \$3,500 GP Points: 50 FIDE Rated: Y Handicap accessible: Y Residency restriction: N Organizer: Vegas Chess Festivals Email: vegaschess@gmail.com Phone: 702-930-9550 Website: <https://vegaschessfestival.com> TLA ID: 42475

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

2024 National Open

JUNE 5-9, 2024, NEVADA

Event site: Flamingo Las Vegas Hotel & Casino Address: 3555 Las Vegas Blvd S Las Vegas NV 89109 Overall prize fund: \$125,000 GP Points: 200 FIDE Rated: Y Handicap accessible: Y Residency restriction: N Organizer: Vegas Chess Festivals Email: vegaschess@gmail.com Phone: 702-930-9550 Website: <https://vegaschessfestival.com> TLA ID: 41728

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

dress: 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 FISHBEIN	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

GRAND PRIX • ENHANCED GRAND PRIX

Dragon Knight Early April Classic

APRIL 7, 2024, NORTH CAROLINA

Event site: Dragon Knight Chess Center Address: 2000 Bearcat Way, Suite 104, Morrisville, NC 27560 Overall prize fund: \$630 GP Points: 10 FIDE Rated: N Handicap accessible: Y Residency restriction: N Organizer: Dragon Knight Chess Center Email: jon@dragonknightchess.com Phone: 919-4222535 Website: <http://dragonknightchess.com> TLA ID: 42102

GRAND PRIX • ENHANCED GRAND PRIX

2024 Ambush & Dragon Knight Chess Open

APRIL 12-14, 2024, NORTH CAROLINA

Event site: Best Western Plus Burlington Address: 770 Huffman Mill Road, Burlington, NC 27215 Overall prize fund: \$9,675 b/130 GP Points: 15 FIDE Rated: N Handicap accessible: Y Residency restriction: N Organizer: Charles Wayne Roberson Email: jrober-sonmcs@gmail.com Phone: 336-4370592 Website: <https://aigames.net/2024ADKO.html> TLA ID: 42097

GRAND PRIX • ENHANCED GRAND PRIX

Dragon Knight Earth Saturday Classic

APRIL 20, 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: 919-4222535 Website: <http://dragonknightchess.com> TLA ID: 42629

GRAND PRIX

Sacramento Chess Club Weekend Swiss #24

APRIL 20-21, 2024, CALIFORNIA, N.

Event site: Holiday Inn Express & Suites Address: 2224 Auburn Boulevard, Sacramento, CA 95821 Overall prize fund: \$4,800 b/60 GP Points: 10 FIDE Rated: N Handicap accessible: Y Residency restriction: N Organizer: John P McCumiskey Email: sactoChess@sbcglobal.net Phone: 916-524-9479 Website: <https://sacramentochessclub.org> TLA ID: 42060

2024 Sacramento Senior Championship

APRIL 20-21, 2024, CALIFORNIA, N.

Correction: The 2024 Sacramento Senior Championship, to be held April 20-21, was mistakenly listed as a 10-point GP event in the March *Chess Life*. This event is not a GP event. Please see the California listing for more information about this event.

GRAND PRIX • ENHANCED GRAND PRIX

Dragon Knight Late April Classic

APRIL 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: 919-4222535 Website: <http://dragonknightchess.com> TLA ID: 42630

HERITAGE EVENT • GRAND PRIX • ENHANCED GRAND PRIX • STATE CHAMPIONSHIP EVENT

32nd Massachusetts G/60 Championship

APRIL 28, MASSACHUSETTS

Event site: Westford Regency Inn & Conference Center Address: 219 Littleton Rd., Westford MA 01886 Overall prize fund: \$3,000 GP Points: 15 FIDE Rated: N Handicap accessible: Y Residency restriction: N Organizer: Massachusetts Chess Association Email: info@masschess.org Phone: n/a Website: <http://www.masschess.org> TLA ID: 42101

GRAND PRIX • ENHANCED GRAND PRIX

11th Annual Reno Larry Evans Memorial Open

MAY 3-5, 2024, NEVADA

Event site: Circus Circus Hotel Casino Reno Address: 500 North Sierra Street, Reno, NV 89503 Overall prize fund: \$27,500 GP Points: 150 FIDE Rated: Y Handicap accessible: Y Residency restriction: N Organizer: Jerome V. Weikel Email: jweikel@aol.com Phone: 775-747-1405 Website: <http://www.renochess.com> TLA ID: 41754

HERITAGE EVENT • ENHANCED GRAND PRIX • JUNIOR GRAND PRIX

29th Space Coast Open

MAY 3-5, 2024, FLORIDA

Event site: Hilton Melbourne at Rialto Place Address: 200 Rialto Place, Melbourne, FL 32901 Overall prize fund: \$10,000 GP Points: 150 FIDE Rated: Y Handicap accessible: Y Residency restriction: N Organizer: Space Coast Chess Association Email: spacecoastchess@gmail.com Phone: 321-225-1234 Website: <http://spacecoastchess.com> TLA ID: 42098

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.

fund: \$20,000 **GP Points:** 120 **FIDE Rated:** Y **Handicap accessible:** Y **Residency restriction:** N **Organizer:** Space Coast Chess Foundation, Inc. **Email:** pdysan@modusoperandi.com **Phone:** 321-431-3060 **Website:** <http://www.spacecoastchessfoundation.org> **TLAID:** 41077

GRAND PRIX • ENHANCED GRAND PRIX

Dragon Knight Cuatro de Mayo Classic MAY 4, 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:** <http://www.dragonknightchess.com> **TLAID:** 42631

GRAND PRIX

2024 Sheridan Wyoming Open MAY 4-5, 2024, WYOMING

Event site: Ramada Plaza Conference Center **Address:** 1809 Sugarland Dr, Sheridan, WY 82801 **Overall prize fund:** \$8,500 **GP Points:** 100 **FIDE Rated:** N **Handicap accessible:** Y **Residency restriction:** N **Organizer:** Brian Kuehl **Email:** admin@sheridanchess.com **Phone:** 202-679-6779 **Website:** <http://www.SheridanChess.com> **TLAID:** 41258

GRAND PRIX • ENHANCED GRAND PRIX

Dragon Knight Mother's Saturday Classic MAY 11, 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:** <http://www.dragonknightchess.com> **TLAID:** 42632

GRAND PRIX • ENHANCED GRAND PRIX • JUNIOR GRAND PRIX

11th Cherry Blossom Classic MAY 22-27, VIRGINIA

Event site: Washington Dulles Airport Marriott **Address:** 45020 Aviation Dr., Dulles, VA 20166 **Overall prize fund:** \$26,000 **GP Points:** 200 **FIDE Rated:** Y **Handicap accessible:** N **Residency restriction:** N **Organizer:** Anand Dommalapati **Email:** cbc2024@capitalareachess.com **Phone:** 703-627-5314 **Website:** <http://www.capitalareachess.com/cherryblossom> **TLAID:** 41988

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

33rd Annual Chicago Open MAY 23-27, 2024, ILLINOIS

Event site: Westin Chicago North Shore Hotel **Address:** 601 North Milwaukee Ave., Wheeling, IL 60090 **Overall prize fund:** \$100,000 **GP Points:** 200 **FIDE Rated:** Y **Handicap accessible:** Y **Residency restriction:** N **Organizer:** Continental Chess Association **Email:** director@chess.us **Phone:** <http://www.chesstour.com> **TLAID:** 41785

HERITAGE EVENT • GRAND PRIX • ENHANCED GRAND PRIX • JUNIOR GRAND PRIX • STATE CHAMPIONSHIP EVENT

92nd Massachusetts Open MAY 25-27, 2024, MASSACHUSETTS

Event site: Westford Regency Inn & Conference Center **Address:** 219 Littleton Road, Westford MA 01886 **Overall prize fund:** \$7,500 **GP Points:** 50 **FIDE Rated:** Y **Handicap accessible:** Y **Residency restriction:** N **Organizer:** Massachusetts Chess Association **Email:** info@masschess.org **Phone:** 603-891-2484 **Website:** <http://www.masschess.org> **TLAID:** 42613

GRAND PRIX • ENHANCED GRAND PRIX

13th Annual Chicago Open Blitz MAY 26, 2024, ILLINOIS

Event site: Westin Chicago North Shore Hotel **Address:** 601 North Milwaukee Ave., Wheeling, IL 60090 **Overall prize fund:** \$2,500 **GP Points:** 30 **FIDE Rated:** N **Handicap accessible:** Y **Residency restriction:** N **Organizer:** Continental Chess Association **Email:** director@chess.us **Phone:** <http://www.chesstour.com> **TLAID:** 42478

GRAND PRIX • ENHANCED GRAND PRIX

4th Annual Niagara Falls Open MAY 31-JUNE 2, 2024, NEW YORK

Event site: Sheraton Niagara Falls Address: 300 3rd St, Niagara Falls NY 14303 **Overall prize fund:** \$10,000 **GP Points:** 80 **FIDE Rated:** Y **Handicap accessible:** N **Residency restriction:** N **Organizer:** Continental Chess Association **Email:** director@chess.us **Phone:** <http://www.chesstour.com> **TLAID:** 42173

