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CHESSLIFE

AUGUST 2024 ■ USChess.org

 US CHESS

Tactics & Threes

In Conversation
with the
**NBA's Grant
Williams**

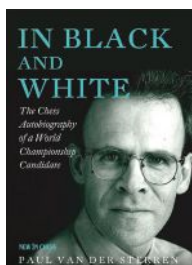




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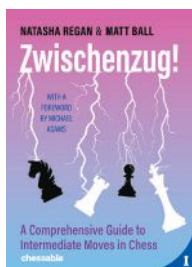


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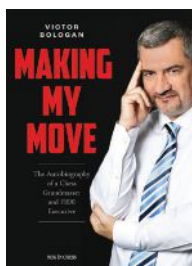
'The finest chess book I've ever read'
– *Matthew Sadler in New In Chess*

In this brutally honest autobiography, Dutch GM Paul van der Sterren describes his rise to the chess elite and his struggle to get better, with all the uncertainties and difficulties on his path. From his very first moves to his match against Gata Kamsky, everything is described in great detail and with the greatest frankness. Be warned: 780 pages!



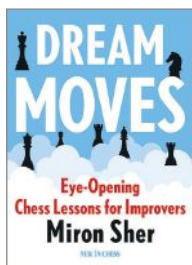
Looking for the unexpected
Natasha Regan & Matt Ball

The first-ever comprehensive guide to the chess tactic also known as the intermediate move, or intermezzo. This exciting manoeuvre can catch opponents off guard because it is against the expected run of play. You will learn how to spot Zwischenzugs, when to look out for them, and how to set them up in your games. On Chessable, the course was awarded 4.82 out of a five stars.



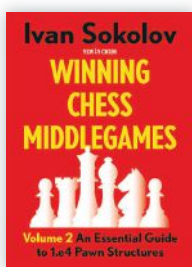
Making My Move
Victor Bologan

Victor Bologan is renowned as a strong GM, but he has also made a career in world chess and Moldovan politics. This autobiography gives a vivid account of his journey, detailing his collaborations with coaches like Chebanenko, Lanka, and Dvoretzky, as well as alliances with players like Morozevich, Ponomarev, Kramnik and Kasparov. Central is Bologan's chess career, with extensive annotations of his most attractive games.



Eye-Opening Lessons for Improvers
Miron Sher

Legendary chess coach Miron Sher, who trained GMs Robert Hess and Fabiano Caruana, collected hundreds of instructive positions for his students. This book focuses on five topics that Sher considered important for chess improvement, including Dream Moves. If you can dream about the final, decisive move that leads to a winning position, you will find your way there.

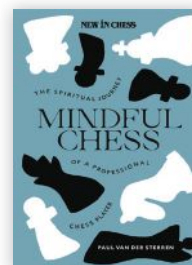


Winning Middlegames with 1.e4
Ivan Sokolov

In his 2010 bestseller *Winning Chess Middlegames*, GM Ivan Sokolov focused on 1.d4 openings. Now, with Volume 2, 1.e4 players get their turn. A dozen topical structures are covered (in the Ruy Lopez, the Italian, the Petroff, the Rauzer Sicilian, the Maroczy Bind, the Hedgehog, the Sveshnikov, the French Winawer and more). Deeply analysed top-level games illustrate the motifs in all these structures.

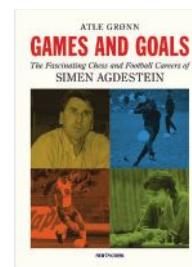
Mindful Chess
Paul van der Sterren

Van der Sterren was a professional chess player for more than twenty years. He met with both victory and defeat, joy and suffering. When, later in life, he discovered vipassana meditation, he approached meditation with the same devotion as his chess. In only 128 pages, the reader follows his two journeys, asking questions such as: What is chess? What is meditation? Who am I?



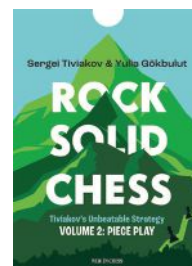
Simen Agdestein: A unique double talent
Atle Grønn

At the age of eighteen, Simen Agdestein became the youngest Grandmaster in the world. He reached his peak as the world's number 12. His talent extended to football, where he played for the Norwegian national team. "I can't choose between my left and my right arm," he once remarked, referring to his passion for both chess and football.



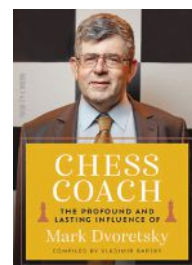
Rock Solid 2
Sergei Tiviakov & Yulia Gökbulut

The acclaimed first volume of his trilogy dealt with pawn structures. In this second volume, Sergei discusses piece play. Topics include the value of pieces, the bishop pair, centralization, and the question of when to castle. Tiviakov was unbeaten in a streak of more than 100 games as a professional. Who better to share the secrets of Rock Solid Chess and the activity and value of pieces than GM Tivi?



The profound influence of Mark Dvoretzky
Vladimir Barsky

When Mark Dvoretzky started coaching, he became a kind of doctor, quickly identifying what his students needed help with. He made them better chess players, but also better people. In this book, students such as Yusupov, Kasparov, Anand, Topalov and Carlsen, to name but a few, pay tribute to the most inspiring chess coach of his generation.



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, recognise the first small mistakes, and grind your opponent down until he cracks. The book is converted from a popular Chessable course. The lively conversations of the two friends translate very well into a highly instructive chess manual.



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Charlotte Chess Center maestro FM Peter Giannatos and Grant Williams



ON THE COVER

Both Grant Williams and his brother, Gabon, are US Chess rated players. But while Grant plays for the Charlotte Hornets, he hadn't yet been to the Charlotte Chess Center. So we got Grant there to visit and play some blitz. Our cover photo is from that visit; thanks to the entire CCC team for their willingness to help!

PHOTOGRAPH BY KELLY CENTRELLI

CHESSLIFE

August

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CHESSLIFE

August

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WGM SABINA FOISOR

(Middle School) was born in Romania to a chess-playing family. In

2008 she moved to the United States to begin studies at the University of Maryland Baltimore County and immediately saw success. The 2017 U.S. Women's Champion, she has represented the United States at the Olympiad and World Team Championships. Visit her teaching site, www.chessevolve.com, and her Twitch stream, www.twitch.tv/sabinafoisor.



GM KAYDEN TROFF

(Elementary) learned chess at the age of three by watching his father play. His talent was apparent,

and soon he was placing highly at both local and national youth events. In 2012 he became the World U14 Champion, and in 2014 — the same year he became a grandmaster — he won the U.S. Junior Open. Now returning to the chess world, he streams at www.twitch.tv/chesssharkz.



DANIEL WILSON

(Cadet) is a financial analyst, chess coach, and the assistant program director for the Chicago Chess

Foundation. He has directed three consecutive Cadet Championships.



GM JESPER THYBO

(Sveshnikov) is a former European U18 champion and a member of the Danish national team. Find him

on LiChess (@JThybo) for lessons.

**AUGUST
12 – 16**

Rounds
Begin at
1 P.M.

GRAND CHESS TOUR



Hikaru
NAKAMURA

Fabiano
CARUANA

Ian
NEPOMNIACHTCHI

Alireza
FIROUZJA

Nodirbek
ABDUSATTOROV

Wesley
SO

Maxime
VACHIER-LAGRAVE

Rameshbabu
PRAGGNANANDHAA

Levon
ARONIAN

Leinier
DOMINGUEZ

8.12 Rapid Rounds 1-3	8.13 Rapid Rounds 4-6	8.14 Rapid Rounds 7-9	8.15 Blitz Day 1	8.16 Blitz Day 2
Playoff (if necessary) 8.16 5:30 p.m.				

**AUGUST
19 – 28**

Rounds
Begin at
1 P.M.

GRAND CHESS TOUR



SINQUEFIELD CUP

Fabiano
CARUANA

Ian
NEPOMNIACHTCHI

Alireza
FIROUZJA

Nodirbek
ABDUSATTOROV

Wesley
SO

Liren
DING

Maxime
VACHIER-LAGRAVE

Rameshbabu
PRAGGNANANDHAA

Anish
GIRI

Dommaraju
GUKESH

8.19 Round 1	8.20 Round 2	8.21 Round 3	8.22 Round 4	8.23 Round 5	8.24 Rest Day
8.25 Round 6	8.26 Round 7	8.27 Round 8	8.28 Sinquefield Playoff	8.29 GCT Playoff	



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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



THE BEHOLDER

Congratulations on winning the contest for most unflattering cover (June 2024) in the history of *Chess Life*.

GM Levon Aronian is a very handsome man, and you managed to obscure that fact entirely.

Do you guys need help in the layout department?

Lance Bark
Via email

John Hartmann responds:

Beauty, as they say, is in the eye of the beholder. I think the cover is flattering to Levon, and is an interesting take on a person we've all seen so many times through the years.

COUNT IT UP

I have found one thing in chess I am equal to Magnus Carlsen and Bobby Fischer. We are both Morphy 4s! Let me explain.

In honor of Paul Morphy, and mimicking a degree of separation system, a person who played Morphy (person 0) is Morphy number 1. Someone who played a person who played Morphy is a 2, and so forth.

I played GM Samuel Reshevsky in three postal games, and I also played GM Arthur Bisguier in a simul. They were 3s, so I am a 4. There are fewer than 10 grandmasters alive who are 3s.

Bobby Fischer was also a 4,

so I am in the same chess-centric sentence with him for once.

I was only a 1600 player at my peak, but chess has enriched my life in countless ways. Being a "Morphy 4" is my highest chess honor. Second was being the Pennsylvania Class C champion.

