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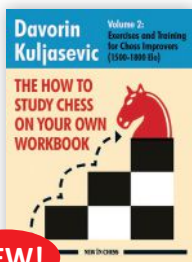


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NEW!

Exercises and Training for Improvers, Volume 2 Davorin Kuljasevic

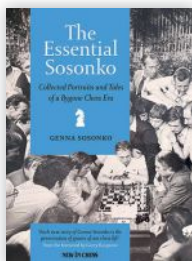
This second workbook in Davorin Kuljasevic's *How to Study Chess on Your Own* series is optimized for chess players with an Elo rating between 1500 and 1800 but is helpful for anyone between 1200 and 2000. The astounding success of his series made clear that thousands of chess players want to improve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



Magnus Carlsen & David Howell Explain the Grind

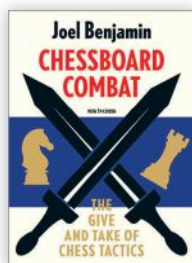
Magnus Carlsen and David Howell show how to win a seemingly equal chess position. Their first book tells you how to keep a game alive, keep posing problems, recognize the first small mistakes, and grind your opponent down until he cracks.

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.



Tales of a Bygone Chess Era Genna Sosonko

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



The Give and Take of Chess Tactics Joel Benjamin

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

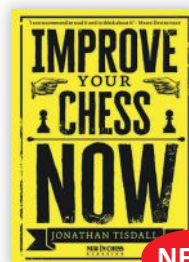


A White Repertoire vs the Open Sicilian Ivan Saric

The Open Sicilian is not a phonebook crammed with computer lines, but a textbook full of 21st-century chess wisdom. GM Ivan Saric covers the entire range of Sicilians, from obscure sidelines to the main lines: the Najdorf, the Taimanov, the Rauzer, the Kan, the Sveshnikov and the Dragons. His approach is very ambitious, and he supports his claims with deep analysis and illuminating verbal explanation.

Improve Your Chess Now Jonathan Tisdall

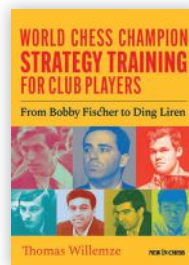
A modern classic, originally published in 1997. Adult improvers often name this book as one of their primary sources in Ben Johnson's *Perpetual Chess Podcast*. With infectious enthusiasm, Tisdall covers a wide range of topics, including visualization and calculation, pattern recognition, the psychological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



NEW!

100 Strategy Lessons from the World Champions Thomas Willemze

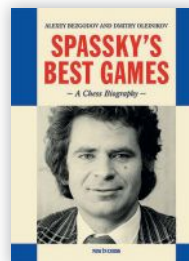
This book offers you 100 strategic exercises from the games of the best of the best, the World Champions from Bobby Fischer to Ding Liren. IM Thomas Willemze, one of the best chess improvement authors around, will show you foundational techniques such as improving your worst-placed. Solving these exercises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



Spassky's Best Games – A Chess Biography Alexey Bezgodov & Dmitry Oleinikov

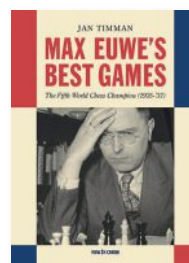
World Champion Boris Spassky was a chess genius and a perfect gentleman. He was, for example, gracious in defeat after he lost his title to the American Bobby Fischer in 1972.

This wonderful new biography includes more than sixty of his best games and a biographical sketch of more than a hundred pages.



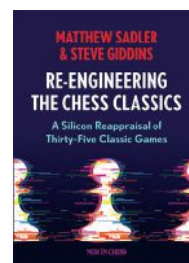
Tribute to the Fifth World Champion Jan Timman

The first outstanding collection of games of this 'efficient, man-eating tiger', as American master William Napier once called Euwe, World Champion from 1935 until 1937. It offers eighty of his games annotated by Jan Timman, who knew Euwe very well. Timman made many discoveries in Euwe's most famous games but has also unearthed several lesser-known brilliancies.



New Insights in Classic Games Matthew Sadler & Steve Giddins

Matthew Sadler and Steve Giddins used the collective power of Leela, Komodo, and Stockfish to re-engineer classic games of fan favorites such as Fischer, Spassky, Larsen, and Capablanca. With these modern engines, the authors have generated dozens of new insights and positional chess lessons that will help every club player and expert to improve their game.



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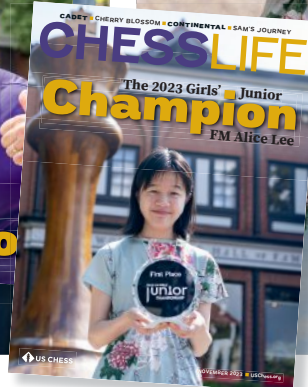


ON THE COVER

Three champions. Three covers.

How could we choose just one? With sparkling play by all, and with plenty of photos on hand, we decided to let fate (or a sorting algorithm) decide which you'd receive. Hope you like yours; if not, trade with a friend!

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CHESSLIFE

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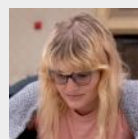
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GM ELSHAN MORADIABADI

(Cover Story) is a chess grandmaster, coach, author, and advocate. Most recently he co-won the 2022 U.S. Open, along with the 2022 Chess Journalist of the Year award. He

is also the co-author of *Sherlock's Method*, a book for players aiming to increase their rating from around 1700 OTB to 2300+. Visit his website at gmelshan.com, and his new online academy (with WGM Sabina Foisor) at chessevolve.com.



SAM SHARP

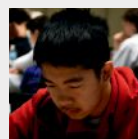
(My Journey) is a college student and activist. Per her Instagram bio, she is also a "Gen Z trans elder, radical futurist, vegan, surfer, cosmist, [and] public transit enthusiast." Currently she is interning with GLAAD.



WGM SABINA FOISOR

(Cherry Blossom) is the 2017 U.S. Women's Champion and the co-author of

the acclaimed *Sherlock's Method*, published in 2020. She has been a member of five U.S. Olympiad teams, and competed in four World Team Championships. Visit her website at sabinafoisor.com, and check out her new online academy (with GM Elshan Moradiabadi) at chessevolve.com.



FM ERICK ZHAO

(Cadet) is the 38th-ranked American junior and currently number eight among players from

Pennsylvania. He is the current U.S. Cadet Champion, and this is his first article for *Chess Life*.



IM JOSIAH STEARMAN

(Continental Championship) is a chess teacher now studying for his M.A.

in math education at the University of Missouri, where he competes for their chess team. He is currently the 15th-ranked American junior on the September 2023 US Chess rating list. Find him on Lichess at lichess.org/coach/lezgo.

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**Youngest-Ever USA
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Alice Lee

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



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COUNTERPLAY



A GREAT ONE

Just getting around to perusing the September 2023 *Chess Life* issue, and it's a great one. I especially liked GM Soltis showing his baseball history chops by cleverly inserting a quote by the former Yankee great Yogi Berra in his "Chess to Enjoy" column. WGM Abrahamyan's ongoing "Getting to Work" is great for us amateurs, and Elise Bickford's "Chess In Translation" was a well-written look into what goes on at tournaments in foreign countries — fantastic.

David R. Margulies
Via email

HYPOTHETICALS

The game between Jesse Kraai and Paul Gold "My Best Move" (September 2023) was entertaining, but also disappointing, because the "Best Move" was in a variation that did not actually take place. I thought the whole point of "My Best Move" was to showcase actual moves made over the board, not hypothetical ones that might have happened if the opponent had played differently.

Roger Blaine
Via email

John Hartmann responds:
Sometimes the most beautiful

moves are found in analysis; here, Gold had to foresee a very tricky move (46. ... g4!) at the board to hold a draw. It's not his fault that Kraai missed the strongest continuation, and I don't think that the aesthetic value is hurt for its being "only" hypothetical.

THANKS, JEN

I am grateful to WGM Jennifer Shahade for taking a public stand against the FIDE ban on transgender chess players. This is a hot-button topic these days, particularly here in the U.S., so for WGM Shahade to push back in this way is wonderful to see. Others assign the most heinous or ridiculous motives to transgender competitors in many endeavors, without a shred of evidence or regard for the people they are hurting.

Chess is an inclusive game; anyone and everyone can play, and everyone should be welcome to play.

Robert Irons
Via email

John Hartmann responds:

To this I would only add that U.S. Chess has been ahead of the curve on this specific issue. Our policy for transgender players, which went into effect in 2018, affirms that we will recognize an individual's gender identity that is consistent with the identity they maintain in their non-chess life. For more, see the complete policy at: new.uschess.org/news/us-chess-transgender-policy-2023.

OUR BAD

It should be **6. ... Ne5** and not **6. ... Ne6** on page 16 (top of column three) of the October issue. And it's **White to move** in the October ABCs of Chess (page 45). Apologies all around.

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

Chess in the Park

Fun was had by all (or at least by the winners) at one of the world's largest outdoor chess events.



C

HESS IS ALWAYS WORTH playing.

But it is especially glorious when played in places like this.

The 2023 Chess in the Park Rapid Open was held on Saturday, September 16, at the Bethesda Fountain in Central Park. Hosted by the New York City Parks Department in conjunction with Chess-in-the-Schools, this was the 22nd edition of the event, and some of the stars of

New York chess turned out to help celebrate, including GMs Joel Benjamin, Max Dlugy, Irina Krush, and Hans Niemann.

Also in attendance were members of the US Chess Women's Committee, led by committee co-chair Kimberly Doo.

The real stars of the show, however, were the players, who were more than 900 strong, making it one of the world's largest outdoor chess tournaments — and it's also completely free.

For more on the history of Chess in the

Park, check out Ed Feldman's story on the 2021 event in our December 2021 issue.

Photos, starting at top left and moving in a serpentine fashion: happy winners; giant chess; GM Joel Benjamin and Harold Scott with their book *Winning the World Open*; the first moves in a long battle; GM Hans Niemann letting the chess (in the park) speak for itself; Kimberly Doo (right) with two Chess in the Schools volunteers; America at its best, enjoying chess together in peace.

All photos by Malcolm Pinckney.





Ranae Bartlett Joins US Chess

*I know what it's like to be one of **the few women in a room...** we are making sure that the girls aren't... greatly outnumbered."*

RANAE BARTLETT IS THE NEW US CHESS Director of Operations, effective September 5, 2023.

Ranae is a familiar face in the chess community, having founded the Madison City Chess League, a non-profit chess program in Madison, Alabama. Since 2020, Ranae served as the Education Director at ChessKid.com. She was an Assistant General Counsel for a Fortune 500 company, and she has been a member of her local school board for 10 years.

Ranae brings a breadth of operations experience, along with her extensive chess program management background. She will be responsible for overseeing US Chess operations.

As a volunteer for US Chess, Ranae served as a Delegate to the 2023 Annual



Meeting and co-chaired the 2022 Chess in Education Committee for US Chess. We are thrilled to welcome Ranae to US Chess in this new role.

To learn more about Ranae, please visit our "Faces of US Chess" page, where she tells the story of her first steps in the chess world; the pull quote is from that interview. Read it at new.uschess.org/faces-us-chess.

Correspondence Chess Changes January 1, 2024

TWO SIGNIFICANT CHANGES TO THE TO THE GOLDEN Knights and Electronic Knights tournaments will be ushered in on January 1, 2024.

The entry fee for both tournaments will be increased to \$35 per section. Since the inception of the Electronic Knights in 2004, the entry fee has remained at \$25. The last increase to the Golden Knights entry fee was in 2002 from \$20 to \$25.

The Electronic Knights will also transition from email to the ICCF webserver on January 1. "With the success of moving the Walter Muir and Victor Palciauskas tournaments in 2021 from postal and email play respectively to the ICCF webserver, it makes sense to further transition the Electronic Knights to the ICCF

server as well," said Michael Buss, US Chess Correspondence Chess Coordinator.

The 2024 Electronic Knights preliminary sections will be followed by the 2021 Electronic Knights finals and the 2022 and 2023 Electronic Knights semi-final and final sections once the qualifiers have been identified. "We are projecting the 2021 Electronic Knights final to begin during the second quarter of 2024," explained Buss.

There is no cost to register to play on the ICCF server. If a player is not already registered go to www.iccf.com/Signup.aspx. "With this move we hope to see an increase in the number of entrants into the Electronic Knights," added Buss.

IM Jeremy Silman

(1954-2023)

BY IM JOHN DONALDSON

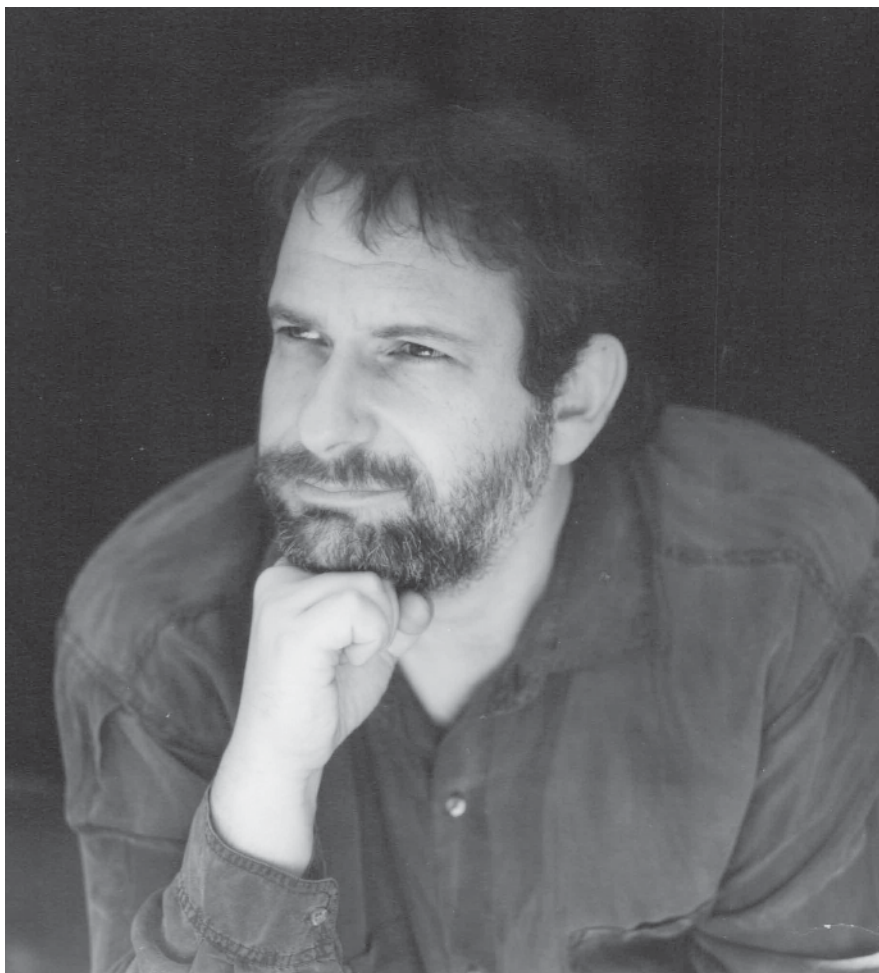
FEW INDIVIDUALS HAVE HAD AS GREAT an influence on American chess as IM Jeremy Silman, who died on September 21 in Los Angeles, California. The cause was complications from primary progressive aphasia frontotemporal dementia.

Born on August 28, 1954, in Del Rio, Texas, Jeremy's family moved around a lot when he was young as his father was in the military. It was only when they settled in San Diego in the late 1960s that Jeremy started to play chess. He was not a prodigy, as his first rating of 1142 on the September 1968 USCF rating list makes abundantly clear. After Jeremy graduated from high school, he served a short stint in the U.S. Army. He did not start to make serious progress as a chess player until late 1973, when he moved to San Francisco and roomed with then-U.S. Champion John Grefe and Dennis Waterman, a national master.

This was a golden time for Bay Area chess, one that would extend into the early 1980s. Tournaments were held nearly every weekend, offering plenty of strong opposition. Future U.S. Chess Hall of Famers and GMs Walter Browne, Larry Christiansen, Nick deFirmian, and James Tarjan were regular competitors.

Jeremy, who had fond memories of this time, blossomed in this environment, becoming a master in January of 1975 at the age of 20. Today this would not be remarkable as standards have risen markedly, thanks in part to technological advances and players starting at an earlier age, but at the time this rating put him in the top ten juniors in the country.

Jeremy kept plugging away, reaching 2400 in September of 1980, and 2500 roughly a year later after tying for first in the U.S. Open in Palo Alto, California. He reached a then-career high of 2556 in the summer of 1982, but soon began a period of personal



and financial struggles that lasted almost five years. His rating nearly dropped below 2400, but Jeremy persisted in his dream of life as a chess professional.

He had always enjoyed writing and in the mid-1980s began to author a number of opening works for *Chess Enterprises* and *Chess Digest*. Writing these pamphlets was not particularly lucrative but they offered Jeremy a chance to showcase his talents as an analyst.

He produced number of important theoretical novelties in those pre-chess engine days, including 1. d4 Nf6 2. c4 e6 3. Nf3 c5 4. d5 exd5 5. cxd5 d6 6. Nc3 g6 7. Bf4 a6 8. e4 b5 9. Qe2 (Silman – Sanchez, San Jose 1981). Another was 1. e4 c5 2. Nf3 Nc6 3. d4 cxd4 4. Nxd4 g6 5. Nc3 Bg7 6. Be3 Nf6 7. Bc4 Qa5 8. 0-0 0-0 9. Bb3 d6 10. h3 Bd7 11. Re1 Rac8 12. Qd3 Ne5 13. Qe2 Qa6. After 14. Qxa6 bxa6

(D.King – Silman, London 1978) Black's doubled a-pawns in the ending are compensated by good counterplay on the queenside, in particular the use of the c4-square.

During 1985 Silman finished the first edition of what would become his magnum opus, *How to Reassess Your Chess*, which is now in its fourth edition. The almost-200-page long manuscript he submitted to Bob Long of Thinker's Press was not typed but handwritten — Jeremy had incredibly neat penmanship. This book is where he first introduced the theory of imbalances in chess that became a hallmark of his teaching.

Not long after finishing *How to Reassess Your Chess*, Jeremy moved to Los Angeles to serve as the editor of the bi-weekly publications *Players Chess News* and *Theory and Analysis*. This was the start of Jeremy's rebirth, both personally and chessically.

He made his long overdue final IM norm in 1987 and began the start of a 36-year marriage to Gwen Feldman that ended only with his death. Gwen, a professional in the publishing business, would produce the final edition of *How to Reassess Your Chess* along with other classics, including *The Amateur's Mind*, *Silman's Complete Endgame Course*, and *Pal Benko: My Life, Games, and Compositions*. Several of Silman's books have been translated into foreign languages, including French, German, and Chinese.

Jeremy peaked as a player in the late 1980s and early 1990s. During this period, he tied for first in the National Open and American Open, and he defeated Jack Peters, one of the strongest IMs in the history of American chess with a FIDE rating of over 2500 for close to two decades, by a score of 3½-½.

Jeremy reached his peak US Chess rating of 2593 on the May 1990 rating list. He didn't advance further, or seriously pursue the grandmaster title, in part because he never enjoyed overseas travel. In those days this was necessary for players pursuing norms.

Although Jeremy had begun his retirement from the tournament arena, he continued contributing to chess through his writing and lecturing for the better part of the next three decades. Besides his books, he was a columnist for *Chess Life* and later for *Chess.com*. He also was the chief commentator for the U.S. Championships of 2000, 2002, and 2003 and served as the guest lecturer for the American Open for over two decades.

Jeremy's lectures were always well received, due to his ability to be both funny and instructive. These were the same qualities that also made his books so popular. He knew his audience, and his listeners and readers often felt he was speaking directly to them. Before Silman, most instructional books were aimed at either beginners or masters. His target audience of players rated 1200 to 2000, which had previously been underserved, gobbled up his books.

Regrettably none of Jeremy's public lectures have been preserved, but his work for *The Great Courses* ensures that a visual and aural record of his skill as a chess educator has been saved. With over 100,000 courses sold, it also serves to demonstrate just how deeply Silman has affected the lives of chess players around the globe.

This is especially true if one takes into account that that Jeremy's seven titles published with Silman-James Press have sold over 600,000 copies. That isn't counting the number of individuals who bought copies secondhand or who checked out Jeremy's books from their public libraries.

This, coupled with the roughly 30 other books he authored (including a five-volume best-selling beginner series with Yasser Seirawan), *The Great Courses* work, his columns for *Chess Life* and *Chess.com*, his pioneering work for the early electronic chess instruction company *Chess Mentor*, and his contributions to *Inside Chess*, *Northwest Chess*, *Player's Chess News*, and *Theory and Analysis*, demonstrate how Jeremy impacted — and will continue to impact — generations of chess players. That's not counting the number of non-chess players he reached serving as a chess consultant for the *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone* movie or prominent TV shows such as *Monk*, *Criminal Minds*, *Malcolm in the Middle*, and *Arliss*.

That's not a bad legacy to leave.

Editor's note: As part of this remembrance, Donaldson has analyzed one of Jeremy's favorite games, a brilliant victory over IM Cyrus Lakdawala from 1989. For three more games, with Jeremy's own annotations, visit the online version of this story at new.uschess.org/news/im-jeremy-silman-1954-2023.

MODERN DEFENSE (A42)

IM Jeremy Silman

FM Cyrus Lakdawala

Southern California Championship,
1989

This positional tour de force was considered by Jeremy to be his best game and was extensively annotated by him in the fourth and final edition of *How to Reassess Your Chess*, which was published in 2010. Since then, chess engines have gotten stronger at evaluating closed positions. Not surprisingly, they have made a few new discoveries here, but Jeremy's overall impressions of this instructive and well-played game hold true.

1. d4 g6 2. c4 Bg7 3. Nc3 d6 4. e4 Nc6

The motivation behind this line of the Modern Defense is to follow up with ... e7-e5, induce d4-d5 by White, and then play ... f7-f5 without having to first move the g8-knight as is the case in the King's Indian.

5. Be3

The traditional main line 5. d5 Nd4 6. Be3 c5 7. Nge2 Qb6 is now known to favor White after 8. Na4 Qa5+ 9. Bd2 Qc7 (9. ... Qa6 10. Nxd4 Bxd4 11. Nc3 is a bad Benoni for Black with his queen on a very odd square) 10. Bc3 e5 11. dxe6 e.p. Nxe6 12. Bxg7 Nxg7 13. Nac3. Recently Black has experimented with 5. ... Ne5 (Mamedyarov) and 5. ... Nb8 (Dubov).



5. ... e5 6. d5 Nce7 7. c5

7. g4 is a major alternative when after 7. ... f5 8. gxf5 gxf5 9. Qh5+ Black should probably play 9. ... Ng6 10. exf5 Qh4 and not 9. ... Kf8 10. Bh3 Nf6 11. Qf3 f4 12. Bd2 with a small but persistent advantage for White, as first seen in Portisch – Ree, Amsterdam 1967 and Franett – Biyiasas, Portland 1971.

7. ... f5 8. cxd6 cxd6 9. Bb5+ Kf8

Black moves his king in this line as he loses control over the e6-square (imagine Nf3-g5-e6) if he trades light-squared bishops.

10. Nf3 f4?!

This gains space on the kingside but at the price of locking in Black's king bishop. More in the spirit of this opening was 10. ... Bh6 with the aim of trading off the problematic bishop before advancing ... f5-f4. To be fair, he achieves this aim in the game, but shouldn't have had the second chance.

11. Bd2 h6

This is played both to prevent Ng5-e6 and to meet g2-g3 with ... g6-g5.

12. a4

White grabs more space on the queenside.

12. ... g5 13. a5 g4 14. Ng1 Nf6

(see diagram next page)

15. Nge2?!

The silicon oracles advocate for 15. h3 putting the question to Black on the h-file. After 15. ... h5 16. hxg4 hxg4 17. Rxh8+ Bxh8 18. Nge2 Ng6 19. g3 White has neutralized any potential attack by Black on the kingside



and will be able to concentrate his energies on the opposite side of the board. He has also made it harder for Black to trade off dark-squared bishops. After the game continuation it will be Black who decides if and when the h-file is opened.

15. ... Ng6 16. g3

Here Jeremy writes in *How to Reassess Your Chess*: "Killing my opponent's counterattack on the kingside. Quite honestly, after playing 16. g3 I felt that the point was already mine!"

This is an overstatement, but there is no question that Jeremy, whose hero Tigran Petrosian often reached similar positions playing against the King's Indian, liked his game.

16. ... f3 17. Nc1 h5 18. Qa4 h4 19. Rf1 h3 20. h3 21. Nb3 Rb8

This stops the advance a5-a6 by White but is passive. An alternative approach was the more active 21. ... a6 22. Bc4 b5 23. axb6 *e.p.*

Qxb6 though after 24. Qa5 White has a small but pleasant advantage.

22. Qb4

White targets Black's weak d-pawn.

22. ... Kg7 23. Bxh6+

This trade facilitates White's plan to transfer his knight to c4 via d2. Both 23. Bd3 and 23. 0-0-0 were equally viable alternatives.

23. ... Rxh6



24. Nd2?!

This move seems ever so natural, but as Stockfish 16 points out it is a small inaccuracy, allowing Black the opportunity to protect his d-pawn in a comfortable way without any adverse side effects.

Correct was 24. Bd3! (clearing the way for a double attack with Nc3-b5) 24. ... Ne8 (24. ... Nh8 25. Nb5 Nf7 26. Nxa7 Bd7 27. Nd2 Qc7 28. Nc4 Ng5 29. Nb6 doesn't provide Black

with enough compensation for the pawn.) 25. Nb5 a6 26. Na3 offers White long-term pressure on the queenside.

The attempt to alleviate this with 26. ... b6 fails to 27. axb6 Qxb6 28. Qxb6 Rxb6 29. Na5 Rxb2 30. N3c4 Rb5 31. Nc6 when the threat of Nc6-a7 is difficult to meet.

24. ... Nh8! 25. Nc4 Nf7

Black is just in time to guard d6. He has also exchanged off his dark-squared bishop and controls the h-file. The position offers equal chances for both sides.

26. Ne3 Qh8?!

Correct was 26. ... Kg6 to prepare ... Bc8-d7, which, if played immediately, walks into a knight fork.

27. 0-0-0 Rh2 28. Kb1 Qh6 29. Rde1 Nh7



30. Qc4!

"A decisive penetration into c7 is assured. The grand plan has worked to perfection!" – Silman.

30. ... a6 31. Qc7 Ra8 32. Bd7

Also strong was 32. Be8.

32. ... Bxd7 33. Qxd7 Nf6 34. Qxb7

This is good enough, but 34. Qe6! was even better as the terrible threat of Ne3-f5+ forces Black to enter a very odd variation: after 34. ... Qxe3 35. fxe3 Re8 White's queen will be trapped but he emerges on top after 36. Qf5 Rh5 37. Rxf3!.

34. ... Qh8 35. Nf5+ Kg6 36. Nh4+ Kg7

The only way to keep the game going was 36. ... Rxh4 but 37. gxh4 Qc8 38. Qc6 should win in the end.

37. Nf5+ Kg6 38. Nh4+ Kg7

Again forced was 38. ... Rxh4.

39. Rh1! Rxh1 40. Rxh1 Qd8 41. Nf5+ Kg6 42. Rh6+!, Black resigned.

This is a pretty finish to a great game against a strong opponent. ♠



Silman (center) with J. Polgar, Karpov, and Seirawan at Melody Amber in 1994.

Brave New Chat

What will engines tell us when they can talk?

BY **GM ANDY SOLTIS**

F

FOR DECADES, COMPUTERS have been giving us the right answer when we ask “What is the best move in this position?” But we also want an answer our next question: “Why is it best?”

Getting only the first answer can be frustrating, even for grandmasters.

LOOK DEEPER

GM Liviu-Dieter Nisipeanu

GM Vasyl Ivanchuk

Medias, 2011



WHITE TO MOVE

White played **22. e6** and threatened **Rd5xf5**. He won 30-plus moves later. But afterwards, a spectator armed with a computer asked him why it took so long.

This was a special spectator, the renowned GM Mihai Suba, and he had a good question. Why did White pass up **22. Rd1** followed by **Rd5-d7+**?

“I didn’t see an answer to **22. ... Rc8**,” Nisipeanu replied.

That made sense, since **23. Rd7+?? Ke6** would turn a win into a loss. If **24. Ne4 Nd4!**. But instead of the rook check, there is **23. Ne4**, Suba said.

“With what idea?” Nisipeanu asked.

“I don’t know,” Suba answered. “But the computer says White is winning!”

This is the kind of situation that baffles everyone who tries to improve. You are studying a game, and you see a move that looks awesome. But the machine tells you, “Nope. Second best.”

“But *why*?” you wonder. The machine leaves you to wade through its multi-move analysis. You might eventually realize **23. Ne4!** is good if:

- You see **23. ... Ne3** could be met by **24. Rd7+! Ke8 25. R1d2!**.
- And then discover how **25. ... Nxc2 26. Ng5!** turns out well following **26. ... Nd4 27. Rxf7**.
- But you need to nudge your computer to look another 10 moves to explain why this is significantly better than what happened after **22. e6** in the game.

Of course, studying a chess game this way is a lot better than in the days when Jose Capablanca would write tersely, “This move is better than **Bf5**.”

But the problem today is engines evaluate positions infinitely better than they explain them. They recommend moves after seeing benefits that humans can’t.

Anish Giri, a world-class grandmaster, calls them “computer advantages.” He was fortunate to enjoy one of them when he blitzed off his first opening moves earlier this year.

ALL TOO HUMAN

GM Anish Giri

GM Andrey Esipenko

WR Masters, Düsseldorf, 2023



WHITE TO MOVE

His computer-assisted preparation helped Giri get this far, and he knew that White is better. Now thinking on his own, he prepared to push his queenside pawns with **18. Nd2**.

But after **18. ... axb4! 19. cxb4 b6!** Black had more than enough counterplay and he drew comfortably following **20. cxb6 Qxb6 21. b5 Rc1+! 22. Nf1 Qa5**.

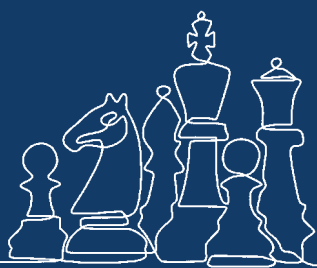
Analyzing with a machine is problematic, Giri said, because it can leave you in an advantageous position that only another machine fully understands. Computers would see, for example, how **18. Rd1** followed by **Rd1-c1, Qb3-a3, Nb1-d2-b3**, and **b4-b5!** is a better procedure.