GRAND PRIX • ENHANCED GRAND PRIX • JUNIOR GRAND PRIX

11th Summer Solstice Open MAY 31-JUNE 2, 2024, FLORIDA

Event site: Embassy Suites Hotel **Address:** 661 NW 53rd Street, Boca Raton, FL 33487 **Overall prize fund:** \$10,000 **GP Points:** 50 **FIDE Rated:** Y **Handicap accessible:** Y **Residency restriction:** N **Organizer:** Jon Haskel **Email:** jon@bocachess.com **Phone:** 561-302-4377 **Website:** <https://www.bocachess.com> **TLAID:** 42704

GRAND PRIX

Nebraska Chess Hall of Fame Champions Celebration JUNE 1-2, 2024, NEBRASKA

Event site: Graduate Hotel **Address:** 141 N 9th St., Lincoln, NE 68508 **Overall prize fund:** \$12,150 **GP Points:** 50 **FIDE Rated:** N **Handicap accessible:** Y **Residency restriction:** N **Organizer:** Bruce Draney **Email:** gambiteer49@yahoo.com **Phone:** 402312635 **Website:** <https://www.nebraskachess.com> **TLAID:** 42343

GRAND PRIX • ENHANCED GRAND PRIX • JUNIOR GRAND PRIX

17th Annual Continental Chess Cleveland Open JUNE 7-9, 2024, OHIO

Event site: Crowne Plaza Cleveland Airport **Address:** 7230 Engle Road, Middleburg Heights OH 44130 **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:** <http://www.chesstour.com> **TLAID:** 42531

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

32nd Annual Eastern Class Championships JUNE 7-9, 2024, CONNECTICUT

Event site: Sheraton Hartford Hotel At Bradley International Airport **Address:** One Airport Drive, Windsor Locks CT 06096 **Overall prize fund:** \$20,000 **GP Points:** 120 **FIDE Rated:** Y **Handicap accessible:** N **Residency restriction:** N **Organizer:** Continental Chess Association **Email:** director@chess.us **Phone:** <http://www.chesstour.com> **TLAID:** 42489

GRAND PRIX • ENHANCED GRAND PRIX

Walter Browne Memorial National Open Blitz Championship JUNE 8, 2024, NEVADA

Event site: Flamingo Las Vegas Hotel & Casino **Address:** 3555 Las Vegas Blvd S Las Vegas NV 89109 **Overall prize fund:** \$3,600 **GP Points:** 30 **FIDE Rated:** Y **Handicap accessible:** Y **Residency restriction:** N **Organizer:** Vegas Chess Festivals **Email:** vegaschess@gmail.com **Phone:** 702-930-9550 **Website:** <https://vegaschessfestival.com> **TLAID:** 42844

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

28th Annual New York State Open JUNE 14-16, 2024, NEW YORK

Event site: Tiki Resort **Address:** 2 Canada St., Lake George, NY 12845 **Overall prize fund:** \$3,300 **GP Points:** 20 **FIDE Rated:** N **Handicap accessible:** N **Residency restriction:** N **Organizer:** Continental Chess Association **Email:** director@chess.us **Phone:** <http://www.chesstour.com> **TLAID:** 42490

GRAND PRIX

2nd World Chess Festival JUNE 17-20, 2024, HAWAII

Event site: Neal S. Blaisdell Center **Address:** 777 Ward Avenue, Honolulu, HI 96814 **Overall prize fund:** \$5,000 **GP Points:** 30 **FIDE Rated:** Y **Handicap accessible:** Y **Residency restriction:** N **Organizer:** Joe Hanley

Email: hanleychessacademy@gmail.com **Phone:** 7149253195 **Website:** <http://www.hanleychessacademy.com> **TLAID:** 42662

GRAND PRIX • ENHANCED GRAND PRIX • JUNIOR GRAND PRIX

17th Annual Philadelphia International JUNE 27-JULY 1, 2024, PENNSYLVANIA

Event site: Philadelphia Sheraton Downtown Hotel **Address:** 201 North 17th Street, Philadelphia, PA 19103 **Overall prize fund:** \$20,000 **GP Points:** 200 **FIDE Rated:** Y **Handicap accessible:** Y **Residency restriction:** N **Organizer:** Continental Chess Association **Email:** director@chess.us **Phone:** <http://www.chesstour.com> **TLAID:** 41569

GRAND PRIX • ENHANCED GRAND PRIX • JUNIOR GRAND PRIX

18th Annual Philadelphia Open JUNE 28-30, 2024, PENNSYLVANIA

Event site: Philadelphia Sheraton Downtown Hotel **Address:** 201 North 17th Street, Philadelphia, PA 19103 **Overall prize fund:** \$20,000 **GP Points:** 200 **FIDE Rated:** Y **Handicap accessible:** Y **Residency restriction:** N **Organizer:** Continental Chess Association **Email:** director@chess.us **Phone:** <http://www.chesstour.com> **TLAID:** 41570

GRAND PRIX • ENHANCED GRAND PRIX • JUNIOR GRAND PRIX

13th Annual World Open Women's Championship! JULY 1-2, 2024, PENNSYLVANIA

Event site: Philadelphia Sheraton Downtown Hotel **Address:** 201 North 17th Street, Philadelphia, PA 19103 **Overall prize fund:** \$2,000 **GP Points:** 30 **FIDE Rated:** Y **Handicap accessible:** Y **Residency restriction:** N **Organizer:** Continental Chess Association **Email:** director@chess.us **Phone:** <http://www.chesstour.com> **TLAID:** 42670

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:** <http://www.chesstour.com> **TLAID:** 41566

GRAND PRIX • ENHANCED GRAND PRIX

13th Annual World Open Game/7 Championship JULY 3, 2024, PENNSYLVANIA

Event site: Philadelphia Sheraton Downtown Hotel **Address:** 201 North 17th Street, Philadelphia, PA 19103 **Overall prize fund:** \$1,500 **GP Points:** 20 **FIDE Rated:** N **Handicap accessible:** Y **Residency restriction:** N **Organizer:** Continental Chess Association **Email:** director@chess.us **Phone:** <http://www.chesstour.com> **TLAID:** 42569

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:** sactochess@sbcglobal.net **Phone:** 916-524-9479 **Website:** <https://sacramentochessclub.org> **TLAID:** 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:** <http://www.chesstour.com> **TLAID:** 42670

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:** <http://www.chesstour.com> **TLAID:** 42571

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:** <http://www.chesstour.com> **TLAID:** 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 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:** <http://www.chesstour.com> **TLAID:** 42771

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:** <https://mdchess.com> **TLAID:** 42528

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:** <http://www.tchess.com> **TLAID:** 41708

Regional

ARIZONA

APRIL 20-21, 2024

2024 Sacramento Senior Championship (CA-N)

See California.

APRIL 20-21, 2024

Sacramento Chess Club Weekend Swiss #24 (CA-N)

See Grand Prix.

MAY 4-5, 2024

2024 Sheridan Wyoming Open (WY)

See Grand Prix.

MAY 22-27, 2024

11th Cherry Blossom Classic (VA)

See Grand Prix.

JUNE 5-6, 2024

2024 U.S. Women's Open (NV)

See National Events.

JUNE 7, 2024

Youth Trophy Tournament (NV)

See Nevada.

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.

JUNE 5-9, 2024

2024 National Open (NV)

See National Events.

JUNE 8, 2024

International Youth Championship (NV)

See Nevada.

JULY 5-7, 2024

26th Annual Sacramento Chess Championship (CA-N)

See Grand Prix.

◆ CALIFORNIA

APRIL 20-21, 2024

2024 Sacramento Senior Championship

Event site: Holiday Inn Express & Suites **Address:** 2224 Auburn Boulevard, Sacramento, CA 95821 **Overall prize fund:** \$2,400 b/40 **GP Points:** n/a **FIDE Rated:** N **Handicap accessible:** Y **Residency restriction:** N **Organizer:** John P McCumiskey **Email:** sactochess@sbcglobal.net **Phone:** 916-524-9479 **Website:** <https://sacramentochessclub.org> **TLAID:** 42059

APRIL 20-21, 2024

Sacramento Chess Club Weekend Swiss #24 (CA-N)

See Grand Prix.

MAY 4-5, 2024

2024 Sheridan Wyoming Open (WY)

See Grand Prix.

MAY 22-27, 2024

11th Cherry Blossom Classic (VA)

See Grand Prix.

MAY 23-27, 2024

33rd Annual Chicago Open (IL)

See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

JUNE 5-6, 2024

2024 U.S. Women's Open (NV)

See National Events.

JUNE 5-9, 2024

2024 National Open (NV)

See National Events.

JUNE 7, 2024

Youth Trophy Tournament (NV)

See Nevada.

JUNE 8, 2024

Walter Browne Memorial National Open Blitz Championship (NV)

See Grand Prix.

JUNE 8, 2024

International Youth Championship (NV)

See Nevada.

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.

AUGUST 10-14, 2024

11th Annual Washington International (MD)

See Grand Prix.

◆ COLORADO

MAY 4-5, 2024

2024 Sheridan Wyoming Open (WY)

See Grand Prix.

JUNE 1-2, 2024

Nebraska Chess Hall of Fame Champions Celebration (NE)

See Grand Prix.

JUNE 5-6, 2024

2024 U.S. Women's Open (NV)

See National Events.

JUNE 5-9, 2024

2024 National Open (NV)

See National Events.