For more on Morphy numbers, visit the Wikipedia page for "Morphy number."

David Panckeri
Via email

NOTATION NOTIONS

Recently, upon learning that a check is notated as a plus (+) and checkmate as two plusses (++) superseded at times by the hashtag symbol) a young student of one of my fellow chess instructors innocently asked what was the symbol for stalemate. It was a good question! Stalemate, being a bedrock outcome of our game, ought to have an annotation symbol of its own, one that is simple, not arbitrary, and can be rendered on a standard typewriter keyboard.

My suggested solution employs the following reasoning. Checkmate (++) is the definitive game ending form of check. The equals sign (=) is used to indicate an even game. As the definitive game ending form of equality, I propose that stalemate should be consecutive equals signs (= = with a space between, as certain fonts would otherwise make it look like two longer parallel lines). This makes the stalemate symbol (= =) completely analogous to the checkmate symbol (++) . Make sense?

I invite *Chess Life* readers to help popularize the stalemate symbol in their annotations and writings and so give this concept unique to chess its long deserved notational due.

Bob Basalla
Via email

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

Husker HOFers

A festival of chess in the Cornhusker state looks to give local chess a shot in the arm.

BY **WIM ALEXEY ROOT, PhD**



THE NEBRASKA CHESS HALL of Fame held their banquet and induction ceremony May 31 in Lincoln and the 50-point Grand Prix Nebraska Hall of Fame Chess Celebration — by far the largest Nebraskan prize fund in recent memory — on June 1-2. Both events were held at the Graduate Hotel, which, in previous incarnations, hosted the U.S. Open in 1969 and 1975.

The Hall of Fame “Class of 2023” are Rod Malpert, Kent Nelson, Keaton Kiewra, and your author. Our Nebraska-shaped awards are dated 2023 because we were selected in 2023, though the event was in 2024. Big events take time to plan!

ROD MALPERT

Rod Malpert joined the Lincoln Chess Club at age 11. He finished second in the Nation-

al Junior High Championship in 1976, and reached fourth on the rating list for US Chess players under age 16.

At age 14, Malpert scored 6½/12 in the 1975 U.S. Open, which was won with 10 points by GM Pal Benko. By 16, Malpert was the Nebraska state champion, was ranked 13th among US Chess players under age 21, and had achieved the master title — a feat, Rod adds, he achieved “without ever having had a chess coach.”

Rod retired from serious chess training at 17 to pursue academic interests, but had one more busy tournament year in 1992, while at Cornell. He quickly became a senior master and finished second in the New York State Championship.

Outside of chess, Malpert has been a professor, lawyer, and venture capitalist in Silicon Valley, Phoenix, and Dallas. Now semi-retired, Malpert is on a mission to spark a chess renaissance in Nebraska through philanthropy, coaching, and celebrating the state’s impressive chess heritage.

KENT NELSON

Kent Nelson had a more modest showing at the 1975 U.S. Open, scoring 4½ points. But this was an uncharacteristic result for Nelson, who won or shared the Lincoln city championship nine times. In 2021, at the age of 62, he caught his “white whale,” tying for first in the Nebraska state championship for the first time. (See “First Moves” in our January 2022 issue for more on this feat. ~ed.)

IM John Watson joined the banquet via video conferencing and said Nelson is known more as a writer than as a player. Nelson has published books about Nebraska Chess Hall of Fame members Anton Sildmets and Howard Ohman and has also collected Watson’s writings from various state

journals. Nelson is also the longest-serving editor of *The Gambit*, the Nebraska state chess newsletter.

ALEXEY (RUDOLPH) ROOT

At the time of the 1975 U.S. Open, I was taking my first steps in chess, having attended the Lincoln Chess Club for six months. With an entry fee of \$35 — more than \$200 in today’s money — and a start time of 7 p.m. each evening, my parents, Wallace and Janet Rudolph, decided that the 10-year-old me would have to miss the tournament.

But I was already blazing a trail in the chess world. Angel Niedfeld and I took all the prizes in the U13 sections of Nebraska tournaments for two years running. In each tournament, I won the first place trophy, and Angel got the first girl trophy. After complaints from the parents of some of the boys, a new structure was established: first overall, first boy, and first girl trophies.

One of the last Nebraska tournaments I played before moving to Washington state was the 1976 University of Nebraska-Lincoln Tournament. In those days, coaches and parents were allowed in the playing hall. I was winning my sixth-round game *en route* to a perfect score in the Elementary Division when I smiled at my chess teacher, FM Loren Schmidt, feeling proud of my position. Then I fell into a back-rank checkmate. I became co-champion, scoring 5/6 along with my sixth-round opponent, Shawn Orme.

Although I became the 1989 U.S. Women’s Champion, Watson also listed me as one of the inductees known more for my writing than my playing. Coming from Watson, a renowned author and *Chess Life* columnist, I took this as a compliment. At the banquet, *Chess Life* and *Chess Life Kids* editor John Hartmann, US Chess digital assistant



Rod Malpert

PHOTO: COURTESY SUBJECT

JJ Lang, *Omaha Chess Archive* editor Bruce Draney, and I received the Jack Spence Award for Chess Journalism.

KEATON KIEWRA

Kiewra is one of two International Masters from Nebraska, the other being IM Watson. (Alas, there are no Nebraskan GMs yet, although Keaton has two norms.) Kiewra was the Nebraska state champion for nine consecutive years and won six national scholastic titles during that time.

Kiewra attended The University of Texas at Dallas on a chess scholarship, and since graduating in 2009 has made his living as a full-time chess instructor. He moved to San Diego in 2013 and for several years managed the San Diego Surfers in the PRO Chess League. Kiewra's students have represented the U.S. at World Youth Championship events and been consistently ranked near the top of their age groups nationally. He now lives in the San Francisco Bay area.

TOURNAMENT RESULTS

Rod Malpert said that the weekend was like a high school reunion, but with a chess

tournament also happening. Bruce Draney said there were familiar faces but they were old faces, and then added with a wry grin, "I guess that means I am old too."

But there were many new, younger faces as well. Puwit Sky Moerlien is too young to have had an actual high school reunion, but he took clear first in the tournament. Moerlien is number 60 on the June US Chess top 100 list for 16-year-olds. The Kansas teen scored 4/4 to top the 69-player field.

Finishing tied for second, with 3½/4, were Kiewra and Nebraskans FM Nate Solon and JJ Lang. Lang also finished first in the unrated blitz tournament.

The combined prize fund for the Hall of Fame tournament and blitz tournament was \$13,650, backed by Malpert with contributions from Craig Wilkins and Bruce Draney.

HALL OF FAME HISTORY

The Nebraska Chess Hall of Fame was established by the Nebraska State Chess Association (NSCA) in 1996. Its first six members were Nebraska legends Howard Ohman, Jack Spence, Delmar Saxton, Aleks Liepnieks, Al Ludwig, and John Watson. The NSCA held a

special tournament to honor the first class. In 1997, five more Nebraska chess greats were added to the Hall of Fame: Anton Sildmets, Loren Schmidt, Lee Magee, Bud Narveson, and Richard McLellan. Another special Hall of Fame tournament was held in honor of the Hall's second class of inductees. Between 1998 and 2012, Gary Marks, Wayne Pressnall, John Tomas, and Rich Chess were added, bringing the total to 15.

In 2023, the Hall of Fame was revived by Bruce Draney, who returned to the chess scene after a 20-year absence. Draney appointed a Hall of Fame Selection Committee composed of three knowledgeable former or current Nebraska players with extensive knowledge of Nebraska chess players of the last 50 years: John Drexel, Richard Gardner Jr., and Loren Schmidt.

NOMINATIONS OPEN

Nominations are now open for the Nebraska Chess Hall of Fame Class of 2024. To nominate someone, submit a nomination to Schmidt, Drexel, Gardner, or Draney through the Nebraska Chess History group on Facebook.



Left to right: Kent Nelson, Rod Malpert, Alexey Root, and Keaton Kiewra

THE GRIND

by JJ Lang

Editor's note: Most readers will have had the experience of trying to win an equal position against a lower-rated opponent. Some will have had the particular joy of trying to win an equal position against a lower-rated, but highly-ranked, junior.

US Chess Digital Assistant JJ Lang was faced with this second task in the third round of the Nebraska Hall of Fame Championship. Playing against the 31st ranked (and climbing) eight-year-old in the United States, JJ had to continually find ways to preserve winning chances, taking some serious risks to do. After I saw the game at the end of the event, and in particular, the way that the rook ending played out, I asked him to annotate it as part of this report. What follows is an instructive look at chess as it is practically played. Enjoy.

THE GRIND

JJ Lang (2103)

Siddharth Parthasarathy (1601)

Nebraska HoF (3), Lincoln, 06.02.2024

Annotations by JJ Lang



WHITE TO MOVE

My advantage out of the opening (Black's weak b-pawns and an isolani) has evaporated, with Black now claiming the bishop pair as compensation for the b-pawns. Trying to reset now, my goal was to make sure this equal position did not, to paraphrase GM Jan Markos paraphrasing George Orwell, turn out to be "more equal than others."

21. a4

I wanted to avoid an opposite-colored bishop endgame.

21. ... Bxb5 22. axb5 Bxc3 23. bxc3 Ra5!

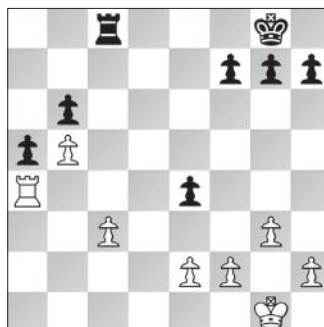
24. Rxa5?