In contrast, when you don’t prepare with a computer, you may start a middlegame with no superiority. But then you can try to “build up a human advantage,” the kind you understand, Giri said on the *Chess24* website. “You know what you want, you know the plan.”

But as we all know by now, we are entering an age of AI chat. It’s no longer far-fetched to believe that computers will someday be able to talk and explain “computer advantages” in words as well as moves. This is the brave new world that grandmasters have been wondering about for years.

QUIZ FOR NOVEMBER

THIS YEAR MARKS THE 100th anniversary of the birth of Svetozar Gligorić, a veteran of a golden age. He was literally a veteran since he was one of the very few grandmasters who served in combat, during World War II. This month's quiz features positions from his early career. Try to find the fastest winning line of play in each of the six diagrams. Hint: Because of Gligorić's enterprising style, the solution will usually involve a sacrifice of at least a minor piece. Solutions are on page 63.



PROBLEM 1
Svetozar Gligorić
Ludek Pachman



WHITE TO MOVE

PROBLEM 2
Svetozar Gligorić
Mario Bertok



WHITE TO MOVE

PROBLEM 3
Svetozar Gligorić
Tigran Petrosian



WHITE TO MOVE

PROBLEM 4
Andrija Fuderer
Svetozar Gligorić



BLACK TO MOVE

PROBLEM 5
Svetozar Gligorić
Mario Bertok



WHITE TO MOVE

PROBLEM 6
Ludvik Gabrovsek
Svetozar Gligorić



BLACK TO MOVE

UNPREJUDICED

GM Vladimir Kramnik
GM Hikaru Nakamura
London Chess Classic, 12.9.2010



WHITE TO MOVE

White chose **14. Rad1?**, putting an undeveloped rook on an open file. But he had little compensation for his lost piece after **14. ... f6**.

Engines of the day recommended 14. g4 Ng7 15. Bd8 instead. But GM Hikaru Nakamura called that "absolutely ridiculous." It is proof that "computers are such a complete and utter joke," he said.

"I wonder if when artificial intelligence improves to the point where computers can chat, just how much more ridiculous their critique of our games would become!" he wrote in *New in Chess*.

As ridiculous as 15. Bd8! may seem, it cuts off the Black queen's retreat to c7 and threatens to win it with 16. f4. Then 15. ... Nc6! 16. f4! Rxd8 17. Qxd8+ Nxd8 18. fxe5 Bd7 would be only a small Black advantage, as Nakamura acknowledged.

Computers are still improving and today's engines may claim White isn't badly off if he chooses 14. f4! Qc7 15. f5 in the diagram. But the biggest difference in studying chess with a computer will come when it can talk to us. What will its voice sound like? Will it be mechanical? High-pitched like a public address announcement? Or calm like "Hal" in the movie "2001"?

OPEN-GM

GM Grigoriy Oparin
GM Hikaru Nakamura
Korchnoi Chess Challenge, Zurich,
04.14.2017



WHITE TO MOVE

After **23. Be3? f6!** White was in trouble. He would lose his queen after 24. Nf3?? Nf4+!. Black eventually won.

When Nakamura annotated the game he pointed out 23. Kg1, calling it "an utter computer move that no human would ever play."

Perhaps. But when a chess engine can chat, I suspect it would reply with a bit of sarcasm:

"Listen, humans. White needs to move his king so that ... Ng6-f4 is not a check. The best move is 23. Kg1! because the other king moves leave the f-pawn vulnerable. This should be obvious — even to you." ♠

On the Attack

Some keys to good attacking chess

BY WGM TATEV ABRAHAMYAN

T

HE MIDDLE GAME IS PERHAPS the most difficult part of the game to master. While there are countless resources

to study opening and endgame theory, the middlegame is the part of the game that allows for the most creativity and freedom. Once we are done developing our pieces, what to do next?

In this column I will focus on common attacking ideas that arise in the middlegame. I think it is more important to develop attacking instincts early, before learning positional concepts. From my experience, players who do not learn how to attack during the initial stages of their chess development really struggle with it later, while positional understanding is something that can be improved down the road.

I have broken down the types of attacks into categories, with an example for each. I would urge the reader to explore more games on their own. We will be looking at games from White's point of view, but of course, the same concepts apply for Black. My categorization has been inspired by Vladimir Vukovic's *Art of Attack in Chess*.

It's always useful to study games to understand the typical positions and tactical motifs that arise from your openings. Vukovic's book is a classic general purpose attacking manual, and well-annotated game collections such as Seirawan's "Winning Chess" series, Fischer's *My 60 Memorable Games*, and Judit Polgar's "Judit Polgar Teaches Chess" trilogy are also excellent for understanding middlegame concepts.

Still, book learning must be complemented with practical experience, and playing

out positions in training games is extremely useful. These positions can be taken from books, or you can simply make the first 10-15 moves in your openings following a database such as the Lichess opening explorer, then pick a position to play out with a friend or a weakened engine.

One key element of successful attacking chess is having well placed pieces. You won't create an attack out of nowhere with an undeveloped army; of course, the corollary to this is that if your opponent hasn't developed any of their pieces, then you know your own king is safe. It is true that you can still attack even if you haven't finished your development entirely, but there always needs to be coordination between your forces. The more pieces you can use to launch an attack, the harder it is for your opponent to successfully defend themselves.

There needs to be some weaknesses or targets around your opponent's king, and we will explore such targets in this column and the next one. As a general rule, avoid trading pieces, especially queens, when attacking. If you have to trade pieces, your goal should be trading off one of your opponent's defensive pieces. This does not apply if your attack has led you to you winning a lot of material — not every attack ends in a checkmate.

ATTACKING AN UNCASTLED KING

To successfully attack an uncastled king, you will need to blast open the center and to keep the king there. This can involve opening the d- or e-files, which will bring your rooks into the attack, checking the king to

force it to lose its right to castle, or putting your bishop on a diagonal that prevents castling. If the enemy king is able to quickly castle into safety, your attack might fail.

SICILIAN DEFENSE, RICHTER-RAUZER VARIATION (B62)

WIM Ann Chumpitaz (2278)

GM Irina Krush (2430)

Women's Olympiad (5), Chennai, 08.02.2022

1. e4 c5 2. Nf3 d6 3. d4 cxd4 4. Nxd4 Nf6 5. Nc3 Bd7 6. Bg5 e6 7. Qd3 a6 8. f4 Nc6 9. 0-0-0 b5 10. e5

Since White has already castled and her rook is centralized, she is well positioned to start operations in the center.

10. ... dxe5 11. Nxc6 Bxc6 12. Qg3

Of course, White will avoid the queen trade.

12. ... Qa5 13. fxe5 b4?



This is too ambitious. Now Black will be quickly punished.

Instead 13. ... Nd7 was necessary as it keeps the e-file closed and doesn't give the White rook entry squares on the d-file.

14. exf6

White has removed a key defender (the f6-knight) and will use the open d-file for the attack. The bishop on g5 is perfectly positioned for a potential checkmate on d8, and the black king has no escape route.

14. ... bxc3 15. Bc4

Bringing the last minor piece into the attack and defending the a2-pawn.

15. ... Rg8

White isn't scared of 15. ... cxb2+ as after 16. Kb1 the king will safely hide behind the enemy pawn.

16. Bf4 Ba3 17. Bc7 Bxb2+ 18. Kb1

The white king is perfectly safe!

18. ... Qb4 19. Bb3 a5 20. Rd6 a4 21. Rhd1
Every single white piece is attacking the black king. Checkmate is inevitable.

21. ... gxf6 22. Qxg8+ Ke7 23. Rxe6+ fxe6 24. Qxe6+, Black resigned.

THE SHORT-CASTLED KING

Your opponent's king will often be castled on the kingside, with the pawn structure in front of the king intact. There are some typical patterns that lead to a successful attack outlined in the examples below.

The following classical bishop sacrifice is the perfect example of the "three piece rule," which states that we need three pieces to checkmate: one to sacrifice itself, opening lines, and two to checkmate the king — one to deliver mate, and one to guard squares or defend the piece giving mate.

THE GREEK GIFT



WHITE TO MOVE

1. Bxh7+

This is a classic sacrifice. Eliminating the h7-pawn opens the h-file for the white pieces to come in.

1. ... Kxh7

Declining the sacrifice with 1. ... Kh8 does not help: after 2. Ng5 (with the threat of Qd1-h5) White gets a crushing attack after 2. ... g6 3. Qg4 Kg7 4. Nxf7.

2. Ng5+ Kg6

If Black retreats with 2. ... Kg8 White continues thematically with 3. Qh5 Re8? (3. ... Qxg5 is the only move that prolongs the game) 4. Qxf7+ Kh8 5. Qh5+ Kg8 6. Qh7+ Kf8 7. Qh8+ Ke7 8. Qxg7 mate.

After 2. ... Kh6 3. Nxf7+ White can try to checkmate, but simply picking up the queen is enough.

3. h4!

The king is in the kill zone, and White brings in another unit to assist with the attack.

3. ... f5 4. h5+ Kh6 5. Nxe6+
White is clearly winning.

Destroying the pawn structure in front of the king leaves it vulnerable to an attack. If you are able to eliminate both the g7- and h7-pawns, you will need your queen and rook to finish off the attack.

DEMOLITION

GM Humpy Koneru (2508)
IM Zoltan Nemeth (2370)
Elekes Memorial (4), Budapest,
05.24.2005



WHITE TO MOVE

21. Bxh7+!

Black's last move was castling short, but instead of finding safety, the king will soon meet his demise. White is perfectly positioned to start an attack, as the king has no defenders besides the lone rook.

21. ... Kxh7 22. Qh5+ Kg8 23. Bxg7! Kxg7

The alternative 23. ... f6 24. Qg6 will soon lead to mate after Bg7xf6 or Bg7-h6 with discovered check.

24. Qg5+ Kh7 25. Rf3

Now that both the g- and h-file are half-open, the major pieces will win the game. Note how far away the black queen is from the action!

25. ... Rg8 26. Qh4+ Kg6 27. Rg3+ Kf5 28. Qh7+ Kf6 29. Rxg8

White has won her material back and will capture another bishop

29. ... Qa7 30. Qh4+ Kf5 31. Qg4+ Ke4 32. Qf3+ Kd3 33. Qd1+ Kxe3 34. Qxd6 Bd7 35. Qxd7, Black resigned.

The prophylactic ... h7-h6 (or h2-h3) pawn

push can create a target for an attack in the middlegame. This type of attack involves a bishop sacrifice on h6 with the assistance of a knight on f5 and a queen.

THE g7/h6 WEAKNESS

WGM Tatev Abrahamyan (2358)

WGM Qiyu Zhou (2229)

FIDE Online Olympiad (9), 08.23.2020



WHITE TO MOVE

This is a typical position that arises from the Giuoco Piano or even some Spanish structures. White has more space in the center due to the pawns on d4 and e4, but otherwise the position is quite symmetrical. Note that the knight on g3 came via the route of b1-d2-f1-g3; it is ready to hop to f5 at the right moment. His counterpart on g6 followed a similar path to get there. White strikes first:

18. Bxh6! gxh6 19. Qxh6

Even though Black has a lot of defenders around the king, the g7-square remains extremely vulnerable. Black needs to get either the queen or the bishop to f8 immediately, but lacks time to do so. White has two big threats of Nf3-g5 and Ng3-f5.

19. ... Qe7 20. Nf5 Bxf5 21. exf5 Nf4

If 21. ... Nh8 22. Ng5 followed by Re1-e3-g3 is devastating.

22. Qxf4 exf4 23. Rxe7

White is up two healthy pawns.

23. ... Rd7 24. Rde1 Rfd8 25. Ng5 Rxe7 26. Rxe7 Rd7 27. Rxd7 Nxd7 28. Kf1 Kg7 29. Ke2 d5 30. Kf3 Nb6 31. Bb3 Kf6 32. h4 Kxf5 33. Bc2+ Kf6 34. b3 Nd7 35. Nh3 Ba5 36. b4 Bc7 37. Nxf4 Nf8 38. g4 Ng6 39. g5+ Kg7 40. Bxg6 Bxf4 41. Kxf4 Kxg6 42. Kg4, Black resigned.

More patterns next month. Until then, practice what you've learned! ♠



SOUND MOVES

WHERE MUSIC MEETS CHESS

ON VIEW MAY 17, 2023 - JANUARY 28, 2024



ON VIEW MAY 17, 2023 - JANUARY 21, 2024



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My Journey



Being trans in today's chess world

BY **SAM SHARF**

WHEN I WAS seven years old, my mom signed me up for an after-school chess

program. I heard “chest” and envisioned a giant treasure chest where we would all get candy and goodies. To my disappointment, all that was waiting when I showed up was an unfamiliar board game. After the teacher explained the rules, I remember capturing my opponent’s king and claiming, “I won!” The teacher explained this was not checkmate, and that’s when I realized the true challenge of this game. From there I continued to learn the basics of chess, taking part in summer camps and group lessons in these early years.

At the same time I began playing chess, I was also struggling with self-hatred and gender dysphoria — a feeling that permeated my body with sorrow and unease — something that I could not yet conceptualize and articulate to my parents. Gender dysphoria, for me, was an omnipresent feeling that I would be more fulfilled living as another gender. By age five, I already sensed I would be happier had I been born a girl, but I did not know people could change their gender to match how they felt internally. I didn’t think I could achieve that desired self.

My earliest memories of manifesting this desire began in kindergarten, when they began treating boys and girls differently. I wondered why I could not be one of the girls. Wearing the boys’ school uniforms and being called by my birth name, “Samuel,” made me extremely uncomfortable. Every time it happened or I thought about it, the discomfort was so intense that I wanted to

abort my skin. I did not know what I was experiencing was gender dysphoria, but I was certain something was wrong with me, and it made me despise myself.

Because I thought I had no choice but to remain miserable, I did not take anything seriously. In chess classes, I was disruptive and sought attention to mask my low self-esteem. I was such a troublemaker that my chess coaches became really annoyed with me. One time, I goofed around so much in a group lesson that I was kicked out. So, while my friends continued to improve, nobody was surprised when I, with my provisional rating — based on 11 losses and one Scholar’s Mate win — of 118, decided to quit chess at the advanced age of nine.

Over a decade later, I rediscovered chess as part of the same introspective journey that led to my medical transition. In high school, my suppressed dysphoric feelings resurfaced, and I fell into a deep anhedonic state, where I lost interest in social contact and no longer experienced pleasure. This newfound self-isolation — and the accompanying overwhelming senses of fear, confusion, and anxiety — led to my socially constructed identity beginning to crack. I finally recognized the girl I could become. But what I did not yet realize was that this woman would excel at chess.

I started my medical transition in my senior year of high school. Not much later, after my first semester in college, the pandemic shut down the country. As quarantine ended and the world re-opened, I began seeking political and social spaces where my newfound identity would be accepted. I was welcomed at the St. Petersburg Chess Club, where I made my first moves back towards serious chess. A local Kava lounge became a regular hangout for me to befriend people who accepted and validated me for who I was. As it happened, they also hosted a biweekly chess tournament.

Playing chess in an environment where I felt comfortable being myself sounded exciting, so I decided to sign up for the next tournament. I started practicing online and discovered my base skill rating was around 800. After hanging my queen to a 1600, a friend recommended I watch IM Levy Rozman’s videos on YouTube, and from there I was hooked.

Another friend informed me about upcoming local tournaments, as well as the World Open in Philadelphia. The thought of playing in official tournaments had never crossed my mind, but it sounded fun, and I was up for the challenge. My friends also connected me with coaches — CM Oniel

Revilla from Venezuela, whom I met with virtually on Lichess, and JJ Lang, who for me is the best coach ever.

In July 2021, I attended the Southern Open in Orlando with my trans friends from Tampa, Riley and Jasper. “Once rated, always rated” at 118, I entered the U1200 section, and I lost my first-round game. After a bye, I won three games in a row to finish with 4/5, and I won the Mixed Doubles prize with my childhood friend Aidan!

I used my prize money to travel to Cherry Hill, New Jersey for the 2021 U.S. Open, where I stayed with my trans chess friend Mady, whom I had met at the World Open earlier that summer. My live rating was up to 800, but I was still 118 on the July list. In

I am an example of the transformational growth that can occur if you allow a young person to become their dream selves.”

round one I pulled off a major upset over a 1700-rated player. Because of this, I was the lowest-rated player with a full point, so I faced the highest-rated player who had requested a half-point bye: 2017 U.S. Women’s Champion WGM Sabina Foisor. After we followed Catalan theory for 15 moves, I watched her walk to the pairing sheet to double-check that her opponent was really rated only 118! She ground me down in a 60-move minor piece endgame, but my tenacity impressed her, and I have taken lessons with her since.

After the U.S. Open, Mady and I formed the Trans Chess Club (TCC), an online chess server for trans, queer, neurodivergent people, and allies. TCC is a safe space for players of all levels, where we get to be ourselves, learn, and bond over the game we love. I have been fortunate in that I have not faced discrimination while playing in tournaments, but I know people who have. Supportive spaces for marginalized people like the TCC are essential for our continued enjoyment of the game. We have hosted tournaments featuring trans chess icon FM Yosha Iglesias, as well as other LGBT masters, where we get to face them and try our best, learning from the experience. You can find us on Twitter at @transchessclub.

In January 2022, I played in the 7th An-

nual Gulf Coast New Year’s Open with TCC friend Riley. I won first place in the U1450 section and took home \$800! I was ecstatic to finally win a tournament after a few tragic final round shortcomings, and I proudly posted my triumph to the r/chess subreddit. That post holds the title of sixth all-time most upvoted post, beating out posts about IM Levy Rozman’s marriage and GM Hikaru Nakamura’s birthday.

I have been blessed to make an assortment of amazing friends in my chess travels. I often meet someone at a tournament, and then plan to travel with them to a future one. In the summer of 2022, I traveled to Las Vegas for the National and U.S. Women’s Opens. It was an amazing experience. Women’s tournaments are such special and supportive environments. Everyone is friendly, and we share our love and passion for chess while also crafting a space that is free from the misogyny often found in chess spaces. My performance at the Women’s open was disappointing overall, but the highlight was a near-draw versus WFM, played live on a DGT board where my friends could watch!

To conclude the summer of 2022, four of us from the Trans Chess Club (TCC) traveled to the U.S. Open in Palm Springs, California. We fundraised on Twitter and GoFundMe to help with our expenses. Chess Twitter pulled through with their generosity, donating \$1,200! (Thanks to everyone who donated!)

We ordered vegan dinners from the same cafe every night, went for walks in the mountainous desert scenery, toured the large resort, and analyzed our games together, laughing and enjoying ourselves the whole way — though it was difficult after tragic losses! The highlight was my victory in a tough endgame against a talented and young near-master.

After two years of getting into chess, my US Chess rating has grown from 800 to a high of 1615. This growth in chess was achieved, in large part, by fulfilling the self-efficacious needs of my womanhood. Transitioning wasn’t just about reducing my depression when I was 17; it was about transposing into an ideal self, one who would make me happy with my existence and would allow me to thrive in the persona I dreamt of.

I am grateful to have had the privilege to shape my body and self-expression into what my heart and mind desire. My growth into a beautiful young woman is a fulfilled childhood dream. This path toward self-actualization and love for myself is allowing me to develop into my fullest potential as a human. I am a more capable, well-rounded, and passionately driven person now.

My long-term goals are to eventually continue my studies in New York and to follow a career path that allows me to change society for the better. I also wish to pursue my growth in chess, as I believe I have lots of potential ahead of me. Unfortunately, much of my energy over the past year has been tied up in defending LGBT rights and academic freedom in Florida. Authoritarian attacks on our freedom to exist in society as our true selves, and on our freedoms to learn the subjects we choose, have increased. This has led to me working to build and grow a platform in activism and media.

Some people mischaracterize the fight for trans and queer inclusion as a movement to radicalize or even “groom” others. This could not be further from the truth: we just want to have the time, energy, and space to pour ourselves into our hobbies and passions without fear of persecution, and the freedom to be ourselves in these spaces. It also mischaracterizes our unwavering support for LGBT youth as harmful. LGBT youth have always and will continue to exist. It is imperative that we support LGBT youth and affirm their identities. I am an example of the transformational growth that can occur if you allow a young person to become their dream selves.

I feel fortunate that, as a trans woman, I have been welcomed into, and thrived in, different kinds of chess spaces. My favorite event so far was the 2022 U.S. Women’s Open in Las Vegas. As women, we typically have trouble enjoying the masculine dominant social atmosphere of contemporary chess events, which is why many of us quit. But women’s events provide us a safe, holistic, and supportive environment with healthy competition. We are able to make friends and enjoy the presence of a talented and determined group of other women and girls. Trans women and girls deserve to be included in these spaces, as we experience the same social archetypes.

But most importantly — we deserve to be in these spaces because we, too, love this game. Chess is for everyone, and trans men, women, boys, and girls are no different from anyone else in this regard. Our pieces move the same way yours do... if perhaps with a bit more flair. We rejoice over our victories, mourn our losses, and lament those lost half-points, just like everyone else.

Representation matters. If you are reading this, and something resonates with you, know that there are allies in the chess world, and that you belong here, with us.

As for me... well, I’ll see you out there, at the board. ♠



BEAUTIFUL BLOOMS



Lessons from the 2023 Cherry Blossom Classic

BY **WGM SABINA FOISOR**

I HAVE BEEN STREAMING OFF and on since the beginning of the pandemic, and over time I have come to enjoy chess broadcasting very much. So I was happy to accept an invitation to host live Twitch coverage of the 2023 Cherry Blossom Classic, which was held from May 24 through 29 in Dulles, Virginia.

That invitation came from IA/IO Anand Dommalpalati, who has over the past decade become one of the leading mid-Atlantic tournament organizers. He has helped grow the Cherry Blossom from about 100 players in 2013 to 287 this year across six sections, with another 98 in the side events.

I was stationed on-site at the Washington Dulles Airport in Marriott, but I wasn't alone — I was joined on the stream by guest

GMs for a number of rounds. It's rare to see top-level players and coaches sharing their thoughts freely, and I thank GMs Rashad Babayev, Alexander Onischuk, and Magesh Panchanathan for their time and their ideas. And special thanks to GM Yasser Seirawan, who joined the chat to discuss the exciting final-round game between GMs John Burke and Semen Khanin.

One of the best things about doing commentary on-site is the possibility for the players to come to the commentary room and discuss their games. It was a lot of fun speaking with the people who were making the moves we were watching, and I hope more organizers consider bringing more eyes to their events with live commentary, especially if DGT boards are available. I think this is the next growth area for chess online, and audiences will continue to grow

as this becomes more common.

This year's Cherry Blossom featured 31 titled players from 12 federations (and some playing under the FIDE flag), with eight grandmasters, two women grandmasters, and 12 international masters in the field. This meant that norms were possible in the Open section; with a total of \$12,000 in prizes, there was a lot at stake!

The Open winners, GMs Mikhail Antipov and Vasif Durarbayli, each took different paths to victory. Both were nicked for draws by lower-rated players, and both missed opportunities. But they scored when it was essential to win the tournament.

In what follows, I want to shake up the traditional tournament report a bit by looking at typical, concrete positions that could occur in the reader's own games. Top players struggle as much as anyone else, but some-

times they are able to stay strong and avoid disasters. Insights into such resilient chess would be very instructive.

There was a big upset in round one, as FM Jason Morefield defeated GM Viktor Matviishen as part of an excellent performance in Dulles. That was not the end of the intrigue, as the top two seeds, GMs Illia Nyzhnyk and Vasif Durarbayli, both struggled to draws. The latter's game was particularly interesting.

TOUGH DEFENSE

Sudarshan Sriniaiyer (2324)
GM Vasif Durarbayli (2686)
Cherry Blossom Classic (1), Dulles,
05.24.2023



WHITE TO MOVE

Sudarshan had an excellent tournament, losing just once and gaining over 80 rating points. Here, in round one, he outplayed the eventual tournament co-winner, reaching the following position up an Exchange. Durarbayli defended valiantly, finding a way to this endgame where precise play is

required by White in order to prevent Black from setting up a fortress.

24. Nxb7?!

This allows Black some defensive ideas.

As I was doing commentary with GM Rashad Babayev, we focused on the following line, which seems to make White's task easier: 24. c5! and now (a) 24. ... Bg7 would fail because of 25. Bxg7 Kxg7 and now 26. c6!. It seems as if White gives up the pawn, but due to the looseness of the black minor pieces, White wins after 26. ... Bxc6 27. Rc4!! and the bishop or knight must fall.

Instead (b) 24. ... b5 was the engine's suggestion, but after 25. Nxb7 Rxb7 26. c6 Black fails to stop the c-pawn. After 26. ... Rc7 27. Bf4 Rc8 28. c7 White should win. With the pawn on the seventh rank, and the inability of the d4-knight to move, White will find a way to promote the c-pawn or activate one of his rooks to win the a- and b-pawns.

24. ... Rxb7 25. c5 Bg7 26. Bxg7?

A mistake. Now Black will be able to support the knight in the center and stop the c-pawn from becoming dangerous.

Here 26. c6! was White's final attempt to keep the c-pawn and maintain a big advantage, i.e., 26. ... Rc7 (26. ... Rb8 27. Re4 Bxh6 28. Rxd4 Bxc1 29. c7 and wins) 27. Bf4 Rc8 28. c7 and White should win.

26. ... Kxg7 27. cxb6?!

The stronger 27. Rb1 would have been White's final try to maintain an advantage, when Black would have to find a precise series of moves: 27. ... Rd7 (or 27. ... b5 28. Rbd1 Nc6 29. Rd6 Rc7 30. Rb1 a6 31. f4 with holding chances) 28. cxb6 axb6 29. a4

(if 29. Rxb6?? Nc2 30. Rc1 Nxa3 31. g4 Rd5 Black brings the knight to safety via the b5-square) 29. ... Ra7 30. Re4 Rxa4 31. Rd1 e5 32. Rxe5 Nf5 33. Rb5 White maintains the advantage, but Black has serious chances to hold this position as there are pawns on only one side of the board.

27. ... axb6

From here Durarbayli defends valiantly to hold the draw.

28. Rc4 Rd7

I prefer 28. ... Nf5 to bring the knight to d5, as it is protected there and it also protects the b6-pawn.

29. Kf1 b5 30. Rc3 g5 31. Rc5 Kg6 32. Rd1 Rd6



GM Illia
NyzhnykGM John
BurkeGM Mikhail
Antipov**33. a4**

Once the queenside pawns go, the game peters out to a draw.

Stockfish still gives White a big advantage should the kingside pawns be blockaded, so that there are potential weaknesses to attack. But with little time on the clock, it is hard to find human advantages here. For the improvers, I recommend trying to outplay the engine with the white pieces from the position after 33. h4 h6 34. g4.

33. ... bxa4 34. Rc4 e5 35. Rxa4 f6 36. g4 h5 37. h3 Rb6 38. Raxd4 exd4 39. Rxd4 Rb1+ 40. Kg2, draw.

Despite his rough start, I liked how Nyzhnyk outplayed his opponent in the third round.

WHAT FORTRESS?

GM Illia Nyzhnyk (2700)
IM Bernardo Roselli Mailhe (2347)
Cherry Blossom Classic (3), Dulles,
05.26.2023



BLACK TO MOVE

Defensive ideas are always the toughest to see. Sometimes missing them in critical moments can lead to a dominant position for the opponent. In the following position Black is struggling due to lack of space and White having control of the only open file. Here staying and doing nothing is not the right approach. The Uruguayan IM Roselli missed an idea to open lines on the queen-

side, and the result was that White was able to win the endgame.

31. ... Bd7??

The right path was 31. ... a4! when the position is equal after 32. Qe7 (or 32. bxa4 Bxf5 33. gxf5 Ra8) 32. ... Bxf5 33. gxf5 Qxe7 34. Rxe7 b5 35. cxb5 axb3 36. axb3 Rb8.

Alternatively, 31. ... Bxf5 works equally well provided that it is followed by the break on the queen side. The following gives a flavor of play: 32. gxf5 a4 33. bxa4 Ra8 34. f6 Qd8 35. Qe7 gxf6 36. Qxd8+ Rxd8 37. Rb1 Ra8 38. Rxb6 Rxa4 39. Rxd6 Kg7 40. Rc6 Rxc4 with equality.

32. Bxd7 Rxd7 33. a4!

A very important move; with the queenside stabilized, White is dominating on the kingside.

33. ... f6 34. Qe8 Rc7 35. Re6 Qxe8 36.

Rxe8+ Kf7 37. Rb8 Ke7 38. Kf3 Rd7 39.

Rxb6 g6 40. Ke4 Ra7 41. h4 Rd7 42. Kd3

The alternative 42. Ra6 also works after 42. ... Rb7 43. h5 gxh5 44. gxh5 Rxb3 45. Kf5.

42. ... f5 43. g5 hxg5 44. fxg5 Kf7 45. Ra6

Rb7 46. Kc2 Ke7 47. Rxa5, Black resigned.

Remember: don't mistake a "fortress" for a draw. Take your chance and find a way to get counterplay.

Durarbayli's ascent was slow. After starting with the draw in round one, he won in rounds two and three to join the leaders, but was nicked for another draw in round four when he was unable to convert a dominant position. By round seven there were eight people (Antipov, Bora, Burke, Durarbayli, Kantor, Khanin, Matviishen, and Nyzhnyk) sharing the lead with 4½/6, and here is where the eventual winners made their moves to the top.

KEEP PUSHING

GM Vasif Durarbayli (2686)

GM John M. Burke (2694)

Cherry Blossom Classic (7), Dulles,
05.28.2023

(see diagram top of next column)

Durarbayli has pressed Burke for the entire game, and now, a pawn down, Black has to play precisely in order to hold the game. The drawing line is reminiscent of a difficult study position; with very little time on the clock it is easy to go astray. Here Burke decided to try and push his own passed pawn



BLACK TO MOVE

instead of stopping White's passed f-pawn. While Black is not losing yet, this misstep was followed by another error...

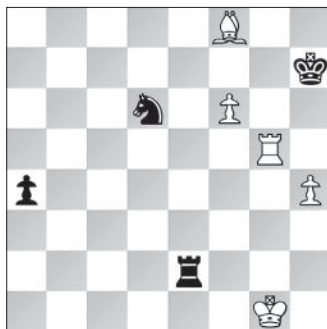
52. ... Nb5?