◆ CONNECTICUT

MAY 18, 2024

1st Greater Baystate Spring Classic (MA)

See Massachusetts.

MAY 22-27, 2024

11th Cherry Blossom Classic (VA)

See Grand Prix.

MAY 31-JUNE 2, 2024

11th Summer Solstice Open (FL)

See Grand Prix.

JUNE 7-9, 2024

32nd Annual Eastern Class Championships (CT)

See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

JUNE 14-16, 2024

28th Annual New York State Open (NY)

See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

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.

◆ DELAWARE

MAY 22-27, 2024

11th Cherry Blossom Classic (VA)

See Grand Prix.

JUNE 28-30, 2024

52nd Annual World Open, Under 1200 and Under 1000 Sections (PA)

See Pennsylvania or chessevents.us.

JULY 3-7, 2024

52nd Annual World Open, top 6 sections (PA)

See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

◆ DIST. OF COLUMBIA

MAY 22-27, 2024

11th Cherry Blossom Classic (VA)

See Grand Prix.

◆ FLORIDA

MAY 22-27, 2024

11th Cherry Blossom Classic (VA)

See Grand Prix.

MAY 23-27, 2024

33rd Annual Chicago Open (IL)

See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

JUNE 27-JULY 1, 2024

17th Annual Philadelphia International (PA)

See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

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.

◆ 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 **Website:** <https://mythinkchess.com/> **TLAID:** 37216

APRIL 19-20, 2024

3rd Annual Bolivar Morales Memorial Club Championships

Event site: Winterville Chess Club at the Winterville Cultural Center **Address:** 371 North Church Street, Winterville, GA 30683 **Overall prize fund:** n/a **GP Points:** n/a **FIDE Rated:** N **Handicap accessible:** N **Residency restriction:** N **Organizer:** Tomas Ramirex **Email:** tram110@verizon.net **Phone:** 4014407416 **Website:** n/a **TLAID:** 41950

MAY 22-27, 2024

11th Cherry Blossom Classic (VA)

See Grand Prix.

MAY 31-JUNE 2, 2024

11th Summer Solstice Open (FL)

See Grand Prix.

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.

◆ IDAHO

APRIL 13, 2024

2024 Wyoming State Scholastic Championship (WY)

See Wyoming.

APRIL 20-21, 2024

2024 Sacramento Senior Championship (CA-N)

See California.

APRIL 20-21, 2024

Sacramento Chess Club Weekend Swiss #24 (CA-N)

See Grand Prix.

MAY 4-5, 2024

2024 Sheridan Wyoming Open (WY)

See Grand Prix.

JUNE 5-6, 2024

2024 U.S. Women's Open (NV)

See National Events.

JUNE 5-9, 2024

2024 National Open (NV)

See National Events.

JULY 5-7, 2024

26th Annual Sacramento Chess Championship (CA-N)

See Grand Prix.

◆ ILLINOIS

APRIL 6, 2024

Caveman April Youth AM Half-Day

Event site: Regus **Address:** 1222 S Prospect Ave, Park Ridge, IL 60068 **Overall prize fund:** n/a **GP Points:** n/a **FIDE Rated:** N **Handicap accessible:** Y **Residency restriction:** N **Organizer:** Kevin Bachler **Email:** contact@cavemanchess.com **Phone:** 224-985-5245 **Website:** <https://www.cavemanchess.com/> **TLAID:** 42748

APRIL 20-21, 2024

Caveman Birthday Bash

Event site: Regus **Address:** 1222 S Prospect Ave, Park Ridge, IL 60068 **Overall prize fund:** \$5,000 **GP Points:** n/a **FIDE Rated:** N **Handicap accessible:** Y **Residency restriction:** N **Organizer:** Kevin Bachler **Email:** contact@cavemanchess.com **Phone:** 224-985-5245 **Website:** <https://www.cavemanchess.com/> **TLAID:** 42749

APRIL 20, 2024

Chicago Wolves Scholastic & Open

Event site: Allstate Arena Skyline Room **Address:** 10351 Lunt Ave, Rosemont, IL 60018 **Overall prize fund:** n/a **GP Points:** n/a **FIDE Rated:** N **Handicap accessible:** N **Residency restriction:** N **Organizer:** David Heiser **Email:** david.heiser@renaissanceknights.org **Phone:** n/a **Website:** <http://renaissanceknights.org/> **TLAID:** 41548

MAY 22-27, 2024

11th Cherry Blossom Classic (VA)

See Grand Prix.

MAY 23-27, 2024

33rd Annual Chicago Open (IL)

See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

MAY 26, 2024

13th Annual Chicago Open Blitz (IL)

See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

MAY 31-JUNE 2, 2024

11th Summer Solstice Open (FL)

See Grand Prix.

JULY 3-7, 2024

52nd Annual World Open, top 6 sections (PA)

See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

JULY 19-21, 2024

17th Annual Chicago Class Championships (IL)

See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

AUGUST 10-14, 2024

11th Annual Washington International (MD)

See Grand Prix.

◆ INDIANA

MAY 23-27, 2024

33rd Annual Chicago Open (IL)

See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

JULY 3-7, 2024

52nd Annual World Open, top 6 sections (PA)

See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

JULY 19-21, 2024

17th Annual Chicago Class Championships (IL)

See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

◆ IOWA

APRIL 27-28, 2024

Sioux Falls Open (SD)

See South Dakota.

MAY 4-5, 2024

2024 Sheridan Wyoming Open (WY)

See Grand Prix.

MAY 22-27, 2024

11th Cherry Blossom Classic (VA)

See Grand Prix.

MAY 23-27, 2024

33rd Annual Chicago Open (IL)
See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

JUNE 1-2, 2024

**Nebraska Chess Hall of Fame
Champions Celebration (NE)**
See Grand Prix

KANSAS

MAY 4-5, 2024

2024 Sheridan Wyoming Open (WY)
See Grand Prix.

MAY 22-27, 2024

11th Cherry Blossom Classic (VA)
See Grand Prix.

JUNE 1-2, 2024

**Nebraska Chess Hall of Fame
Champions Celebration (NE)**
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 for tournament announcements, registration for tournaments, updated wallcharts, live standings, sign up for K-12 & open e-newsletters, lists of coaches & clubs, camp announcements, & news. K-12 MD players who compete in the Varsity section (for players rated 1600+) of 1 of 8+ annual MD-Sweet-16 Qualifiers can qualify for the \$48,000+ scholarship to the University of Maryland, Baltimore County awarded annually. UMBC is a perennial top-10 contender for the collegiate national chess championship.

MAY 22-27, 2024

11th Cherry Blossom Classic (VA)
See Grand Prix.

MAY 31-JUNE 2, 2024

11th Summer Solstice Open (FL)
See Grand Prix.

JUNE 8, 2024

MCA Baltimore Quads for K-12
Event site: Jewish Community Center of Greater Baltimore Address: 3506 Gwynnbrook Ave, Suite 148, Owings Mills, MD 21117 Overall prize fund: n/a GP Points: n/a FIDE Rated: N Handicap accessible: N Residency restriction: N Organizer: Magnus Chess Academy Email: divyanshu@chessacademy.com Phone: n/a Website: <https://chessacademy.com/tournaments> TLA ID: 39043

JUNE 27-JULY 1, 2024

17th Annual Philadelphia International (PA)
See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

JUNE 28-30, 2024

18th Annual Philadelphia Open (PA)
See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

JUNE 28-30, 2024

**52nd Annual World Open, Under 1200
and Under 1000 Sections (PA)**
See Pennsylvania or chessevents.us.

JULY 1-2, 2024

**3rd Annual World Open Amateur
Championship (PA)**
See Pennsylvania or chessevents.us.

JULY 1-2, 2024

**13th Annual World Open Women's
Championship! (PA)**
See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

JULY 3-7, 2024

**52nd Annual World Open, top 6
sections (PA)**
See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

MASSACHUSETTS

APRIL 28, 2024

**32nd Massachusetts G/60
Championship (MA)**
See Grand Prix.

MAY 18, 2024

1st Greater Baystate Spring Classic
Event site: St. John's Lutheran Church Address: 360 Broad Street, Westfield, MA 01085 Overall prize fund: \$930 b/30 GP Points: n/a FIDE Rated: N Handicap accessible: Y Residency restriction: N Organizer: Greater Baystate Chess Association Email: greater.baystate.chess@gmail.com Phone: (413)-356-0303 Website: <https://www.greaterbaystatechess.com> TLA ID: 42503

MAY 22-27, 2024

92nd Massachusetts Open (MA)
See Grand Prix.

MAY 22-27, 2024

11th Cherry Blossom Classic (VA)
See Grand Prix.

JUNE 7-9, 2024

**32nd Annual Eastern Class
Championships (CT)**
See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

JUNE 14-16, 2024

28th Annual New York State Open (NY)
See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

JUNE 27-JULY 1, 2024

**17th Annual Philadelphia International
(PA)**
See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

JUNE 28-30, 2024

18th Annual Philadelphia Open (PA)
See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

JULY 1-2, 2024

**2nd Annual World Open Junior
Championship (PA)**
See Pennsylvania or chessevents.us.

JULY 1-2, 2024

**3rd Annual World Open Amateur
Championship (PA)**
See Pennsylvania or chessevents.us.

JULY 1-2, 2024

**14th Annual World Open Senior
Amateur (PA)**
See Pennsylvania or chessevents.us.

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.