An incredibly risky move. I was confident

that this was not "best," but could not find alternative lines that did not dry things out. If I realized that the best-case scenario after this continuation was, essentially, the exact position I wanted to avoid, I wouldn't have taken such a risk.

At the time, I thought that 24. Rad1 was unacceptable, as the position looks dreadfully equal after 24. ... Rxb5 25. Rd7 Kf8 26. Rc1 Rb3 27. Rxb7 Rbxc3 28. Rxc3 Rxc3 29. Rxb6 f5, with a same-side four-versus-four endgame. In retrospect, this is not much different than what I got later in the game!

24. ... bxa5 25. Ra1 b6 26. Ra4?!



Here my position goes from worse to losing. Activity is the first principle in rook endings; therefore, I should have played 26. Rd1!, allowing mate if Black were to take the c-pawn. After 26. ... Kf8 27. Rd6! Rb8 White brings his king to the center and has enough counterplay to hold the draw. The king can defend the c-pawn while the rook worries about the a-pawn.

26. ... f5

This was objectively fine (and still winning), but a practical error. The inclusion of ... f7-f5 elongates the seventh rank for White's rook, while keeping the e4-pawn is not a part of Black's clearest winning plan of advancing the a-pawn.

Also winning was 26. ... Rxc3 27. Rxe4 Kf8 when White's rook has no path to the b6-pawn, and no easy way to get behind the a-pawn. The rook must stay on the fourth rank but after, say 28. Kf1 (guarding the b-pawn with 28. Re5 a4 29. Re4 a3 30. Ra4 allows 30. ... Ke7! when Black's king is faster) 28. ... Rc5, Black's outside, connected passed pawns clearly out-perform White's four-on-three kingside majority.

27. Rd4

Already, Black's path to maintaining a winning edge is narrow.

27. ... Rc5?

This move is artificial, defending the f5-pawn while attacking the b5-pawn. But the b-pawn is not the base of White's queenside, and the f-pawn is not the most important pawn to save.

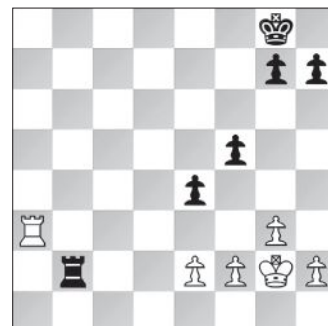
Black will not find an advantage after 27. ... Rxc3 28. Rd6 a4 29. Rxb6 a3 30. Ra6.

Instead, Black had to play 27. ... Ra8! and activate his king after 28. Ra4 Kf7 29. Kf1 Ke6 30. Ke1 Kd6 31. Kd2 Kc5 32. c4 Rd8+ 33. Kc3 Rd1 when White is powerless against Black's rook.

28. c4

Black has nothing better than to trade off the queenside pawns and enter a clearly drawn endgame.

28. ... a4 29. Rd6 Rxc4 30. Rxb6 Rb4 31. Kg2 a3 32. Ra6 Rxb5 33. Rxa3 Rb2



Now Black is the one who must deal with the psychological difficulty of chasing an advantage that no longer exists. For my part, I was quite happy to play on.

34. e3 Rb7

An odd move. Nobody wants an enemy rook on their seventh rank, but it's unclear what Ra3-a7 would really accomplish for me.

Instead, 34. ... Rb5, preventing Ra3-a5, would show an understanding of my actual plan of attack. My rook is stranded on the seventh rank after 35. Ra7 g6!, with the point that White cannot maneuver the king to h6 without dropping the f- and h-pawns.

35. Ra5 g6 36. g4

I was happy with this development for two reasons. First, I had no idea how else to provoke a weakness if not for this move. Second, I assumed it was at least possible for Black to make a bad decision here, even though most likely any reasonable response was still equal or equal-ish.

36. ... Rf7

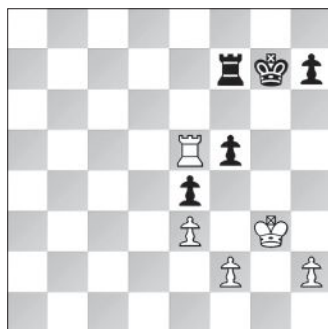
I thought the most obvious drawing move was 36. ... fxg4 with the point that 37. Re5

Rb2 38. Rxe4 h5 shouldn't be a win, despite the passed e-pawn, as White's king is tied down to the defense of the f-pawn. The rook can try to take over the king's guard, but 39. Rf4 Ra2 40. Kg3 Rb2 41. Kh4 Ra2 42. Kg5 Kg7 leaves White with no way to make progress. That said, giving White the passed e-pawn is a difficult practical decision to make, and it is at least conceivable that Black makes future errors that give the e-pawn a chance.

37. Re5 Kg7

Again 37. ... fxc4 was more practical. Now, White gets actual play against a weak pawn!

38. gxf5 gxf5 39. Kg3



Black can still draw, but it requires precision and urgency. This is the key position to appreciate. If Black did not allow the creation of such a vulnerable pawn, or if Black's rook tried to play more actively rather than defend the f-pawn, then such an urgent and precise moment would never have arisen. Drawing the drawn endgame, in other words, is less about finding the precise move here, and more about avoiding a "drift" into positions like this.

39. ... Kf6?

The only draw was 39. ... f4+!! 40. exf4 Kf6 41. Rxe4 when Black is down two pawns, but White's doubled, isolated f-pawns are unable to make any progress!

40. Kf4 Kg6 41. Ra5 Rf8

Black's rook has remained passive, while both of White's pieces have coordinated against the fixed, backward f-pawn. Of course, White still needs to play accurately, too.

42. Ra1

The way forward was 42. h4! h5 (the point is 42. ... Rf7 43. h5+ Kxh5 44. Rxf5+ trades into a winning king-and-pawn endgame) 43. Ra6+ Rf6 and only now (or 43. ... Kg7 44. Kg5 infiltrates) 44. Ra1 when the g5-square is under White's control: 44. ... Rb6 45. Rg1+ Kf6 46. Rg5 scooping up the f5-pawn before Black's

JJ Lang (left) and John Hartmann (right) proudly display their awards.

rook can attack the f2-pawn. Also possible and good is 42. Rc5 Rf7 43. h4 Rf8 (if 43. ... h5 44. Rc6+).

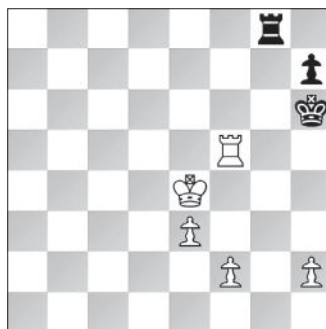
42. ... Re8??

White's imprecise move order allowed Black one last chance at activity with 42. ... Rb8 43. Ra6+ (there's no breakthrough after 43. Rg1+ Kf6 44. Rg5 Rb5 when Black holds) 43. ... Kg7 44. Kxf5 Rb2! following the important maxim that activity is more valuable than material. After 45. Kxe4 Rxf2, it's hard to imagine White's e-pawn making it far with Black's king not cut off by any files.

43. Ra6+

Black must have counted on 43. Rg1+?? Kf6 44. Rg5 Re5, but of course the rook's power is limited on the e-file, where it can only defend the f5-pawn and can't switch gears to counterattack the f2-pawn when needed!

43. ... Kh5 44. Rf6 Rg8 45. Rxf5+ Kh6 46. Kxe4

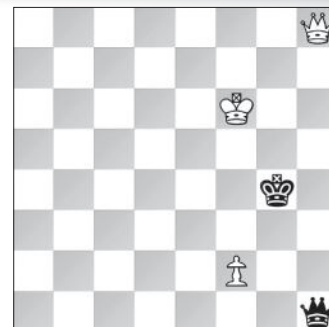


Now White's winning.

46. ... Rg2 47. h4 Rh2 48. h5 Rxh5 49. Rxh5+ Kxh5 50. Kf5 Kh6 51. Kf6 Kh5 52. e4 Kg4 53. e5 h5 54. e6 h4 55. e7 h3 56. e8=Q h2 57. Qh8 h1=Q

(see diagram top of next column)

I'm sad to say I spent five minutes here calculating my way out of the "stalemate trick" I walked into, and did not realize until the next day that Black's king still has the f4-square if I captured on h1.



58. Qc8+ Kf4 59. Qf5, mate.

Okay, this works too.

Let's be honest: It is impossible to win such a symmetrical rook-and-pawn endgame without some (OK, a lot) of help from one's opponent. But it's important to try to help your opponent help you.

Here, by achieving the g3-g4 pressure against Black's f5-pawn, it was Black's job to commit to the risk of transforming the structure into one where White had a (probably harmless) passed e-pawn. It's the "commitment" and the "probably" that gave Black decision points. Black chose wrongly at several points by going for passive defense, even when the position was still objectively drawn, because the path to the draw became much more complicated when Black's rook could not exert as much pressure as its counterpart. ♡

National Chess Day Week!

THE 2024 NATIONAL CHESS DAY FALLS on Saturday, October 12, which this year is also Yom Kippur, one of the most solemn holidays on the Jewish calendar.

For this reason, the Executive Board has decided to extend our National Chess Day into a National Chess Week, running from October 5-12.

For any event that includes “National Chess Day” (or “National Chess Week”) in the event title and is held October 5-12, US Chess is offering:

- A free email blast. Make sure that “National Chess Day” is part of your subject line. On the payment screen, select “No charge.” Also, make sure the demographic you are sending this to is reasonable; generally, this will be local or regional. Do not send to the

entire membership.