The clearest path is 52. ... Nf7, working to stop the f-pawn. White could continue with 53. Rg7 (it's equal after 53. Rg6+ Kh5 54. Rg7 Re4) 53. ... Re4 54. Bc3 Rc4 and now Black's drawing idea is to chase the white bishop and distract White from marching the passer. Heading into the rook endgame leads to a draw: 55. Rxf7 (or 55. Rg6+ Kh5) 55. ... Rxc3 56. Kg2 (on 56. Ra7 Black holds with 56. ... Rf3 57. Ra6+ Kh5 58. f6 Kxh4) 56. ... Rc4 57. Kg3 etc.

53. Bg7+ Kh7 54. f6

Realizing the error of his ways, Black hurries the knight back to defend.

54. ... Nd6 55. Bf8



Now it's likely that only a cyborg could save this game, such were the time constraints and the difficult choices to be made.

55. ... Re6??

Allowing White to advance the f-pawn.

The best way to proceed was (a) 55. ... Ne4!. After 56. Rg7+ Kh8 57. Rg4 Nf2! (taking

the pawn with 57. ... Nxf6?? of course loses to 58. Bg7+) 58. Rxa4 Nh3+ 59. Kh1 (59. Kf1 loses the f-pawn after 59. ... Rf2+ 60. Ke1 Rxf6) 59. ... Kh7! and now the white king is stuck in the corner, unable to help the pawns advance. The attempt to activate the monarch with 60. Ra7+ allows the black king to get active. After 60. ... Kg6 61. f7 Black has time to get the knight back and win the f-pawn as in 61. ... Nf2+ 62. Kg2 Nd3+ 63. Kf3 Rf2+ 64. Ke4 Rxf7.

The engine also shows that the cold-blooded (b) 55. ... Re1+ 56. Kg2 Re2+ saves the game. It looks like White is being invited to have the king join the game, but after 57. Kf3 Re6! 58. Rg7+ Kh8 the point is that the f-pawn can't advance without loss, and if 59. Rg6 Nf7 60. Kf4 Re5 Black has just enough counterplay with the a-pawn, or against the h-pawn, to hold the game with perfect defense. Of course, this is a tall ask over-the-board.

56. Rg7+ Kh8 57. f7

After winning Black's knight, White went on to win the game shortly after.

57. ... Nxf7 58. Rxf7 Re4 59. h5 Kg8 60.

Rf5 Rh4 61. Kg2 Kh7 62. Rf7+ Kg8 63. Rf5 Kh7 64. Kg3 Rh1 65. Ra5 Rf1 66. Ra7+, Black resigned.

Despite having just equality throughout the game, Durarbayli never lost hope and kept trying to find ways to change the balance. It doesn't always succeed, but learning to exploit small advantages is important if you want to become a better player.

DOMINATION

GM Mikhail Antipov (2644)

GM Viktor Matviishen (2616)

Cherry Blossom Classic (7), Dulles, 05.28.2023



This position resulted from a Semi-Tarrasch, where White has a comfortable position with more space, but Black tries to prove that it's hard for White to further improve. I find White's position easier to play, as even a small inaccuracy gives White the initiative. Here Antipov correctly plays the thematic

20. d5!

Well-timed, restricting the black pieces as White threatens d5-d6. This game is worth analyzing as it shows how White's positional advantages transform into a kingside attack. Black plays natural moves, but is helpless to thwart White's initiative.

20. ... Nc5 21. Ba2 Ba6 22. Qd2 exd5?



Right: We've all been there. Thomas Coe Lane (L) was winning against FM Macon Shibut (R)... and then he wasn't.



US Chess Executive Director Carol Meyer was on hand in Dulles, trying her hand at streaming (above) and revealing her prep (left).

The capture on d5 should be avoided as now White quickly infiltrates on the opened e-file.

Nearly forced was 22. ... Qe8, when White makes slow progress with 23. Qd4 Rcd7 24. Qc3 Bb7 25. Ne5 Rd6 26. Nc4 R6d7 27. Rde1.

23. exd5 Qf6 24. Ne5 Re7

If 24. ... Qd6 25. Rde1 with a big edge.

25. Nc6 Rxe3 26. Qxe3 Rd6??

Abandoning the back rank leads to real problems. Black had to keep the eighth covered with 26. ... Ra8 (or 26. ... Rf8), but White is clearly winning after 27. d6 Bb5 28. Ne5.

27. Qe8+ Kh7 28. Ne7 h5 29. Bb1+?!

The direct 29. Qg8+ leads to a win after

29. ... Kh6 30. Qh8+ Kg5 31. f4+ Qxf4 32. Qxg7+ Rg6 33. h4+ Qxh4 34. Qe5+ Kh6 35. Nf5+.

29. ... g6 30. Re1

White dominates the board, in no small part because of the ugly rook on d6.

30. ... Rd7

If 30. ... Qg7 31. Nf5! gxf5 32. Bxf5+ Kh6 33. h4! and Black must shed material with Qe8-e3+ threatened.

31. d6?!

Unnecessary. White just needed to fuel his attack with 31. Re3.

31. ... Bb5?

This makes it easier for White, but the game is lost anyway.

A sterner test is 31. ... Bd3, as after 32. Bxd3 Nxd3 33. Re2 Nf4 34. Re4 Rxd6 35. Qg8+ Kh6 36. Qf8+ Kh7 White needs to find 37. Ng8! in time pressure. The threat is 38. Qh6+ Kxg8 39. Re8 mate.

32. a4?!

Giving Black a chance to make White work for the point. The easiest way was 32. Re5 Bd3 (or 32. ... Nd3 33. Bxd3 Bxd3 34. f4 and wins) 33. Rxc5 bxc5 34. Qxd7 Bxb1 35. Nd5 when the d-pawn moves quickly.

32. ... Bxa4

After 32. ... Bd3 White has to find the win in the above note.

33. Re5 Bd1 34. Rf5 Rxe7 35. Qxe7, Black resigned.

After a hard-fought, 78-move draw in round eight, where Antipov won the Exchange but allowed Durarbayli's pieces to come to life right before the time control, only Antipov and Durarbayli were on six points heading into the ninth and final round. With the top five boards drawing, although not without some drama, the two leaders earned their tournament victories.

To conclude: the takeaway from the games at the 2023 Cherry Blossom is to never relax in better positions, and to fight to the end in worse ones. Thanks to the organizers for asking me to provide commentary on my Twitch (@sabinafoisor) channel, and I'm looking forward to next year's tournament! ♠

2023 CHERRY BLOSSOM CLASSIC AT A GLANCE

MAY 24-29, 2023 | DULLES, VIRGINIA

OPEN: GMs Mikhail Antipov and Vasif Durarbayli, 6½/9. **U2300:** Roman Rychkov, 7/9. **U2000:** James Douglas Wright, 9/9. (Wright gained 152 rating points in this event!) **U1700:** Chen Yan, 8/9. **U1400:** John Bennett and Micah Kuester, 7½/9. **U1100:** Dae Yang Moon, 5½/6. **K-12 U1200:** Luke Nielsen, 4/4. **K-12 U600:** Alexander N. Evans, 4/4. **K-6 U800:** Vladimir Herndon, 4/4. **OPEN BLITZ:** GM Magesh Panchanathan, 8½/9. **AMATEUR BLITZ:** Kanim Ismayilova, 8½/9.

For complete results and additional photos, visit www.cherryblossomchess.com.

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Zhao Wins 2023 Cadet

Good mindsets and moves are keys to victory.

BY FM ERICK ZHAO

I WAS THRILLED WHEN I WAS invited to play in the 2023 U.S. Cadet Championship, which took place from June 22-25 in Schaumburg, Illinois. Eight of the best American players under the age of 16 came to compete for \$2,000 in cash prizes and an additional \$10,000 scholarship prize for the first-place winner, courtesy of the Dewain Barber Foundation and US Chess. This scholarship can be used at the college or university of the winner's choice.

The field was very strong, with just 102 rating points separating the top and bottom seeds. Rated sixth out of the eight players, I was definitely nervous, and I did not feel too confident that I would do well in this event. However, I decided to fight against these thoughts; my goal was to try my best and play according to my preparation.

In the first round, I was paired against IM Ryo Chen, the highest rated player in this event. I was, understandably, quite nervous before and during the game. But after a long battle, with many mistakes made by both sides, I managed to come out on top.

SICILIAN DEFENSE, RICHTER-RAUZER VARIATION (B60)

FM Erick Zhao (2403)

IM Ryo Chen (2435)

U.S. Cadet Ch (1), Schaumburg, 06.22.2023

1. e4 c5 2. Nf3 d6 3. d4 cxd4 4. Nxd4 Nf6 5. Nc3 Nc6 6. Bg5 a6

I had fully been expecting the move 6. ...

e6, and had prepared for in the short time we had between pairings being announced and the first round. Surprise! So I continued with ideas I knew from my preparation.

7. Qd2 Qb6 8. Nb3 e6 9. 0-0-0 Qc7 10. f4 b5 11. Bxf6!?

Part of what I took from my preparation was that the main ideas in these kinds of positions were Bc1-g5, f2-f4, and then Bg5xf6 followed by Bf1-d3 and f4-f5. That's what I tried here, but of course there are quite a few other ideas that work just as well.

I think 11. Kb1! might be best, as after 11. ... b4 12. Bxf6 White will play Nc3-e2-d4 and the king is comfortable on b1.

White can also try 11. a3!? to make the ... b5-b4 push less effective. After 11. ... Rb8 12. Be2 Be7 13. Bxf6 Bxf6! 14. Qxd6 Qb6 15. Qd3 Be7 16. e5 I think White is a bit better.

11. ... gxf6 12. Bd3 b4 13. Ne2 Bd7 14. f5?!

A bit hasty. I should have prepared this by moving my king to safety with 14. Kb1.

14. ... e5?! 15. Bc4?



15. ... Nd4!

I missed the point of this move: now if 16. Bd5?? Bh6 wins.

16. Bd3

I also thought about 16. Qd3 for a little bit, but Black has a brilliant attacking response: 16. ... d5! 17. exd5 (I considered sacrificing material with 17. Bxd5 Bb5 18. Nxd4 Bxd3 19. Bxa8, but after 19. ... Bc4! White is busted) 17. ... Bxf5 18. Nbx4 Bxd3 and Black is winning.

Also unpleasant for White is 16. Nxd4 Qxc4 17. Ne2 a5.

16. ... Nxb3+ 17. axb3 a5 18. Bc4 Bc6 19. Bd5 Rc8?!

This allows me to create counter-chances. Black should have played 19. ... Ke7! as it takes a long time to maneuver the white knight to e3, and Black has clear ideas of ... a5-a4, ... h7-h5, and ... Bf8-h6.

20. c4!

He can't take it: if 20. ... bxc3 e.p. 21. Nxc3! my king is very safe and I control the d5-square.

20. ... a4?! 21. Kc2

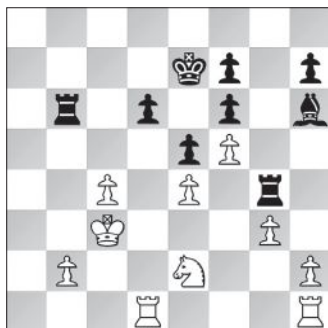
It looks a little scary, but 21. Qxb4! is honestly just a free pawn. Black's counterplay dries up after 21. ... axb3 (or 21. ... Bh6+ 22. Kb1 Bxd5 23. Rxd5 axb3 24. Nc3 with a significant advantage) 22. Nc3 Bh6+ 23. Kb1 0-0 24. Qxb3.

21. ... axb3+?!

Not needed yet. Perhaps Black should activate another piece with 21. ... Rg8! 22. Ng3

h5! and now if 23. Nxh5 Black plays 23. ... Ke7 24. Ng3 axb3+ 25. Kxb3 Bh6! with excellent compensation.

22. Kxb3 Bh6 23. Bxc6+ Qxc6 24. Qd5 Ke7 25. Qxc6 Rxc6 26. Kxb4 Rb6+ 27. Kc3 Rg8 28. g3 Rg4



29. Kd3?

With both of us in time pressure, we both missed 29. Rhe1!, which saves the e-pawn. If 29. ... Rxe4 30. Nf4 and wins. Now we both started making errors.

29. ... Rxb2 30. Nc3 Kf8?! 31. Nd5?!

I only belatedly realized that 31. Nb5! wins the d-pawn after 31. ... Ke7 32. Kc3 Rf2 33. Nxd6.

31. ... Bg5 32. Nc3 h5 33. Nb5 h4 34. Kc3

Where to move the rook?

34. ... Re2?!

Here 34. ... Rf2! is correct, but it's not immediately clear why. After 35. Rxd6 Be3 we see the point — with the rook on e2, White would have Kc3-d3.

35. gxh4?!

White is winning after 35. Nxd6 hxg3 36. hxg3 Rxg3+ 37. Kb4.

35. ... Be3 36. Kd3 Rgg2 37. Rhe1 Rxe1 38. Rxe1 Bc5 39. Re2 Rg4 40. Nc3 Rxh4 41. Rg2 Rh3+ 42. Kc2 Bd4?!

The position is equal after 42. ... Be3.

43. Nd5 Ra3 44. Kd1 Ra1+ 45. Ke2 Rc1 46. Nxf6 Rc2+ 47. Kf3 Rc3+ 48. Kg4 Rxc4 49. Kh5 Ke7 50. Nd5+ Kf8 51. Kh6 Rc1 52. Kh7 Rg1 53. Rxg1?

It was a lot easier if I had just kept the rooks on the board. However, with just one minute left on my clock, I felt that this endgame was something I could win. In what follows there are a lot of mistakes for both sides, but I was eventually able to bring home the point.

53. ... Bxg1 54. h3 Bh2 55. Kh6 Bf4+ 56.

Kh5 Bd2 57. f6 Kg8 58. Ne7+ Kf8 59. Kg4 Bc1 60. h4 Bd2?? 61. h5 Bc1 62. Kf5? Bd2 63. Kg4 Bc1 64. Nf5 Ba3 65. Kf3 Bc1 66. Kg4 Ba3 67. Kh4 Bb4 68. Ne3 Bd2 69. Ng4 Bf4 70. Kh3 Kg8 71. Kg2 d5 72. exd5 e4 73. Nf2 e3 74. Ng4 Bg5 75. d6 Bf4 76. d7 Bc7 77. Nxe3 Kh7 78. Ng4, Black resigned.

This game changed my mindset quite a bit. Since I had just defeated the highest seed, I realized that there was no reason that I couldn't do the same with my other opponents. Having this thought process allowed me to play more calm and solid games, which, in turn, helped me have better results.

I kept a steady half-point lead for most of the tournament, but that was never enough for me to feel too comfortable. There was always the lingering feeling that anybody could catch up to me at any given moment.

The standings were very close by the final round. Three people could catch me — IM Ryo Chen, FM Brewington Hardaway, and IM Evan Park. If I lost, and if any of these three won, then they would win the tournament.

I was paired with the well-known prodigy FM Tanitoluwa “Tani” Adewumi in the final round, and I had the black pieces. Tani was having a tough tournament, but I know just how strong he is, so this game was going to be a challenge. Coming off a long, intense game with Hardaway that morning, I was tired, and so I was perfectly fine with a draw against Tani, as it would secure at least a tie for first.

But as we made our moves, I remembered a quote that went something like, “If you play for a draw, you will surely lose.” I changed my mindset: instead of playing for a draw, I played my best for a win. Here's what happened.

SICILIAN DEFENSE, ROSSO-LIMO VARIATION (B51)

FM Tanitoluwa Adewumi (2393)

FM Erick Zhao (2403)

U.S. Cadet Ch (7), Schaumburg,

06.25.2023

1. e4 c5 2. Nf3 d6 3. Bb5+ Nd7 4. c3 Ngf6 5. Bd3 b6!?

An interesting idea I prepared before the round. The main line is 5. ... g6 6. Bc2 Bg7 7. d4 0-0 8. 0-0 e5 9. dxe5 Nxe5 but I wanted to try to something different.

6. 0-0 Bb7 7. Re1 Rc8 8. Bc2 Qc7! 9. a4

Now 9. d4?! is not wise as White can't recapture with the pawn after 9. ... cxd4!.



IM Ryo Chen



FM Brewington Hardaway



IM Evan Park



9. ... a6 10. Na3 e6 11. d3 Be7 12. Bg5 0-0 13. Rc1 Rfe8 14. Qe2 Bc6?!

This move feels unnecessary, as the a6-pawn is undefended, and it limits the scope of my bishop. But I wanted to try to play ... b6-b5. Instead I think 14. ... e5! is better, as stopping d3-d4 is necessary.

15. d4! Qb7 16. Bd3 Ra8



Here I considered 16. ... b5, but it just loses a pawn without much compensation after 17. axb5 axb5 18. Bxb5 Bxb5 19. Qxb5 Qxb5 20. Nxb5.

17. Nd2?!

White likely passed up 17. e5! over fears of ... Bc6xf3, but the white bishops are quite strong after 17. ... Bxf3 (17. ... dxe5 18. dxe5 Bxf3 19. gxf3 Nd5 20. Bd2 is better for White) 18. gxf3 dxe5 19. Bxf6 gxf6 20. Be4 Qa7 21. Bxa8 Qxa8. White has an advantage, but Black is not without a bit of compensation for the Exchange.

17. ... Nf8 18. e5 dxe5 19. dxe5 Nd5 20. Qg4 Bxg5 21. Qxg5 Bxa4 22. Ne4 Qe7 23. Qg4

White's idea is Ne4-f6+, and the queen also 'looks' at the undefended a4-bishop.

23. ... Red8 24. Nd6 Bc6 25. Qg3 Ng6?!

After 25. ... f5! Black is a pawn up in a com-

fortable position. If 26. b4 Ng6 27. Nac4 cxb4 28. cxb4 Nxb4 and Black is a bit better.

26. Nac4 Rab8 27. Ra1 b5?!

Allowing Nc4-a5 gives White a lot of play. Instead 27. ... a5 is a lot less weakening.

28. Na5 Ba8 29. Bxg6 hxg6 30. Nb3!

Both the a6- and c5-pawns are attacked.

30. ... Qa7 31. Re4?!

During the game, 31. Ne4 annoyed me. If I protect the c-pawn, then White has ideas of Ne4-g5 and Qg3-h4. After 31. ... Ne7 32. Nbx5 Black no longer has any advantage, and White is the one who can think of playing for the win.

31. ... c4

I could have unbalanced the game with 31. ... Nxc3! 32. bxc3 Bxe4 33. Nxe4 c4 34. Nbd2! (34. Nd4? loses to 34. ... Rxd4 35. cxd4 Qxd4 36. Re1 b4) 34. ... Rd3. Here White's two knights are good, but my rooks can become active. Black has to play to push the queen-side pawns, while White can pressure the king with Qg3-h4, Ne4-g5, and Qh4-h7+.

32. Nd4?



Now the tactics start to work in Black's favor. Note that 32. Nd2 prevents Black's ideas.

32. ... Nxc3! 33. Rh4! Qxd4! 34. bxc3

If 34. Qh3 Ne2+! 35. Kf1 Bxg2+! 36. Kxg2 Nf4+, and 34. Rxd4 Ne2+ is a clean win.

34. ... Qd2?!

Here 34. ... Qd3 stops Qg3-h3, but after 35. Qf4 Black has to find 35. ... Rxd6 36. exd6 Qxc3 37. Rc1 Qf6 with good winning chances.

35. f4?

The final mistake.

I think 35. Qh3 leads to a draw: after 35. ... Kf8 36. Rg4 Black has to stop the queen from getting to the back rank with 36. ... Qh6 but now the position will repeat after 37. Rh4 Qd2.

35. ... b4 36. Qh3 Kf8 37. Nxc4 Qxc3 38.

Rh8+ Ke7 39. Qh4+ f6 40. exf6+ Qxf6 41.

Rxd8 Qxh4 42. Rxb8 Qxf4, White resigned.

Chess, in the end, is just a game, but our moves are woven from a tapestry of skill, mental strength, luck, and experience. Losing is inevitable, but learning from the mistakes is essential. All in all, this tournament not only provided a great experience playing with the best junior chess players in the nation, but also allowed us to socialize and forge connections beyond the chess board. This was one of my biggest chess wins, and I hope to build on it in tournaments to come! ♠

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

2023 U.S. Cadet Championship

SCHAUMBERG, IL, JUNE 22-25, 2023

			1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	
1	FM Erick Zhao	2403	*	½	½	1	1	½	½	1	5/7
2	IM Brewington Hardaway	2432	½	*	½	½	½	1	1	½	4½/7
3	FM Vishnu Vanapalli	2395	½	½	*	½	0	1	½	1	4/7
4	IM Ryo Chen	2435	0	½	½	*	½	½	1	1	4/7
5	Harshid Kunka	2367	0	½	1	½	*	½	½	½	3½/7
6	IM Evan Park	2487	½	0	0	½	½	*	1	1	3½/7
7	FM Eric Li	2367	½	0	½	0	½	0	*	½	2/7
8	FM Tanitoluwa Adewumi	2393	0	½	0	0	½	0	½	*	1½/7

MAKE YOUR MOVE

BY **FM CARSTEN HANSEN**

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

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

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

TACTIC 1.



WHITE TO MOVE

TACTIC 2.



WHITE TO MOVE

TACTIC 3.



BLACK TO MOVE

TACTIC 4.



WHITE TO MOVE

TACTIC 5.



WHITE TO MOVE

TACTIC 6.



BLACK TO MOVE

TACTIC 7.



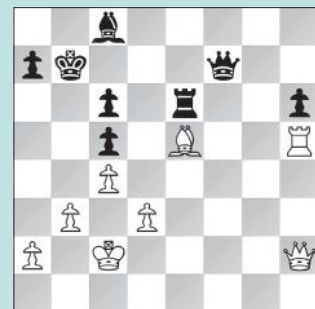
BLACK TO MOVE

TACTIC 8.



BLACK TO MOVE

TACTIC 9.



BLACK TO MOVE

Position 1: MAKING CRATERS

Position 2: HIT THE ESSENTIAL DEFENDER

Position 3: PUSH BEFORE YOU SHOVE

Position 4: ELIMINATE THE RIGHT PIECES

Position 5: POUNDING THE PIN

Position 6: MAKING A HOLE

Position 7: POOR COORDINATION

Position 8: CROSSFIRE

Position 9: IT HURTS IN THE DEEP



EXPERIENCE & EXUBERANCE

Khachiyan, Mishra, and Lee prevail in National Championships.

BY GM ELSHAN MORADIABADI

WHAT HAVE COME to be known as the “National Championships” — the U.S. Junior, Girls’ Junior, and Senior Championships — are always intriguing events. You see players in the junior sections who are sometimes a half-century younger than their senior colleagues, and the meeting of the generations is a visual bonanza!

But the chess, too, is enchanting, and there’s a lot at stake for everyone. Sponsored by the Saint Louis Chess Club, and with a total of more than \$135,000 in prizes, including \$75,000 for the Seniors, winning here can be a nice boost to the bank account. The Junior and Girls’ Junior champions also earn spots in the U.S. Championships, along with \$10,000 scholarships to the institution of their choice thanks to the generous sup-

port of the Dewain Barber Foundation and US Chess.

Given the importance of these tournaments, it is not a surprise that all kinds of opening preparation, deep engine analysis, and deep ideas are poured into the games of these old heads and young bloods. Thanks to their new training partner Leela — the engine, of course! — the young players in particular have dazzling calculative abilities and a great sense of dynamics. If fans were served an excellent main dish by the junior players, where do I get my starter and dessert?

The answer was just a few feet away, where the veterans — who have won several world team championship titles in the past few years — were playing. These legends of American chess inspired a lot of players during their impressive careers, and while their tactical prowess may be in decline due to the inevitability of time, their massive classical knowledge and immeasurable experience offered viewers a lot of original positions and content to study.

Now that you know my full-course menu, let’s dive into some exciting games that will

entertain and also enrich our knowledge of our favorite pastime!



Renowned coach and trainer GM Melikset Khachiyan stole the show from day one of the Senior championship. His first-round victory over top seed GM Vladimir Akopian gave him the necessary boost.

SICILIAN DEFENSE, KAN VARIATION (B41)

GM Melikset Khachiyan (2462)

GM Vladimir Akopian (2691)

U.S. Senior Ch (1), St. Louis, 07.15.2023

1. e4 c5 2. Nf3 e6 3. d4 cxd4 4. Nxd4 a6 5. c4

A wise decision. Khachiyan grabs space against his higher-rated opponent.

5. ... Nf6 6. Nc3 Qc7 7. a3 b6 8. Be3 Bb7

9. f3 Be7 10. Rc1

Melik chooses the classical set up. He prob-

Left: There is no joy like victory, and our new champions — Melik Khachiyan, Alice Lee, and Abhimanyu Mishra — wear it well.



GM Melik Khachiyan



GM Max Dlugy



Khachiyan versus Akopian, round one

ably wasn't aware that these days people go for: 10. Qd2 d6 11. Be2 0-0 12. Rc1 Nbd7 13. g4! as the engines scream an advantage for White here, aiming for a Scheveningen with the pawn on c4!

10. ... 0-0 11. Be2 d6 12. 0-0

With 12. Qd2 he could still try the same setup! For example, 12. ... Nbd7 (12. ... Re8) 13. g4 Qd8 (or 13. ... Rfc8 14. g5 Ne8 15. h4) 14. g5 Nh5 and now the very modern 15. Kd1!.

12. ... Nbd7 13. b4 Rac8 14. Qd2 Qb8 15. Rfd1 Rfe8 16. Bf1



Thematic. White clears the e-file to make sure ... d6-d5 does not offer extra tactical resources to Black.

16. ... Ne5

There was a time that ... Kg8-h8 followed by ... Re8-g8 and ... g7-g5 was considered a thing. We see these ideas on Fischer – Andersson (with reversed colors; Fischer began with 1. b3) and Taimanov – Yusupov. I studied both games in one of Dvoretsky's books, but sadly, the engines brutally refute the plan today!

17. Na4 Ba8 18. Nb3?!

White understandably missed 18. Nxb6!?, which is a 2700+ idea. After 18. ... Qxb6 19. Nf5 Qc7 20. Nxe7+ Qxe7 21. Qxd6 Nd5 22. Qxe7 Nxe7 23. c5 one needs to correctly evaluate this piece-down position as better for White on top of accurately calculating the lines. A tough road to travel!

18. ... Nxc4 19. Bxc4 b5 20. Nb6 bxc4 21. Nxc8

Alternatively, 21. Na5 d5 22. Nxc8 Rxc8 23. exd5 exd5 leads to a similar balance.

21. ... Rxc8 22. Nd4

Here 22. Na5 was better.

22. ... d5 23. Bf4!

A concrete way to maintain the balance. After 23. exd5 Khachiyan realized that Black has the option of 23. ... Nxd5.

23. ... e5?!

This is a bluff.

24. Nf5?!

Khachiyan responds with the obvious move, but after 24. Bg3 g6 25. exd5 Nxd5 26. Ne2 a5 27. Nc3 Nxc3 28. Qxc3 axb4 29. axb4 Qb6+ 30. Bf2 Qb5 31. Be3 Bxb4 32. Rb1 Bxc3 33. Rxb5 Black's problems remain.

24. ... Bf8 25. Bg5 dxe4 26. Bxf6 Qb6+ 27. Qe3 Qxf6 28. fxe4 a5 29. Qh3!

Another accurate move by Melik to maintain the balance.

29. ... Qe6?



An unfortunate blunder.

30. Nd6!

A queen trade is now forced.

30. ... Qxh3 31. gxh3 Bxd6 32. Rxd6 g6 33. Rcd1!

Classical play by Khachiyan, showing perfect judgement. White has to trade the rooks. The rest is not just a matter of technique — it's more basic than that.

33. ... Rf8 34. Rd8 Bxe4 35. bxa5 Bb7 36. Rxf8+ Kxf8 37. Rd7 Ba6 38. Rd6, Black resigned.

While sitting at a modest 2403 FIDE rating before the tournament began, most people knew that “Melik” was far stronger than this number intimated. Still an active player, he has lost most of his rating during grueling double-round weekend tournaments. But steel sharpens steel; playing continuously has kept Melik in good form. He hardly made any blunders in St. Louis, which proved critical to his success.

Khachiyan remained solid throughout the tournament, and he mercilessly exploited his opponents’ mistakes at every opportunity. His final score of 7/9, a full 1½ points ahead of second-place finisher GM Alexander Shabalov, is a testimony to his form and real strength.

In the days before the tournament began, Khachiyan was not anyone’s top pick to fight for the title. I personally considered Akopian, Shabalov, and GM Gregory Kaidanov to be the three leading contenders. My prediction was not too off, as all three finished in the top half of the field.

I suspect that Akopian will view his tournament as a bit of a disappointment, but the former FIDE world championship finalist showed his positional skills in his victories. The win over GM Maxim Dlugy was particularly eye-catching.

LONDON SYSTEM (A45)

GM Maxim Dlugy (2620)

GM Vladimir Akopian (2691)

U.S. Senior Ch (6), St. Louis, 07.21.2023

1. d4 Nf6 2. Bf4

Dlugy has played the London and its sidelines almost exclusively for years now.

2. ... c5 3. dxc5

Objectively not the best move.

3. ... Na6

A bit provocative. Sufficient for a draw is 3. ... e6, as seen in last year’s event: 4. Bd6 Bxd6 5. Qxd6 (5. cxd6 Qb6 6. b3 Ne4 7. e3 Qxd6 8. Qxd6 Nxd6 9. c4 is equal) 5. ... Qe7 (5. ... Na6 6. Nc3 Qe7 transposes) 6. Nc3 Na6 7. Nb5 Ne4 (7. ... Kf8!?) 8. Qxe7+ Kxe7 9. f3 Nex5 10. e4 Nb4 as in Dlugy – D. Gurevich, St. Louis 2022.

4. e4 Nxe4 5. Bxa6 Qa5+ 6. b4 Qxa6

The position is equal, but there are imbalances all over the board.

7. Qd4 d5?!

Here 7. ... Qf6!? is one idea, while 7. ... Nf6 8. c4 d6 9. cxd6 Be6 10. Nd2 exd6 is more to the point for Black, focusing on the two bishops.

8. Ne2 e6 9. Nbc3?!

Here 9. f3 Nf6 10. a4 would give White a pleasant advantage.

9. ... Nxc3 10. Nxc3 f6!