MICHIGAN

STATE CHAMPIONSHIP EVENT

APRIL 13-14, 2024, MICHIGAN

2024 Michigan Senior Championships
Event site: Twin Knights Gaming Address: 4955 Rochester Rd, Troy, MI 48065 Overall prize fund: See TLA GP Points: n/a FIDE Rated: N Handicap accessible: N Residency restriction: N Organizer: Michigan Chess Association Email: jeffchess64@gmail.com Phone: 8109557271 Website: <https://www.michess.org/> TLA ID: 42712

MAY 22-27, 2024

11th Cherry Blossom Classic (VA)
See Grand Prix.

MAY 23-27, 2024

33rd Annual Chicago Open (IL)
See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

JUNE 7-9, 2024

**17th Annual Continental Chess
Cleveland Open (OH)**
See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

JULY 1-2, 2024

**3rd Annual World Open Amateur
Championship (PA)**
See Pennsylvania or chessevents.us.

JULY 3-7, 2024

**52nd Annual World Open, top 6
sections (PA)**
See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

MINNESOTA

APRIL 27-28, 2024

Sioux Falls Open (SD)
See South Dakota.

MAY 4-5, 2024

2024 Sheridan Wyoming Open (WY)
See Grand Prix.

MAY 23-27, 2024

33rd Annual Chicago Open (IL)
See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

MISSOURI

MAY 23-27, 2024

33rd Annual Chicago Open (IL)
See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

MAY 26, 2024

13th Annual Chicago Open Blitz (IL)
See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

JUNE 1-2, 2024

**Nebraska Chess Hall of Fame
Champions Celebration (NE)**
See Grand Prix

JULY 3-7, 2024

**52nd Annual World Open, top 6
sections (PA)**
See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

MONTANA

APRIL 27-28, 2024

Sioux Falls Open (SD)
See South Dakota.

MAY 4-5, 2024

2024 Sheridan Wyoming Open (WY)
See Grand Prix.

NEBRASKA

APRIL 27-28, 2024

Sioux Falls Open (SD)
See South Dakota.

MAY 4-5, 2024

2024 Sheridan Wyoming Open (WY)
See Grand Prix.

NEVADA

APRIL 20-21, 2024

**2024 Sacramento Senior Championship
(CA-N)**
See California.

APRIL 20-21, 2024

**Sacramento Chess Club Weekend
Swiss #24 (CA-N)**
See Grand Prix

MAY 3-5, 2024

**11th Annual Reno Larry Evans
Memorial Open (NV)**
See Grand Prix.

MAY 4-5, 2024

2024 Sheridan Wyoming Open (WY)
See Grand Prix.

JUNE 5-6, 2024

2024 U.S. Women's Open (NV)
See National Events.

JULY 5-7, 2024

**26th Annual Sacramento Chess
Championship (CA-N)**
See Grand Prix

JUNE 6, 2024

National Open Action Quads

Event site: Flamingo Las Vegas Hotel & Casino Address: 3555 Las Vegas Blvd S Las Vegas NV 89109 Overall prize fund: see TLA GP Points: n/a FIDE Rated: N Handicap accessible: Y Residency restriction: N Organizer: Vegas Chess Festivals Email: vegaschess@gmail.com Phone: 702-930-9550 Website: <https://vegaschessfestival.com> TLA ID: 42845

JUNE 7, 2024

Youth Trophy Tournament

Event site: Flamingo Las Vegas Hotel & Casino Address: 3555 Las Vegas Blvd S Las Vegas NV 89109 Overall prize fund: see TLA GP Points: n/a FIDE Rated: N Handicap accessible: Y Residency restriction: N Organizer: Vegas Chess Festivals Email: vegaschess@gmail.com Phone: 702-930-9550 Website: <https://vegaschessfestival.com> TLA ID: 42841

JUNE 8, 2024

International Youth Championship

Event site: Flamingo Las Vegas Hotel & Casino Address: 3555 Las Vegas Blvd S Las Vegas NV 89109 Overall prize fund: see online TLA GP Points: n/a FIDE Rated: N Handicap accessible: Y Residency restriction: N Organizer: Vegas Chess Festivals Email: vegaschess@gmail.com Phone: 702-930-9550 Website: <https://vegaschessfestival.com> TLA ID: 42843

NEW HAMPSHIRE

MAY 18, 2024

**1st Greater Baystate Spring Classic
(MA)**
See Massachusetts.

MAY 22-27, 2024

11th Cherry Blossom Classic (VA)
See Grand Prix.

NEW JERSEY

JANUARY 14-DECEMBER 31, 2024

Hamilton Chess Club Quads

Dates: Jan. 13, Feb. 10, Mar. 9, Apr. 20, May 18, Jun. 8, Aug. 17, Sep. 21, Oct. 19, Nov. 16, Dec. 21. Event site: Switlik Park Pavilion Address: Fischer Place/Joe Dimaggio Drive, Hamilton, NJ 08610 Overall prize fund: n/a GP Points: n/a FIDE Rated: N Handicap accessible: N Residency restriction: N Organizer: Edward Sytnik Email: edmondou@aol.com Phone: 609-351-2437 text Website: <http://hamiltonchessclub.com> TLA ID: 40988

STATE CHAMPIONSHIP EVENT

MAY 5, 2024

**2024 NJ State North Individual Grades
6-8 Championship**

Event site: ICA Address: 354 Rock Rd., Glen Rock, NJ 07452 Overall prize fund: n/a GP Points: n/a FIDE Rated: N Handicap accessible: N Residency restriction: N Organizer: NJSCF Email: chessdirector@icanj.net Phone: (973) 219-6877 Website: <https://form.jot-form.com/240194574203149> TLA ID: 42260

STATE CHAMPIONSHIP EVENT

MAY 5, 2024

**2024 NJ State South Individual Grades
6-8 Championship**

Event site: South Jersey Innovation Center Address: 498 Kings Hwy N, Cherry Hill, NJ 08034 Overall prize fund: n/a GP Points: n/a FIDE Rated: N Handicap accessible: N Residency restriction: N Organizer: South Jersey Innovation Center Email: dov@incntr.com Phone: 7039896867 Website: <https://form.jot-form.com/240194653454155> TLA ID: 42264

STATE CHAMPIONSHIP EVENT

MAY 5, 2024

**2024 NJ State North Individual Grades
9-12 Championship**

Event site: ICA Address: 354 Rock Rd., Glen Rock, NJ 07452 Overall prize fund: n/a GP Points: n/a FIDE

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.

Rated: N Handicap accessible: N Residency restriction: N Organizer: NJSCF Email: chessdirector@icanj.net Phone: (973) 219-6877 Website: <https://form.jot-form.com/240194574203149> TLA ID: 42261

STATE CHAMPIONSHIP EVENT

MAY 5, 2024

2024 NJ State South Individual Grades 9-12 Championship

Event site: South Jersey Innovation Center Address: 498 Kings Hwy N, Cherry Hill, NJ 08034 Overall prize fund: n/a GP Points: n/a FIDE Rated: N Handicap accessible: N Residency restriction: N Organizer: South Jersey Innovation Center Email: dov@incntr.com Phone: 7039896867 Website: <https://form.jot-form.com/240194653454155> TLA ID: 42265

STATE CHAMPIONSHIP EVENT

MAY 5, 2024

2024 NJ State North Individual Girls K-12 Championship

Event site: ICA Address: 354 Rock Rd., Glen Rock, NJ 07452 Overall prize fund: n/a GP Points: n/a FIDE Rated: N Handicap accessible: N Residency restriction: N Organizer: NJSCF Email: chessdirector@icanj.net Phone: (973) 219-6877 Website: <https://form.jot-form.com/240194574203149> TLA ID: 42262

STATE CHAMPIONSHIP EVENT

MAY 5, 2024

2024 NJ State South Individual Girls K-12 Championship

Event site: South Jersey Innovation Center Address: 498 Kings Hwy N, Cherry Hill, NJ 08034 Overall prize fund: n/a GP Points: n/a FIDE Rated: N Handicap accessible: N Residency restriction: N Organizer: South Jersey Innovation Center Email: dov@incntr.com

com Phone: 7039896867 Website: <https://form.jot-form.com/240194653454155> TLA ID: 42266

STATE CHAMPIONSHIP EVENT

MAY 5, 2024

2024 NJ State North Individual Grades K-5 Championship

Event site: ICA Address: 354 Rock Rd., Glen Rock, NJ 07452 Overall prize fund: n/a GP Points: n/a FIDE Rated: N Handicap accessible: N Residency restriction: N Organizer: NJSCF Email: chessdirector@icanj.net Phone: (973) 219-6877 Website: <https://form.jot-form.com/240194574203149> TLA ID: 42259

STATE CHAMPIONSHIP EVENT

MAY 5, 2024

2024 NJ State South Individual Grades K-5 Championship

Event site: South Jersey Innovation Center Address: 498 Kings Hwy N, Cherry Hill, NJ 08034 Overall prize fund: n/a GP Points: n/a FIDE Rated: N Handicap accessible: N Residency restriction: N Organizer: South Jersey Innovation Center Email: dov@incntr.com Phone: 7039896867 Website: <https://form.jot-form.com/240194653454155> TLA ID: 42263

MAY 22-27, 2024

11th Cherry Blossom Classic (VA)

See Grand Prix.