- Free ratings fees. Use the payment code **NCD2024FREE**. This is case-sensitive, and can only be used for one event.
- Free online TLA. Online TLAs are always free, of course, not just for National Chess Day. But we want to make sure you are aware of this option too as you promote your event. See “How to Create a TLA” at new.uschess.org/information-new-members

Another way to celebrate National Chess Day is by making a gift to US Chess! What better way to celebrate National Chess Day than by sharing your passion and love for the game? Your donation will help ensure that the chess

programs and events that you care so much about will continue for years to come and advance our mission to “empower people, enrich lives, and enhance communities through chess.” To make a tax-deductible gift to US Chess, just click on DONATE at uschess.org, and choose the program or fund that you would like to support. Thank you for the impact you are making on so many lives, and for your commitment to US Chess!

Please feel free to send your best photos to our Communications team through John Hartmann <john.hartmann@uschess.org> for possible use in *Chess Life*, *Chess Life Kids*, and *Chess Life Online*. On social media, use the hashtag **#NationalChessDay**.

Please direct any questions to Dan Lucas <dlucas@uschess.org>. Here’s to a successful National Chess Week for all!

Welcome, Rick!

RICK MASSIMO HAS JOINED THE US Chess Communications team as an assistant editor.

Rick played his first tournament chess game in 1977, and the joys — and frustrations — have captivated him ever since. “Playing chess did for me what playing football or baseball does for other kids,” he says, “and whenever I find myself in a new city, or a new life situation, I look for a club or a tournament and I’ve immediately

got a group of people I can get along with.”

He’s also been a writer and editor of everything from books on music and history to social media posts for more than 30 years, but he says, “I’m most looking forward to working with an organization, and on a publication, that has been such a big part of my life.”

When he’s not working or playing chess, Rick is probably writing his novel about an elderly Soviet master, or recording music long distance with his high school bandmate. ♠



Rick
Massimo

PHOTO: COURTESY SUBJECT

Ron Gross 1936-2024

BY **ANDY SACKS**

IT WAS SAD NEWS TO LEARN OF THE death of Ron Gross, a fine chess player and a friendly gentleman, at the age of 88. His victory at the 1955 U.S. Junior Speed Championship in Lincoln, Nebraska, was an early sign of his talent, and it was there that he met his longtime friend Bobby Fischer, whom he defeated in that tournament.

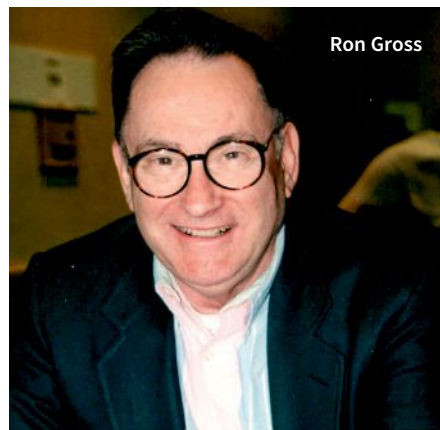
Ron won many tournaments over the years and scored particularly well in California tournaments in the 1960s. Ron tied for fourth with two others at the 1965 California State Championship behind winner Don Sutherland, followed by a fourth-place finish at the 1966 U.S. Open in Seattle. The

following year, he took second behind Walter Browne in the Southern California Championship; he tied for third place (with Jim Tarjan) in the 1968 John Gilbreth Memorial Open behind winners Tibor Weinberger and Charles Henin.

Perhaps his most notable result came at the 1969 American Open, where he finished tied for second with three players, including Browne, at 7/8 — a score sufficient to win most American Opens.

Ron was a solid master who was tough to beat. This brought him many wins and draws against higher-rated players. His style was primarily positional, but of course he could attack when the position called for it.

Even in his prime, Ron played a lighter tournament schedule than most masters because of his various outside interests and professional responsibilities. I have little doubt that, had he devoted more time and study to chess, he would have maintained senior master status. As it was, however, he was still able



Ron Gross

to maintain a master rating well into his 70s due to his deep understanding of the game.

Ron will be missed, both in the chess circles of Southern California, his home for decades, and in the Las Vegas area, where he was adopted as a local living legend in his later years.

WIM Lisa Lane 1934-2024

BY **JOHN HARTMANN**

A TWO-TIME U.S. WOMEN'S CHAMPION and a 2023 inductee to the U.S. Chess Hall of Fame, Lisa Lane learned to play chess in 1957 when she observed some of her fellow students playing the game at Temple University. Soon she was hooked, playing in Philadelphia coffee houses as often as she could, and then at the Franklin Mercantile Chess Club.

It was there that she came to the attention of Attilio di Camillo (1917-1962), a master who had played in multiple U.S. Championships. Di Camillo was impressed with Lane's fervor and talent, and in January 1958, he told her that if she worked hard, she could be the women's champion in two years.

Lane would do better than that.

In her first national tournament, the 1958

U.S. Open, Lane scored 6/12. The following year, she was the top woman finisher in the U.S. Amateur Championship in May and won the U.S. Women's Championship in December. She was top woman in the 1960 U.S. Open with a score of 7/12.

Lane played in her first Women's Candidates Tournament in Vrnjačka Banja in 1961, scoring 6/16 to share 12th place with fellow American Gisela Gresser, among others. Her participation was heralded by her appearance on the cover of *Sports Illustrated* on August 7, 1961 — the first time a chess player was so honored.

After a second-place finish in the 1962 U.S. Women's Championship and another 12th-place finish at the 1964 Women's Candidates, Lane captured her second U.S. Women's title in 1966, sharing the honor with Gresser.

But this event, with its paltry funding compared to that of the "open" championship, hastened Lane's exit from competitive play. She organized protests outside the chess club she operated in Greenwich Village, but no equity in prize funds was forthcoming; by the late 1960s, Lane had



WIM Lisa Lane

left the chess world.

Together with her second husband, Neil Hickey, Lane moved to Carmel, New York, and opened a natural health food store. She died at home on February 28; her husband passed away three weeks later. ♠

Is It Still Chess?

When it pays to be a zombie

BY GM ANDY SOLTIS

W

HEN THE WORLD'S TOP-RATED player won the latest super-tournament, the chess media said he had a natural advantage: The fast time limit favored his practical style.

They weren't talking about Magnus Carlsen — and the time limit wasn't rapid, blitz or bullet.

It was “40 moves in two hours!” the most popular chess journalist of the day exclaimed. The journalist was Savielly Tartakower; the tournament winner was Jose Capablanca, and the tournament was London 1922.

“Forty in two” was considered a radical change from a standard time control of the day, 15 moves in one hour. Even the iconoclast thinkers called Hypermoderns thought the change was wrong.

Richard Réti ended his book *Modern Ideas in Chess* by saying the newfangled format was obviously “unfavorable” to deep-thinking Europeans. It benefited facile pragmatists — like Americans.

What followed was a century of often-anguished debate about how quickly we should think. Traditionalists said faster formats changed the basic nature of the game.

“This is not chess,” GM Vladimir Kramnik huffed in 1997, when he refused to play in a tournament with a one-hour sudden death format. This is “ridiculous,” he said.

No, the younger generation replied to each new controversy. Chess remains the same game when it is played faster. Rooks belonged on open files back when masters used hourglasses. They still belong there in the era of analog clocks and increments.

But today's professional players have turned the debate around: Faster chess is a different game, they say. And that's a good thing.

“Classical chess is mostly about strategy and planning,” GM Wesley So told *Chess24.com* in 2023. “Blitz is mostly about tactics

and intuition, so it's a very different game.” How different should it be? Some speed demons go to extremes:

- Any move is good in blitz if it is confusing, they say. Losing a pawn is worthwhile if it costs your opponent a minute.
- If you can't find a good move, play a pointless one. Your opponent will burn seconds looking for a reason that doesn't exist.
- Make long moves to get your opponent looking in the wrong direction. Or play a short move so your hand is closer to the clock.

Some blitz players claim the pieces take on different personalities when time is short. Knights become more surprising.

SEMI-SLAV DEFENSE (D43)

WFM Mariya Yakimova (2231)

WIM Nodira Nodirjanova (2069)

World Women's Blitz Ch (6), Samarkand, 12.29.2023

1. d4 d5 2. c4 c6 3. Nf3 Nf6 4. Nc3 e6 5. Qd3 Bb4 6. g3 O-O 7. Bg2 b6 8. O-O Ba6 9. Ne5 Nfd7! 10. Nxd7 Bxc4?



11. Nxb8! Bxd3 12. Nxc6 Qd6 13. Nxb4

Qxb4 14. exd3 Qxd4 15. Rd1 a6 16. a3 Qc5 17. d4 Qe7 18. Bf4 Rfc8 19. Rac1



With three minor pieces for the queen and pawn, chances should be roughly equal. But in blitz, it's a psychological mismatch. Knights are sneakier, e.g. 19. ... Rc4 20. Nxd5! wins — if 20. ... exd5 21. Rxc4 dxc4 22. Bxa8.

20. ... Rc6? 20. Nxd5! exd5 21. Rxc6 g5 22. Be5 Qd7 23. Rxb6 a5 24. Rd6 Qa4 25. Rc1 Re8 26. Bxd5 Qb5 27. Rc7 Rf8 28. Rdd7 Qxb2 29. Bxf7+! Rxf7 30. Rc8+ Rf8 31. Rg7+, Black resigned.

Traditionalists say fast controls reward players for making quick, second-best moves. They point to how Garry Kasparov tied for last place in the rapid section of the 2017 Saint Louis Rapid and Blitz. He tried to find the perfect moves, as he would in a classical game.