11. Qd3?

A serious error, one that is almost losing on the spot.

White needed to play 11. a4, when a lot of interesting ideas pour into the position. I put together a few sample lines for you as entertainment, but you should consider analyzing this without an engine for fun: 11. ... e5 12. Qxd5 exf4 (or 12. ... Be6 13. Qe4 0-0-0 [not 13. ... exf4 14. b5 with a tremendous position] 14. Be3 Qc4 15. Qxc4 Bxc4 16. a5 f5 17. Bd2! and White castles queenside with an edge) 13. Nb5 (White is worse after 13. 0-0-0 Be6 14. Rhe1 Kf7) 13. ... Be6 14. Nc7+ Kf7 15. Qe4 f5 16. Qe5 Qc4 17. 0-0-0 and now only 17. ... f3! keeps Black in the game. What a mess!

11. ... Qxd3 12. cxd3 a5!

A smart lever.

13. Na4 axb4!

This is the key point — Black demolishes White’s barricade.

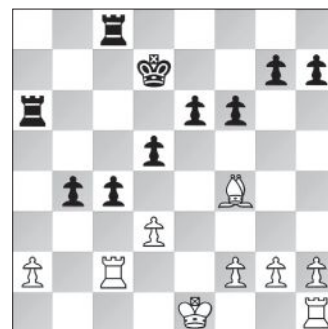
14. Nb6 Ra6 15. Nxc8 Bxc5 16. Rc1 b6 17. Nd6+

I think 17. d4 Bxd4 18. Rc7 was a better practical decision.

17. ... Kd7 18. Nb7 Rc8

Now 18. ... e5 was probably more accurate, and Black is better after 19. Rxc5 exf4 20. 0-0 Rxa2 21. Rxd5+ Kc6 22. Rd4 b3 23. Nd6 b5.

19. Nxc5+ bxc5 20. Rc2 c4



21. Rb2?

Tantamount to resignation.

After 21. Bc1!! I was surprised that I couldn’t find a clear win. For example, (a) 21. ... c3 22. d4 Kc6 23. Ke2 e5 24. dxe5 fxe5 25. f3 Rca8 26. a3 Kb5 27. Kd3 bxa3 28. Bg5 a2 29. Ra1 d4 30. Re2 is what a GM would play “by hand,” or by intuition, but as you can see this is not winning at all. If (b) 21. ... cxd3 22. Rxc8 Kxc8 23. Kd2 Rxa2+ 24. Kxd3 and now 24. ... Rxf2 is the best try. The position after 25. Rg1 is harder to hold, but I still don’t see how Black wins.

21. ... e5 22. Bc1 cxd3 23. Kd1 Rac6 24.

Bd2 Rc2 25. Rxc2 Rxc2 26. Bxb4 Rxf2 27.

Bd2 Rxg2 28. a4 Rg4 29. a5 Ra4 30. Rg1 g5

31. Rg3 Ra1+ 32. Bc1 e4 33. Kd2 Rxa5 34.

Rh3 Ra2+ 35. Kd1 Ke6 36. Rxh7 d4 37. Rh3

Rg2, White resigned.

A neat victory for Akopian, and a reminder of why he was at a super-GM level at his peak.



In the Junior section, things panned out rather differently.

Five players had a chance to clinch the title, or at least tie for first place, as the final round kicked off. GM Abhimanyu Mishra and IM Arthur Guo shared first with 5½/8, with GMs Balaji Daggupatti, Andrew Hong, and Brandon Jacobson, were right behind them with five points.

With Daggupatti having the white pieces against Mishra, and Guo taking White against IM Kirk Ghazarian, it seemed that the odds might be leaning towards Guo. Both Mishra and Guo obtained good advantages as the games progressed, with Mishra even winning at one point. But Guo lost to Ghazarian in a long endgame, and neither Jacobson nor Hong could get anything in their head-to-head encounter. This meant that Mishra’s draw with Daggupatti was enough to clinch the title with 6/9.

Looking at the games from the Junior for this article, I was struck by the topsy-turvy feel of the rounds, and the many fighting games. What really stood out was the high level of opening preparation in theoretically fashionable lines, along with a heavy tendency towards dynamic play. Here are a few examples that caught my eye.

RUY LOPEZ (C84)

IM Jason Liang (2585)

GM Brandon Jacobson (2608)

U.S. Junior Ch (1), St. Louis, 07.15.2023

In this game, Brandon Jacobson demonstrated his strength and obtained a convincing advantage. However, the game got a bit messy in the technical phase.

1. e4 e5 2. Nf3 Nc6 3. Bb5 a6 4. Ba4 Nf6
5. 0-0 Be7 6. d3 d6
Brandon's pet line.

7. c3 0-0 8. Re1 Re8 9. h3 Bf8
Jacobson prefers to postpone ... g7-g5. Liang's next moves are provocative.

10. Bg5
The loss of tempo with 10. c4!? actually makes sense. After 10. ... Bd7 11. Be3, followed by Nb1-c3 and d3-d4, you have a solid Maroczy where White has a long-lasting advantage. It would be the choice of a classical player, but Liang prefers to play for dynamics.

10. ... h6 11. Bh4 g5!
A must.

12. Bg3 Bg7 13. Nbd2 b5 14. Bc2 Bb7?!
Aiming for the ... d6-d5 break, but this move weakens the f5-square.

15. Nf1 Ne7 16. Ne3 Ng6



17. Nf5
The engine thinks a few moves are of equal worth here, but I believe that 17. h4! is best. White has a solid advantage after 17. ... g4

18. Nh2 Bc8 19. Nf5 (19. Nhxg4?! Nxe4 20. Nxe4 Nxe4 allows Black practical play with ... Qd8-g5) 19. ... h5 20. Nxe7 Kxe7 21. d4.

17. ... Ne7 18. Nxe7

First 18. Ne3 and then h3-h4 was better, but Liang's mind was already made up.

18. ... Kxe7 19. h4?!

Wrong timing. The h-file only helps Black.

19. ... Ng6 20. hxe5 hxe5 21. Nxe5 Rh8
22. Bb3 Rh5!

From here Jacobson is highly accurate, making the most out of his initiative.

23. Qd2?!

Liang had to go for chaos with 23. Nxf7 Qe7 24. d4.

23. ... Qh8 24. Kf1 d5!

Opening lines to White's king. The weak e5-pawn is unimportant.

25. exd5 Nxd5 26. f3 Re8!

Preparing ... Qh8-h6.

If 26. ... Qh6 immediately, White is fine after 27. Bxd5 Bxd5 28. Ne4 Nf4 29. Bxf4 exf4 30. Qf2 because the rook needs to be on e8 for ... f7-f5 to work.

27. Nh3

If 27. d4 Qh6 28. Bxd5 (28. Ne4? Ndf4!) 28. ... Bxd5 29. Ne4 Bc4+ 30. Kf2 f5 and Black will win a piece with ... f5-f4.

27. ... Nde7 28. Ng1?

This loses by force.

28. ... Nf5 29. Bf2 Rh2?

Now begins a series of mistakes in time pressure. Black could have won a crucial tempo with 29. ... Rh1 30. Ke2 Rh2!.

30. Qg5?

After 30. d4 Rh1 31. Qg5 Rh5 32. Qd2 e4 the position was still dangerous, but White could fight with 33. d5, and if 33. ... exf3 34. g4!.

30. ... Bc8 31. d4 f6 32. Qd2

(see diagram top of next column)

32. ... Rxe2??

The engine gives the somewhat paradoxical 32. ... Rd8! 33. Re4 Rh1 34. Rg4 Qh2 35. Re1 c5 36. Re4 c4 37. Bc2 Kf7 and evaluates the position as -3. I can understand why Black is winning, but the win itself is not trivial. Perhaps this is because the position doesn't bear the classical traits of a king attack.



33. Kxe2 Nf4+ 34. Kf1 Qh2 35. Re4??

A slip in a difficult position, but both players begin to hallucinate! Only 35. Re2 Qg2+ 36. Ke1 Nxe2 37. Qxe2! saves the day; for example, 37. ... Ng3 38. Qe3 Nf5 39. Qe2 with equality.

35. ... Ng3??

The correct 35. ... Qg2+ 36. Ke1 Ng3 wins; if 37. Bxe3 Qxe3 mate.

36. Ke1??

The last mistake, transposing to the line above. White could still win with two minor pieces and a rook for the queen after 36. Bxe3! Qxd2 37. Bxf4 Qxb2 38. Rd1.

36. ... Qg2!

Back on track. Now Brandon gets through the time pressure and finds his way.

37. Kd1 Nxe4 38. fxe4 Bg4+ 39. Kc1 Qf1+ 40. Be1 exd4! 41. Bd1 Nd3+ 42. Kb1 Rxe4 43. Bxe4 Rxe1+ 44. Kc2 Nb4+ 45. Kb3 Qc4+ 46. Ka3 Rxa1 47. b3 Qxc3, White resigned.

A messy game indeed! But the position after the opening was quite dynamic, and the risk of going wrong was high. This time it was Liang who lost the thread first.

CATALAN OPENING (E04)

GM Abhimanyu Mishra (2591)

GM Arthur Guo (2586)

U.S. Junior Ch (1), St. Louis, 07.15.2023

1. d4 Nf6 2. c4 e6 3. Nf3 d5 4. g3 dxc4
5. Bg2 Bd7 6. Ne5 Bc6 7. Nxc6 Nxc6 8. 0-0 Qd7 9. e3 Rd8 10. Qc2 e5 11. dxe5 Nxe5
12. Nd2 b5 13. a4 Bb4 14. axb5 Qxb5
15. f4 Nd3 16. Qxc4

Both players have demonstrated excellent preparation. Who will have gone deeper in this novel position?

16. ... Qc5 17. Bc6+ Ke7 18. Qxc5+ Bxc5
19. Nc4 Rb8 20. Rd1 Rhd8



21. Kf1

Now Kf1-e2 is a threat. Black needs to attack the c4-knight.

21. ... Kf8?!

Correct is 21. ... Rb4 22. b3 Ng4 (22. ... Rxb3?! 23. Ba4 Rc3 24. Na5 Rd6 25. Bd2 Ra3 26. Rxa3 Bxa3 27. Nc4 Rd5! with a probable draw, eventually) 23. Ke2 Rxb3 with dynamic balance. Black has nothing to worry about after 24. Bd2 Nb2 25. Rab1 Rdb8.

22. Ke2 Nxc1+ 23. Raxc1 Rxd1 24. Rxd1 Rb4 25. Kd3 Ng4 26. Rd2

Now it is a bit uncomfortable.

26. ... Rb8?!

And more uncomfortable still.

27. Ke2!

White threatens to play e4-e5.

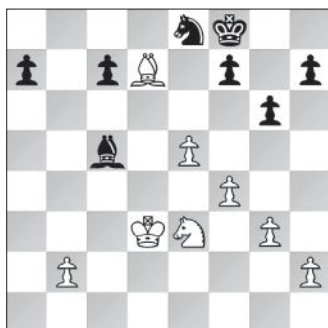
27. ... Nf6

Not 27. ... Nxh2? 28. Ne5.

28. e4 Be7?!

Now Black is worse, and the knight goes passive. After 28. ... g6! 29. e5 Ng8 the knight re-emerges via the e7-square.

29. e5 Ne8 30. Rd7 g6 31. Kd3 Rd8 32. Ne3 Rxd7+ 33. Bxd7 Bc5



34. Nd5?

This gives Black a golden opportunity to save the day. After 34. Bxe8! Kxe8 35. g4 c6 36. Ke4 Ke7 37. Nc2 a5 38. Nd4 Kd7 39. b3

White has good winning chances.

34. ... Bg1! 35. h3 Ng7

More to the point was 35. ... Bh2 36. g4 g5.

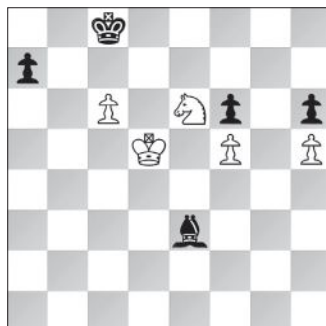
36. g4 c5?! 37. f5?

Hasty. With 37. Ke4 Ne6 38. Bb5 Black should give up the c-pawn; else White is winning with Bb5-c4, h2-h4 and f4-f5.

37. ... gxf5 38. gxf5 Bd4 39. b4 Bxe5 40. bxc5 Ne8 41. c6 f6

Avoiding 41. ... Nc7?? 42. Nxc7 Bxc7 43. f6 and White marches his king to b7.

42. Bxe8 Kxe8 43. Kc4 Kd8 44. Kc5 Kc8 45. Kb5 Bb2 46. h4 Be5 47. h5 Bb2 48. Nf4 Bc1 49. Ne6 Be3 50. Nf8 h6 51. Ne6 Kb8 52. Kc4 Kc8 53. Kd5



53. ... Bd2??

Finally Black breaks under the pressure. The fortress is impenetrable after 53. ... a6! 54. Kc4 Bf2 55. Kb4 Bb6.

54. Nc5!

Now White has a path.

54. ... a5 55. Kc4 Kc7 56. Kb5 Be3 57. Ne6+ Kd6 58. c7 Kd7 59. Kxa5 Bf4 60. Nxf4 Kxc7 61. Kb5 Kd6 62. Ne6 Ke5 63. Ng7 Kd5 64. Kb6 Kd6 65. Kb7 Kd7 66. Ne6, Black resigned.

SICILIAN DEFENSE, FOUR KNIGHTS VARIATION (B45)

IM Josiah Stearman (2551)

GM Balaji Daggupati (2571)

U.S. Junior Ch (4), St. Louis, 07.18.2023

1. e4 c5 2. Nf3 e6 3. d4 cxd4 4. Nxd4 Nf6 5. Nc3 Nc6

The Sicilian Four Knights is a new focus of theoretical debate, highly publicized thanks to games among the world's elite.

6. Nxc6 bxc6 7. e5 Nd5 8. Ne4 c5!?

The long-time mainline was 8. ... Qc7



GM Balaji Daggupati



GM Abhimanyu Mishra

9. f4 Qb6, but Leela and her colleagues have shown that many other ideas are playable in this opening.

9. a3?!

Too passive. White has an edge after 9. Bd3 Qc7 10. c4 Nb4 11. Bf4 f5 12. Nd6+ Bxd6 13. exd6 Qb6 14. 0-0 0-0 15. Re1. Black needs to play ... Nb4-c6, ... Bc8-b7, ... Ra8-b8, and ... a7-a5. Capturing on d3 gives White a free hand to open the game. The queenside comes under pressure (after ... Nb4xd3) with Qd3-c3 and Bf4-e5, forcing ... Rf8-f7 and thereby cutting the rook off from queenside action.

9. ... Bb7 10. c4 Nb4 11. axb4 Bxe4 12. b5 a6! Black has totally equalized.

13. bxa6 Qb6 14. Qa4 Qb8 15. f4 Be7 16. h4?!

I'm not sure what this accomplishes. The alternative 16. a7 Qb7 17. Qa6 Qb3 18. Qa3 Qb7 doesn't offer much either, but White could at least try Rh1-g1 with g2-g3 or repeat the position.

16. ... f6 17. a7 Qb7 18. Rh3?



A delighted Mishra checking his game after the final round.

Overly optimistic. White misses a key tactical idea.

18. ... fxe5 19. Rb3 Rxa7! 20. Rxb7 Bxb4+ 21. Kd1 Rxa4

White must have forgotten that after Rb7-b8+, Black simply moves his king and both rooks attack each other!

22. Rxa4 Bxb7

The dust is settled, and Black is winning.

23. b4 exf4 24. Ra7 Be4 25. b5 Ke7 26. Bxf4 Rf8 27. g3 g5 28. Be3 Rxf1+ 29. Ke2 Rf5 30. gxh4 gxh4 31. b6 Kd6 32. b7 Kc7 33. b8=R+ Kxb8 34. Rxd7 Rh5 35. Bf4+ Kc8 36. Rd2 h3 37. Ke3 Bg2 38. Kf2 Rf5 39. Kg3 Rxf4 40. Kxf4 h2 41. Rxd2 h1=Q, White resigned.



Much of what I said about the Junior Championship also applies to the Girls' Junior, albeit with a bit of a twist: the games were more diverse and, it seems to me, more based on choice of pawn structures rather than detailed tactical sequences.

This tournament saw IM-elect Alice Lee make an early run for the title. While I expected a close rivalry between Alice and IM Carissa Yip, the 2021 U.S. Women's Champion, it turned out that Yip fell behind from the start, especially after losing their direct encounter in round seven, when Yip lost after overpressing in a complicated endgame. Their game was full of ups and downs, but I was particularly interested in the opening phase. Let me tell the story in the notes.

CENTER GAME (C22)

IM Carissa Yip (2470)

FM Alice Lee (2461)

U.S. Girls' Junior Ch (7), St. Louis, 07.22.2023

1. e4 e5 2. d4 exd4 3. Qxd4 Nc6 4. Qc4!?

Back in 2020, during the depths of COVID-19, I discussed this option extensively with none other than GM Alexander Shabalov! As it turned out, I won with the black pieces in this line against Shabba's friend, GM Jaan Ehlevest, in the 2021 U.S. Championship qualifier.

4. ... Nf6 5. Nc3 Bb4 6. Bd2 0-0 7. 0-0-0 Re8 8. f3

Both ... d7-d6 and ... a7-a5 make sense. Black needs to win as many tempi as she can by

taking advantage of White's awkwardly placed queen.

8. ... a5 9. g4

This must have been Carissa's prep. Ehlevest played 9. a3 — maybe he and Shabalov had separately discussed this among themselves. It's a move that Ehlevest had used to defeat Tang earlier, which I only realized belatedly after the games made it to the online database: 9. ... Ne5 (9. ... d6!? 10. Qa2 Be6 11. Bc4 Qd7 12. Nge2 Bc5 13. Bg5 Nb4? 14. Qb3! was seen in Ehlevest – Tang, *Chess.com* 2020) 10. Qa2 d6 11. Bc4 Nxc4 12. Qxc4 Be6 13. Qd3 Nd7 14. axb4 Ne5 15. Qe3 axb4 16. b3 Ra1+ 17. Nb1 Qa8 18. Qd4 c5 and White resigned in Ehlevest – Moradiabadi, *Chess.com* 2020.

9. ... d5?!

Principled but inaccurate. Instead 9. ... Ne5 10. Qd4 d6 11. Qf2 c6! leads to a double-edged position where I prefer to be Black. Engines estimate this as roughly equal, but I like a position where one is ahead in development. I guess that reads into my personal bias toward classical ideas!

10. exd5 Ne5 11. Qd4 c6 12. Bf4 Bxc3

13. Qxc3 Nxd5 14. Qd4



The game should lead to a balanced position, but it remains tactically sharp.

14. ... Nxg4! 15. Ne2

Here 15. fxg4? is met with 15. ... Bxg4 and the d1-rook cannot move. White must try 16. Bh6 Qf6 17. Qxf6 Nxf6 18. Bd2 Bxd1 19. Kxd1 Ng4 but this is good for Black.

15. ... Qf6?

An oversight. Correct was 15. ... Qh4! 16. fxg4 Bxg4 17. Bg3 Qh6+ 18. Qd2 Bxe2 19. Bxe2 Rxe2 20. Qxh6 gxh6 21. Rhg1 f6 22. c4 with a balanced endgame. Black cannot hold on to her extra pawns for too long.

16. fxg4 Bxg4 17. Qxf6 Nxf6 18. Nc3?

After 18. Rd2 Ne4, the move 19. Ng3! is what Carissa missed. Now if 19. ... Nxd2 20. Bxd2

White has time to use the bishops, while in the game, White was under immediate pressure from Black.

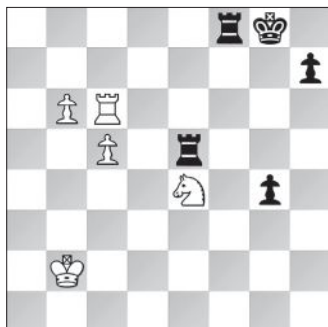
18. ... Bxd1 19. Nxd1 Ne4 20. Rg1 g6?!

Losing valuable time. Better was with 20. ... a4 21. Bd3 a3 with counterplay.

21. Ne3?! f6?

In what follows, Lee got the best of her celebrated opponent in a topsy-turvy battle.

22. a4 Kh8 23. Nc4 Nc5 24. Be3 Nxa4 25. Bd4 Kg7 26. b3 Rad8 27. Bf2 Nc3 28. Nxa5 Ne2+ 29. Bxe2 Rxe2 30. Be1 Rde8 31. Bg3 Ra8 32. Re1 Rg2 33. Bc7 g5 34. Kb2 f5 35. Nxb7 Rf8 36. Re6 f4 37. Be5+ Kf7 38. Rf6+ Kg8 39. Rxc6 Re8 40. Bd4 f3 41. Nd6 Rf8 42. b4 Rd2 43. Bc5 f2 44. Bxf2 Rdx2 45. b5 Rxh2 46. b6 Rhf2 47. Ne4 R2f5 48. c4 g4 49. c5 Re5



Both sides have been walking a tightrope; now Yip slips as she strains to find a path to victory.

50. Ng3?

The correct 50. Nf6+ leads to a draw after

50. ... Rxf6 (or 50. ... Kg7 51. Nxg4 Re4 52. Rc7+ Kg6 53. b7 Rxxg4 54. Rc8 Rb4+ 55. Kc3 Rxb7 56. Rxf8 Rc7) 51. Rxf6 Rxc5 52. Rf4 h5 53. Rb4 Rc8! 54. Rb5 with equality.

50. ... Re3! 51. Rd6 Rxxg3 52. c6 Rf2+ 53. Kc1 Ra3 54. Rd2 Rc3+ 55. Kb2 Rxc6 56. Rxf2 Rxb6+ 57. Kc3 Kg7 58. Kd4 Rf6 59. Rg2 h5 60. Ke4 Kg6, White resigned.

It's true that Lee was perhaps a bit lucky against Yip, but overall she played excellent chess. Here we can see her positional understanding of the Carlsbad structure in a win over Atwell.

QUEEN'S GAMBIT DECLINED (D31)

FM Alice Lee (2461)

Rose Atwell (2236)

U.S. Girls' Junior Ch (3), St. Louis, 07.17.2023

Alice Lee is simply unstoppable. I am convinced that she can be the next American woman to become a strong GM. In this game, she demonstrated her knowledge of classical ideas with style.

1. d4 d5 2. c4 e6 3. Nc3 Be7 4. cxd5 exd5 5. Bf4 c6 6. e3 Bd6 7. Bxd6 Qxd6 8. Bd3 Nf6

A bit inaccurate. After 8. ... Ne7 (intending ... Bc8-f5, which is thwarted by White's next move) 9. Qc2 Black has shown how to

Right, top to bottom: Rose Atwell, FM Ruiyang Yan, FM Rochelle Wu and IM Carissa Yip. Below: Lee paces during her game with Yip.





Left: Lee appeared on *GMA3* in New York the day after her victory. She told *Chess Life Kids* that she enjoyed seeing Times Square!

In the end Lee ran away with the event, scoring a gigantic $7\frac{1}{2}$ /9 to end a point and a half ahead of FM Ruiyang Yan with six points. Finishing a further half-point back were Yip and FM Zoey Tang at $5\frac{1}{2}$ /9. Yan had a solid tournament, but her third-round loss to Tang, and a missed chance against Atwell in round one, proved too much to overcome.



To sum up: all three tournaments brought a lot of exciting games to fans and content creators, and it was interesting to note the various clashes of styles in all three events. I found it quite fun to look through these games; compared to top-level chess, where the openings have little diversity, here we found all kinds of battles.

Your task, then, is to go and look at the other games — I'm told there are plenty of well-annotated battles from the Championships on *Chess Life Online* — and enjoy the diverse openings, plans, blunders and just plain excitement of high-level chess! ♠

For round-by-round reports with annotated games on *CLO*, visit new.uschess.org/2023-us-national-championships

equalize in correspondence play: 9. ... b6!? 10. Nf3 Ba6 11. 0-0 Bxd3 12. Qxd3 0-0 13. Rac1 Nd7 14. Rc2 Qg6 15. Qxg6 hxg6 16. Rfc1 f6 was passive but solid in Rau – Lehnhoff, ICCF 2020.

9. Qc2

The alternative 9. Nge2 0-0 10. Qd2 (10. Ng3 Re8 11. 0-0 g6 12. Qd2 Nbd7 13. f3 Nf8 14. Rad1 Bd7 15. Bc2 h5 16. e4 was seen two days later in Z.Tang – Atwell, St. Louis 2023) 10. ... a5 11. f3 c5 12. Nb5 Qe7 13. dxc5 was played in Tarjan – Atwell, Larry Evans Memorial 2023, and analyzed by Tarjan in the June issue of *Chess Life*.

9. ... 0-0 10. Nge2 Re8 11. h3 a5 12. 0-0 Nbd7 13. Rab1

White should have gone for the f2-f3 / e3-e4 break by playing 13. Qd2.

13. ... Qe7 14. a3 Ne4?

Strategically unsound. White obtains a better pawn structure.

15. Bxe4 dxe4 16. Ng3 Nf6 17. Rfd1 h5



18. d5!

The correct plan by Alice!

18. ... h4 19. d6 Qd8?

Now Black loses a pawn. After 19. ... Qe6 20. Ngxe4!? Nxe4 21. Nxe4 Qxe4 22. Qxe4 Rxe4 23. d7 Bxd7 24. Rxd7 Rb8 25. Rc1 Black has a long way to get a draw in this endgame.

20. Ngxe4 Nxe4 21. Nxe4 Bf5 22. f3 Qg5?!

23. Qc5! Qg6 24. d7 Red8 25. Rd6 f6 26.

Qc4+

Or 26. Rbd1 first.

26. ... Kh8 27. Rbd1 Bxh3 28. R1d2 Bf5 29.

Nf2 Qg3 30. R6d4 g5 31. Qf7 h3 32. Qxf6+

Kg8 33. Nxh3 Bxh3 34. Qg6+ Kf8 35. Rd6

Rxd7 36. Rxd7 Bxd7 37. Qh6+ Kg8 38.

Rxd7, Black resigned.

2023 U.S. SENIOR, JUNIOR AND GIRLS' JUNIOR CHAMPIONSHIPS AT A GLANCE

ST. LOUIS | JULY 15-25, 2023

JUNIOR CHAMPIONSHIP

1st: GM Abhimanyu Mishra, 6/9. **2nd-5th:** GMs Balaji Daggupati, Andrew Hong, Brandon Jacobson, IM Arthur Guo, $5\frac{1}{2}$. **6th-7th:** IMs Kirk Ghazarian, Justin Wang, 5. **8th-9th:** IM Jason Liang, Josiah Stearman, 3. **10th:** FM Arthur Xu, 1.

GIRLS' JUNIOR CHAMPIONSHIP

1st: FM Alice Lee, $7\frac{1}{2}$ /9. **2nd:** FM Ruiyang Yan, 6. **3rd-4th:** IM Carissa Yip, FM Zoey Tang, $5\frac{1}{2}$. **5th:** WIM Iris Mou, $4\frac{1}{2}$. **6th:** FM Rochelle Wu, 4. **7th:** WCM Shreya Mangalam, $3\frac{1}{2}$. **8th-9th:** WFM Gracy Prasanna, Kelsey Liu, 3. **10th:** Rose Atwell, $2\frac{1}{2}$.

SENIOR CHAMPIONSHIP

1st: GM Melikset Khachiyan, 7/9. **2nd:** GM Alexander Shabalov, $5\frac{1}{2}$. **3rd:** GM Vladimir Akopian, 5. **4th-5th:** GMs Maxim Dlugy, Gregory Kaidanov, $4\frac{1}{2}$. **6th-7th:** GMs Joel Benjamin, Patrick Wolff, 4. **8th-10th:** GMs Dmitry Gurevich, Igor Novikov, IM Douglas Root, $3\frac{1}{2}$.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



For help forming teams contact
esdoyle@aol.com

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



A Clear Head

How balance and mindset sent me to the World Cup!

BY IM JOSIAH STEARMAN

IT WAS THE MIDDLE OF March 2023. I was hanging out with GM Fidel Corrales Jimenez at Lambert International Airport, waiting for our flights after playing in the Saint Louis Super Swiss. As fellow competitors sometimes do, we were discussing our feelings about the event, along with our travel plans for the near future.

Fidel mentioned his ambitious goal of making it back to 2600, and I shared my struggles around achieving my own grandmaster title. In some ways, our goals were miles apart, but we both felt motivated to achieve them. During our conversation he noted that the American Continental Championships were coming up in less than two months. Little did we know how auspicious this tournament would be — at time of writing, Fidel is now over 2550 FIDE, with a World Open title to his name, and I am at 2450 FIDE with a second GM norm, achieved at the American Continental.

I shared my travel plans with my friend and organizing partner, IM Aleksander Ostrovskiy. We have been running norm events here in the States through 1000GM, but the thought of a new playing location was enticing. So we caught a jetBlue flight from JFK to Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic, and soon arrived at the playing site, the Emotions Resort in Juan Dolio.

Met with a one-hour check-in line and tropical humidity, we were thankful to settle into an air-conditioned room. After a tour of the facilities, we planned our daily routines. They say the most important meal of the day is breakfast, so we were sure to begin each morning with made-to-order omelets. My Spanish skills are weak, but the chef knew I wanted all the ingredients through my attempts at sign language.

Rounds were at 4:30 p.m. daily, giving us

ample time to prepare before our games and otherwise chill. I've been super uptight about my opening preparation in the past, holing myself up in my room for hours on end trying to memorize every line. For this event, I decided it would be better to hang out, play sports, and generally de-stress with the minimum of study before the round.

Instead of Stockfish and Chessbase, it was sports like pool volleyball that became my daily staple. Alex and I were joined by a number of the players, including Corrales Jimenez, famous Spanish-language commentator GM Pepe Cuenca Jimenez, and some non-chess local friends. We'd make time for a buffet lunch — let's give it mixed reviews — and then retire to our rooms at around 3 p.m. to do some light preparation.

We'd play our games, then it was time for the dinner buffet, and more activities! Alex and I had some late-night table tennis battles in the humidity and heat, and we'd then head back to our room to catch the NBA Conference Finals. The Nuggets swept the Lakers, but I can't have everything go my way!