MAY 23-27, 2024

33rd Annual Chicago Open (IL)

See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

MAY 25, 2024

2024 US Amateur East K-8 Scholastic

Event site: Hyatt Regency New Brunswick Address: Two Albany Street New Brunswick, New Jersey 08901

Overall prize fund: n/a GP Points: n/a FIDE Rated: N Handicap accessible: Y Residency restriction: N Organizer: Aaron Kiedes Email: akiedes@gmail.com Phone: n/a Website: <https://njscf.org/> TLA ID: 42116

MAY 31-JUNE 2, 2024

11th Summer Solstice Open (FL)

See Grand Prix.

JUNE 7-9, 2024

32nd Annual Eastern Class Championships (CT)

See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

JUNE 14-16, 2024

28th Annual New York State Open (NY)

See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

JUNE 27-JULY 1, 2024

17th Annual Philadelphia International (PA)

See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

JUNE 28-30, 2024

18th Annual Philadelphia Open (PA)

See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

JUNE 28-30, 2024

52nd Annual World Open, Under 1200 and Under 1000 Sections (PA)

See Pennsylvania or chessevents.us.

JULY 1-2, 2024

2nd Annual World Open Junior Championship (PA)

See Pennsylvania or chessevents.us.

JULY 1-2, 2024

3rd Annual World Open Amateur Championship (PA)

See Pennsylvania or chessevents.us.

JULY 1-2, 2024

13th Annual World Open Women's Championship! (PA)

See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

JULY 1-2, 2024

14th Annual World Open Senior Amateur (PA)

See Pennsylvania or chessevents.us.

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.

NEW MEXICO

JUNE 5-6, 2024

2024 U.S. Women's Open (NV)

See National Events.

JUNE 5-9, 2024

2024 National Open (NV)

See National Events.

NEW YORK

MAY 18, 2024

1st Greater Baystate Spring Classic (MA)

See Massachusetts.

MAY 22-27, 2024

11th Cherry Blossom Classic (VA)

See Grand Prix.

MAY 23-27, 2024

33rd Annual Chicago Open (IL)

See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

MAY 31-JUNE 2, 2024

4th Annual Niagara Falls Open (NY)

See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

33rd annual CHICAGO OPEN

May 23-27, 24-27 or 25-27, 2024 - Memorial Day weekend - see chessevents.us
7 sections, prizes \$100,000 unconditionally guaranteed!
Westin Chicago North Shore Hotel, 601 North Milwaukee Ave., Wheeling IL 60090

Open section, 5/23-27: 9 rounds, 40/80, SD/30, d30.
U2300 through U1300 sections: 5/24-27 or 25-27: 7 rounds, 40/80, SD/30, d30 (3-day option, rds 1-2 G/60 d10). All merge & play for same prizes in section. Free parking.

Open: \$10000-5000-2500-1300-1000-900-700-600-500-500, clear or tiebreak first \$300 bonus, top FIDE U2400/unr \$2000-1000-400. FIDE rated, GM and IM norms possible.

U2300, U2100, U1900, U1700 Sections:

Each \$5000-2500-1200-800-600-500-400-400-400-300.

U2300 & U2100 sections are also FIDE rated.

U1500: \$4000-2000-1000-700-500-400-400-400-400-300.

U1300: \$3000-1500-1000-700-500-400-400-400-400-300, top rated Under 1100 \$1000-600-400.

FIDE ratings used for Open, May 2024 Official USCF for others. Unofficial USCF ratings usually used if otherwise unrated. **Cannot play below** Online Regular Rating - 100 points.

If post-event Regular OTB or Regular Online rating posted 5/23/23-5/23/24 or current Regular Online rating is more than 40 pts over section maximum, prize limit \$800.

Under 26 games prize limit (as of May 2024 Official Rating list): U1300 \$1000, U1500 \$1500, U1700 \$2000, U1900 \$2500.

Unrated prize limits: U1300 \$300, U1500 \$400, U1700 \$600, U1900 \$800, U2100 \$1200.

Mixed Doubles: male/female combined score, any section \$2000-1000-500-400-300. See chessevents.us.

Entry fee: \$207 at chessaction.com by 3/19, \$227 by 5/22, \$250 online later or at site until 1 hour before round 1 (no checks). Open Section \$500 extra to US players below 2200 USCF and below 2000 FIDE. Senior 65+/up \$100 less. Online EF \$5 less to ICA members (join ICA at il-chess.org). Titled player entry: see chessevents.us. Refunds, \$15 service charge. Re-entry \$100 (no Open to Open).

Open titled minimum prizes: see chessevents.us. 1/2-pt byes: limit 3 (2 last 4 rds); must commit before rd 3.

5-day schedule (Open only): enter Thu to 6 pm, rds Thu 7 pm, Fri 1 & 7, Sat 11 & 5, Sun 10 & 4, Mon 10 & 4.

4-day schedule (U2300 to U1300): enter Fri to 6 pm, rds Fri 7, Sat 11 & 5, Sun 10 & 4, Mon 10 & 4.

3-day schedule (U2300 to U1300): enter Sat to 9 am, rds Sat 10, 1:30 & 5, Sun 10 & 4, Mon 10 & 4.

Hotel rates: 1-4 in room \$130, use link at chessevents.us or 847-777-6500, reserve by 5/11, may sell out before.

USCF membership required, see chessevent.us for special dues rates if paid online with entry.

Bring set, board, clock if possible- none supplied. No cellphone possession during play (in bag near table OK). See devicerules.com for more electronic device rules.

Email: director@chess.us.

Entry: chessaction.com. No mailed entry.

\$2500 Blitz tournament, Sunday 10 pm (enter by 9:00).

JUNE 7-9, 2024

32nd Annual Eastern Class Championships (CT)

See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

JUNE 14-16, 2024

28th Annual New York State Open (NY)

See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

JUNE 27-JULY 1, 2024

17th Annual Philadelphia International (PA)

See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

JUNE 28-30, 2024

18th Annual Philadelphia Open (PA)

See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

JUNE 28-30, 2024

52nd Annual World Open, Under 1200 and Under 1000 Sections (PA)

See Pennsylvania or chessevents.us.

JULY 1-2, 2024

2nd Annual World Open Junior Championship (PA)

See Pennsylvania or chessevents.us.

JULY 1-2, 2024

3rd Annual World Open Amateur Championship (PA)

See Pennsylvania or chessevents.us.

JULY 1-2, 2024

13th Annual World Open Women's Championship! (PA)

See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

JULY 1-2, 2024

14th Annual World Open Senior Amateur (PA)

See Pennsylvania or chessevents.us.

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.

◆ NORTH CAROLINA

APRIL 7, 2024

Dragon Knight Early April Classic (NC)

See Grand Prix.

APRIL 20, 2024

Dragon Knight Earth Saturday Classic (NC)

See Grand Prix.

APRIL 27, 2024

Dragon Knight Late April Classic (NC)

See Grand Prix.

MAY 4, 2024

Dragon Knight Cuatro de Mayo Classic (NC)

See Grand Prix.

MAY 11, 2024

Dragon Knight Mother's Saturday Classic (NC)

See Grand Prix.

MAY 22-27, 2024

11th Cherry Blossom Classic (VA)

See Grand Prix.

MAY 31-JUNE 2, 2024

11th Summer Soltice Open (FL)

See Grand Prix.

JUNE 27-JULY 1, 2024

17th Annual Philadelphia International (PA)

See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

JUNE 28-30, 2024

18th Annual Philadelphia Open (PA)

See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

JUNE 28-30, 2024

52nd Annual World Open, Under 1200 and Under 1000 Sections (PA)

See Pennsylvania or chessevents.us.

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.

◆ NORTH DAKOTA

APRIL 27-28, 2024

Sioux Falls Open (SD)

See South Dakota.

MAY 4-5, 2024

2024 Sheridan Wyoming Open (WY)

See Grand Prix.

◆ OHIO

HERITAGE EVENT

APRIL 12-14, 2024

Cincinnati Open

Event site: Embassy Suites Hotel Address: 4554 Lake Forest Drive, Blue Ash, OH 45242 Overall prize fund: \$18,000 GP Points: n/a FIDE Rated: Y Handicap accessible: Y Residency restriction: N Organizer: Cincinnati Scholastic Chess Email: info@chesscincinnati.com Phone: 5136009915 Website: <https://www.chesscincinnati.com/> TLAID: 41595

MAY 22-27, 2024

11th Cherry Blossom Classic (VA)

See Grand Prix.

MAY 23-27, 2024

33rd Annual Chicago Open (IL)

See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

MAY 31-JUNE 2, 2024

4th Annual Niagara Falls Open (NY)

See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

JUNE 7-9, 2024

17th Annual Continental Chess Cleveland Open (OH)

See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

JULY 3-7, 2024

52nd Annual World Open, top 6 sections (PA)

See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

◆ OREGON

APRIL 20-21, 2024

2024 Sacramento Senior Championship (CA-N)

See California.

APRIL 20-21, 2024

Sacramento Chess Club Weekend Swiss #24 (CA-N)

See Grand Prix

MAY 4-5, 2024

2024 Sheridan Wyoming Open (WY)

See Grand Prix.

JUNE 5-6, 2024

2024 U.S. Women's Open (NV)

See National Events.