Carlsen said the most difficult format for him is 25-minute rapid because it is midway between fast and slow chess. “If you have played a lot of blitz, you will often play too fast and superficial in rapid,” he told Norwegian radio NRK in 2018.

After years of reluctance, FIDE, the world chess federation, agreed to having separate rating lists for classical, rapid and blitz. But it draws the line at one-minute bullet games.

Is bullet chess still chess? “Of course, not!”

QUIZ FOR AUGUST

A CENTURY AGO THIS month, fans were trying to understand newfangled openings like 1. Nf3 and how 56-year-old Emanuel Lasker could win the recent New York super-tournament. They paid little attention to a tournament in revolutionary Russia called the Third Soviet Championship. Most of the game scores were lost, but the ones that were preserved hinted at the powerhouse of talent that would dominate international chess after World War II. In each of the six positions from the Moscow tournament you are asked to find the fastest winning line of play: a forced mate or the win of a decisive amount of material. Solutions on page 63.

PROBLEM 1 Grigory Levenfish Solomon Rozental



WHITE TO MOVE

PROBLEM 2 Veniamin Sozin Abram Rabinovich



WHITE TO MOVE

PROBLEM 3 Yakov Vilner Peter Romanovsky



BLACK TO MOVE

PROBLEM 4 Yefim Bogolyubov Peter Romanovsky



WHITE TO MOVE

PROBLEM 5 Vladimir Nenarokov Andrey Smorodsky



WHITE TO MOVE

PROBLEM 6 Fyodor Bohatirchuk Vladimir Nenarokov



WHITE TO MOVE

GM Hikaru Nakamura wrote in his book *Bullet Chess: One Minute to Mate*.

But, he added, it is fun. When someone objects "It's not chess," he said, the proper response is "Who said it was?"

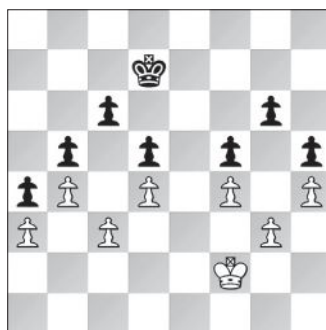
OK, so when does chess become an entirely new game called "clock"? GM Maxim Dlugy, a blitz authority, offers a precise answer: When neither player has more than 20 seconds left.

Then the proper strategy is ... no strategy. "The position no longer matters," he wrote in *New In Chess*. "Do not stop to think about anything." Dlugy calls this "zombie chess." That may explain this blitz game between two, uh, rivals:

Rxe1 12. Qxe1 Ne8 13. Bf4 d5 14. Bd3 g6 15. Nd2 Ng7 16. Nf3 Bf5 17. Bxf5 Nxf5 18. Qe2 c6 19. Re1 Ng7 20. Be5 Ne6 21. Bxf6 Qxf6 22. Ne5 Re8 23. Ng4 Qd8 24. Qe5 Ng7 25. Qxe8+ Nxe8 26. Rxe8+ Qxe8 27. Nf6+ Kf8 28. Nxe8 Kxe8 29. f4 f5

It is virtually impossible for either king to penetrate the iron barrier of pawns. Under any reasonable circumstances a draw would be agreed around here.

30. Kf2 Kf7 31. b4 Ke6 32. Ke3 b5 33. Kf3 Kf6 34. Kg3 h6 35. h4 h5 36. Kf3 Ke6 37. Ke3 Kd6 38. Kf3 Kc7 39. Ke3 Kb6 40. a3 a5 41. Kd3 Ka6 42. Kc2 a4 43. Kd3 Kb6 44. Ke3 Kc7 45. Kf2 Kd7 46. g3



RUY LOPEZ, BERLIN DEFENSE (C67)

GM Magnus Carlsen

GM Hans Moke Niemann

Titled Tuesday (Early), *Chess.com*, 01.30.2024

1. e4 e5 2. Nf3 Nc6 3. Bb5 Nf6 4. O-O Nxe4 5. Re1 Nd6 6. Nxe5 Be7 7. Bf1 Nxe5 8. Rxe5 O-O 9. d4 Bf6 10. Re1 Re8 11. c3

But who said zombies are reasonable? The game lasted another 41 moves. When they finally drew both players had more time than when they began the game.

Zombie chess was pioneered by the Russian master Genrikh Chepukaitis. Before anyone else took fast chess seriously, he was trouncing grandmasters in five-minute games. He articulated a speed catechism.

"There is absolutely no need to play well," the Leningrader said. "Your opponent must play badly."

How do you get him to do that? Many newcomers to speed chess think you should make forcing moves, like checks and one-move threats. It reduces the chances that your opponent will find a good move.

This is intuitive — but wrong, Chepukaitis said. If you make a threat, it focuses your opponent's attention. But if you threaten nothing, it forces him to make a choice.

Having a choice in a slow game is good for you. Having it in a fast game is bad. It costs you time to decide. And since there are many more bad moves in a typical position than good ones, the odds tip in your favor.

"An opponent will find a way to lose if you don't get in his way," he said. ♠

MIDDLE SCHOOL MAYHEM!



All eyes were on Atlanta for the 2024 National Middle School Championship.

BY **WGM SABINA FOISOR**

THE 2024 NATIONAL Middle School (K-8) Championship saw nearly 1,200 players descend upon the Hyatt Regency Atlanta from May 10 through 12 to compete for medals and trophies. With seven sections, each contesting seven rounds of slow time-control chess, there were a lot of pawns being pushed!

I have always enjoyed the side events at the US Chess national scholastics. On Thursday — the day before the first Championship round — an afternoon bughouse tournament was won by two elementary

schoolers! Fourth-grader Hunter Hong and second-grader (!) Tommy Kozlek scored a perfect 14/14 to take first place, a fact that may not surprise us as much when we remember that Kozlek also won (with Leon Li) the bughouse event at the National Elementary in Columbus!

The ever-popular blitz championship saw CMs Ethan Guo and Nikash Vemparala share top honors with 10½/12. Other activities included a simultaneous exhibition with, and “all-comers” blitz against, tournament guest WGM Katerina Nemcova. Parents and coaches looking to push pawns could get in on the fun with the “family and friends” tournaments.

But of course everyone was focused on the main event, and I was happy to serve once again as a commentator for the final three rounds of the event with my friend FM Gauri Shankar. It’s always a pleasure to be at these events, and to see the passion both players and parents are putting into playing their very best chess. While we don’t get to wander the playing hall much, as we are broadcasting on Twitch during the games, many kids stop us in the hallways to let us know they follow our streams!

With more than 30 players rated over 2000, it was clear that the race to the top would be tough. FM (now IM) Eric Liu was the top seed at 2468, and as last year’s winner, I’m sure he

was looking to repeat. But being on board one can be tough — everyone is trying their best against you, and a draw is good for your opponents, but terrible for you.

To his credit Eric played exciting chess throughout the tournament, and he seemed poised to continue last year's success until he was halted by Nikash Vemparala in round six. Eric defeated Nikash last year in a round seven matchup, taking away Nikash's chances to finish in shared third; this year, the players battled to a drawn knight versus bishop ending, leaving them tied for first at 5½/6 heading into the final round.

In round seven Nikash was paired with CM Neeraj Harish, a talented young player whom I watched compete in the 2022 World Youth Championship. (I was the head of delegation for the U.S. team.) Taking the white pieces, Nikash essayed an English Opening that gave him a dominating middlegame position and a kingside attack. Harish defended well for some time, but succumbed to the pressure, trading into a lost rook and pawn ending that Nikash converted with excellent technique.

CONVERSION

CM Nikash Vemparala (2171)

CM Neeraj Harish (2293)

National Middle School (K-8) Ch (7),
Atlanta, 05.12.2024



WHITE TO MOVE

This was the game that brought Nikash his share of the championship. Nikash had the opportunity to finish off the game faster with a beautiful sacrifice. Instead he went for the positional...

29. Bd5?!

This squanders the immediate win, but maintains a winning position.

Instead, 29. Rxe6! would have led to a fast finish as follows: 29. ... fxe6 30. Qxg6+ Kh8 31. Qh6+ Kg8 32. Rxf8+ Qxf8 33. Qxe6+ Qf7 (here 33. ... Rf7 allows the same idea after

34. Bd5 when Black can resign) 34. Bd5!. This beautiful move wins back the Exchange and liquidates into a winning endgame. Perhaps this was the move Nikash missed.

29. ... Qxf6 30. Rxf6 Kg7 31. Bxe6 fxe6?

Black accepts defeat.

The only way to pose White trouble was 31. ... Re7, when 32. g5 Rfe8 is testing. However, now White has 33. Rd1! Rxe6 34. Rxd6 Rxd6 35. Rxd6 and even if Black gets the chance to activate the rook, White wins all the pawns on the queenside: 35. ... Re4 36. Rb6 Rxh4 37. Kf2 Rg4 38. Rxb7 Rxg5 39. Rb5 Kf6 40. c5 and the pawns are too fast.

32. Rxf8 Kxf8 33. Rxe6

From here, Nikash was able to convert without much trouble.

33. ... Kf7 34. Re4 Kf6 35. Kf2 Rc7 36. Ke3 Rh7 37. g5+ Kf5 38. Kd4 Rh8 39. Kd5 Rh7 40. Rd4 Rh8 41. c5 dxc5 42. Kxc5 Rc8+ 43. Kb6 Rc3 44. Rd5+ Kg4 45. Rb5 Kxh4 46. Kxa5 Rc6 47. Rxb7 Kxg5 48. Kb5 Rc3 49. b4 Kf4 50. a5 g5 51. a6 g4 52. a7 Ra3 53. Kb6 g3 54. Rg7 Kf3 55. Kb7 g2 56. a8=Q Rxa8 57. Kxa8 Kf2 58. b5 g1=Q 59. Rxg1 Kxg1 60. b6, Black resigned.