You might be wondering why I'm including these details in a tournament report. One of the things I brought back from Juan Dolio was a recognition of the extraordinary importance of the psychological factors in chess growth and improvement. It's not enough to study theory — good physical habits, social engagement, and a strong mindset are just as important! My time at the American Continental was probably the best work-life balance I've experienced at a tournament to date.

In the past few months, as I have worked towards the GM title, I find myself more able to approach the game in a healthy manner. It is important to win with humility, lose with grace, and carry oneself in a mature, growth-oriented way. While things generally went my way at this event, I hit the inevita-

ble speedbump when I lost in round nine to eventual tournament winner GM Georg Meier. I did not self-destruct. Instead I gathered myself and finished strong, with one of the games you'll see shortly.

And I'm not the only one who may have had such an epiphany. Fidel followed our sporting ways, and showed incredible resilience in his games! After a tough loss to your author in round four, he stormed back, finishing with a blazing six points from the final seven rounds to claim shared second place. I ultimately found myself fourth on tiebreaks, a nice bonus to the second GM norm, while my fellow IM and countryman Kirk Ghazarian also earned his second GM norm along with fifth place via tiebreaks.

With Meier taking the top spot with 9/11, it was Cuban GM Carlos Albornoz who finished a half-point back in shared second with Jimenez. While Albornoz earned one of the four qualifying spots to the World Cup from this tournament, he had already qualified via zonal, so the four original nominations went to Meier, Jimenez, Ghazarian, and your author. Unfortunately neither Fidel nor Kirk could make the trip, so they were replaced by Brazilian GM Yago Santiago and Peruvian IM Gianmarco Leiva.

If you're expecting a fairy tale, you're in for some disappointment — by the time you read this, the World Cup has come and gone, and I crashed out in the first round. If I had to lose, I'm glad it was to my friend and fellow Mizzou Tiger, Russian GM Mikhail Antipov. My optimism about the value of a healthy mindset continues, and I'm taking this defeat in stride, looking to the future. I'll continue to chase the GM title this fall, and I'm hopeful that my short trip to Baku will not be my last World Cup! I was incredibly thankful to God for the experience to play in such a prestigious event, and I never take such experiences for granted.



IM Josiah Stearman

The American Continental was a refreshing change from the endless grind of two-a-day American swisses. Don't get me wrong — I'm young and can hang in there for the speed and brutality of the U.S. circuit, but I'd never experienced the relaxing but intense atmosphere this tournament brought. I'll return to more American Continentals, not only for the shots at World Cup qualification, but for the chance to enjoy such a wonderfully organized event!

I hope that you've been able to get a glimpse into my tournament experience, and now, that you'll enjoy the annotated games. After all, it wasn't just vacation. There was a lot of fierce chess too!

RUY LOPEZ (C88)

IM Josiah Stearman (2385)
GM Fidel Corrales Jimenez (2489)
American Continental Ch (4), Juan Dolio, 05.17.2023

After a long battle in round three with Cuban GM Carlos Alborno that ended in a draw, I found myself with 2½/3 facing off with Jimenez. Just one month prior, I had defeated him in a crazy Najdorf battle. I expected a similarly tense game, with perhaps an opening change as I held the White pieces once again.

1. e4 e5!?

As expected, a surprise.

2. Nf3 Nc6 3. Bb5 a6 4. Ba4 Nf6 5. 0-0 Be7
6. Re1 b5 7. Bb3 0-0

Telegraphing his intentions to offer the Marshall gambit. But I deviated with...

8. d4!? d6 9. Be3 Bg4 10. c3

A humorous aside: the DGT broadcast erroneously said I played the awful 10. h3?? when after 10. ... Bxf3 the d4-pawn falls due to similar Noah's Ark trapping ideas; for instance, 11. gxf3 exd4 12. Bxd4 Nxd4 13. Qxd4 c5.

10. ... Re8

The greedy 10. ... Nxe4? fails promptly to 11. Bd5!.

11. h3 Bh5 12. Nbd2 exd4 13. cxd4 Na5 14. Bc2 c5



This was the first critical moment of the game. Black is attempting to gain space on the queenside while also disrupting my commanding control of the center. The continuation I opted for resulted in a very imbalanced middlegame.

15. dxc5 dxc5 16. g4?!

The engine gives the positionally incredible 16. Qb1!, and only the very best would think of this multi-purpose move. Not only do I get out of the annoying pin, I also threaten a strong e4-e5 push in the center. A sample variation where Black tries to evade the tactics on the h7-pawn: 16. ... h6 17. e5! Nd5 and only now 18. g4! Bg6 19. Bxg6 fxg6 20. Qxg6 with a great advantage.

16. ... Bg6 17. Ne5 Nd7 18. Nxc6 hxc6 19. f4

This is the variation I had calculated ahead of time. I evaluated that my bishop pair, with a menacing kingside pawn storm, would be enough for an advantage. As we will see, however, Black has play of his own!

19. ... c4 20. Nf3 Bc5

Trying to trade off my strong e3-bishop while leaving me with the sub-optimal cleric on c2. I wanted to connect rooks, so I played...

21. Qe2? Qf6!

A disturbing oversight on my part! Fidel's play has now materialized. The black queen is now lasering down both the b2- and f4-pawns, and it looks like I will be in quite the mess.

22. Rad1 Rad8 23. Rd5!



23. ... Bxe3+?

Fidel needed to keep the tension while also improving his a5-knight with 23. ... Nb7!. The threats to the b2- and f4-pawns remain, and it would be hard for me to stir up more trouble for Black.

24. Qxe3 Qxb2 25. Qd2!

This was the big idea — now I am threatening both the a5- and d7-knights.

25. ... c3 26. Qd1 Rf8?

The engine gives the crazy 26. ... Nc4! 27. Rxd7 Nd2!! 28. Rxd8 Rxd8 with the typical 0.00 evaluation!

27. Re2?

During the game, I felt this was the most logical continuation, but the preparatory and destructive 27. e5! was the way to go.

27. ... Nc4?

Here 27. ... Qxa2 was the last opportunity for Jimenez to even the playing field. After 28. Rxd7 Rxd7 29. Qxd7 b4 the pawns start rolling with complications to come.

28. Bb3 c2 29. Rxc2 Qf6 30. Bxc4!

After the game, Jimenez told me that this was the move he missed.

30. ... bxc4 31. Rxd7 Rxd7 32. Qxd7 Qxf4

33. Kf2 Qxe4

Now up a knight for two pawns, with a significant time advantage to boot, this should have been a fairly routine conversion.

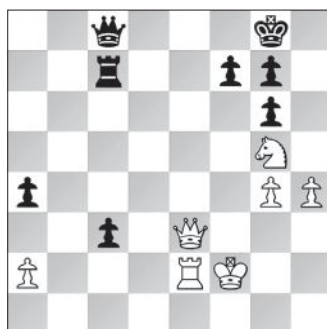
34. Re2 Qa8 35. h4? c3

Allowing this was a huge mistake. Now Black is able to utilize the annoying c-pawn to create counterplay.

36. Rc2 Rd8 37. Qe7 Rc8 38. Qe3 Qb8! 39. Qd3

Not 39. Rxc3?? Qb2+.

39. ... a5 40. Kg2 Rc5 41. Qd7 Rc7 42. Qa4 Qa8 43. Qf4 Qc8 44. Kf2 Rc4 45. Qe5 Rc5 46. Qe3 a4 47. Ng5 Rc7 48. Re2



After a series of shuffling moves, my opponent finally cracked under time pressure.

48. ... Kf8? 49. Qf4!

Threatening the a4-pawn as well as Ng5-e6+.

49. ... Rb7 50. Qxa4 f6 51. Qa3+ Kg8 52. Qxc3!

Now for the proverbial “matter of technique.”

52. ... Qb8 53. Nf3 Kh7 54. h5 gxh5 55. Qd3+ Kh8 56. Qg6 Rb2 57. Qxh5+ Kg8 58. Qd5+ Kh8 59. Rxb2 Qxb2+ 60. Qd2 Qb6+ 61. Qd4 Qe6 62. a4 Qa2+ 63. Kg3 Qc2 64. Qd8+ Kh7 65. a5 f5 66. gxf5 Qxf5 67. Qh4+ Kg8 68. Qc4+ Kh8 69. a6 Qg6+ 70. Kf2

Qb6+ 71. Nd4 Qf6+ 72. Ke2 Qe5+ 73. Kd1 Qh5+ 74. Kc2 Qg6+ 75. Qd3 Qg2+ 76. Kc3 Qh1 77. Kb4 Qe1+ 78. Ka4 Qe8+ 79. Nb5, Black resigned.

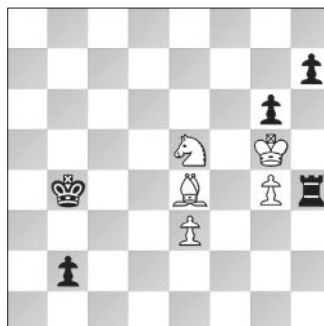
This wild back-and-forth game proved to be the kickstarter I needed for what would amount to an amazing tournament... for the both of us! Perhaps it was the fact that Jimenez stopped giving private lessons at this point in the event, but the story I'll tell is that I whipped him into shape!

FINISHING STRONG

IM Josiah Stearman (2385)

IM Gianmarco Leiva (2392)

American Continental Ch (11), Juan Dolio, 05.23.2023



BLACK TO MOVE

After losing to first place finisher Meier and beating Colombian GM Sergio Barrientos, I once again found myself in a position where a draw would be satisfactory! This time the stakes were even higher, with a coveted

World Cup qualification on the line. The nerves were definitely on edge, as after 50 moves I had carelessly blitzed into an end-game where the waters were muddy indeed. My saving grace? I had around an hour to my opponent's mere five minutes.

50. ... Rh3?

The wrong square, but for a very specific reason.

Black had to find 50. ... Rh2! 51. Nd3+ Kc3 52. Nxb2 and now Black can play 52. ... Rxb2! as the in-game sacrifice no longer works; the king is closer and the rook is better positioned. Black wins after 53. Bxg6 hxg6 54. Kxg6 Kd3 55. Kf5 Rb5+ 56. Kf6 Ke4 57. g5 Rb6+ 58. Kf7 Kf5.

51. Nd3+! Kc3

Now to eliminate the immediate threat.

52. Nxb2! Kxb2

And now, with the black king so far away, it's time for another endgame transition.

53. Bxg6! hxg6 54. Kxg6 Kc3 55. g5 Kd3

56. Kf5

“Shouldering” the black king away.

56. ... Rf3+ 57. Ke5 Rxe3+ 58. Kf6 Rf3+ 59. Ke5

Continuing to prevent the black king from approaching the g-pawn. As soon as I'm given the chance, I'll push it!

59. ... Re3+ 60. Kf6 Rf3+ 61. Ke5 Kc4 62. g6 Rg3 63. Kf6 Kd5 64. g7 Kd6 65. Kf7 Rxc7+ 66. Kxc7, draw.

Bare kings — a fitting end to a crazy event! ♠

2023 AMERICAN CONTINENTAL CHAMPIONSHIP AT A GLANCE

MAY 15-23, 2023

JUAN DOLIO, DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

WINNERS:

1st: GM Georg Meier, 9/11. **2nd-3rd:** GMs Carlos Albornoz, Fidel Corrales Jimenez, 8½. **4th-10th:** GMs Jorge Cori, Gregory Kaidanov, Yago Santiago, Cristobal Henrique Villagra, IMs Kirk Ghazarian, Gianmarco Leiva, Josiah Stearman, 8.

OTHER AMERICANS:

IM Justin Sarkar, 7½. IMs Maximillian Lu, Aleksandr Ostrovskiy, 7. GM Alexander Shabalov, 6½. GM Robert Hungaski, FM Joseph Wan, 6. FMs Alexander Betaneli, Gregory Markzon, 5½. GM Akshat Chandra, FM Todd Andrews, 5. Tyrell Harriott, 4½. Jorge Flores-Rodriguez, Ajitesh Nair, 3½. Kenneth Fernandez, 3. Sarvesh Nair, 1.

For complete results, visit chess-results.com/tnr742500.aspx?lan=1.



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FINAL FOUR OF COLLEGE CHESS

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AND MANY OTHER PROGRAMS

Ups and Downs

A back-and-forth win for Keres

BY **BRUCE PANDOLFINI**

C

HESS IS A FUNNY GAME. You can have the edge for quite a while. Suddenly, apparently out of nowhere, though

not really, the game begins to turn. Somehow, it's the other side coming away with the initiative and the menacing possibilities. Clearly, you can never let your guard down in a chess game. Consider the following battle between Sir George Thomas and Paul Keres (Black) played at Margate in 1937. Through the opening, it's Thomas holding a slight advantage. But once the game takes a turn, the great Estonian grandmaster brings home a nicely earned point.

RUY LOPEZ (C77)

George Thomas

Paul Keres

Margate, 1937

1. e4 e5 2. Nf3 Nc6 3. Bb5 a6 4. Ba4 Nf6 5. Nc3 b5 6. Bb3 d6 7. Ng5



BLACK TO MOVE

Now ensure that the position above is set up on your chessboard. As you play through the remaining moves in this game, use a piece of paper to cover the article, exposing Black's next move only after trying to guess it. If you guess correctly, give yourself the par

score. Sometimes points are also awarded for second-best moves, and there may even be bonus points — or deductions — for other moves and variations. Note that ** means that Black's move is on the next line. **

7. **Par Score 7** **d5**

Even though Black played 6. ... d6, there's really no other adequate way to secure the f7-square.

8. **Nxd5**

For the meantime, White seizes a pawn and has threats. **

8. **Par Score 5** **Nd4**

This is much better than 8. ... Nxd5?, when either 9. Bxd5 or 9. Nxf7 wins.

9. **Ne3**

White disdains 9. Nxf6+ Qxf6 10. Bxf7+ Ke7 11. d3 h6 12. Bd5 c6, with Black getting the edge. Give yourself **1 bonus point** if you analyzed this. **

9. **Par Score 5** **Nxb3**

Black naturally gets rid of the light-squared monster.

10. **axb3**

In taking back, White opens the a-file. **

10. **Par Score 5** **h6**

Generally, one shouldn't let an enemy knight sit comfortably across the frontier line if circumstances permit driving it away.

11. **Nf3****

11. **Par Score 5** **Nxe4**

This gets the pawn back for one move, but White keeps a slight advantage.

12. **Nxe5**

As my teacher used to say to me, a pawn is a pawn in any country in the world. **

12. **Par Score 5** **Qf6**

Black's double threat is easily handled. White still has the advantage. Can Black get enough play to justify the pawn deficit?

13. **Nf3****

13. **Par Score 5** **Bb7**

Keres hopes to get play with his two bishops and open center. The position is about equal, with White having a minimal pull.

14. **Qe2**

White has a veiled threat against the black king on the open file, with d2-d3 a possible threat. **

14. **Par Score 5** **0-0-0**

Keres removes his king from the center, eliminating any possible discoveries, and takes hold of the d-file.

15. **0-0**

Thomas castles in turn. With the kings on opposite sides of the board, both sides can more freely attack the other. **

15. **Par Score 5** **Bd6**

Keres' bishops are beginning to look potentially scary. White must remain on his best, and most alert, defensive feet.

16. **Ng4**

As unsettling as it may seem, 16. h3, creating an anchor at g4, might have been a twinge better. **

16. **Par Score 5** **Qf5**

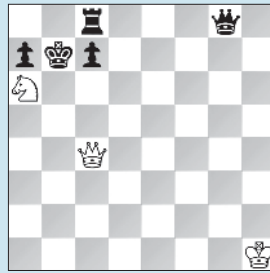
You may accept **full credit** for both 16. ... Qg6 or 16. ... Qe6. Either one would still maintain Black's sudden initiative.

ABCS OF CHESS

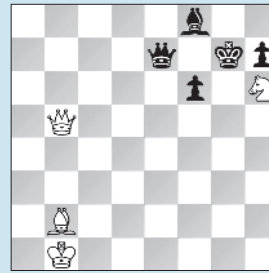
THESE PROBLEMS ARE ALL related to key positions in this month's game. In each case, White is to move. The answers can be found in Solutions on page 63.

NOVEMBER EXERCISE:
Find a game you're interested in, perhaps 40 moves or so in length. Using software, print out from the game the position every five moves. Then cut out and mark those, keeping them in a connected series. Try to work your way to the end of the game, figuring out the commonsense way to get to each diagram in the sequence. Do this often enough and it should make you a more logical and strategic thinker over the chessboard.

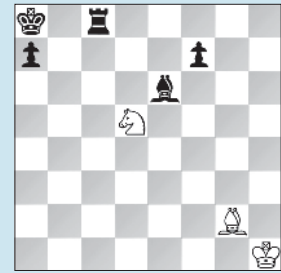
PROBLEM 1
Mating net



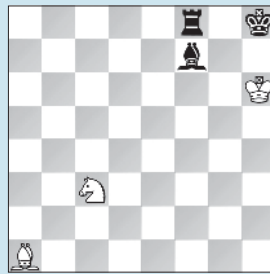
PROBLEM 2
Mating net



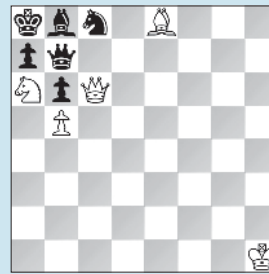
PROBLEM 3
Mating net



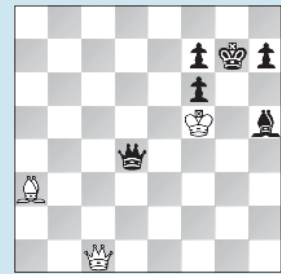
PROBLEM 4
Mating net



PROBLEM 5
Mating net



PROBLEM 6
Mating net



17. d3
White clears the c1-h6 diagonal for development, with a counterthreat... **

17. Par Score 5 Ng5
Mounting pressure against White's castled position. You may accept **full credit** for 17. ... Qxg4.

18. Nh4
Thomas hopes to gain time against the black queen, but Keres has a good response. **

18. Par Score 4 Qd5
This deployment ties down the h4-knight, which is upholding the g2-pawn. Keres is ready to spring.

19. c4
White hopes to dislodge the black queen. Perhaps a more prudent move was 19. Ne3, adding some bolster to the g2-pawn. **

19. Par Score 6 Nh3+
Voila! It looks like it's going to get worse for White before it gets better. If 20. gxh3, then 20. ... Qh1 mate.

20. Kh1**

20. Par Score 5 Qh5
White has had a half-open a-file but it's been meaningless. Black, on the other hand, has

threats against g2, h2, g4, and h4. Defense for White is getting really complicated.

21. c5
This is an attempt to distract the d6-bishop. It doesn't work. Maybe 21. f3 was better, but that doesn't hold the fort either. **

21. Par Score 6 Rhe8
A nice time-gaining move. The center belongs to Keres.

22. Qc2
An iota better would have been 22. Be3, developing a piece and clearing the home rank, though that wouldn't deter Black's snowballing attack. **

22. Par Score 6 Qxh4
Black is winning, but you may accept **full credit** for 22. ... Qxg4, which might even be a tad better. Nonetheless, Keres' continuation has something in mind.

23. cxd6**

23. Par Score 7 Bxg2+
Don't look now (okay, you can look), but Black is forcing mate.

24. Kxg2**

24. Par Score 4 Qxg4+

25. Kh1**

25. Par Score 6 Qf3, mate.
A really nice conclusion to an attack that seemed to occur out of nowhere, and a checkmate pattern that is well worth remembering. ♠

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," visit the US Chess Digital Archives at new.uschess.org/chess-life-digital-archives.

World Cup Spills

High intensity matches produce some interesting mishaps.

BY GM JOEL BENJAMIN

T

HE WORLD CUP IS ONE OF my favorite tournaments to follow. In the short matches, something is at stake in every game, and a critical error can send a player packing. The early rounds are fertile grounds for interesting endgames. The large number of games provides many candidates, but it also means that fans can overlook these hidden nuggets.

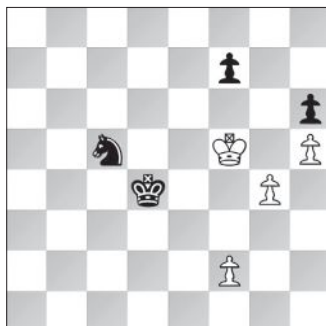
In our first game Black flubbed the apparently easy task of preventing pawn promotion... and surprisingly could have saved a half-point anyway!

QUEEN FOR A KNIGHT

GM Felix Blohberger (2522)

GM Dimitrios Mastrovasilis (2587)

FIDE World Cup (1.4), Baku, 08.01.2023



BLACK TO MOVE

Black reached a minor piece ending with an outside passed pawn, but winning White's bishop for said pawn has not paid off in full. White's active king means Black should be happy to draw, and with his king and knight relatively close, it's a matter of choosing one of many correct paths.

42. ... Ne4

It's difficult to say which method is "simplest" or most straightforward. Certainly Black has choices. For example, (a) 42. ... Nd7 43. g5 hxg5 44. h6 Nf8 45. Kf6 Ke4 (or 45. ... g4 46. Kxf7 Nh7 and the knight cannot be chased off the h-pawn; this is an important motif to know) 46. Kxf7 Kf5 47. Kxf8 Kg6, etc. gets the job done. And there's also (b) 42. ... Ne6 43. Kf6 Ke4 44. Kxf7 Nf4 (44. ... Ng5+ 45. Kg6 Kf4 also works) 45. Kg7 (or 45. f3+ Kxf3 46. g5 Kg4 47. gxh6 Kxh5 48. h7 Ng6) 45. ... Kf3 46. g5 Nxh5+ 47. Kxh6 Nf4, etc.

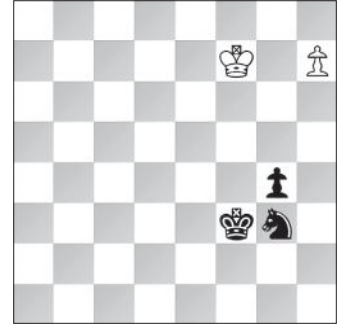
43. f3 Ng3+

Perhaps 43. ... Ng5 44. f4 Nh7 45. g5 hxg5 46. fxg5 Nf8 47. h6 Nh7 48. g6 fxg6+ 49. Kxg6 Nf8+ is more thematic. Knowing this pattern certainly makes this ending easier.

44. Kf6 Ke3 45. Kxf7 Kxf3 46. g5 hxg5?!

This is a bit hard to fathom as Black still had two ways to prevent promotion: (a) 46. ... Nf5 47. Kg6 Kg4 48. gxh6 Nh4+ 49. Kf7 Kxh5 50. h7 Ng6 is a finish we've seen before, while (b) 46. ... Kg4 47. gxh6 Ne4! is a bit sneakier.

47. h6 g4 48. h7



BLACK TO MOVE

48...Ne4??

The ship has sailed on stopping the pawn, but with maximum coordination of his pieces, Black can actually hold the White queen at bay. Only 48. ... Ne2! 49. h8=Q g3 49. Qh5+ Kf2 50. Qf5+ Ke3! 51. Qf1 Nf4 52. Kf6 g2 draws. I have to confess that I don't recall seeing this theme before.

49. h8=Q g3 50. Qh5+ Kf4

The problem is Black's king cannot come forward and keep his knight protected. Once the queen blockades the pawn it's just a matter of time.

51. Qh1 Nf2 52. Qg2 Ng4 53. Kg6 Ne3 54. Qe2 Ng4 55. Kh5 Ne3 56. Kh4 Nf5+ 57. Kh3 Ne3 58. Qb2 g2 59. Qf2+ Ke4 60. Kg3 Kd3 61. Kf3 Nf5 62. Kxg2, Black resigned.

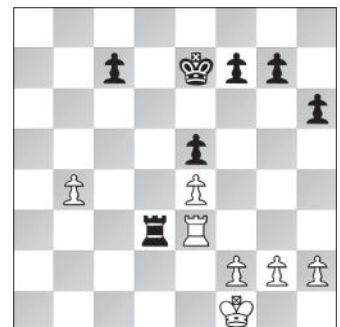
Bad decisions on entering the pawn ending continue to pop up in this column. In the following game the two combatants met the challenge with different degrees of success.

TRADING PLACES

Renije Huang (2445)

GM Alexey Sarana (2685)

FIDE World Cup (2.2), Baku, 08.03.2023



BLACK TO MOVE

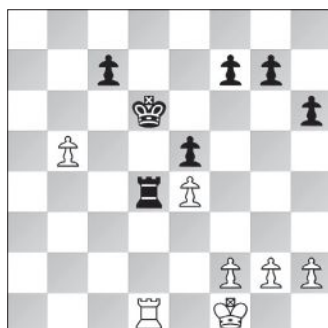
You may have noted that Sarana is the

gentleman who knocked Wesley So out of the competition. Here he is trying to squeeze out a slight advantage, and he has a big decision to make.

32. ... Rd1+

The first stop is 32. ... Rxe3 because if it is good, it can be *very* good. At first 33. fxe3 Kd6 34. Ke2 c5 (fruitless is 34. ... Kc6 35. Kd3 Kb5 36. Kc3 c5 37. bxc5 Kxc5 38. Kb3 because Black's king can never penetrate) looks promising because 35. bxc5+ Kxc5 36. Kd3 Kb4 37. Kd2 Kb3 penetrates decisively, while 35. b5 c4 36. Kd2 Kc5 clearly wins. But 35. Kd3! cxb4 36. Kc4 holds, so Black is right to stay patient.

33. Re1 Rd4 34. b5 Rb4 35. Rc1 Kd6 36. Rd1+ Rd4



WHITE TO MOVE

37. Rxd4+

I am not familiar with this young player from China, who is untitled despite holding a fairly high FIDE rating. But this error should not happen at the World Cup level.

An inferior pawn ending can be lost without any hope, but even a pawn down rook ending will offer drawing chances. The correct 37. Rb1 Rxe4 38. b6 cxb6 39. Rxb6+ produces a classic rook and four pawns versus rook and three pawns ending that should be drawn. Black can avoid the queenside liquidation, but 37. ... Kc5 38. f3 Rb4 39. Rc1+ Rc4 40. Rd1 offers White substantial counterplay.

37. ... exd4 38. Ke2 Kc5 39. Kd3 g5

This finesse is not needed to win, but it slows down White's majority because 40. g3 g4 would freeze White's pawns thanks to the *en passant* rule.

40. f3 Kxb5 41. Kxd4 Kb4 42. Kd3 c5 43. Kc2 Kc4 44. g3 Kd4 45. Kd2 c4 46. h4 gxh4 47. gxh4 h5, White resigned.

One of the blitz playoffs produced a dead drawn ending that unsurprisingly finished

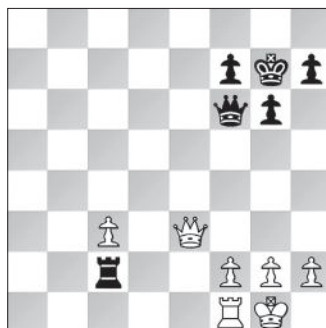
in a draw, but not before a shocking opportunity came and went.

CAN'T LOSE, MIGHT WIN!?

GM Rasmus Svane (2625)

GM Wang Hao (2709)

FIDE World Cup (4.8), Baku, 08.11.2023



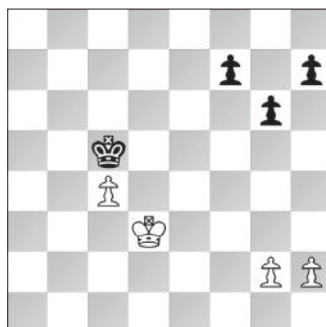
WHITE TO MOVE

Black is poised to eliminate the extra pawn, but White does not want to give up the fight.

35. Rc1

This was the eighth game of the match, so we are talking blitz chess — anything can happen. I don't know if this move was an oversight or a winning attempt.

35. ... Qxf2+! 36. Qxf2 Rxc1+ 37. Qf1 Rxf1+ 38. Kxf1 Kf6 39. Ke2 Ke5 40. Kd3 Kd5 41. c4+ Kc5



WHITE TO MOVE

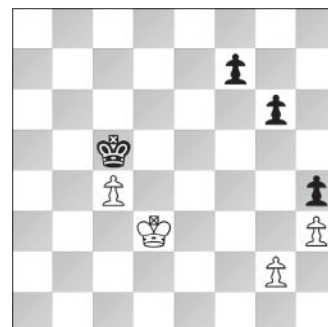
Wang Hao had no choice but to enter this pawn endgame. Svane figured he could always make a draw, which was true until it wasn't anymore. If White wants to play it safe, 42. g4 would be the fastest path to a draw, but there is no need for the moment.

42. Kc3 h5 43. Kd3

Here White could put some pressure on with 43. h4, when Black would have to play accurately to secure a draw: 43. ... f6 44. Kd3 Kc6! (White wins after 44. ... g5? 45. hxxg5

fxg5 46. Ke4, as Black does not have time to liquidate and White will emerge with an effective g-pawn) 45. Kd4 Kd6 46. c5+ Kc6 47. Kc4 (after 47. g3 g5 Black will liquidate everything if White takes on g5; otherwise his h-pawn will not be enough to win) 47. ... g5 48. hxxg5 fxxg5 49. Kd4 h4 50. Ke4 g4 and we get down to bare kings.

43. ... h4 44. h3?

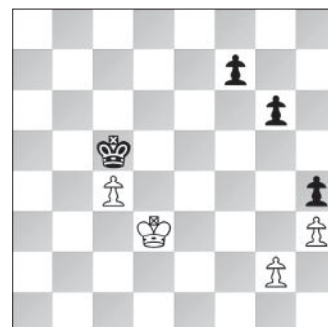


BLACK TO MOVE

This creates a situation where White's king may get stretched between defending the c-pawn and stopping Black's majority. Both 44. g3 and 44. Kc3 zero out quickly.

44. ... f5 45. Kc3 g5 46. Kd3 g4 47. Ke3 gxh3 48. gxh3 Kxc4 49. Kf4 Kd3 50. Kxf5 Ke3 51. Kg4 Ke4, draw.

We have a familiar finish where the h-pawn doesn't get the job done. But Black actually missed a win!