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

MAY 22-27, 2024

11th Cherry Blossom Classic (VA)

See Grand Prix.

MAY 23-27, 2024

33rd Annual Chicago Open (IL)

See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

MAY 31-JUNE 2, 2024

4th Annual Niagara Falls Open (NY)

See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

MAY 31-JUNE 2, 2024

11th Summer Soltice Open (FL)

See Grand Prix.

JUNE 7-9, 2024

17th Annual Continental Chess Cleveland Open (OH)

See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

JUNE 27-JULY 1, 2024

17th Annual Philadelphia International (PA)

See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

JUNIOR GRAND PRIX

JUNE 26-27 2024

16th Annual World Open Under 13 Championship (PA)

Event site: Philadelphia Sheraton Downtown Hotel Address: 201 North 17th Street, Philadelphia, PA 19103 Overall prize fund: n/a GP Points: n/a FIDE Rated: N Handicap accessible: Y Residency restriction: N Organizer: Continental Chess Association Email: director@chess.us Phone: director@chess.us Website: <http://www.chesstour.com> TLAID: 42674

JUNE 28-30, 2024

18th Annual Philadelphia Open (PA)

See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

JUNIOR GRAND PRIX

JUNE 28-30, 2024

52nd Annual World Open, Under 1200 and Under 1000 Sections

Event site: Philadelphia Sheraton Downtown Hotel Address: 201 North 17th Street, Philadelphia, PA 19103 Overall prize fund: \$17,000 GP Points: n/a FIDE Rated: N Handicap accessible: Y Residency restriction: N Organizer: Continental Chess Association Email: director@chess.us Phone: director@chess.us Website: <http://www.chesstour.com> TLAID: 41567

JUNIOR GRAND PRIX

JULY 1-2, 2024

2nd Annual World Open Junior Championship

Event site: Philadelphia Sheraton Downtown Hotel Address: 201 North 17th Street, Philadelphia, PA 19103 Overall prize fund: \$5,000 GP Points: n/a FIDE Rated: N Handicap accessible: Y Residency restriction: N Organizer: Continental Chess Association Email: director@chess.us Phone: director@chess.us Website: <http://www.chesstour.com> TLAID: 42668

JUNIOR GRAND PRIX

JULY 1-2, 2024

3rd Annual World Open Amateur Championship

Event site: Philadelphia Sheraton Downtown Hotel Address: 201 North 17th Street, Philadelphia, PA 19103 Overall prize fund: \$3,000 GP Points: n/a FIDE Rated: Y Handicap accessible: Y Residency restriction: N Organizer: Continental Chess Association Email: director@chess.us Phone: director@chess.us Website: <http://www.chesstour.com> TLAID: 42669

JULY 1-2, 2024

14th Annual World Open Senior Amateur

Event site: Philadelphia Sheraton Downtown Hotel Address: 201 North 17th Street, Philadelphia, PA 19103 Overall prize fund: \$1,000 GP Points: n/a FIDE Rated: Y Handicap accessible: Y Residency restriction:

N Organizer: Continental Chess Association Email: director@chess.us Phone: director@chess.us Website: <http://www.chesstour.com> TLAID: 42671

JULY 1-2, 2024

13th Annual World Open Women's Championship! (PA)

See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

JULY 3-7, 2024

52nd Annual World Open, top 6 sections (PA)

See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

JULY 3, 2024

13th Annual World Open Game/7 Championship (PA)

See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

JULY 6, 2024

32nd Annual World Open Game/10 Championship (PA)

See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

JULY 7, 2024

35th Annual World Open Blitz Championship (PA)

See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

AUGUST 10-14, 2024

11th Annual Washington International (MD)

See Grand Prix.

◆ RHODE ISLAND

MAY 18, 2024

1st Greater Baystate Spring Classic (MA)

See Massachusetts.

◆ SOUTH CAROLINA

MAY 22-27, 2024

11th Cherry Blossom Classic (VA)

See Grand Prix.

◆ SOUTH DAKOTA

APRIL 27-28, 2024

Sioux Falls Open

Event site: HyVee Grocery Store Address: 3000 S Minnesota Ave., Sioux Falls, SD 57105 Overall prize fund: \$475 GP Points: n/a FIDE Rated: N Handicap accessible: Y Residency restriction: N Organizer: South Dakota Chess Association Email: terryandjilllilkins@gmail.com Phone: 605-753-5464 Website: <http://sd-chess.org> TLAID: 42612

MAY 4-5, 2024

2024 Sheridan Wyoming Open (WY)

See Grand Prix.

JUNE 1-2, 2024

Nebraska Chess Hall of Fame Champions Celebration (NE)

See Grand Prix

◆ TENNESSEE

MAY 22-27, 2024

11th Cherry Blossom Classic (VA)

See Grand Prix.

◆ TEXAS

MAY 4-5, 2024

2024 Sheridan Wyoming Open (WY)

See Grand Prix.

MAY 22-27, 2024

11th Cherry Blossom Classic (VA)

See Grand Prix.

MAY 23-27, 2024

33rd Annual Chicago Open (IL)

See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

JUNE 5-6, 2024

2024 U.S. Women's Open (NV)
See National Events.

JUNE 5-9, 2024

2024 National Open (NV)
See National Events.

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.

UTAH

SEPTEMBER 7, 2023-ONGOING WEEKLY

Chess Knight
Event site: Kilt (Lehi) Address: 2701 N Thanksgiving Way #100, Lehi, UT 84043 Overall prize fund: n/a GP Points: n/a FIDE Rated: N Handicap accessible: Y Residency restriction: N Organizer: Rob Harker Email: utahchessknight@gmail.com Phone: n/a Website: n/a TLA ID: 39726

MAY 4-5, 2024

2024 Sheridan Wyoming Open (WY)
See Grand Prix.

JUNE 5-6, 2024

2024 U.S. Women's Open (NV)
See National Events.

JUNE 5-9, 2024

2024 National Open (NV)
See National Events.

JUNE 7, 2024

Youth Trophy Tournament (NV)
See Nevada.

JUNE 8, 2024

International Youth Championship (NV)
See Nevada.

JULY 5-7, 2024

26th Annual Sacramento Chess Championship (CA-N)
See Grand Prix

VERMONT

MAY 18, 2024

1st Greater Baystate Spring Classic (MA)
See Massachusetts.

MAY 22-27, 2024

11th Cherry Blossom Classic (VA)
See Grand Prix.

VIRGINIA

APRIL 13, 2024

Scholastic Chess Tournament at the Meadowdale Public Library
Event site: Meadowdale Public Library Address: 4301 Meadowdale Blvd, North Chesterfield, VA 23234 Overall prize fund: Trophies & Medals GP Points: n/a FIDE Rated: N Handicap accessible: Y Residency restriction: N Organizer: Mike Hoffpauir, NTD/IA Email: mhoffpauir@aol.com Phone: 7578464805 Website: <https://www.vachess.org> TLA ID: 42319

APRIL 13, 2024

Quads at the Meadowdale Public Library
Event site: Meadowdale Public Library Address: 4301 Meadowdale Blvd, North Chesterfield, VA 23234 Overall prize fund: \$110 per quad GP Points: n/a FIDE Rated: N Handicap accessible: Y Residency restriction: N Organizer: Mike Hoffpauir, NTD/IA Email: mhoffpauir@aol.com Phone: 7578464805 Website: <https://www.vachess.org> TLA ID: 42320

APRIL 27, 2024

MCA Arlington Quads for K-12
Event site: Unitarian Universalist Church of Arlington Address: 4444 Arlington Boulevard, Arlington, VA 22204

Overall prize fund: n/a GP Points: n/a FIDE Rated: N Handicap accessible: N Residency restriction: N Organizer: Magnus Chess Academy Email: divyanshu@chessacademy.com Phone: n/a Website: <https://chessacademy.com/tournaments> TLA ID: 39039

MAY 18, 2024

MCA Fairfax County Quads for K-12
Event site: Potez Jewish Community Center of Northern Virginia Address: 8900 Little River Turnpike, Fairfax, VA 22031 Overall prize fund: n/a GP Points: n/a FIDE Rated: N Handicap accessible: N Residency restriction: N Organizer: Magnus Chess Academy Email: divyanshu@chessacademy.com Phone: n/a Website: <https://chessacademy.com/tournaments> TLA ID: 39034

MAY 22-27, 2024

11th Cherry Blossom Classic (VA)
See Grand Prix.

MAY 23-27, 2024

33rd Annual Chicago Open (IL)
See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

MAY 31-JUNE 2, 2024

11th Summer Solstice Open (FL)
See Grand Prix.

STATE CHAMPIONSHIP EVENT

JUNE 7-9, 2024

2024 Virginia Senior Open
Event site: Country Inn & Suites by Radisson Address: 10358 Patriot Highway, Fredericksburg, VA 22408 Overall prize fund: \$2,000 GP Points: n/a FIDE Rated: Y Handicap accessible: Y Residency restriction: N Organizer: Mike Hoffpauir, NTD/IA Email: mhoffpauir@aol.com Phone: 7578464805 Website: <https://www.vachess.org> TLA ID: 42109

JUNE 27-JULY 1, 2024

17th Annual Philadelphia International (PA)
See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

JUNE 28-30, 2024

18th Annual Philadelphia Open (PA)
See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

JUNE 28-30, 2024

52nd Annual World Open, Under 1200 and Under 1000 Sections (PA)
See Pennsylvania or chessevents.us.