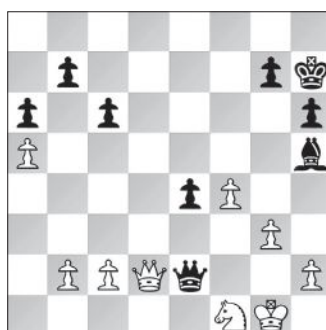
Eric had a tough pairing, playing Black against FM Isaac Wang, who was the second-highest seed in the event. Their game was hard-fought, but in the end, Eric took advantage of a misplaced queen and maneuvered into a winning bishop versus knight endgame.

TRANSITIONS

FM Eric Chang Liu (2468)

FM Isaac Wang (2326)

National Middle School (K-8) Ch (7),
Atlanta, 05.12.2024





This was most likely the toughest game in the event for Eric. The players had a balanced position throughout, but it was towards the end that Isaac misplayed his side of the imbalanced queen and minor piece ending. White has a small advantage as Black's e4-pawn, although passed, is weak.

39. ... Qg4?

This allowed White to improve the position of his knight.

Instead, 39. ... Qb5! 40. b3 b6 could have been a way to try to simplify the position further to get rid of weak b7-pawn. Things are equal after 41. axb6 Qxb6+ 42. Qe3 Qb4.

40. Ne3 Qf3??

This allows the trade of the queens, after which Eric played flawlessly.

The best drawing try was 40. ... Qe6, although after 41. Qd4 Bf3 42. b3 White can improve the position of the king by navigating it to the e3-square. From there, he can try to trade queens and go for Black's weak b7-pawn. The engines make it look easy, but at the board, especially with the stress of needing to win, it may create more practical problems for White. When in doubt, always choose the line that poses one's opponent the most difficulty.

41. Qf2!

The queenless endgame is an easy ride to victory for White, thanks to the powerful blocking abilities of the e3-knight.

41. ... Kg6 42. Qxf3 Bxf3 43. Kf2 Kf6 44. Nc4 Ke6 45. Nd2 Bd1 46. c4 Kf5 47. Nf1 Bf3 48. Ne3+ Ke6 49. c5 h5 50. h3 Bh1 51. g4 hxg4 52. hxg4 Bf3 53. Kg3 Be2 54. Kh4 Bd3 55. Kg5 Kf7 56. Kf5 Bb1 57. Ke5 Ke7 58. Nf5+ Kd7 59. Kd4 g6 60. Nd6 e3 61. Kxe3 Kc7 62. Kd4 Bc2 63. Ke5 Bb1 64. Ke6 Ba2+ 65. Ke7, Black resigned.

With both players at 6½/7, Eric and Nikash were declared co-champions. There was also a tie in the team standings, with Columbia Grammar and Prep (first on tiebreaks) and Speyer Legacy School sharing top honors.

I was impressed by so many of the games I saw, along with how well some of these young players were prepared in the opening! I am looking forward to seeing how they fare as they start playing in open events throughout the country, and I'll be following their success stories. I am also — especial-

ly — looking forward to next year's Super Nationals in Orlando!

And now, by way of conclusion, I leave you with some of my favorite games and end-game moments from the tournament. Enjoy!

SLAV DEFENSE (D15)

FM Isaac Wang (2326)

Aditeya Das (2021)

National Middle School (K-8) Ch (6),

Atlanta, 05.12.2024

This game caught my eye because of the early material imbalance as well as its swift conclusion.

1. d4 d5 2. c4 c6 3. Nc3 Nf6 4. Nf3 dxc4 5. e4 b5 6. Be2 e6 7. a4

White more typically castles here. Isaac went for a tricky idea instead.

7. ... b4 8. e5 bxc3 9. exf6 cxb2 10. fxg7 bxa1=Q 11. gxh8=Q

It's not every day that we see four queens on the board. Nevertheless, this is all well-known theory.

11. ... Qa5+ 12. Nd2 c3

To my surprise, there were five games in the database to reach this position. I thought there would be fewer!

13. 0-0 cxd2 14. Bxd2 Qxd1 15. Rxd1



15. ... Qxa4??

This move seems to be the culprit in Black's demise.

The only save for Black is the surprising 15. ... Qf5!, but the line is a bit suspicious to the human eye. White continues 16. d5 but now 16. ... Qg6!. Despite moving the queen so many times, Black has to keep the f7-pawn protected and only then proceed with the development of the queenside. White can continue 17. Qe5 Nd7 18. Qc7 to restrict Black from developing his own queenside, and after 18. ... exd5 19. Bh5 Qf6 20. Re1+ Be7 21. Bg4 Black seems tied up, but it isn't

easy for White to make progress either.

16. Bh5!

The only winning move. White deeply knows his opening. The less accurate 16. Qxh7 was played in Gelfand – Movsesian (Riga, 2021).

16. ... Qc2

Black's only chance to survive may have been 16. ... Nd7, but it isn't easy to play with the king in the center. Now, best is 17. Bg5 to restrict the king's escape, followed by Qh8-g8, when Black would have to give up material.

17. Qf6

Black is lost now. His entire kingside will be cleaned out in no time.

17. ... Qf5 18. Bxf7+ Kd7 19. Bxe6+ Qxe6 20. Qxf8

White is down a piece, but Black's entire queenside is frozen!

20. ... Qb3 21. Qg7+ Kd6 22. Bf4+, Black resigned.

FRENCH DEFENSE, STEINITZ VARIATION (C11)

FM Eric Chang Liu (2468)

Anjaneya Sripathy Rao (2182)

National Middle School (K-8) Ch (5),

Atlanta, 05.11.2024

The co-champion, FM Eric Liu, showed beautiful technique in taking advantage of an inadequate move by Black.

1. e4 e6 2. d4 d5 3. Nc3 Nf6 4. e5 Nfd7 5. f4 c5 6. Nf3 Nc6 7. Be3 a6 8. Qd2 b5 9. a3



In this typical French position, Black must have mixed up the lines and made a mistake.

9. ... g6?

This move weakens the kingside, particularly the dark squares.

A more reasonable plan was 9. ... Qb6 10. Ne2 c4 to focus on a queenside attack. Alternatively, 9. ... Qa5 is also typical for these types of positions, with 10. dxc5 Bxc5 being a normal offer to trade dark-squared bishops.

10. dxc5 Nxc5

From here, Eric showed his class in building up a beautiful kingside attack.

11. h4! Bb7 12. Qf2 Ne4 13. Nxe4 dxe4 14. Ng5 Ne7 15. h5

A must.

15. ... h6 16. hxg6 Nxg6 17. f5

The final blow that breaks open Black's king. It is true that White's king is in the center as well, but Black doesn't have any pieces to take advantage of this. White's pieces, on the other hand, are all coming in with tempo.

17. ... exf5



If 17. ... Nxe5 18. fxe6 fxe6, then 19. Nxe6 wins.

18. Nxf7! Qd7

No better was 18. ... Kxf7 19. Qxf5+ Kg7 20. Rd1, when the threat of Rd1-d7+ forces 20. ... Bc8, but now 21. Qxe4 simply wins.

19. Nxh8 Nxh8 20. Bxh6 Bxh6 21. Rxh6 0-0-0 22. Rd6 Qe7 23. Qxf5+ Kb8 24. 0-0-0 Nf7 25. Rd7 Rxd7 26. Rxd7 Nh6 27. Rxe7 Nxf5 28. Rf7 Bc8 29. Be2 e3 30. Rf8, Black resigned.

OVERSIGHT

Maahir M. Patel (2071)

CM Nikash Vemparala (2171)

National Middle School (K-8) Ch (4),

Atlanta, 05.11.2024

(see diagram next page)

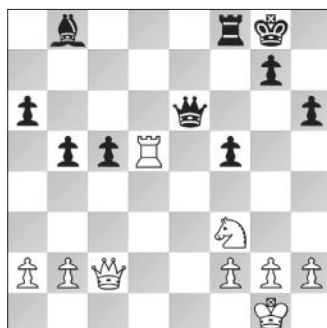
I selected a few tactical misses which I thought could serve as lessons to readers. In the following position White did not realize



WOMAN POWER

The 2024 National Middle School (K-8) Championship was the first national event run by US Chess that featured women in all key positions. Seen here, from left to right, are NTD Karen Pennock, the Chief Floor TD; NTD Maret Thorpe, the Backroom Chief; Executive Director Ranae Bartlett; NTD Martha Underwood, Chief Tournament Director; and Kim Cramer, Chess Control Manager.

In honor of this milestone in US Chess history, Senior Director of Strategic Communications Dan Lucas has recorded a video interview with the four chiefs. You can find it via the US Chess YouTube channel (@USChessFederation) or this direct link: www.youtube.com/watch?v=2KarWkITk78



WHITE TO MOVE

the trouble his weak back rank could cause him and played...

24. Qxc5??

Now Black took advantage with...

24. ... Rc8, White resigned.

... as there is no way to save the mate and the queen, White gave up.