POSITION AFTER 44. h3

From the previous diagram, Black can stutter-step with 44. ... f6!! putting his opponent in *zugzwang*. Play continues 45. Kc3 f5 46. Kd3 g5 47. Kc3 g4 48. Kd3 (the king can't get over in time after 48. hxxg4 fxxg4) 48. ... g3! and now White has to cede his passed pawn because 49. Kc3 f4 again promotes. Black also wins after 49. Ke3 Kxc4 50. Ke2 (also losing is 50. Kf4 Kd3 51. Kg5 Ke3 52. Kxxh4 Kf2 etc.) 50. ... Kd4 51. Kd2 f4 52. Ke2 Ke4 53. Kf1 Kd3 54. Ke1 Ke3 55. Kf1 Kd2 56. Kg1 Ke2 57. Kh1 f3 58. gxf3 Kf2 and wins. ♠

Razuvaev on Rubinstein

A cult classic is now available in English.
Does it live up to the hype?

BY IM JOHN WATSON

W

HO WAS AKIBA RUBINSTEIN? Today I suspect that many young players don't know or have only a vague idea. Fifty

years ago, however, just about any club or tournament player would have been familiar with the Polish legend, whose games were in so many of the books we grew up with. To this day, in fact, anthologies and tactics books often show the game Rotlwei – Rubinstein (Lodz, 1907), and Rubinstein's name is attached to several popular opening variations. Nevertheless, he rarely appears in contemporary writing and is generally missing from world championship lore.

It might surprise some that for a few years, Rubinstein was the best player in the world (by historical performance ratings) and was the consensus pick to play a match against Emanuel Lasker in 1912-14. That failed to come about because of the arbitrary obstacles to arranging matches at that time and, eventually, because the first World War intervened.

In fact, it has often been said that Rubinstein was the strongest player who never became world champion. That may well be true, although he faces serious competition from Korchnoi, Keres, and a couple of others; in any event, he was surely the strongest player never to play for the world championship, or to get the chance to play in a qualifying event.

In 1980, the Soviet publishing house *Fizkultura i Sport* published Yuri Razuvaev and Valery Murakhveri's book *Akiba Rubinstein*, which over the years became one of the most widely-read chess books in the Rus-

sian-speaking world. In his foreword to the new English edition just published by Verendel Publishing, GM Boris Gelfand explains how he read the book over and over again in his childhood, and describes what a great impact it had upon his development as a player. He attributes this to the quality of Rubinstein's play, of course, but especially to Razuvaev's gift for explaining complicated ideas in a few words and explaining Rubinstein's games clearly and succinctly.

This new edition of *Akiba Rubinstein*, translated by GM Andrey Deviatkin, centers on Razuvaev's annotations to 60 selected games and includes his chapters on the highlights of Rubinstein's play as well as on his endgames and contributions to opening theory. In addition, Murakhveri provides an 86-page biographical account, which engagingly mixes tournament developments, stylistic commentary, and 17 characteristic games with light annotations. He describes Rubinstein's competitive and psychological decline with sympathy, indicating how brilliant and creative he remained even while slipping from the world's elite.

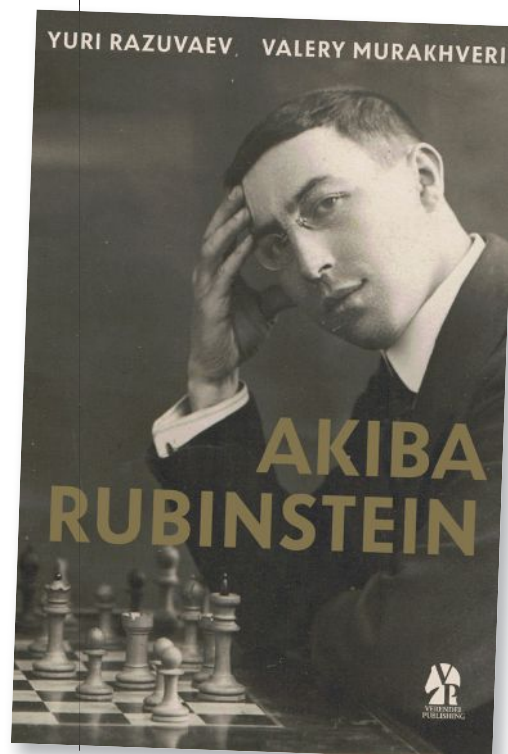
This edition improves upon the original Russian by including 32 pages of photographs, some in color, and a lengthy section of footnotes by Deviatkin. The latter are primarily analytical corrections, but include some interesting tidbits about various aspects of Rubinstein's life.

Razuvaev's chapter entitled "Rubinstein and Chess Theory" is de-

voted to some of Rubinstein's better-known opening contributions. One which has held up brilliantly over the years is the move **4. ... Nd4** in the Four Knights Opening (after **1. e4 e5 2. Nf3 Nc6 3. Nc3 Nf6 4. Bb5**). Rubinstein famously played **6. g3** in the Tarrasch Defense of the Queen's Gambit (**1. d4 d5 2. c4 e6 3. Nc3 c5 4. cxd5 exd5 5. Nf3 Nc6**), to this day the move that most discourages Black from using this defense (see the game below).

In the French Defense, after **1. e4 e6 2. d4 d5 3. Nc3 dxe4** (or **3. Nd2 dxe4**) **4. Nxe4**, Rubinstein's **4. ... Nd7** followed by ... Ng8-f6 is still the most popular defensive setup. Rubinstein's name is attached to **4. e3** versus the Nimzo-Indian, and he was the first to consistently investigate and play such standard variations as the Queen's Indian with **1. d4 Nf6 2. c4 e6 3. Nf3 b6 4. g3** as White, the Meran Variation of the Slav Defense as Black, and the English Opening defense with **1. c4 c5 2. Nf3 Nf6 3. Nc3 d5**.

In contemporary literature, Rubinstein is best known for his brilliant handling of rook endgames, which have been the subject of whole books as well as numerous articles. His mastery of positional maneuvering is less widely appreciated. Here's an excerpt from the book, taken from a game played early in his career in which he finds two ingenious and surprisingly modern ideas. In the diagrammed position, White has apparently gained a nice advantage with his vastly superior knight on e4, solid kingside position, and potential attack on the queenside:



BEFORE HIS TIME

David Janowski
Akiba Rubinstein
Karlsbad, 1907

*Selected Annotations by Razuvaev;
Watson's insertions in red*



BLACK TO MOVE

Rubinstein finds the only sensible plan in this position. For chess in 1907, the following knight transfer was a real revelation:

24. ... Ne7!!

Watson: This has the deceptively simple idea ... Kg8-h8 and ... Ne7-g8-f6, after which ideas such as ... Rf5-h5 and ... Qd7-h3 gain force.

25. Rd1 Kh8 26. c4 Ng8! 27. f3 Nf6 28. Rf1 Nxe4 29. Qxe4



While the maneuver beginning with Black's 24th move was subtle and profound... the following transfer is absolutely unique.

29. ... Qd8!! 30. Qg4

White is careless here, but frankly speaking, he could not have anticipated Black's next move.

30. ... Qb8!! 31. Kg2 Qa7 32. Rfe1 Qc5...

Black has obtained a slight edge. Janowski lost from this position gradually and move-by-move after missing several defensive resources.

Watson: As so often, Rubinstein was

ahead of his time. This ... Qd8-b8-a7 motif appeared much later in some modern openings, most prominently the King's Indian Defense and the Ruy Lopez.

Razuvaev's lucid and pointed notes to the following game helped to immortalize it as a positional masterpiece:

QUEEN'S GAMBIT, TARRASCH DEFENSE (D33)

Akiba Rubinstein
Georg Salwe
Lodz, 1908

Selected Annotations by Razuvaev

1. d4 d5 2. Nf3 c5 3. c4 e6 4. cxd5 exd5 5. Nc3 Nf6 6. g3 Nc6 7. Bg2 cxd4 8. Nxd4 Qb6 9. Nxc6!

Why is Rubinstein ridding Black of the isolated d5-pawn? Because the isolated pawn couple (on) c6 and d5 will now be subject to a blockade while White gains time.

9. ... bxc6 10. 0-0 Be7 11. Na4 Qb5 12. Be3 0-0 13. Rc1

White has the initiative and is ready to occupy the c5-square...

13. ... Bg4 14. f3!

This defensive move is, at the same time, the first step of a profound strategic plan.

14. ... Be6 15. Bc5 Rfe8 16. Rf2!

The point of this subtle move will only be clear four moves later. Since 14. f3 has weakened the second rank, covering it with a rook is important.

16. ... Nd7 17. Bxe7 Rxe7 18. Qd4 Ree8 19. Bf1!



Curiously, three unattractive moves (f2-f3, Rf1-f2, Bg2-f1) have allowed White to regroup and form a spring of pieces ready to uncoil.

19. ... Rec8 20. e3!

It is only now that the depth of White's 14th

move becomes apparent. The white pieces have become active and wonderfully coordinated, whereas Black has failed to generate any counterplay.

20. ... Qb7 21. Nc5 Nxc5 22. Rxc5 Rc7 23. Rfc2 Qb6 24. b4 a6

Forced since White threatened to play 25. b5, whereas 24. ... a5 would have already been refuted by 25. Rxa5...

25. Ra5 Rb8

No better is 25. ... Qxd4 26. exd4 Bc8 27. Rxd5 cxd5 28. Rxc7, etc.

26. a3 Ra7 27. Rxc6! Qxc6 28. Qxa7 Ra8 29. Qc5 Qb7 30. Kf2 h5 31. Be2 g6 32. Qd6 Qc8 33. Rc5 Qb7 34. h4 a5 35. Rc7 Qb8 36. b5 a4 37. b6 Ra5 38. b7, Black resigned.

This game is a classic example of how to combat an isolated pawn and an isolated pawn couple. The maneuver of 14. f3, 16. Rf2, 19. Bf1, 20. e3 is the mark of a great strategist.

I can't end this review without mentioning the two-volume masterpiece *The Life & Games of Akiba Rubinstein* by IMs John Donaldson and Nikolay Minev. This is one of the best, if not the very best, biographical games collections ever written; for the historically-minded, it is easily the most thoroughly researched work on Rubinstein. The new Verendel edition of Razuvaev's book refers to it and cites some of its research, but isn't as scholarly or exhaustive.

Of course, the two projects serve different purposes. Donaldson and Minev have much more detailed biographical information and have dug up and recorded every game of Rubinstein's that they can find — approximately 1,100! — in the two volumes; they have found many notes for them (primarily analytical) from a wide variety of sources, including selected analysis from Razuvaev.

The Razuvaev & Murakhveri book, in contrast, is suited for the fan who wants a readable and instructive annotated games collection with written notes and explanations. It includes an informative, casual biographical narrative with an extensive photographic section and, as noted above, some discussion of Rubinstein's style and contributions to theory.

Both Donaldson & Minev and Razuvaev & Murakhveri can be recommended as wonderful contributions to an expanding chess historical literature. ♠

Razuvaev, Yuri, Valery Murakhveri, and Andrey Deviatkin, trans. Akiba Rubinstein. Verendel Publishing, 2023. ISBN 9789151976457. HB, 571+32pp. Available at verendel.com.

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 November 30, 2023 out of concern for the unforeseeable impacts the COVID-19 (Coronavirus) could have on participation in GP events. The change allows organizers with guaranteed prize funds to change the status of their prize fund without first seeking US Chess permission to make the change. More specifically, organizers who have announced “\$XXX in Guaranteed prizes” (or similar words) for their GP events shall be allowed to re-state their prize funds in their publicity as “\$XXX 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 • GRAND PRIX

2023 US Masters

NOVEMBER 22-26, 2023, NORTH CAROLINA

Event site: Hilton Charlotte University Place **Address:** 8629 J M Keynes Drive, Charlotte, NC 28262 **Overall prize fund:** \$22,000 **GP Points:** 150 **FIDE Rated:** Y **Handicap accessible:** Y **Residency restriction:** N **Organizer:** Charlotte Chess Center **Email:** events@charlottechesscenter.org **Phone:** n/a **Website:** <http://www.charlottechesscenter.org/usmasters> **TLA ID:** 39896

NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP EVENT • JUNIOR GRAND PRIX

2023 National K-12 Grade Championships

DECEMBER 15-17, 2023, FLORIDA

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

NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP EVENT • HERITAGE EVENT

World Amateur Team & U.S. Team East

FEBRUARY 17-19, 2024, NEW JERSEY

Event site: Parsippany Hilton **Address:** 1 Hilton Ct., Parsippany, NJ, 07054 **Overall prize fund:** n/a **GP Points:** n/a **FIDE Rated:** N **Handicap accessible:** Y **Residency restriction:** N **Organizer:** New Jersey Chess Federation **Email:** esdoyle@aol.com

Phone: esdoyle@aol.com **Website:** <https://njscc.org/TLA ID: 39739>

NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP EVENT

2024 U.S. Amateur Team Championship - South

FEBRUARY 23-24, 2024, FLORIDA

Event site: Laurel Manor Recreation Center **Address:** 1985 Laurel Manor Drive, The Villages, FL 32162 **Overall prize fund:** Commemorative awards, plaques, trophies **GP Points:** n/a **FIDE Rated:** N **Handicap accessible:** Y **Residency restriction:** N **Organizer:** The Villages Chess Club **Email:** TheVillagesChessClub@outlook.com **Phone:** 1-407-497-2261 **Website:** <http://www.thevillageschessclub.org/TLA ID: 40253>

Grand Prix

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

FINAL 2022 GRAND PRIX STANDINGS

Congratulations to the 2022 Grand Prix Champion

IM JASON LIANG

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

2022 Awards

\$12,500 in cash prizes

First Prize \$5,000

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

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

GRAND PRIX • ENHANCED GRAND PRIX • JUNIOR GRAND PRIX

21st Annual Turkey Bowl

NOVEMBER 10-12, 2023, FLORIDA

Event site: Sheraton Suites Fort Lauderdale at Cypress Creek **Address:** 555 W. Cypress Creek Road, Fort Lauderdale, FL 33309 **Overall prize fund:** \$11,500 **GP Points:** 50 **FIDE Rated:** Y **Handicap accessible:** Y **Residency restriction:** N **Organizer:** Jon Haskel **Email:** jon@bocachess.com **Phone:** 561-302-4377 **Website:** <http://www.bocachess.com/TLA ID: 39669>

GRAND PRIX • ENHANCED GRAND PRIX

11th annual Kings Island Open Blitz

NOVEMBER 11, 2023, OHIO

Event site: Embassy Suites Cincinnati NE **Address:** 4554 Lake Forest Dr, Blue Ash OH 45242 **Overall prize fund:** \$500 **GP Points:** 10 **FIDE Rated:** N **Handicap accessible:** Y **Residency restriction:** N **Organizer:** Continental Chess Association **Email:** events@chessclub.com **Phone:** 412-436-5558 **Website:** <http://www.chessevents.us/TLA ID: 40120>

GRAND PRIX • ENHANCED GRAND PRIX • STATE CHAMPIONSHIP EVENT

The Missouri Open State Championship

NOVEMBER 11-12, 2023, MISSOURI

Event site: Stony Creek Hotel and Conference Center **Address:** 18011 Bass Pro Drive, Independence, MO 64055 **Overall prize fund:** \$3,000 **GP Points:** 20 **FIDE Rated:** N **Handicap accessible:** Y **Residency restriction:** N **Organizer:** Bob Howe **Email:** bhowe@yahoo.com **Phone:** 636-234-7928 **Website:** n/a **TLA ID:** 39924

GRAND PRIX

2023 Houston Open Chess Championships

NOVEMBER 17-19, 2023, TEXAS

Event site: DoubleTree by Hilton Bush International **Address:** 15757 John F. Kennedy Blvd, Houston, TX 77032 **Overall prize fund:** \$11,750 **GP Points:** 60 **FIDE Rated:** Y **Handicap accessible:** Y **Residency restriction:** N **Organizer:** Francisco Guadalupe **Email:** fguadalupe@aol.com **Phone:** n/a **Website:** <https://www.kingregistration.com/event/Houstonopen23> **TLA ID:** 40042

HERITAGE EVENT • GRAND PRIX • ENHANCED GRAND PRIX

2023 Northern Virginia Open

NOVEMBER 17-19, 2023, VIRGINIA

Event site: Washington Dulles Airport Marriott **Address:** 45020 Aviation Dr., Dulles, VA 20166 **Overall prize fund:** \$6,795 **GP Points:** 30 **FIDE Rated:** Y **Handicap accessible:** Y **Residency restriction:**

N Organizer: NTD/IA Mike Hoffpauir **Email:** mhoffpauir@aol.com **Phone:** 757-846-4805 **Website:** <http://www.vachess.org> **TLA ID:** 40028

GRAND PRIX

Turkey Shoot

NOVEMBER 17-19, 2023, TEXAS

Event site: La Quinta by Wyndham San Antonio Riverwalk **Address:** 303 Blum Street, San Antonio, TX 78205 **Overall prize fund:** \$5,200 **GP Points:** 30 **FIDE Rated:** N **Handicap accessible:** N **Residency restriction:** N **Organizer:** Jesse Lozano **Email:** CompleteChess@gmail.com **Phone:** (210) 393-3056 **Website:** <https://completechesseducation.com/event/turkey-shoot-2023/> **TLA ID:** 39443

GRAND PRIX • ENHANCED GRAND PRIX

Tunnelvision XIV

NOVEMBER 18, 2023, SOUTH CAROLINA

Event site: First Church of the Nazarene **Address:** 901 St Andrews Rd, Columbia, SC 29210 **Overall prize fund:** \$1,000 gtd **GP Points:** 10 **FIDE Rated:** N **Handicap accessible:** Y **Residency restriction:** N **Organizer:** Columbia Chess Club **Email:** info@columbiachess.org **Phone:** 803-569-0938 **Website:** <https://columbiatunnelvision.com/tunnelvision-xiv-nov-2023> **TLA ID:** 39264

GRAND PRIX • STATE CHAMPIONSHIP EVENT

2023 Illinois Class State Championship

NOVEMBER 19, 2023, ILLINOIS

Event site: Hyatt Regency Schaumburg **Address:** 1800 E. Golf Rd., Schaumburg, IL 60173 **Overall prize fund:** \$5,000 **GP Points:** 30 **FIDE Rated:** N **Handicap accessible:** N **Residency restriction:** N **Organizer:** Chess Weekend **Email:** glenn@chessweekend.com **Phone:** n/a **Website:** <https://www.chessweekend.com/TLA ID: 39696>

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

58th American Open

NOVEMBER 21-26, 2023, CALIFORNIA, S.

Event site: Hyatt Regency Orange County **Address:** 11999 Harbor Boulevard, Garden Grove, CA 92640 **Overall prize fund:** See TLA **GP Points:** 150 **FIDE Rated:** Y **Handicap accessible:** Y **Residency restriction:** N **Organizer:** ChessPalace **Email:** play@americanopen.org **Phone:** 714-643-8828 **Website:** <https://americanopen.org/TLA ID: 38900>

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

54th annual National Chess Congress

NOVEMBER 24-26, 2023, PHILADELPHIA

Event site: Loews Hotel **Address:** 1200 Market St, Philadelphia PA 19107 **Overall prize fund:** \$45,000 **GP Points:** 200 **FIDE Rated:** Y **Handicap accessible:** Y **Residency restriction:** N **Organizer:** Continental Chess Association **Email:** director@chess.us **Phone:** director@chess.us **Website:** <http://www.chessevents.us/TLA ID: 38941>

GRAND PRIX

2023 North Carolina Open

NOVEMBER 24-26, 2023, NORTH CAROLINA

Event site: Hilton Charlotte University Place **Address:** 8629 J M Keynes Drive, Charlotte, NC 28262 **Overall prize fund:** \$13,000 **GP Points:** 40 **FIDE Rated:** Y **Handicap accessible:** Y **Residency restriction:**

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.

striction: N **Organizer:** Charlotte Chess Center
Email: events@charlottechesscenter.org **Phone:** n/a **Website:** <https://www.charlottechesscenter.org/icopen> **TLA ID:** 39895

GRAND PRIX

2023 63rd Mid South Open

NOVEMBER 24-26, 2023, TENNESSEE

Event site: Memphis Chess Club **Address:** 195 Madison Ave Suite 101, Memphis, TN 38103 **Overall prize fund:** \$6,400 **GP Points:** 15 **FIDE Rated:** N **Handicap accessible:** Y **Residency restriction:** N **Organizer:** Memphis Chess Club **Email:** info@memphischessclub.com **Phone:** 7318685755 **Website:** <https://www.memphischessclub.com/> **TLA ID:** 39702

GRAND PRIX • ENHANCED GRAND PRIX

Motor City Open

NOVEMBER 24-26, 2023, MICHIGAN

Event site: Crowne Plaza – Auburn Hills **Address:** 1500 N. Opdyke Rd., Auburn Hills MI 48326 **Overall prize fund:** \$8,000, 65% gtd. **GP Points:** 30 **FIDE Rated:** Y **Handicap accessible:** Y **Residency restriction:** N **Organizer:** Ed Mandell **Email:** eman.1943@aol.com **Phone:** 248-635-2375 **Website:** n/a **TLA ID:** 39949

GRAND PRIX

7th Sevan Muradian Memorial

NOVEMBER 24-26, 2023, ILLINOIS

Event site: Hyatt Regency Schaumburg **Address:** 1800 E Golf Rd, Schaumburg, IL 60173 **Overall prize fund:** \$12,000 b/220 **GP Points:** 30 **FIDE Rated:** Y **Handicap accessible:** Y **Residency restriction:** N **Organizer:** Glenn Panner **Email:** glennpan@gmail.com **Phone:** n/a **Website:** <http://www.chessweek-end.com> **TLA ID:** 40279

GRAND PRIX

2023 Class Warfare Open, Class & Blitz Championship

NOVEMBER 24-26, 2023, CALIFORNIA, N.

Event site: Sonesta San Jose (North Milpitas) **Address:** 777 Bellow Dr., Milpitas, CA 95035 **Overall prize fund:** \$10,000 **GP Points:** 30 **FIDE Rated:** Y **Handicap accessible:** Y **Residency restriction:** N **Organizer:** BayArea Chess **Email:** events@bayareachess.com **Phone:** 408.409.6596 (voicemail/text only) **Website:** n/a **TLA ID:** 40339

GRAND PRIX

11th annual National Chess Congress Blitz

NOVEMBER 25, 2023, PHILADELPHIA

Event site: Loews Hotel **Address:** 1200 Market St, Philadelphia PA 19107 **Overall prize fund:** \$500 **GP Points:** 10 **FIDE Rated:** N **Handicap accessible:** Y **Residency restriction:** N **Organizer:** Continental Chess Association **Email:** director@chess.us **Website:** <http://www.chessevents.us> **TLA ID:** 40136

HERITAGE EVENT • GRAND PRIX • ENHANCED GRAND PRIX

Harry Nelson Pillsbury Memorial

DECEMBER 10, 2023, MASSACHUSETTS

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

GRAND PRIX • ENHANCED GRAND PRIX

Tunnelvision XV

DECEMBER 16, 2023, SOUTH CAROLINA

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

GRAND PRIX • ENHANCED GRAND PRIX • JUNIOR GRAND PRIX

2023 SPICE Cup Open

DECEMBER 17-22, 2023, MISSOURI

Event site: Hyatt Regency Crystal City **Address:** 2799

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

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

48th annual Eastern Open

DECEMBER 26-29, 2023, VIRGINIA

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

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

33rd annual North American Open

DECEMBER 26-30, 2023, NEVADA

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

GRAND PRIX

Eastern Open Blitz

DECEMBER 28, 2023, VIRGINIA

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

GRAND PRIX • JUNIOR GRAND PRIX

2023 World Chess Festival

DECEMBER 28-31, 2023, HAWAII

Event site: Neal Blaisdell Center **Address:** 777 Ward Avenue, Honolulu, HI 90630 **Overall prize fund:** \$5,000 **GP Points:** 30 **FIDE Rated:** Y **Handicap accessible:** Y **Residency restriction:** N **Organizer:** Joe Hanley **Email:** hanleychessacademy@gmail.com **Phone:** 714 925 3195 **Website:** <http://hanleychessacademy.com/2023WCFF.html> **TLA ID:** 38682

HERITAGE EVENT • GRAND PRIX • ENHANCED GRAND PRIX

32nd annual North American Blitz

DECEMBER 29, 2023, NEVADA

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

GRAND PRIX

CFCC 2024 Winter Open & Scholastic

JANUARY 5-7, 2024, FLORIDA

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

GRAND PRIX • ENHANCED GRAND PRIX • JUNIOR GRAND PRIX

12th annual Boston Chess Congress

JANUARY 5-7, 2024, MASSACHUSETTS

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

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

56th annual Liberty Bell Open

JANUARY 12-15, 2024, PHILADELPHIA

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

GRAND PRIX • ENHANCED GRAND PRIX • JUNIOR GRAND PRIX

15th annual Golden State Open

JANUARY 12-15, 2024, CALIFORNIA, N.

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

GRAND PRIX

2024 Charlotte Open

JANUARY 13-15, 2024 NORTH CAROLINA

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

HERITAGE EVENT • GRAND PRIX • JUNIOR GRAND PRIX

Land of the Sky XXXVI

FEBRUARY 2-4, 2024, NORTH CAROLINA

Event site: Crowne Plaza Resort Asheville **Address:** One Resort Dr, Asheville NC 28806 **Overall prize fund:** \$12,500 **GP Points:** 20 **FIDE Rated:** Y **Handicap accessible:** N **Residency restriction:** N **Organizer:** Wilder Wadford **Email:** info@landofthesky.us **Phone:** n/a **Website:** n/a **TLA ID:** 40025

GRAND PRIX • ENHANCED GRAND PRIX • JUNIOR GRAND PRIX

15th annual Southwest Class Championships

FEBRUARY 15-19, 2024, TEXAS

Event site: Westin Dallas Fort Worth Airport **Address:** 4545 W John Carpenter Fwy, Irving TX 75063 **Overall prize fund:** \$35,000 **GP Points:** 200 **FIDE Rated:** Y **Handicap accessible:** Y **Residency restriction:** N **Organizer:** Continental Chess Association **Email:** director@chess.us **Phone:** director@chess.us **Website:** <http://www.chessevents.us> **TLA ID:** 39835

GRAND PRIX • ENHANCED GRAND PRIX • JUNIOR GRAND PRIX

8th annual George Washington Open

FEBRUARY 23-25, 2024, VIRGINIA

Event site: Washington Dulles Marriott **Address:** 45020 Aviation Dr, Dulles VA 20166 **Overall prize fund:** \$17,000 **GP Points:** 120 **FIDE Rated:** Y **Handicap accessible:** Y **Residency restriction:** N **Organizer:** Continental Chess Association **Email:** director@chess.us **Website:** <http://www.chessevents.us> **TLA ID:** 40252

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

31st annual Western Class Championships

MARCH 1-3, 2024, CALIFORNIA, S.

Event site: Hilton Orange County Airport **Address:** 18800 Macarthur Blvd, Irvine CA 92612 **Overall prize fund:** \$20,000 **GP Points:** 120 **FIDE Rated:** Y **Handicap accessible:** Y **Residency restriction:** N **Organizer:** Continental Chess Association **Email:** director@chess.us **Phone:** director@chess.us **Website:** <http://www.chessevents.us> **TLA ID:** 40212

ALABAMA

NOVEMBER 22-26, 2023

2023 US Masters (NC)

See National Events.

NOVEMBER 24-26, 2023

2023 North Carolina Open (NC)

See Grand Prix.

NOVEMBER 24-26, 2023

2023 63rd Mid South Open (TN)

See Grand Prix.

DECEMBER 19-23, 2023

2023 North American Junior U20 Championships (VA)

See Virginia.

JANUARY 13-15, 2024

2024 Charlotte Open (NC)

See Grand Prix.

FEBRUARY 23-25, 2024

2024 U.S. Amateur Team Championship - South (FL)

See National Events.

ALASKA

DECEMBER 19-23, 2023

2023 North American Junior U20 Championships (VA)

See Virginia.

AMERICAN SAMOA

DECEMBER 19-23, 2023

2023 North American Junior U20 Championships (VA)

See Virginia.

ARIZONA

NOVEMBER 21-26, 2023

58th American Open (CA-S)

See Grand Prix.

DECEMBER 19-23, 2023

2023 North American Junior U20 Championships (VA)

See Virginia.

DECEMBER 26-30, 2023

33rd annual North American Open (NV)

See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

DECEMBER 29, 2023

32nd annual North American Blitz (NV)

See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

JANUARY 12-15, 2024

15th annual Golden State Open (CA-N)

See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

MARCH 1-3, 2024

31st annual Western Class Championships (CA-S)

See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

ARKANSAS

NOVEMBER 24-26, 2023

2023 63rd Mid South Open (TN)

See Grand Prix.

DECEMBER 19-23, 2023

2023 North American Junior U20 Championships (VA)

See Virginia.

FEBRUARY 23-25, 2024

2024 U.S. Amateur Team Championship - South (FL)

See National Events.

CALIFORNIA

SEPTEMBER 19, 2021-ONGOING

PCC LBX Hangar Sunday Action

Regional

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.

Event site: LBX Hangar Building (inside and out) **Address:** 4150 McGowan St, Long Beach CA 90808 **Overall prize fund:** 80% of total entry fee **GP Points:** n/a **FIDE Rated:** N **Handicap accessible:** Y **Residency restriction:** N **Organizer:** John Tan **Email:** paramountchessclub@gmail.com **Phone:** 3107356871 **Website:** n/a **TLA ID:** 31701

NOVEMBER 21-26, 2023

58th American Open (CA-S)
See Grand Prix.

NOVEMBER 22-26, 2023

2023 US Masters (NC)
See National Events.

NOVEMBER 24-26, 2023

2023 North Carolina Open (NC)
See Grand Prix.

DECEMBER 19-23, 2023

2023 North American Junior U20 Championships (VA)
See Virginia.

DECEMBER 29, 2023

32nd annual North American Blitz (NV)
See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

JANUARY 12-15, 2024

15th annual Golden State Open (CA-N)
See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

JANUARY 13-15, 2024

2024 Charlotte Open (NC)
See Grand Prix.

MARCH 1-3, 2024

31st annual Western Class

Championships (CA-S)

See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

FLORIDA

NOVEMBER 22-26, 2023

2023 US Masters (NC)
See National Events.

NOVEMBER 24-26, 2023

2023 North Carolina Open (NC)
See Grand Prix.

DECEMBER 19-23, 2023

2023 North American Junior U20 Championships (VA)
See Virginia.

DECEMBER 26-30, 2023

33rd annual North American Open (NV)
See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

JANUARY 13-15, 2024

2024 Charlotte Open (NC)
See Grand Prix.

CONNECTICUT

OCTOBER 15, 2023-APRIL 21, 2024

9th Annual NY State Magnus High School And Junior High Chess League (Out-Of-State Players Welcome)! (NY)
See New York.