JULY 1-2, 2024

3rd Annual World Open Amateur Championship (PA)
See Pennsylvania or chessevents.us.

JULY 1-2, 2024

13th Annual World Open Women's Championship! (PA)
See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

JULY 1-2, 2024

14th Annual World Open Senior Amateur (PA)
See Pennsylvania or chessevents.us.

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.

WASHINGTON

APRIL 20-21, 2024

2024 Sacramento Senior Championship (CA-N)
See California.

APRIL 20-21, 2024

Sacramento Chess Club Weekend Swiss #24 (CA-N)
See Grand Prix

MAY 4-5, 2024

2024 Sheridan Wyoming Open (WY)
See Grand Prix.

JUNE 8, 2024

International Youth Championship (NV)
See Nevada.

JULY 5-7, 2024

26th Annual Sacramento Chess Championship (CA-N)
See Grand Prix

WEST VIRGINIA

MAY 22-27, 2024

11th Cherry Blossom Classic (VA)
See Grand Prix.

WISCONSIN

APRIL 13, 2024

Manitowoc Tornado 4

Event site: Manitowoc Holiday Inn Address: 4601 Calumet Ave., Manitowoc, WI 54220 Overall prize fund: \$1,110 GP Points: n/a FIDE Rated: N Handicap accessible: Y Residency restriction: N Organizer: Terran Chess Federation Email: TerranChess@gmail.com Phone: 9202795688 Website: n/a TLA ID: 41755

APRIL 27-28, 2024

Sioux Falls Open (SD)
See South Dakota.

MAY 22-27, 2024

11th Cherry Blossom Classic (VA)
See Grand Prix.

JULY 3-7, 2024

52nd Annual World Open, top 6 sections (PA)
See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

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.

WYOMING

STATE CHAMPIONSHIP EVENT

APRIL 13, 2024

2024 Wyoming State Scholastic Championship

Event site: Jackson Hole Classical Academy Address: 2500 S. Loop Rd., Jackson, WY 83001 Overall prize fund: n/a GP Points: n/a FIDE Rated: N Handicap accessible: Y Residency restriction: N Organizer: JHCA (Jackson Hole Classical Academy) Email: jbenka@jhclassical.org Phone: 307 699 3970 Website: n/a TLA ID: 42200

APRIL 27-28, 2024

Sioux Falls Open (SD)
See South Dakota.

MAY 4-5, 2024

2024 Sheridan Wyoming Open (WY)
See Grand Prix.

JUNE 1-2, 2024

Nebraska Chess Hall of Fame Champions Celebration (NE)
See Grand Prix.

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4-Player Quads

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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.

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PAGE 11 CHESS TO ENJOY

PROBLEM 1. 1. g6! imposes *zugzwang* and mates — 1. ... Bb7 2. Nd7 and Nd7-f6 mate. **PROBLEM 2.** Black resigned after 1. Ng5! in view of 1. ... Qxg5 2. Rh8+! Kxh8 3. Nxf7+ Kg8 4. Nxg5. Slightly slower is 1. Qe3! and 2. Ng5. **PROBLEM 3.** Not 1. Rxc6? Rb4! 2. Rh6 d4!. But 1. Rg7+! Kc6 2. Rxc6 wins, e.g. 2. ... d4 3. f5 Rd7 4. Kf2. **PROBLEM 4.** 1. c5+! Kxc5 2. d6 Re1+ 3. Kf4 Re8 4. d7 Rd8 5. Kxf5 and followed by Kf5-e6-e7. Or 1. ... Kd7 2. c6+ Kd6 3. Rc2. **PROBLEM 5.** The right move is 1. ... Be6! (or the other bishop passes, 1. ... Bd7! and 1. ... Bc8!), creating *zugzwang*. For example, 2. Bh1 g3+ 3. Ke2 Bh3 and ... g3-g2. Or 2. Bf1 Ke4 and ... Ke4xd4. **PROBLEM 6.** Here 1. ... Re2! is good but 1. ... Re3! is better: 2. Rxd6 Rxh3+ 3. Kg1 Qc1+ 4. Rd1 Qe3+ 5. Kf1 Rf3+ or 5. Qf2 Rh1+!. Also 4. Kf2 Qe3+ 5. Kf1 Rf3+ and 4. Bd1 Qe3+ 5. Kf1 Qf4+ 6. Ke1 Re3+!.

PAGE 39 MAKE YOUR MOVE

TACTIC 1. 33. ... Qxe2+, and White resigned as Black forces mate after 34. Kxe2 Bxf4+ 35. Ke1 Bxg3+ 36. Kf1 Rxd1 mate. (Beukema – Niemann, Tata Steel Challengers 2024) **TACTIC 2.** 23. ... Rxe4! 24. Nxe4 Qe7 The pin wins material for Black. 25. Nf6+ Qxf6 26. e4 Qd4+ 27. Kf3 Qxd5 28. Bxb4 Bxe4+ 29. Qxe4 Qxe4+ 30. Kxe4 cxb4 31. axb4 Bxb4 and Black won eventually in Donchenko – Gukesh, Tata Steel Masters 2024. **TACTIC 3.** 21. ... Rc8! 22. Qd2 a4 All of a sudden, White's position falls apart. 23. Rxe4 Nxe4 24. Qa5 Qf6, White resigned. White loses material. (J. van Foreest – Giri, Tata Steel Masters 2024) **TACTIC 4.** 28. Nd5! Bd8 As White was threatening Qa2-a8+ with devastating consequences. Of course, 28. ... Qxe6?? is met with 29. Nc7+, forking Black's king and queen. 29. h3 Creating some luft for the king before continuing the assault against Black's king. Unfortunately for Black, her pieces are completely tied up. 29. ... Rf7 Or 29. ... Nxd5 30. Bxd5 Qg6 31. Qe2 Rf7 32. Qxb5+ Rd7 33. Bc6, and White forces a won endgame. 30. Qa6! Nxd5 Or 30. ... Rd7 31. Qc6 and White wins. 31. Qc6+ Kf8 32. Qd6+ Ke8 33. Bxd5 Qe7 34. Qc6+ and Black resigned as she will lose her queen. (Abdusattorov – Ju Wenjun, Tata Steel Masters 2024) **TACTIC 5.** 35. Nxc6! Rxc6 36. Rxd5 h5 Or 36. ... Bc5 37. Nxc5 Rxc5 38. Rd8+ Kh7 39. b4 and White wins. 37. Qf4 Rd6 38. Rxd6 Bxd6 39. Rxd6 Rxd6 40. Qxd6 White has won three pawns, and while one will have to be returned, the endgame is easily won for White. 40. ... Qe1+ 41. Kh2 Qxf2 42. Nc3 Qc2 43. Qd4 Bd3 44. Nd5 Be4 45. Nf4 g6 46. a4 Bf3 47. Qd3 Qf2 48. e4 Bd1 49. Nxg6 and Black resigned in Gukesh – Nepomniachtchi, Tata Steel Masters 2024. **TACTIC 6.** 31. ... Rb2+! The weak spot in White's camp is the g2-pawn. 32. Kf1 Qg5 More pressure against g2. 33. Qg1 Or 33. Rh2 Qg3 34. Ng4 Bxf3 and Black crashes through. 33. ... Qd2 34. Rg3 Or 34. Rh4 Bxf3! 35. gxf3 Rxf3+ 36. Nxf3 Qd3+ 37. Re2 Qxe2 mate. 34. ... Bc4+ and, facing mate in two, White resigned. (Roebers – Maurizzi, Tata Steel Challengers 2024) **TACTIC 7.** The material is even, but Black's position is surprisingly vulnerable to simple threats. 34. Rh4!

Rd5 Or 34. ... g6 35. Rxh5! gxh5 36. Nfg5 Qg6 37. h4 Nb8 38. Qxc7 Rf8 39. b4 and Black's position is completely paralyzed. 35. Qa3 Threatening Rxh5. 35. ... g6 36. Nfg5, and Black resigned on account of 36. Nfg5 Qxe5 37. Qa8+ Nd8 38. Rxh5! gxh5 39. Qxd5, leaving White a piece up. Nepomniachtchi – Ding Liren, Tata Steel Masters 2024. **TACTIC 8.** 28. ... Rxc2+!! Completely unexpected. Now, from being two pawns up, White is scrambling to survive. 29. Kxc2 Rc8+ 30. Nc3?? White should have settled for the scary-looking but survivable 30. Kd2 Qxd5+ 31. Ke3 Qg2 32. Qe4 Qh3+ 33. Ke2 Qh5+ 34. Ke3 when Black can take the repetition of moves or play for more with 34. ... f5 30. ... Qf3 31. Rd3 Qg2+ 32. Kb1 Qxh1+ 33. Nd1 Qxh2 34. Qd2 Qh4 and while Black has a decisive advantage, White somehow managed to survive and save the draw in Nepomniachtchi – Donchenko, Tata Steel Masters 2024. **TACTIC 9.** 34. c4! This queenside break forces an endgame on the board that heavily favors White. 34. ... bxc4 Or 34. ... cxb4 35. cxb5, and White is winning. 35. bxc5 dxc5 36. Rxd7+ Kxd7 37. Kc3 Kc6 38. Kxc4 The outside pawn on the a-file as well as White strong knight vs. bad bishop decide the game in White's favor. 38. ... Kb6 39. a4 Kc6 40. Nf2 Bd8 41. Ne4 Be7 42. a5 Bd8 43. a6 Be7 44. Nc3 Bg5 45. Nb5 Be3 46. h4 Kb6 47. a7 Kb7 48. h5 Ka8 49. Kd5 Kb7 50. Kd6 c4 51. Kd5 Bxa7 52. Nxa7 c3 53. Nc6 c2 54. Na5+ Kc7 55. Nb3 Kd7 56. g5 Ke7 57. gxh6 gxh6 58. Ke5 f6+ 59. Kd5 Kd7 60. Nc1, Black resigned. Abdusattorov – Giri, Tata Steel Masters 2024.