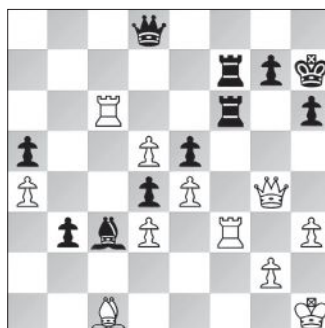
Instead, 24. Rxc5 had to be played. Even if White gives up the a2-pawn, it is just temporary. After 24. ... Qxa2, White can play 25. g3 to make a bit of *luft* and restrict Black's bishop. After 25. ... Qf7 26. Rc6 White can focus on attacking Black's a- and b-pawns in order to maintain activity. This position is headed towards a draw.

COUNTERSTRIKE

Siddharth Singh (2204)

Kyle Y Wang (2115)

National Middle School (K-8) Ch (5),
Atlanta, 05.11.2024



WHITE TO MOVE

This was an interesting position where, at first sight, it seems that Black should be winning with the promotion of the b-pawn. However, White came up with a clever counterstrike on the kingside.

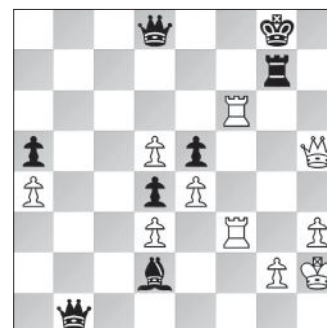
41. Bxh6! b2

In case of 41. ... gxh6, White can utilize the pin of the f6-rook to force a repetition as follows: 42. Qh4 Kg7 43. Qg4+ Kh7 (not 43. ... Kf8?? 44. Rc8 winning the queen) 44. Qh4 b2 45. Rxcxf6 b1=Q+ 46. Kh2 Rxf6 47. Rxf6 Bd2 48. Rf7+ Kg6 49. Qxd8 Kxf7 50. Qd7+ with a draw.

42. Bxg7

White allows Black to promote, but, as I always like to remind my students, the safety of the king is more important than material. White has strong threats that prevent Black from regrouping their pieces to exploit their material advantage.

42. ... b1=Q+ 43. Kh2 Rxg7 44. Qh5+ Kg8
45. Rxcxf6



45. ... Bd2

Everything was well-played until here, but now White has one move only to save the game, and unfortunately missed it.

46. Rf8+??

After the capture, Black is up a rook and a bishop and all they have to do is make sure they escape the attempts at perpetual checks.

Instead, 46. Rf7!! was the only path to safety for White, threatening to capture on g7 and play Rf3-f7+ followed by Qh5-h7 mate. Play continues 46. ... Rxc2+ (no better is 46. ... Bf4+ 47. R3xf4 exf4 48. Rxc7+ Kxc7 49. Qg4+ Kf7 50. Qe6+ with a perpetual check) 47. Kxc2 Qg5+ 48. Qxc5+ Bxc5 49. Rc7 Qb2+ 50. Rf2 Qb4 51. Rfc2 when neither side can improve. Black should acquiesce to a draw despite the slight material advantage.

46. ... Qxf8 47. Rxf8+ Kxf8 48. Qf5+ Rf7

The rest was a matter of technique.

49. Qc8+ Kg7 50. Qg4+ Kh6 51. Qh4+ Kg6
52. Qg4+ Bg5 53. Qe6+ Kg7 54. Qxe5+ Bf6
55. Qg3+ Kf8 56. Qd6+ Be7 57. Qh6+ Rg7

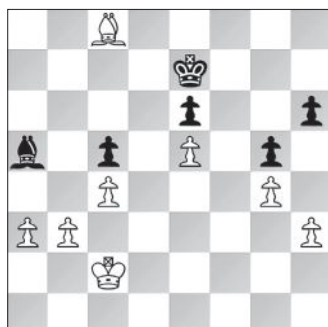
58. Qh8+ Rg8 59. Qh6+ Ke8 60. Qc6+ Kd8
61. Qa8+ Kd7 62. Qc6+ Kd8 63. Qa8+ Kc7
64. Qxg8 Bd6+ 65. g3 Qc2+ 66. Kh1 Qd1+
67. Kh2 Qe2+ 68. Kg1 Qe3+ 69. Kh2 Qf2+
70. Kh1 Bxg3 71. d6+ Bxd6 72. Qc4+ Kd8
73. Qg8+ Kd7 74. Qg4+ Kc7 75. Qg2 Qe1+
76. Qg1 Qxg1+ 77. Kxg1 Kc6 78. h4 Kc5 79.
Kg2 Kb4 80. Kf3 Kxa4 81. h5 Kb5 82. Kg4
Be5 83. Kf5 Bh8 84. e5 Kc6 85. Ke4 Kc5 86.
e6 Kd6 87. e7 Kxe7 88. Kd5 Kd7 89. Kc5
Ke6 90. Kb5 Kf5 91. Kxa5 Kg5 92. Kb5 Kxh5
93. Kc4 Kg4 94. Kd5 Kf3 95. Kc5 Ke2 96.
Kc4 Ke3 97. Kd5 Kxd3, White resigned.

TRAGEDY

Tariq Yue (2124)

Anmay Kumar Chaudhury (2030)

**National Middle School (K-8) Ch (7),
Atlanta, 05.12.2024**



BLACK TO MOVE

This game had a tragic ending. White had been trying for some time to improve in this opposite-colored bishop endgame, but they accepted a draw after Black's next move:

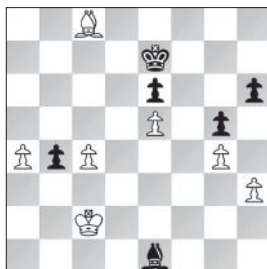
52. ... Be1, draw.

Most likely, Black was thinking that White does not have a way to make progress given that the b4-square is controlled by the bishop. As such, White doesn't seem to have a way to activate the king to support the passed a-pawn.

However, after some analysis it seems that White can indeed play 53. b4! (if, instead of capturing, Black tries 53. ... Bg3, then 54. bxc5 Bxe5 55. Kb3 Bc7 56. Kb4 e5 57. Bf5 is promising) to give up the pawn, but with the idea that after 53. ... cxb4 White would ignore Black's b-pawn in order to march their own a-pawn by playing 54. a4!.

(see diagram top of next column)

Now White's king can support the passed pawns on the a- and c-files while Black's king is bound to protecting the weak e6-pawn.



POSITION AFTER 54. a4

After 54. ... Bc3 (no better is 54. ... b3+ 55. Kxb3 Ba5 56. c5 Bc7 57. Kb4 Bxe5 58. Kb5 Bb8 59. Kb6 e5 60. Kb7 trapping the bishop) 55. Kb3 Black is out of moves, as the king is stuck guarding the e-pawn, while the bishop is likewise stuck protecting the b-pawn. In the meantime, White just pushes the a-pawn to promotion. In case of 55. ... Bxe5 56. Kxb4 Kd8 57. Bxe6 Kc7 58. c5 Kc6 59. Kc4 Bg3 60. Bd5+ Kc7 61. a5 Kc8 62. a6 Bb8, White can march on the kingside to win Black's pawns while Black's pieces are stuck guarding the queenside passed pawns.

TWISTS AND TURNS

Adhiraiyan Murugan Ayyappan (1853)

CM Nikash Vemparala (2171)

**National Middle School (K-8) Ch (2),
Atlanta, 05.10.2024**



BLACK TO MOVE

This position occurred in round two, and it may have changed Nikash's fate. White stands better and should focus on a minority attack on the queenside, while Black's attack is easily stopped if White trades knights. In this position Black tried

22. ... Rxe5

Trying to get rid of the strong e5-knight that covered the g4-square. After a more passive try, such as 22. ... Re7, White can halt Black's attack with 23. Be2 Qe8 24. b4, when White can focus on the queenside and Black has to defend.





23. dxe5??

This was a tough mistake, overlooking Black's threat and allowing him to win on the spot with 23. ... Ng4! 24. Bxe4 fxe4 25. Nd1 Qh2+ 26. Kf1 Nxe5 27. Qb3 Bg4 28. f3 exf3 29. gxf3 Bh3 mate.

It turns out that White missed the fantastic 23. Be2!!, which serves as an important *zwischenzug*! If the queen retreats with 23. ... Qe8, then 24. dxe5 Qxe5 25. b4 yields a favorable position for White. Note that, unlike in the game, 23. ... Ng4 24. Bxg4 fxg4

25. dxe5 Bf5 26. Qd1 Rf8 27. Qd4 leads to an advantage for White.

GO DEEP

Kyle Wang (2115)
Anjaneya Sripathy Rao (2182)
National Middle School (K-8) Ch (7),
Atlanta, 05.12.2024



BLACK TO MOVE

I always enjoy a good king and pawn endgame. It is easy to think that, in positions with many pawns on the board, the position will get blocked and end in a draw. But it is always important to calculate these positions through to the end. If one doesn't have sufficient time to calculate, then I recommend making a move that would maintain the balance instead.

24. ... Kc7??

Now Black is lost, as White's king advances first.

I would have chosen 24. ... Qd5! ensuring that a queen trade leaves Black with a queenside majority. After 25. Qxd5

exd5! the recapture frees up the e6-square for Black's king, such that 26. Kd2 c5 27. b3 Kc7 results in an equal endgame.

25. Qxd8+ Kxd8 26. Kd2

From here, it was just a matter of technique. This reminded me of the famous pawn endgame from Cohn – Rubinstein (St. Petersburg, 1909), where the endgame master from Poland used the weakness of the h2-pawn to win the game.

26. ... Ke7 27. Ke3 Kf8

No better was 27. ... f6, when 28. Kf4! Kf7 29. f3 Ke7 30. g4 fxg4 31. fxg4 leaves White with the possibility to create a distant passed pawn.