NOVEMBER 11-12, 2023

7th Annual NY State Girls Championship (Other States Welcome)! (NY)
See New York.

DECEMBER 19-23, 2023

2023 North American Junior U20 Championships (VA)
See Virginia.

JANUARY 5-7, 2024

12th annual Boston Chess Congress (MA)
See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

DELAWARE

NOVEMBER 17-19, 2023

2023 Northern Virginia Open (VA)
See Grand Prix.

NOVEMBER 22-26, 2023

2023 US Masters (NC)
See National Events.

NOVEMBER 24-26, 2023

2023 North Carolina Open (NC)
See Grand Prix.

DECEMBER 19-23, 2023

2023 North American Junior U20 Championships (VA)
See Virginia.

DIST. OF COLUMBIA

NOVEMBER 17-19, 2023

2023 Northern Virginia Open (VA)
See Grand Prix.

NOVEMBER 22-26, 2023

2023 US Masters (NC)
See National Events.

NOVEMBER 24-26, 2023

2023 North Carolina Open (NC)
See Grand Prix.

DECEMBER 19-23, 2023

2023 North American Junior U20

Championships (VA)

See Virginia.

JANUARY 13-15, 2024

2024 Charlotte Open (NC)
See Grand Prix.

FLORIDA

NOVEMBER 22-26, 2023

2023 US Masters (NC)
See National Events.

NOVEMBER 24-26, 2023

2023 North Carolina Open (NC)
See Grand Prix.

DECEMBER 19-23, 2023

2023 North American Junior U20 Championships (VA)
See Virginia.

JANUARY 5-7, 2024

CFCC 2024 Winter Open & Scholastic (FL)
See Grand Prix.

JANUARY 13-15, 2024

2024 Charlotte Open (NC)
See Grand Prix.

FEBRUARY 23-25, 2024

2024 U.S. Amateur Team Championship - South (FL)
See National Events.

GEORGIA

APRIL 8, 2023-ONGOING MONTHLY

Pizza Scholastic

Event site: The Boardroom **Address:** 1675 Peachtree Pkwy, Suite #180, Cumming Georgia 30041 **Overall prize fund:** n/a **GP Points:** n/a **FIDE Rated:** N **Handicap accessible:** Y **Residency restriction:** N **Organizer:** ThinkChess, LLC **Email:** info@myThinkChess.com

54th annual NATIONAL CHESS CONGRESS

6 rounds, Nov 24-26 or 25-26, Loews Philadelphia Hotel

\$45,000 prize fund guaranteed, 20 plaques, free entries!

6 rounds, 40/80, SD/30, d30 (2-day option, rds 1-3 G/40 d10). U800 & U600 sections play separate 2-day schedule only, 11/25-26, G/40 d10. Top 3 sections are FIDE rated.

Loews Philadelphia Hotel, 1200 Market St, Philadelphia PA 19107. Hotel rates \$118-118-143, use link at chessevents.us, reserve by 11/10.

In 10 sections (see peakrating.us):
Premier Section: Open to 2000/over. Prizes \$4000-2400-1200-800-500, clear/tiebreak win \$200, USCF U2400 \$2000-1000. 200 GPP.
U2200, U2000: Each \$2500-1300-700-500-300.

U1800: \$2400-1200-600-400-300.

U1600: \$2000-1000-600-400-300.

U1400: \$1600-800-500-300-200.

U1200: \$1400-700-400-300-200.

U1000: \$1200-600-400-300-200.

U800, U600: Each, plaques to top 10. CCA free entry prizes to top 4.

Unrated prize limits: U1000 \$200, U1200 \$300, U1400 \$400, U1600 \$500, U1800 \$600, U2000 \$700.

Mixed doubles prizes: Best male-female 2-player combined score among all sections, averaging under 2200: \$2000-1000-600-400. May enter different sections, register before both begin round 2, teams including an unrated limited to \$400.

Unofficial or Online Regular ratings usually used if otherwise unrated.

Cannot play below USCF Online Regular rating minus 100 points.

Top 8 sections entry fee: \$138 online at chessaction.com by 11/22, \$160 at site, or online until 1 hour before round 1.

U800, U600 sections entry fee: \$52 online by 11/22, \$70 at site or online until 9 am 11/25.

All: No checks at site, credit cards OK. Re-entry (except Premier) \$60.

Special USCF membership with magazine if paid online with entry fee: Adult \$43, Young Adult \$26, Youth \$19. USCF membership required.

3-day schedule: Reg. Fri to 11 am, rds Fri 12 & 6, Sat 12 & 6, Sun 10 & 3:30.

2-day U1000/up schedule: Reg Sat to 9 am, rds Sat 10, 12:45, 3:30 & 6; Sun 10 & 3:30.

2-day U800 & U600 sections: Reg Sat to 9 am, rds 10, 12:45 & 3:30 each day.

Half point byes OK all rds, limit 3, must commit before rd 3.

Bring set, board, clock if possible-none supplied.

Cellphones: No possession during play; in bag near your table OK.

Parking: Loews valet 25% off regular (about \$38). Gateway Gate, 3/5 mile away at 1540 Spring St, about \$11/day Sat & Sun, \$28 other days.

Entry: chessaction.com. No mailed entries. \$15 charge for refunds. Entries posted at chessaction.com (click "entry list" after entering).

Blitz tournament Sat 10:30 pm, enter by 10 pm.

Chess.com Phone: 770.744.8595 Website: <https://mythinkchess.com/> TLA ID: 37216

NOVEMBER 10-12, 2023

21st Annual Turkey Bowl (FL)
See Grand Prix.

NOVEMBER 22-26, 2023

2023 US Masters (NC)
See National Events.

NOVEMBER 24-26, 2023

2023 North Carolina Open (NC)
See Grand Prix.

NOVEMBER 24-26, 2023

2023 63rd Mid South Open (TN)
See Grand Prix.

DECEMBER 19-23, 2023

2023 North American Junior U20 Championships (VA)
See Virginia.

JANUARY 13-15, 2024

2024 Charlotte Open (NC)
See Grand Prix.

FEBRUARY 23-25, 2024

2024 U.S. Amateur Team Championship - South (FL)
See National Events.

GUAM

DECEMBER 19-23, 2023

2023 North American Junior U20 Championships (VA)
See Virginia.

HAWAII

DECEMBER 19-23, 2023

2023 North American Junior U20 Championships (VA)
See Virginia.

IDAHO

NOVEMBER 11, 2023

2023 Southern Idaho Open / Veterans Day Tournament

Event site: Hampton Inn Address: 1658 Fillmore St. No., Twin Falls, ID 83301 Overall prize fund: \$400 GP Points: n/a FIDE Rated: N Handicap accessible: N Residency restriction: N Organizer: Barry Eacker Email: idahochessassociation@gmail.com Phone: 208-539-5385 Website: <https://www.idahochessassociation.com/> TLA ID: 39294

DECEMBER 19-23, 2023

2023 North American Junior U20 Championships (VA)
See Virginia.

ILLINOIS

NOVEMBER 10-12, 2023

21st Annual Turkey Bowl (FL)
See Grand Prix.

NOVEMBER 24-26, 2023

Motor City Open (MI)
See Grand Prix.

DECEMBER 19-23, 2023

2023 North American Junior U20 Championships (VA)
See Virginia.

DECEMBER 26-30, 2023

33rd annual North American Open (NV)
See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

JANUARY 13-15, 2024

2024 Charlotte Open (NC)
See Grand Prix.

FEBRUARY 3, 2024

2024 Greater Chicago K-12 Championship
Event site: McCormick Place West Building Address: 2301 S Dr Martin Luther King Jr Dr, Chicago, IL 60616 Overall prize fund: n/a GP Points: n/a FIDE Rated:

N Handicap accessible: Y Residency restriction: N Organizer: Renaissance Knights Email: info@renaissanceknights.org Phone: n/a Website: <http://greaterchicago.rknights.org> TLA ID: 40037

INDIANA

NOVEMBER 19, 2023

2023 Illinois Class State Championship
See Grand Prix.

NOVEMBER 24-26, 2023

Motor City Open (MI)
See Grand Prix.

NOVEMBER 24-26, 2023

7th Sevan Muradian Memorial (IL)
See Grand Prix.

DECEMBER 19-23, 2023

2023 North American Junior U20 Championships (VA)
See Virginia.

IOWA

NOVEMBER 19, 2023

2023 Illinois Class State Championship
See Grand Prix.

DECEMBER 19-23, 2023

2023 North American Junior U20 Championships (VA)
See Virginia.

KANSAS

DECEMBER 19-23, 2023

2023 North American Junior U20 Championships (VA)
See Virginia.

NOVEMBER 11-12, 2023

The Missouri Open State Championship (MO)
See Grand Prix.

KENTUCKY

NOVEMBER 22-26, 2023

2023 US Masters (NC)
See National Events.

NOVEMBER 24-26, 2023

2023 North Carolina Open (NC)
See Grand Prix.

NOVEMBER 24-26, 2023

2023 63rd Mid South Open (TN)
See Grand Prix.

DECEMBER 19-23, 2023

2023 North American Junior U20 Championships (VA)
See Virginia.

JANUARY 13-15, 2024

2024 Charlotte Open (NC)
See Grand Prix.

FEBRUARY 23-25, 2024

2024 U.S. Amateur Team Championship - South (FL)
See National Events.

LOUISIANA

NOVEMBER 22-26, 2023

2023 US Masters (NC)
See National Events.

NOVEMBER 24-26, 2023

2023 North Carolina Open (NC)
See Grand Prix.

DECEMBER 19-23, 2023

2023 North American Junior U20 Championships (VA)
See Virginia.

JANUARY 13-15, 2024

2024 Charlotte Open (NC)
See Grand Prix.

33rd annual NORTH AMERICAN OPEN

Dec 26-30, 26-29 or 27-29, Las Vegas - GM & IM norms possible!
\$130,000 PRIZE FUND UNCONDITIONALLY GUARANTEED!

Open Section: 9 rounds, Dec 26-30, 40/90, SD/30, d30.

Other sections: 7 rounds, Dec 26-29 or 27-29, 40/90, SD/30, d30 (3-day option, rds 1-2 G/60 d10).

At Horseshoe Casino Resort, 3645 Las Vegas Blvd So, Las Vegas NV 89103. Free parking for guests.

In 8 sections. Open Section uses December FIDE ratings, other sections Dec official USCF ratings. Top 3 sections are FIDE rated.

Open Section: \$10000-5000-3000-2000-1300-1000-800-700-600-500, clear/tiebreak win \$300 bonus, top FIDE U2400/Unr \$3000-2000-1000, 300 GPP.

Under 2300, Under 2100, Under 1900: Each \$7000-4000-2000-1200-800-600-500-400-400.

Under 1700: \$6000-3000-1500-1000-800-600-500-400-400.

Under 1500: \$5000-2500-1300-1000-700-600-500-400-300-300.

Under 1300: \$4000-2000-1000-800-600-500-400-300-300.

Under 1000: \$1500-1000-600-400-300-300-200-200-200.

Prize limits: 1) Unrated limit U1000 \$300, U1300 \$500, U1500 \$700, U1700 \$1000, U1900 \$1500, U2100 \$2000. 2) Under 26 games by 12/23 list, limit U1000 \$800, U1300 \$1500, U1500 or U1700 \$3000. 3) If any post-event Regular OTB or Regular Online rating posted 12/20/22-12/20/23 was more than 40 points over section maximum, limit \$1500. 4) Balance of any limited prize goes to next player(s) in line.

Cannot play below Online Regular rating minus 100 points.

Mixed doubles: \$2000-1000-500-300-200. See chessevents.us.

Top 6 sections entry fee: \$245 at chessaction.com by 9/20, \$275 by 12/23, \$300 online or at site until 1 hour before round 1. Open Section \$500 more to US players if not FIDE rated 2000/over.

Special entry fee: U1000 Section \$150 less, Senior 65/over in U1300/up, \$100 less. Re-entry (no Open) \$120.

Titled player entry: See chessevents.us.

Unofficial uschess.org ratings usually used if otherwise unrated.

5-day late reg. ends 12/26 10 am, rds 12/26-28 11 & 6, 12/29 10 & 4:30, 12/30 10 am. Open only.

4-day late reg. ends 12/26 5 pm, rounds 12/26 6 pm, 12/27-28 11 & 6, 12/29 10 am & 4:30 pm.

3-day late reg. ends 12/27 10 am, rounds 12/27 11, 2:30 & 6, 12/28 11 & 6, 12/29 10 & 4:30.

1/2-pt byes OK all, limit 3 (limit 2 in last 4 rds). Must commit before round 3.

Bring set, board, clock if possible- none supplied.

USCF membership required; see chessevents.us for special rates.

Special room rate at Horseshoe \$99 single or twin. Link at chessevents.us or 800-833-3308. Rooms may sell out about Nov 10.

Entry: chessaction.com. No mail entries, no checks. Refunds, \$15 service charge.

Entries posted at chessaction.com (click "entry list" after entering).

Blitz tournament 12/29 10:30 pm. Enter online by 7 pm 12/29 for lowest fee.

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.

FEBRUARY 15-19, 2024

15th annual Southwest Class Championships (TX)

See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

FEBRUARY 23-25, 2024

2024 U.S. Amateur Team Championship - South (FL)

See National Events.

MAINE

DECEMBER 19-23, 2023

2023 North American Junior U20 Championships (VA)

See Virginia.

MARYLAND

MARYLAND CHESS TOURNAMENTS (NORTH PENN CHESS CLUB)

Maryland Chess runs 21+ annual K-12 tournaments every other Saturday from September through June & 12+ annual 1-day or multi-day open tournaments for adults & K-12 players on weekends. See www.MD-Chess.org for tournament announcements, registration for tournaments, updated wallcharts, live standings, sign up for K-12 & open e-newsletters, lists of coaches & clubs, camp announcements, & news. K-12 MD players who compete in the Varsity section (for players rated 1600+) of 1 of 8+ annual MD-Sweet-16 Qualifiers can qualify for the \$48,000+ scholarship to the University of Maryland, Baltimore County awarded annually. UMBC is a perennial top-10 contender for the collegiate national chess championship.

NOVEMBER 10-12, 2023

21st Annual Turkey Bowl (FL)

See Grand Prix.

NOVEMBER 17-19, 2023

2023 Northern Virginia Open (VA)

See Grand Prix.

NOVEMBER 22-26, 2023

2023 US Masters (NC)

See National Events.

NOVEMBER 24-26, 2023

2023 North Carolina Open (NC)

See Grand Prix.

NOVEMBER 24-26, 2023

54th annual National Chess Congress (PA)

See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

DECEMBER 2, 2023

MCA Baltimore County 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:** 39041

DECEMBER 9, 2023

MCA Rockville Quads for K-12

Event site: Bender Jewish Community Center **Address:** 6125 Montrose Rd, Rockville, MD 20852 **Overall prize fund:** n/a **GP Points:** n/a **FIDE Rated:** N **Handicap accessible:** N **Residency restriction:** N **Organizer:** Magnus Chess Academy **Email:** divyanshu@chessacademy.com **Phone:** n/a **Website:** <https://chessacademy.com/tournaments> **TLA ID:** 39025

DECEMBER 19-23, 2023

2023 North American Junior U20

Championships (VA)

See Virginia.

DECEMBER 26-29, 2023

48th annual Eastern Open (VA)

See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

JANUARY 5-7, 2024

12th annual Boston Chess Congress (MA)

See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

JANUARY 12-15, 2024

56th annual Liberty Bell Open (PA)

See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

JANUARY 13-15, 2024

2024 Charlotte Open (NC)

See Grand Prix.

FEBRUARY 23-25, 2024

8th annual George Washington Open (VA)

See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

MASSACHUSETTS

REGIONALS

DECEMBER 3, 2023

1st WMCA Senior Open Over 50

Event site: Myrtle Street Park building **Address:** 117 Main Street, Indian Orchard, MA 01151 **Overall prize fund:** \$700 **GP Points:** n/a **FIDE Rated:** N **Handicap accessible:** Y **Residency restriction:** N **Organizer:** Western Massachusetts Chess Association **Email:** gbompastore@gmail.com **Phone:** 4133560303 **Website:** <http://www.wmass-chess.us/> **TLA ID:** 39288

DECEMBER 19-23, 2023

2023 North American Junior U20

Championships (VA)

See Virginia.

JANUARY 5-7, 2024

12th annual Boston Chess Congress (MA)

See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

HERITAGE EVENT

JANUARY 27, 2024

32nd Mid-Winter Classic

Event site: St. John's Lutheran Church **Address:** 60 Broad Street, Westfield, MA 01085 **Overall prize fund:** \$700 **GP Points:** n/a **FIDE Rated:** N **Handicap accessible:** Y **Residency restriction:** N **Organizer:** Western Massachusetts Chess Association **Email:** gbompastore@gmail.com **Phone:** n/a **Website:** <http://www.wmass-chess.us/> **TLA ID:** 40306

MICHIGAN

NOVEMBER 19, 2023

2023 Illinois Class State Championship

See Grand Prix.

NOVEMBER 24-26, 2023

Motor City Open (MI)

See Grand Prix.

DECEMBER 19-23, 2023

2023 North American Junior U20

Championships (VA)

See Virginia.

MINNESOTA

DECEMBER 19-23, 2023

2023 North American Junior U20

Championships (VA)

See Virginia.

MISSISSIPPI

NOVEMBER 22-26, 2023

2023 US Masters (NC)

See National Events.

NOVEMBER 24-26, 2023

2023 North Carolina Open (NC)

See Grand Prix.

NOVEMBER 24-26, 2023

2023 63rd Mid South Open (TN)

See Grand Prix.

48th annual Eastern Open

December 26-29, 27-29 or 28-29, 2023 - 8 rounds, Hyatt Regency Crystal City

\$30,000 GUARANTEED including \$2500 in senior prizes!

8-rd Swiss, Hyatt Regency Crystal City, 2799 Richmond Highway, Arlington VA 22202. Parking \$25, free airport shuttle. In 6 sections: Premier 12/26-29, U2200 to U1300 12/26-29 or 27-29, U1000 12/28-29.

Premier (2000/up): \$3000-1500-800-500-400, clear/tiebreak 1st \$100 bonus, top USCF U2300 \$1000-500. FIDE, 150 GPP. See peakrating.us.

U2200: \$1700-900-500-400-300, top U2000 \$600-300. FIDE rated.

U1900: \$1700-900-500-400-300, top U1700 \$400-200.

U1600: \$1400-700-500-300-200, top U1400 \$400-200.

U1300: \$1300-700-400-300-200, top U1100 \$300.

U1000: \$800-500-300-200-100.

Cannot play below Online Regular rating minus 100 points.

Unrated prize limits: U1000 \$150, U1300 \$300, U1600 \$450, U1900 \$600, Senior prize \$200.

Senior over 50 bonus prizes: Top born by 12/29/73, overall regardless of section, \$1200-600-400-300.

Mixed doubles: best male/female 2-player team (average under 2200) combined score: \$1000-500-300. May play in different sections; register before both players begin rd 2.

Top 5 sections entry fee: \$148 at chessaction.com by 12/23, \$170 (no checks, credit cards OK) at site or online until an hour before round 1.

Under 1000 Section: all \$50 less.

Re-entry (except Premier): \$80.

Unofficial uschess.org ratings usually used if otherwise unrated.

USCF membership required. See chessevents.us for special rates.

4-day: 40/80, SD/30, d30. Reg. ends 12/26 12 noon, rds. 12/26 1 & 7, 12/27-28 11 & 5, 12/29 10 & 4.

3-day: Rds 1-3 G/30, d10. Reg. ends 12/27 10 am, rds 12/27 11, 1, 3 & 5, merges with 4-day at 5 pm.

2-day: G/30, d10. Reg. ends 12/28 10 am, rds. 12/28 11, 1, 3 & 5, 12/29 10, 12, 2 & 4. U1000 only.

1/2 pt bye OK all (limit 3), must commit by rd 3.

Bring set, board, & clock if possible- none supplied.

Hotel rates: \$119-119-129-139, link at chessevents.us, reserve by 12/9 or rate may increase.

Entry: chessaction.com. \$15 service charge for refunds. Entries are posted (click "entry list. ").

Blitz tournament 12/28 9:30 pm, enter by 9:10 pm.

DECEMBER 19-23, 2023

2023 North American Junior U20 Championships (VA)
See Virginia.

JANUARY 13-15, 2024

2024 Charlotte Open (NC)
See Grand Prix.

MISSOURI

NOVEMBER 11-12, 2023

The Missouri Open State Championship (MO)
See Grand Prix.

NOVEMBER 22-26, 2023

2023 US Masters (NC)
See National Events.

NOVEMBER 24-26, 2023

2023 North Carolina Open (NC)
See Grand Prix.

NOVEMBER 24-26, 2023

2023 63rd Mid South Open (TN)
See Grand Prix.

DECEMBER 19-23, 2023

2023 North American Junior U20 Championships (VA)
See Virginia.

JANUARY 13-15, 2024

2024 Charlotte Open (NC)
See Grand Prix.

FEBRUARY 23-25, 2024

2024 U.S. Amateur Team Championship - South (FL)
See National Events.

MONTANA

NOVEMBER 11-12, 2023

41st Missoula Turkey Open
Event site: Holiday Inn Missoula Downtown Address: 200 S Pattee St, Missoula, MT 59802 Overall prize fund: \$2,000 GP Points: n/a FIDE Rated: N Handicap accessible: N Residency restriction: N Organizer: Eric Walthall Email: eric.m.walthall@gmail.com Phone: 4068309524 Website: <https://missoulachess.com/> TLAID: 38320

DECEMBER 19-23, 2023

2023 North American Junior U20 Championships (VA)
See Virginia.

NEBRASKA

DECEMBER 19-23, 2023

2023 North American Junior U20 Championships (VA)
See Virginia.

NEVADA

NOVEMBER 3-5, 2023

18th annual Los Angeles Open (CA-S)
See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

NOVEMBER 21-26, 2023

58th American Open (CA-S)
See Grand Prix.

DECEMBER 19-23, 2023

2023 North American Junior U20 Championships (VA)
See Virginia.

DECEMBER 26-30, 2023

33rd annual North American Open (NV)
See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

DECEMBER 29, 2023

32nd annual North American Blitz (NV)
See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

JANUARY 12-15, 2024

15th annual Golden State Open (CA-N)
See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

MARCH 1-3, 2024

31st annual Western Class Championships (CA-S)
See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

NEW HAMPSHIRE

DECEMBER 19-23, 2023

2023 North American Junior U20 Championships (VA)
See Virginia.

NEW JERSEY

JANUARY 14-DECEMBER 30, 2023

Hamilton Chess Club Quads

Dates: Feb. 11, Mar. 18, Apr. 29, May 20, Jun. 3, Aug. 19, Sep. 30, Oct. 21, Nov. 18, Dec. 30. Event site: Switlik Park Pavilion Address: Fischer Place/Joe Dimaggio Drive, Hamilton, NJ 08610 Overall prize fund: n/a GP Points: n/a FIDE Rated: N Handicap accessible: N Residency restriction: N Organizer: Edward Sytnik Email: edmendou@aol.com Phone: 609-758-2326 Website: <https://sites.google.com/site/hamiltonchessclub/> TLAID: 35704

OCTOBER 15, 2023-APRIL 21, 2024

9th Annual NY State Magnus High School And Junior High Chess League (Out-Of-State Players Welcome)! (NY)
See New York.

NOVEMBER 10-12, 2023

21st Annual Turkey Bowl (FL)
See Grand Prix.

NOVEMBER 11-12, 2023

7th Annual NY State Girls Championship (Other States Welcome)! (NY)
See New York.

NOVEMBER 19, 2023

2023 New Jersey Grade School Championship

Event site: Brookdale Community College Address: Lot #7, Arena Dr., Lincroft, NJ 07738 Overall prize fund: n/a GP Points: n/a FIDE Rated: N Handicap accessible: Y Residency restriction: N Organizer: Alessandro De Marchi-Blumstein Email: tournaments.njscl@gmail.com Phone: n/a Website: <http://www.njscl.org> TLAID: 38879

NOVEMBER 22-26, 2023

2023 US Masters (NC)
See National Events.

NOVEMBER 24-26, 2023

2023 North Carolina Open (NC)
See Grand Prix.

NOVEMBER 24-26, 2023

54th annual National Chess Congress (PA)
See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

DECEMBER 19-23, 2023

2023 North American Junior U20 Championships (VA)
See Virginia.

DECEMBER 26-29, 2023

48th annual Eastern Open (VA)
See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

JANUARY 5-7, 2024

12th annual Boston Chess Congress (MA)
See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

JANUARY 12-15, 2024

56th annual Liberty Bell Open (PA)
See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

JANUARY 13-15, 2024

2024 Charlotte Open (NC)
See Grand Prix.

NEW MEXICO

DECEMBER 19-23, 2023

2023 North American Junior U20 Championships (VA)
See Virginia.

NEW YORK

OCTOBER 15, 2023-APRIL 21, 2024

9th Annual NY State Magnus High School And Junior High Chess League (Out-Of-State Players Welcome)!

Event site: Columbia Grammar And Prep School Address: 36 West 93rd Street (between Central Park West and Columbus Ave.), New York, NY 10025 Overall prize fund: \$480/match + \$750 end-of-season prize GP Points: n/a FIDE Rated: N Handicap accessible: N Residency restriction: N Organizer: Chess Center of New York Email: director@magnusleague.org Phone: director@magnusleague.org Website: <http://www.magnusleague.org> TLAID: 40218

NOVEMBER 10-12, 2023

21st Annual Turkey Bowl (FL)
See Grand Prix.

STATE CHAMPIONSHIP EVENT • JUNIOR GRAND PRIX

NOVEMBER 11-12, 2023

7th Annual NY State Girls Championship (Other States Welcome)!
Event site: Columbia Grammar And Prep School Address: 36 West 93rd Street (between Central Park West and Columbus Ave.), New York, NY 10025 Overall prize fund: n/a GP Points: n/a FIDE Rated: N Handicap accessible: N Residency restriction: N Organizer: Chess Center of New York Email: director@chessgirls.win Phone: director@chessgirls.win Website: <https://www.chessgirls.win/> TLAID: 40216

NOVEMBER 17-19, 2023

2023 Northern Virginia Open (VA)
See Grand Prix.

NOVEMBER 22-26, 2023

2023 US Masters (NC)
See National Events.

NOVEMBER 24-26, 2023

2023 North Carolina Open (NC)
See Grand Prix.

NOVEMBER 24-26, 2023

54th annual National Chess Congress (PA)
See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

DECEMBER 19-23, 2023

2023 North American Junior U20 Championships (VA)
See Virginia.

DECEMBER 26-29, 2023

48th annual Eastern Open (VA)
See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

JANUARY 5-7, 2024

12th annual Boston Chess Congress (MA)
See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

JANUARY 12-15, 2024

56th annual Liberty Bell Open (PA)
See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

JANUARY 13-15, 2024

2024 Charlotte Open (NC)
See Grand Prix.

STATE CHAMPIONSHIP EVENT • AMERICAN CLASSIC • HERITAGE EVENT • JUNIOR GRAND PRIX

MARCH 9-10, 2024

56th annual New York State Scholastic Championships

Event site: Saratoga City Center, Hilton and Court-yard Address: various locations, Saratoga Springs, NY Overall prize fund: n/a GP Points: n/a FIDE Rated: N Handicap accessible: Y Residency restriction: N Organizer: Continental Chess Association Email: director@chess.us Phone: director@chess.us Website: <http://www.chessevents.us> TLAID: 40245

NORTH CAROLINA

NOVEMBER 17-19, 2023

2023 Northern Virginia Open (VA)
See Grand Prix.

NOVEMBER 22-26, 2023

2023 US Masters (NC)
See National Events.

NOVEMBER 24-26, 2023

2023 North Carolina Open (NC)
See Grand Prix.

DECEMBER 19-23, 2023

2023 North American Junior U20 Championships (VA)
See Virginia.

JANUARY 13-15, 2024

2024 Charlotte Open (NC)
See Grand Prix.

FEBRUARY 23-25, 2024

2024 U.S. Amateur Team Championship - South (FL)
See National Events.

NORTH DAKOTA

DECEMBER 19-23, 2023

2023 North American Junior U20 Championships (VA)
See Virginia.

N. MARIANA ISLANDS

DECEMBER 19-23, 2023

2023 North American Junior U20 Championships (VA)
See Virginia.

OHIO

NOVEMBER 24-26, 2023

Motor City Open (MI)
See Grand Prix.

DECEMBER 19-23, 2023

2023 North American Junior U20 Championships (VA)
See Virginia.

OKLAHOMA

DECEMBER 19-23, 2023

2023 North American Junior U20 Championships (VA)
See Virginia.

FEBRUARY 15-19, 2024

15th annual Southwest Class Championships (TX)
See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

OREGON

NOVEMBER 21-26, 2023

58th American Open (CA-S)
See Grand Prix.

DECEMBER 19-23, 2023

2023 North American Junior U20 Championships (VA)
See Virginia.

PENNSYLVANIA

North Penn Chess Club

Main & Richardson - St. John's UCC, 500 West Main St., Lansdale, PA 19446. See www.northpennchessclub.org for schedules & info or 215-699-8418

OCTOBER 15, 2023-APRIL 21, 2024

9th Annual NY State Magnus High School And Junior High Chess League (Out-Of-State Players Welcome)! (NY)
See New York.

NOVEMBER 10-12, 2023

21st Annual Turkey Bowl (FL)
See Grand Prix.

NOVEMBER 11-12, 2023

7th Annual NY State Girls Championship (Other States Welcome)! (NY)
See New York.

NOVEMBER 17-19, 2023

2023 Northern Virginia Open (VA)
See Grand Prix.

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.

NOVEMBER 22-26, 2023

2023 US Masters (NC)
See National Events.

NOVEMBER 24-26, 2023

2023 North Carolina Open (NC)
See Grand Prix.

NOVEMBER 24-26, 2023

54th annual National Chess Congress (PA)
See Grand Prix or chess events.us.

NOVEMBER 24-26, 2023

Motor City Open (MI)
See Grand Prix.

DECEMBER 19-23, 2023

2023 North American Junior U20 Championships (VA)
See Virginia.

DECEMBER 26-29, 2023

48th annual Eastern Open (VA)
See Grand Prix or chess events.us.