PAGE 49 ABCS OF CHESS

PROBLEM 1. Mating net: White mates in two: 1. Bd7+ Ka8 2. Bc6 mate. **PROBLEM 2.** Mating net: White mates in two moves: 1. Nc7+ Bxc7 2. Bc6 mate.

PROBLEM 3. Mating net: Black is mated in two: 1. Ne5+ Kb7 2. Bd5 mate. **PROBLEM 4.** Mating net: White wins in two: 1. Qa6+ Kxa6 (if 1. ... Ka8 or 1. ... Kb8, then 2. Qc8 mate) 2. Bc8 mate. **PROBLEM 5.** Mating net: Black loses in two: 1. Qa6+ Kb8 2. Rb3 mate. **PROBLEM 6.** Mating net: White scores in two: 1. Qa8+ Kd7 2. Ne5 mate.

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CAVEMAN CHESS



FESTIVAL

Tournaments and Camp

PRIZES
\$40K
& 75 PLAQUES
AND TROPHIES

JULY 12-19, 2024

Location: Hilton Chicago/Northbrook, Northbrook, IL (15 minutes from O'Hare, just north of Chicago)

TOURNAMENTS

JULY 12-14

- ✓ US Senior Open (Nat'l Championship **\$13k**)
- ✓ Caveman Medior Open **\$10k**
- ✓ US Junior Open (Nat'l Championship **\$10k**)
- ✓ US Blind (Nat'l Championship **\$5k**)
- ✓ Caveman Beginner Open 1 on 7/13
- ✓ Caveman Beginner Open 2 on 7/14
- ✓ Junior Blitz **\$1k**, 7/13
- ✓ Senior/Medior Quick **\$1k**, 7/13
- ✓ Registration on www.kingregistration.com



Tournaments and camps for all ages
and strengths

A Family Friendly environment with
side events for non-players

CAMPS IN THE CAMP

JULY 14-19

- ✓ Master Class- GM instruction only
- ✓ Classes for players age 5 to 85
- ✓ Fundamental & Advanced classes
- ✓ Classes by age & strength
- ✓ Family and chaperone registrations to
accompany young campers
- ✓ Intensive Study classes for
advanced players
- ✓ Some classes for adults only

PAST INSTRUCTORS



GM Kaidanov



GM Yermolinsky



GM Shulman



GM Goldin



GM Gurevich

OTHER PAST INSTRUCTORS

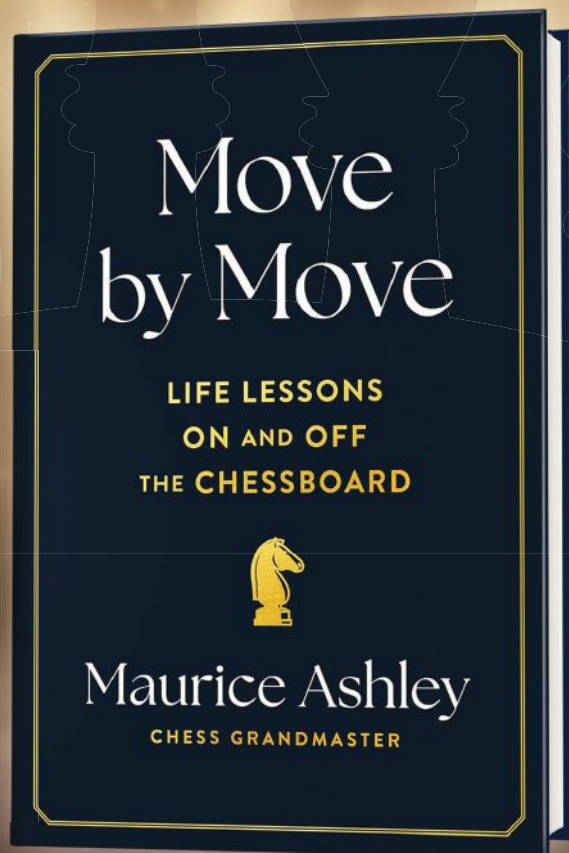
GMs So, Krush, Lenderman, Kraai,
Serper, Kudrin, Avrukh, Mitkov,
Onischuk, Novikov, Finegold, IMs
Bartholomew, Schroer, Silman, Masters
Wallach, Szpisjak and many others

GIFT CERTIFICATES AVAILABLE



Also: shopping excursions, fitness classes

Information and Registration: www.cavemanchess.com Email: contact@cavemanchess.com



A little book of life advice drawing on the timeless wisdom of chess from Maurice Ashley, the first African American Chess Grandmaster.

In *Move by Move*, Ashley guides readers through the essential lessons that chess has taught him about life, using both personal examples from his rise from an immigrant kid playing matches in Brooklyn parks to the most rarified levels of competition, as well as insights and anecdotes from fellow notable chess players. In short chapters with practical takeaways, this book reaches from the fundamental to the counterintuitive on subjects ranging from self-knowledge to strategic thinking to the importance of failure. This little book of wisdom is the perfect gift for graduates, chess enthusiasts, and anyone interested in understanding how lessons from the most famous and long-lasting game of strategy can help you reach your personal and professional goals.

NATIONAL OPEN U.S. WOMEN'S OPEN



US CHESS
FEDERATION



JUNE 5 – 9, 2024

INTERNATIONAL CHESS FESTIVAL



www.VegasChessFestival.com



NATIONAL OPEN

JUNE 5–9, 6–9, 7–9, OR 8–9

\$125,000 GUARANTEED PRIZE FUND

7 Rounds (Open 9) • 8 Sections • Top 3 FIDE Rated

Game/90 +30 • 3-day rounds 1–2 G/60 +10 • 2-day rounds 1–4 G/25 +5

Beginners Section with 3 Schedules of 5 Rounds Each Day

Open Section 9 Rounds in 5 days with **FIDE Norms Possible**

Winner is a US Chess National Champion and receives a replica of the Edmondson Cup



U.S. WOMEN'S OPEN

WEDNESDAY & THURSDAY JUNE 5–6

\$3,500 GUARANTEED PRIZE FUND

5 Round Swiss • FIDE Rated • G/90 +30

Winner is a US Chess National Champion and receives the Women's Open Cup



WALTER BROWNE MEMORIAL NATIONAL OPEN BLITZ CHAMPIONSHIP

SATURDAY JUNE 8 AT 9:00 P.M.

\$3,600 GUARANTEED PRIZE FUND

6 Double Round Swiss • 2 Sections • G/3 +2

US Chess Blitz Rated • Top Section FIDE Blitz Rated

Winner receives a replica of the Walter Shawn Browne Cup



INTERNATIONAL YOUTH CHAMPIONSHIP

JUNE 8–9

6 Round Swiss • 4 Sections by Age and Rating

Dozens of Individual & Team Trophies

Chess Merchandise Prizes Awarded in Each Section



GM or IM Simuls

OPEN TO ALL

THURSDAY 3:00 P.M.

OPEN TO AGE 14 & UNDER

SATURDAY 7:00 P.M.

Grandmaster Chess Camp

FOR ALL AGES & Strengths THURSDAY 10 A.M. – 6:00 P.M.

Blitz & Action Tournaments

ACTION QUADS

THURSDAY 2:00 P.M.

YOUTH BLITZ (AGE 14 & UNDER)

FRIDAY 6:30 P.M.

8 PLAYER BLITZ SECTIONALS

FRIDAY 11:30 P.M.

8 PLAYER BLITZ SECTIONALS

SUNDAY 9:00 P.M.

Free Lectures & Analysis

THURSDAY – SUNDAY

Youth Side Events (age 14 & under)

TROPHY TOURNAMENT

FRIDAY 10:00 A.M.

YOUTH BLITZ

FRIDAY 6:30 P.M.

PUZZLE SOLVING COMPETITION

SATURDAY 6:00 P.M.

YOUTH SIMUL

SATURDAY 7:00 P.M.

Streamer Meet & Greet

MEET YOUR FAVORITE STREAMERS

FRIDAY 10:00 A.M.

Poker Tournament

NO LIMIT HOLD'EM

MONDAY 10:00 A.M.

Flamingo
LAS VEGAS

At the center of the Las Vegas Strip!

Reserve online at VegasChessFestival.com/hotel or call 888-373-9855 and ask for International Chess Group Rates. Reserve by May 18 to for the low rate of \$79 (\$109 Friday & Saturday) with free parking and discounted resort fees. **Win a Free Hotel Stay During the Chess Festival!** Reserve your room early for a chance to win your stay for free. Earlier reservations have more chances to win!