JANUARY 12-15, 2024

56th annual Liberty Bell Open (PA)
See Grand Prix or chess events.us.

JANUARY 13-15, 2024

2024 Charlotte Open (NC)
See Grand Prix.

PUERTO RICO

DECEMBER 19-23, 2023

2023 North American Junior U20 Championships (VA)
See Virginia.

FEBRUARY 23-25, 2024

8th annual George Washington Open (VA)
See Grand Prix or chess events.us.

FEBRUARY 23-25, 2024

2024 U.S. Amateur Team Championship - South (FL)
See National Events.

RHODE ISLAND

DECEMBER 19-23, 2023

2023 North American Junior U20 Championships (VA)
See Virginia.

SOUTH CAROLINA

NOVEMBER 11-12, 2023

15th Annual Michael Anderson Memorial South Carolina Senior Open 2023

Event site: Hilton Greenville **Address:** 45 W Orchard Park Drive, Greenville, SC 29615 **Overall prize fund:** \$675 **GP Points:** n/a **FIDE Rated:** N **Handicap accessible:** Y **Residency restriction:** N **Organizer:** Ernest E. Nix, Jr. **Email:** teenixjr@yahoo.com **Phone:** 18649052406 **Website:** <https://www.schess.org/> **TLA ID:** 39273

NOVEMBER 18, 2023

Columbia Tunnelvision XIV (SC)
See Grand Prix.

NOVEMBER 22-26, 2023

2023 US Masters (NC)
See National Events.

NOVEMBER 24-26, 2023

2023 North Carolina Open (NC)
See Grand Prix.

DECEMBER 16, 2023

Columbia Tunnelvision XV (SC)
See Grand Prix.

DECEMBER 19-23, 2023

2023 North American Junior U20 Championships (VA)
See Virginia.

JANUARY 13-15, 2024

2024 Charlotte Open (NC)
See Grand Prix.

FEBRUARY 23-25, 2024

2024 U.S. Amateur Team Championship - South (FL)
See National Events.

SOUTH DAKOTA

DECEMBER 19-23, 2023

2023 North American Junior U20 Championships (VA)
See Virginia.

TENNESSEE

NOVEMBER 22-26, 2023

2023 US Masters (NC)
See National Events.

NOVEMBER 24-26, 2023

2023 North Carolina Open (NC)
See Grand Prix.

DECEMBER 19-23, 2023

2023 North American Junior U20 Championships (VA)
See Virginia.

JANUARY 13-15, 2024

2024 Charlotte Open (NC)
See Grand Prix.

FEBRUARY 23-25, 2024

2024 U.S. Amateur Team Championship - South (FL)
See National Events.

TEXAS

NOVEMBER 21-26, 2023

58th American Open (CA-S)
See Grand Prix.

NOVEMBER 22-26, 2023

2023 US Masters (NC)
See National Events.

NOVEMBER 24-26, 2023

2023 North Carolina Open (NC)
See Grand Prix.

DECEMBER 19-23, 2023

2023 North American Junior U20 Championships (VA)
See Virginia.

DECEMBER 26-30, 2023

33rd annual North American Open (NV)
See Grand Prix or chess events.us.

JANUARY 13-15, 2024

2024 Charlotte Open (NC)
See Grand Prix.

FEBRUARY 15-19, 2024

15th annual Southwest Class Championships (TX)
See Grand Prix or chess events.us.

U.S. MIN. O.L. ISLS.

DECEMBER 19-23, 2023

2023 North American Junior U20 Championships (VA)
See Virginia.

UTAH

SEPTEMBER 7, 2023-ONGOING WEEKLY

Chess Knight

Event site: Kiln (Lehi) **Address:** 2701 N Thanksgiving Way #100, Lehi, UT 84043 **Overall prize fund:** n/a **GP Points:** n/a **FIDE Rated:** N **Handicap accessible:** Y **Residency restriction:** N **Organizer:** Rob Harker **Email:** utahchessknight@gmail.com **Phone:** n/a **Website:** n/a **TLA ID:** 39726

DECEMBER 19-23, 2023

2023 North American Junior U20 Championships (VA)
See Virginia.

DECEMBER 26-30, 2023

33rd annual North American Open (NV)
See Grand Prix or chess events.us.

VERMONT

HERITAGE EVENT • STATE CHAMPIONSHIP EVENT

NOVEMBER 18-19, 2023

2023 Vermont Open

Event site: Burlington City Hall **Address:** 149 Church St, Burlington, VT 05401 **Overall prize fund:** \$2,000 **GP Points:** n/a **FIDE Rated:** N **Handicap accessible:** N **Residency restriction:** N **Organizer:** Walter M. Chesnut **Email:** wmc@wmchesnut.com **Phone:** 8028815602 **Website:** n/a **TLA ID:** 40027

DECEMBER 19-23, 2023

2023 North American Junior U20 Championships (VA)
See Virginia.

VIRGIN ISLANDS, U.S.

DECEMBER 19-23, 2023

2023 North American Junior U20 Championships (VA)
See Virginia.

VIRGINIA

NOVEMBER 10-12, 2023

21st Annual Turkey Bowl (FL)
See Grand Prix.

NOVEMBER 17-19, 2023

2023 Northern Virginia Open (VA)
See Grand Prix.

NOVEMBER 22-26, 2023

2023 US Masters (NC)
See National Events.

NOVEMBER 24-26, 2023

2023 North Carolina Open (NC)
See Grand Prix.

NOVEMBER 24-26, 2023

54th annual National Chess Congress (PA)
See Grand Prix or chess events.us.

DECEMBER 16, 2023

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:** diyans-hu@chessacademy.com **Phone:** n/a **Website:** <https://chessacademy.com/tournaments> **TLA ID:** 39036

FIDE EVENT • JUNIOR GRAND PRIX

DECEMBER 19-23, 2023

2023 North American Junior U20 Championships

Event site: Washington Dulles Airport Marriott **Address:** 45020 Aviation Drive, Dulles, VA 20166 **Overall prize fund:** FIDE titles **GP Points:** n/a **FIDE Rated:** Y **Handicap accessible:** N **Residency restriction:** N **Organizer:** Anand Dommalapati **Email:** 2023naji@capitalareachess.com **Phone:** 1-703-621-5314 **Website:** <https://www.capitalareachess.com/2023NA/> **TLA ID:** 39413

DECEMBER 26-29, 2023

48th annual Eastern Open (VA)
See Grand Prix or chess events.us.

JANUARY 13-15, 2024

2024 Charlotte Open (NC)
See Grand Prix.

FEBRUARY 23-25, 2024

8th annual George Washington Open (VA)
See Grand Prix or chess events.us.

FEBRUARY 23-25, 2024

2024 U.S. Amateur Team Championship - South (FL)
See National Events.

WASHINGTON

NOVEMBER 11, 2023

Inaugural Veteran's Day Open

Event site: VA Puget Sound Health Care System **Address:** 1660 S Columbian Way, Building 101, Seattle, WA 98108 **Overall prize fund:** \$4,000 **GP Points:** n/a **FIDE Rated:** N **Handicap accessible:** Y **Residency restriction:** N **Organizer:** Olin Martin **Email:** Olin.Martin@va.gov **Phone:** 206-552-3228 **Website:** <https://www.va.gov/puget-sound-health-care/locations/seattle-va-medical-center/> **TLA ID:** 40271

NOVEMBER 21-26, 2023

58th American Open (CA-S)
See Grand Prix.

NOVEMBER 24-25, 2023

18th Susan Polgar Foundation National Open for Girls and Boys

Event site: Hyatt Regency Bellevue **Address:** 900 Bellevue Way NE, Bellevue, WA 98004 **Overall prize fund:** Scholarships and other prizes **GP Points:** n/a **FIDE Rated:** N **Handicap accessible:** Y **Residency restriction:** N **Organizer:** Washington Chess Federation **Email:** washingtonchessfederation@gmail.com **Phone:** 2067693757 **Website:** <https://www.spfn.com/> **TLA ID:** 40240

DECEMBER 19-23, 2023

2023 North American Junior U20 Championships (VA)
See Virginia.

DECEMBER 26-30, 2023

33rd annual North American Open (NV)
See Grand Prix or chess events.us.

JANUARY 12-15, 2024

15th annual Golden State Open (CA-N)
See Grand Prix or chess events.us.

WEST VIRGINIA

DECEMBER 19-23, 2023

2023 North American Junior U20 Championships (VA)
See Virginia.

JANUARY 12-15, 2024

56th annual Liberty Bell Open (PA)
See Grand Prix or chess events.us.

FEBRUARY 23-25, 2024

2024 U.S. Amateur Team Championship - South (FL)
See National Events.

WISCONSIN

NOVEMBER 19, 2023

2023 Illinois Class State Championship
See Grand Prix.

NOVEMBER 24-26, 2023

7th Sevan Muradian Memorial (IL)
See Grand Prix.

DECEMBER 16-17, 2023

The Wisconsin Memorial

Event site: Courtyard by Marriott **Address:** 2266 Deming Way, Middleton, WI 53562 **Overall prize fund:** \$900 **GP Points:** n/a **FIDE Rated:** N **Handicap accessible:** Y **Residency restriction:** N **Organizer:** Mike Nietman **Email:** mike.nietman@charter.net **Phone:** 16084678510 **Website:** <https://www.wischess.org/> **TLA ID:** 39080

DECEMBER 19-23, 2023

2023 North American Junior U20
Championships (VA)

See Virginia.

WYOMING

DECEMBER 19-23, 2023

2023 North American Junior U20
Championships (VA)

See Virginia.

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US CHESS



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(MAP)

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Name	State	Count	Name	State	Count	Name	State	Count
Overall Affiliate Standings			State Chapter Affiliate Standings			Scholastic and Youth Membership Standings		
CONTINENTAL CHESS ASSOC	NY	1,666	WASHINGTON CHESS FEDERATION	WA	269	CONTINENTAL CHESS ASSOC	NY	483
BAY AREA CHESS	CA	332	MICHIGAN CHESS ASSOCIATION	MI	113	BAY AREA CHESS	CA	295
CHESS CLUB AND SCHOLASTIC CTR	MO	279	MINNESOTA STATE CHESS ASSOC	MN	44	WASHINGTON CHESS FEDERATION	WA	194
WASHINGTON CHESS FEDERATION	WA	269	MASSACHUSETTS CHESS ASSOC	MA	33	NEW ENGLAND CHESS SCHOOL	MA	157
CHESSPALACE	CA	218	IOWA STATE CHESS ASSOC	IA	29	CHESS CENTER OF NEW YORK	NY	143
NEW ENGLAND CHESS SCHOOL	MA	160	OREGON CHESS FEDERATION	OR	28	CHESSPALACE	CA	142
CHESS CENTER OF NEW YORK	NY	156	MARYLAND CHESS ASSOC	MD	27	CINCINNATI SCHOLASTIC CHESS	OH	112
BOCA RATON CHESS CLUB	FL	153	PENNSYLVANIA ST CHESS FED	PA	18	BOCA RATON CHESS CLUB	FL	108
SAN DIEGO CHESS CLUB	CA	151	MAINE CHESS ASSOCIATION	ME	17	CHESS CLUB AND SCHOLASTIC CTR	MO	96
ROCHESTER CHESS CENTER	NY	145	ARKANSAS CHESS ASSOCIATION	AR	14	HAMPTON ROADS CHESS ASSOC	VA	96

Small State Affiliate Standings

ENDGAME CHESS	NM	25
TOURNAMENT IN A BOX	NH	22
KNIGHTS CHESS CLUB	NH	20
MAINE CHESS ASSOCIATION	ME	17
LIKENS CHESS	SD	9
HAWAII PHOENIX CHESS	HI	7
WVSCA	WV	7
OMAHA CHESS COMMUNITY	NE	4
HARRISON COUNTY CHESS CLUB	WV	4
NORTH DAKOTA CHESS ASSOC	ND	3

Adult Membership Standings

CONTINENTAL CHESS ASSOC	NY	1,183
CHESS CLUB AND SCHOLASTIC CTR	MO	183
SAN DIEGO CHESS CLUB	CA	119
ROCHESTER CHESS CENTER	NY	109
VEGAS CHESS FESTIVALS	NV	82
CHESSPALACE	CA	76
WASHINGTON CHESS FEDERATION	WA	71
SOUTH MIAMI CHESS CLUB	FL	47
TWIN KNIGHTS CHESS CLUB	MI	47
BOCA RATON CHESS CLUB	FL	45
DOWNRIVER CHESS CLUB	LA	45

Member Standings

CARTER LARSON	NC	1
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PCT GAIN STANDINGS

State	Dec20	Dec21	PCT
DE	148	423	185.81
ND	64	130	103.13
MT	87	127	45.98
AR	193	274	41.97
SD	59	81	37.29
OK	358	482	34.64
WY	52	68	30.77
LA	409	511	24.94
IA	413	511	23.73
NE	221	273	23.53



US CHESS



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all of our Affiliates for their commitment and hard work.

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510-843-0150
www.berkeleychessschool.org

Capital Area Chess

Centreville VA
703-627-5314
www.capitalareachess.com

Caveman Chess, LLC

Park Ridge, IL
224-985-5244
www.cavemanchess.com

Charlotte Chess Center

Charlotte, NC
980-265-1156
<https://www.charlottechess-center.org/>

ChessNYC.com

New York, NY
212-475-8130
www.chessnyc.com

Continental Chess Association

Pelham, NY
201-347-2269
www.chesstour.com

Manasota Chess Center

Sarasota, FL
941-900-3296
www.manasotachess.org

Marshall Chess Club New York, NY

212-477-3716
www.marshallchessclub.org

New Millennium Chess LLC

New York, NY
212-475-8130
www.NewMillenniumChess.org

Ocean State Chess Association

Riverside, RI
401-212-1335
www.oceanstatechess.com

PaperClip Pairings

Brownsville, TX
956-621-0377
rrferrari@bisd.us

Sacred Heart Uni- versity Chess Club Fairfield, CT

203-365-4827
www.sacredheartclubsports.com/sports/Chess

Chess Club and Scholastic Center of Saint Louis St. Louis, MO

314-361-CHESS
www.saintlouischessclub.org

San Diego Chess Club San Diego, CA

619-752-4377
www.sandiegochessclub.org

Washington Chess Federation

Redmond, WA
206.769.3757
www.wachess.com

Williamsburg Tutoring.com

Brooklyn NY
www.WilliamsburgTutoring.com

US CHESS SILVER AFFILIATES

Chess Center of New York (NY)

www.chesscenter.cc

CHESS4u (GA)

770-939-5030

Dark Knight Chess Club (TX)

www.dkchess.com

En Passant Chess Club (TX)

td_edg@twc.com

Evangel Chess Club (AL)

www.evangelchurch.me

Jersey Shore HS Chess League (NJ)

shorehschessleague@yahoo.com

Little House of Chess, Inc. (NY)

littlehouseofchess.org

Long Island Chess Nuts (NY)

516-739-3907

Mechanics' Institute (CA)

www.milibrary.org/chess

Michigan Chess Association (MI)

www.michess.org

Oklahoma Chess Foundation (OK)

www.OCFchess.org

Regents School of Austin Chess Club (TX)

www.regentsaustin.org/chess

Rochester Chess Center (NY)

www.chessset.com

Sparta Chess Club (NJ)

www.spartachessclub.org

TLA CHESS (VA)

tla.chess.llc@gmail.com

For all information on becoming a Gold or Silver Affiliate, please visit <https://new.uschess.org/gold-and-silver-affiliates>.

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PAGE 13 CHESS TO ENJOY

PROBLEM 1. White wins with 22. Ne6!. Black allowed 22. ... Bxd5 23. Qg7 mate rather than play out 22. ... fxe6 23. Bxe6+ Rf7 24. Qf6! Qf8 25. Rc7 and wins. **PROBLEM 2.** 31. Rg6! clears the way for Qh4-g5-h6+. After 31. ... Bxg6 32. fxg6 Rgf8 White forced mate with 33. Qg5 Kg8 34. Qh6. **PROBLEM 3.** Don't take full credit for 33. Rxc5+! (if 33. ... fxg5 34. Qxf8 mate) unless you also saw 33. ... Kf7 34. Rxf6+!. Black resigned after 34. ... Kxf6 35. Qxf8+ Kxg5 (if 35. ... Qf7 36. Rf5+) 36. h4+! in view of 36. ... Kxh4 37. Qf4 mate or 36. ... Kg6 37. Nf4 mate. **PROBLEM 4.** 35. ... Qh4! makes ... Be5xg3 decisive. **PROBLEM 5.** Black resigned after 26. Nxf6+! in light of 26. ... exf6 27. Qd5+ Kh8 28. Qf7 and mates. Or 26. ... Kh8 27. Nd7! Bxd7? 28. Qf7. **PROBLEM 6.** The win comes with 26. ... f5! threatening 27. ... fxe4. White resigned after 27. Nxb4 fxe4 28. h4 Nxf3+ in view of 29. Kh1 Qxb4 30. Be1 Rxd1, for example. Or 27. h4 fxe4 28. hxg5 exd3 and ... e5-e4.

PAGE 31 MAKE YOUR MOVE

TACTIC 1. 23. Bxg6! The move order is important. If White first captures on e7, 23. Bxe7, then 23. ... cxd3! wins for Black. **23. ... fxg6 24. Bxe7 Qxe7 25. Rxc6+** Now the hole down to Black's king is the size of a crater. **25. ... Kh8 26. Rh6+ Kg7** Or 26. ... Kg8 27. Qg3+ Qg7 (27. ... Kf7 28. Qg6 mate is obviously worse) 28. Rg6 and White wins. **27. Rxb5, Black resigned.** The threat is 28. Qg3+ Kf7 29. Rh7+ and if 27. Rxb5 Kg6, then 28. Rh6+ Kg7 29. Rd4 and Black is done. (Svidler – Van Foreest, FIDE World Cup, 2023) **TACTIC 2. 28. Bc7!** The world #1 hits the back rank defender. This is much stronger than 28. Qe4 Bf6 29. Be5 Kg8 30. Ne7+ Bxe7 31. Qxg6+ fxg6 32. Bxh8 which, of course, also should win. **28. ... Rd7** It was relatively better to play 28. ... Bf6 but giving White the Exchange while entering an endgame is not a path to success against Carlsen. **29. Re8+! Boom! Black resigned** as White forces mate. The conclusion would have been 29. Re8+ Kxe8 30. Qe4+ Ne6 31. Qa8+ Nd8 32. Qxd8+ Rxd8 33. Rxd8 mate. Practice your mating puzzles! (Carlsen – Pantoš, FIDE World Cup, 2023) **TACTIC 3. 28. ... Qe8!** Black simultaneously pushes the bishop and guards the f7-pawn. **29. Bc1 Rb6!** The strongest move, although it should be said that both 29. ... Re1 and 29. ... Nxc1 also would offer Black winning positions. The immediate threat is 30. ... Rf6. **30. Qh5** White is without good option, for instance, 30. Rxc4 Rxc4 31. Qxd3 Rc8 is hopeless for White because the white king will never be safe and 30. h4 is met by 30. ... Rf6 31. Bf4 h6 32. Rc2 Nxf4 33. gxf4 Re3 34. Qf2 Rg6+ 35. Kh2 Qe6 and White's king is toast. **30. ... h6** There is no need to rush, as Black slowly shoves White over the edge. **31. Qd5 Rb5 32. Qd6 Nxc1 and White resigned.** A possible continuation was 32. ... Nxc1 33. Rxc1 Rxb2 34. Qc5 Ree2 and it is game over. (Janik – Dominguez Perez, FIDE World Cup, 2023) **TACTIC 4. 24. Bxh7!** It is hard to imagine at first glance, but this game only lasts two more moves before the former world champion challenger resigns. The h7-knight is an essential defender, and, at the same time, White needs the e4-square for

another piece. **24. ... Kxh7 25. Ne4!** Yes, that's the guy who is needed in the attack. The immediate threat is Ng5+. **25. ... Qe7** If 25. ... Kh8, then 26. f5 Qxd4 27. Qxd4 Rxd4 28. Nf6 exf5 29. Nxc8 Kxg8 30. Rxc7+ and White easily wins the endgame. **26. f5, Black resigned.** The immediate threat is 27. f6, and if 26. f5 exf5, then White forces mate with 27. Nf6+! Kh8 (or 27. ... gxf6 28. Qxh6+ Kxh6 29. Rh3 mate) 28. Qxh6+! gxf6 29. Rxc8+ Rxc8 30. Rxc8 mate. No wonder Caruana had enough. (Abasov – Caruana, FIDE World Cup, 2023) **TACTIC 5. 21. Rhb1!** White prepares Nc3-b5 and, rather amazingly, Black has no defense against the pin on the c7-knight. **21. ... Rc8** Black doesn't have any good options, for instance, 21. ... Kc6 22. R1b6+ Kd7 23. Nb5 Rc8 24. Na7 Ra8 25. Rc6 when 25. ... R8xa7 is met by 26. Rcxc7+, winning the rook; or 21. ... Ra6 22. Nb5 Rc6 23. Na7 Rc4 (also 23. ... Rf6 24. Rc1 ends Black's resistance.) 24. Kd3, and the rook is out of squares. **22. Nb5 a3 23. Na7! Rxa7** Desperation, but 23. ... Ra8 24. Rc1 is similar to above. **24. Rxa7 Kc6 25. Rxa3 Rd8 26. Rc3+ and Black resigned** in Sarana – Shevchenko, FIDE World Cup, 2023. **TACTIC 6. 26. ... Ng5!!** An unbelievably nasty move that threatens 27. ... Nh3+ 28. gxf3 Bxh3 with mate to follow. **27. e4** Desperation, but White is without a defense, for instance, 27. h4 Nh3+ 28. Kh1 Bg4! (28. ... Nxf2+ obviously also wins, but White cannot move so why not improve the position of the pieces?) 29. Nb7 Bxb4 30. gxf3 (or 30. f3 Qxe3 31. Bg3 Bxd2 and curtains) 30. ... Bxd2 31. Qxd2 Qf3+ 32. Kg1 Bxh3 with mate next move. **27. ... Nh3+ Or 27. ... Bh3 28. gxf3 Nxb3+ 29. Kg2 Qg4+ 30. Kf1 Nf4 with mate. 28. Kh1 dxe4 29. gxf3 e3** One of several winning moves; this move forces mate. **30. Kg1 Bxh3 and White resigned** in Gelfand – Berkes, FIDE World Cup, 2023. **TACTIC 7. 12. ... dxe4!** This is the beginning of an amazing firestorm unleashed by the Indian youngster on his unsuspecting victim. **13. Qg3** If 13. Qe3, then 13. ... Bc5 14. Qxe4 Nh4! (the knight cannot be captured because of ... Bc5-f2+) 15. Na4 Qa5+ 16. Bd2 Nxc2+ with a decisive advantage for Black. **13. ... Nh4! 14. Rxb4 Qg1+ 15. Bf1 e3 Boom!!! 16. Nd1** Of course, the pawn cannot be captured, 16. Bxe3 Bxh4 and Black wins. **16. ... Re8** Again stopping Bxe3 on account of ... Be7xh4. **17. Ke2 Be6!** Threatening nasty things on c4. However, here, Black could possibly have improved with 17. ... Bxh4 18. Qxh4 b6! 19. f5 Ba6+ 20. c4 Re5 21. Nxe3 Rae8 with a clear advantage for Black, but there is obviously a lot left to play for. **18. b3??** The French grandmaster collapses. It was necessary to play 18. f5 Bxh4 19. Qxh4 Bd5 20. Nxe3 Re4 21. Qf2 Bc4+ 22. Ke1 Qh1 23. g3 Rae8 24. Qg2 Qxh5 25. Bxc4 Rxc4 and Black has a clear advantage but White continues to fight. **18. ... Rad8 19. Nxe3 Bf6 19. ... Bxh4 also wins. 20. Rb1 Bf5 21. Qf2** Or 21. Bb2 Bxb2 22. Rxb2 Rd4 23. b4 Be6 24. Kf3 Bd5+ 25. Nxd5 Qxf1+ 26. Kg4 f5+ 27. Kh3 cxd5 and White will not survive. **21. ... Bxh4 22. Qxh4 Bxc2 23. Qxd8 Rxd8 24. Nxc2 Qc5** and Black had a winning position, which eventually was converted. (Lagarde – Praggnanandhaa FIDE World Cup, 2023) **TACTIC 8. 28. ... Be4+** Best! In the game, the Webster University head coach won after **28. ... e5 29. dxe5 Rhd8 30. Bd3 Bxg2 31. Bxf5** (or 31. Rh5 Rxd3 32. Qxd3 Be4 33. Rxe4

fxe4 34. Qd6+ Qxd6 35. exd6 Rf8 and Black wins) **31. ... Bxh3 32. e6?? Rf8** (the amazing 32. ... Ne3!! would have been even better) **33. Bc2 Rc7?** (33. ... Qd6!) **34. Bd4?** (34. c5!?) **34. ... Bg2 35. Qd2 Qd6 36. a5 Rd8 37. axb6 axb6 38. Rd1 Bf3 39. Be5 Qxd2 40. Rxd2 Rxd2 41. e7 Bc6** and White resigned in Ivanisevic – Le Quang Liem, FIDE World Cup, 2023. **29. Bd3** It would probably have been better to play 29. Rxe4, but after 29. ... fxe4 30. Be2 Rhf8 31. Be3 Nxe3 32. Qxe3 Rf6, Black wins easily. **29. ... Rxc4!! Boom!** **30. Qxc4 Rc8** Black gives up two rooks for the queen, but the rook on h3 and the bishop on g1 are not participating in the game. **31. Qxc8+ Kxc8 32. Rc1+ Kd7 33. Rc3 Bxd3+ 34. Rxd3 Qb4** and Black wins. **TACTIC 9. 34. ... Qf1!!** After having been on heels the entire game, Black misses his chance after an uncharacteristic slip by Carlsen, and this one could have been costly. The game continued **34. ... Rg6??** and Black resigned on move 43 in Carlsen – Abasov, FIDE World Cup, 2023. **35. Qd2** Nothing works for White, for instance, 35. Rxb6 Rxb6 36. Qxh6 Qe2+, winning the bishop on e5 or 35. Kc3 Rg6, and White cannot stop the penetration in White's position. **35. ... Rg6 36. Rh2 Rg1!** Complete penetration of White's back rank. **37. Bb2 Qb1+ 38. Kc3 Bf5 39. Rf2 Rd1** and it would have been game over for the eventual winner of the World Cup.

PAGE 47 ABCS OF CHESS

PROBLEM 1. White mates in two: **1. Qb5+ Ka8 2. Qc6 mate. PROBLEM 2.** White mates in two: **1. Qg5+ Kh8 2. Qg8 mate. PROBLEM 3.** White wins in two: **1. Nc7+ Kb8 2. Na6 mate. PROBLEM 4.** Black loses in two: **1. Nd5+ Kg8 2. Ne7 mate. PROBLEM 5. Mating net:** White mates in two: **1. Qxb7+ Kxb7 2. Bc6 mate. PROBLEM 6.** White mates in two: **1. Qh6+ Kxh6** (if 1. ... Kg8 or 1. ... Kh8, then 2. Qf8 mate) **2. Bf8 mate.**

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MY BEST MOVE

AMY NUNN
TOURNAMENT DIRECTOR
AND PARALEGAL

A

1988 *CHESS LIFE* AD LED 20-something me on a nervous search to an old Chicago neighborhood one pitch-black winter night. Is *this* ancient apartment building with such a narrow gangway the place?

Claustrophobic. Wary. *Was this a good idea?* Some years before I remembered learning that one of my moves was passive?! Huh?

To get what we needed, girls from my generation were often *raised* to be passive. Was chess different?

You see, I'd loved chess during the Fischer boom, but for some years had only played against my old chess computer. How might I fare against Chicago's flesh and blood, a fraternity with books and clocks and each other to learn from and play with?

A dozen or so characters — all men — dotted the dank basement. But quickly one twinkle-eyed member kindly offered a game. Pretty sure he *let* me win. But no matter. I felt like a *competitor*.

I was hooked.

By 1991 we'd moved near Elizabethtown, Kentucky, where life got busy and I began a 17-year chess hiatus. But I still *never* forgot the thrill of that dank basement game of chess.

Flash forward to 2010 when I joined the Elizabethtown Chess Club. How I struggled. Oh, I could get 'em on the ropes, but as one club member said, "Amy gets close, but she just can't close the deal." Turns out to improve I needed more than just chess strategy. I needed to *not* go unconsciously passive in strong positions; *no more imitating a lady in waiting!*

I needed to close the deal.

Which my intrepid queen finally did against often-nemesis Glen O'Banion (seen with me in the photo above) in a local tournament. Always playfully trash talking beforehand, Glen had promised to win, "even though you always get so close against me, don't you?"

You'll find my answer on move 34.



“Turns out to improve I needed more than just chess strategy.”

LONDON SYSTEM (A48)

Glen O'Banion (1650)

Amy Nunn (1442)

Elizabethtown Christmas Open (4),
12.21.2021

1. d4 g6 2. Bf4 Bg7 3. Nf3 Nf6 4. Qc1 d6 5. Bh6 0-0 6. Bxg7 Kxg7 7. c4

Black is better developed and has an edge.

7. ... Bf5 8. e3 c5 9. Be2 Bxb1 10. Qxb1 Qa5+ 11. Nd2 cxd4 12. b4 Qb6 13. e4 Nbd7 14. 0-0 Rac8 15. a3 Rfe8 16. Kh1 e5 17. Qd3 Nf8 18. Rfc1 Ne6 19. g3 Re7 20. Ra2 Rec7 21. Rac2 h5 22. Bf3 Qc6

Preparing to open fronts on both sides of the board.

23. b5 Qe8 24. Bg2 Qh8 25. Bh3 Ng4 26. Bxg4 hxg4 27. Qe2 Qh5

Black is only "up a pawn" but the positional advantage is huge!

28. Rg1 Rh8 29. Rg2 Ng5 30. Nf1 Nf3

Preventing any f-pawn pushes to open the board.

31. Rb2 Qg5 32. Rb3 Rcc8 33. b6 axb6 34. Rxb6



34. ... Qc1!

This is **MY BEST MOVE!** The queen owns the first rank and can't be dislodged!

35. Rb4 Rh3

Glen: "I wish you hadn't done that!"

36. Ra4

Now mate is forced.

36. ... Rch8 37. Rg1 Rxh2+ 38. Nxh2 Qxg1, mate. ♖



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