28. Kf4 Kg7 29. Kg5 a4

The inclusion of 29. ... h6+ does not force White's king far enough away. After 30. Kh5 Kh7 31. f3 f6 32. exf6 e5 33. g4 e4 34. fxe4 f4 35. Kh4, White's king is ready to return to the action.

30. c4 c5 31. f3 h6+

Likewise, 31. ... f6+ 32. exf6+ Kf7 33. f4 seals the deal.

32. Kh5 f6

If Black simply stays put, then 32. ... Kh7 33. g4 fxg4 (no better is 33. ... f4 34. g5 hxg5 35. Kxg5 Kg7 36. Kxf4 winning) 34. fxg4 f6 35. exf6 e5 36. g5 hxg5 37. Kxg5 wins.

33. exf6+ Kxf6 34. f4 Kg7 35. h3 Kh7 36.

g4 e5 37. gxf5 e4 38. Kg4 Kg7 39. Kg3 Kf6

40. Kf2 Kxf5 41. Ke3 h5 42. h4 Kg4 43.

Kxe4 Kxh4 44. Kf3 Kh3 45. f5 h4 46. f6

Kh2 47. f7, Black resigned. ♠

2024 NATIONAL MIDDLE SCHOOL (K-8) CHAMPIONSHIP AT A GLANCE

MAY 10-12, 2024 | ATLANTA, GA

INDIVIDUAL WINNERS:

K-8 CHAMPIONSHIP: Nikash Vemparala, Eric Chang Liu, 6½/7. **K-8 U1700:** Vidhun Ganesan, 6/7. **K-8 U1400:** Shalin Kumar, Angelica Pitynski, 6/7. **K-8 U1100:** Tianyue Ma, Aryansh Tripathy, 6½/7. **K-8 U900:** Muneeb Piracha, 7/7. **K-8 U700:** Solomon Boyd, Keiran Martin, 7/7. **K-8 UNRATED:** Isaac Yoonsik Kim, 7/7. **BLITZ:** Ethan Guo, Nikash Vemparala, 10½/12. **BUGHOUSE:** Hunter Hong & Tommy Kozlek, 14/14!

TEAM WINNERS:

K-8 CHAMPIONSHIP: Columbia Grammar & Prep (New York, NY), Speyer Legacy School (New York, NY), 17½. **K-8 U1700:** Franklin County Middle School (Meadville, MS), 17. **K-8 U1400:** I.S. 318 (Brooklyn, NY), 21½. **K-8 U1100:** I.S. 318 (Brooklyn, NY), 20. **K-8 U900:** PS 180 (Brooklyn, NY), 22. **K-8 U700:** Nicollet Middle School (Burnsville, MN), 22. **K-8 UNRATED:** The King's Academy (Woodstock, GA), 18½. **BLITZ:** Speyer Legacy School (New York, NY), 36.

Elementary Lessons

Almost 1,600 players travel to Ohio for the 2024 National Elementary (K-6) Championship.

BY **GM KAYDEN TROFF**



NATIONAL SCHOLASTIC championships are special occasions. The first one I played in — the 2006 National Elementary Championship — was nearly 18

years ago, and many memories have faded, but one moment has stayed with me since it happened.

Walking into the playing hall was unforgettable. The room was so big it felt unreal. I'd played in local tournaments in my native Utah, and a number of state-level contests too, but nothing prepared me for the feeling of entering that room and seeing nearly 2,000 kids swarming about, all ready to do battle over the board.

When I realized just how big chess was across the country, and that so many kids would travel from so far, just to play a game... well, the word "mindblowing" gets used a lot, but it really did blow my young mind, helping me to think about the chess world beyond my own hometown. In some ways I think those experiences set me on my path to becoming a grandmaster.

Now, of course, I'm a bit more accustomed to the volume of players at national events, but the intensity in the room remains. I sensed it once again in April, when I served as a commentator at the 2024 National Elementary (K-6) Championships this April in Columbus, Ohio. I was joined there by WGM Sabina Foisor, who also (as you know from her article in this issue) did commentary at the 2024 National Middle School (K-8) Championship!

Sabina and I presented analysis for the fifth through seventh rounds live on-site, and

also on the US Chess Twitch stream. (That's twitch.tv/uschess, just for the record. ~ed.) From our perch in the commentary room we were treated to some really exciting games, many of which went right down to the wire! I'd like to walk through three of the games that impressed us most.

First up: the battle that decided the K-5 Championship section.

SICILIAN DEFENSE, ROSSO-LIMO VARIATION (B31)

[Sharath Radhakrishnan \(2205\)](#)

[Ted Wang \(2130\)](#)

[National Elementary K-5 Ch \(7\), Columbus, 04.28.2024](#)

Heading into this game, Ted Wang was a half-point ahead, but Sharath, with the white pieces, came to the board ready to fight for the win!

1. e4 c5 2. Nf3 Nc6 3. Bb5 g6 4. 0-0 Bg7 5.

Re1 Nf6 6. c3 0-0 7. d4 d5 8. e5 Ne4 9. Nbd2

A bit of a sideline; it's more common to play Bb5xc6 first before Nb1-d2.

In the previous round we saw 9. Be3 cxd4 10. cxd4 Qb6 11. Bxc6 Qxc6 12. Nfd2 Nxd2 13. Qxd2 Bf5 14. Nc3 e6? and after 15. f3 Black had to give up material to stay in the game. That was Schaefer – Gu from round six.

9. ... cxd4 10. cxd4 Qb6 11. Bxc6 Qxc6 12. Nb3

Both sides work to develop their pieces.

12. ... Be6 13. Bd2

I slightly prefer the bishop on e3, leaving the d2-square open for the knights and with the





idea of maneuvering a knight to c5. For example, White could try 13. Be3 b6 14. a4 a5 15. Nc1, bringing the knight around to d3 where it might jump to f4. Both sides would have chances.

13. ... Qb6 14. Rc1 Rac8 15. Qe2 Nxd2 16. Qxd2 Bg4 17. Nc5

Both sides are following good plans! White gets an active knight, while Black weakens the white kingside.

17. ... Bxf3 18. gxf3 Rfd8 19. e6



The fight begins!

19. ... f5

During the commentary, it was hard to know what to make of this position. Intuitively I felt a slight preference for White. However, Black's play is a bit easier. He simply wants to move the queen and get in ... b7-b6.

20. b4?!

Expanding on the queenside after pushing the e-pawn feels wrong. Stay consistent and attack the kingside!

I think 20. h4!? is much more challenging, as Black's pieces struggle to get to the kingside. After 20. ... Kh8 21. Kh1 Qc6 22. h5 gxh5 23. Qg5 the position is an absolute mess, but it's more dangerous for Black.

20. ... Qc6 21. a4 b6 22. b5 Qc7 23. Nd7 Qd6



24. Rc3?

Too relaxed, missing the danger. It's easy to overlook, but the knight is vulnerable on d7 and should be removed immediately. The position is equal after 24. Ne5 Bxe5 25. Rxe5.

24. ... Rc4!

White's pawn structure is just weak enough that defending everything is becoming impossible.

25. Rxc4 dxc4 26. f4?

White needed more active means of counterplay. Now things start to fall apart.

The right move was 26. a5, trying to make use of the knight on d7! After 26. ... Rc8 (26. ... Qxd4? 27. Qxd4 Bxd4 28. Rd1 wins for White, as the bishop can't move due to the Nd7-f6+ discovery) 27. axb6 axb6 28. d5 c3 29. Qd3 White's defense is ugly, but the position can be held.

26. ... Bh6 27. Ne5 Qxd4 28. Qxd4 Rxd4 29. Nc6 Rxf4 30. Nxe7+ Kf8 31. Nc8 Rd4!



The passed e-pawn is scary, but Ted keeps his cool and says his pawn is more dangerous!

32. Nxa7 c3 33. Nc6 Rc4 34. e7+ Ke8 35. Rd1 Re4

Again, impressively cool!

36. f4

After 36. Rd8+ Kf7 there's no way for White to save himself.

36. ... c2 37. Rc1 Rc4 38. Ne5 Bxf4 39. Nxc4 Bxc1, White resigned.

With no way to prevent the promotion in two moves, Sharath gave up, and Ted took the championship!

One of the things you often hear about "playing the kids" is that adults should try to drag them into the endgame to maximize winning chances. The thought is that kids lack the experience and patience to play

endings well, and their relative tactical strengths are minimized.

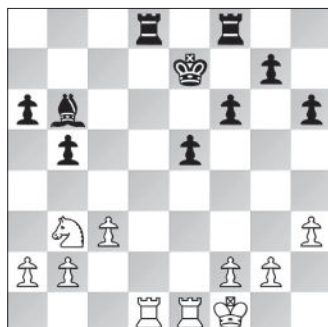
This game from the K-3 Championship, however, shows us that tomorrow's stars can already play the endgame pretty well! Sometimes the smallest things can turn an equal position into a win.

TERRIFIC TECHNIQUE

Sasha Milo Schaefer (1843)

Aayansh Samanta (1722)

National Elementary K-3 Ch (5), Columbus, 04.27.2024



WHITE TO MOVE

26. Nd4

The knight was struggling for activity; with this move, White either activates the knight or manages to create a minor weakness in Black's camp.

26. ... Bxd4 27. cxd4 Ke6 28. dxe5 fxe5

The isolation of the e-pawn doesn't seem like a big deal, but it will play a major part in Black's undoing!

After 28. ... Rxd1 29. Rxd1 Kxe5 30. Rd7 Black avoids the isolated pawn, but White gets a more active rook in return. It's a tough call deciding which move is better; even now, I'm not entirely sure.

29. Rc1 Rd2 30. Re2 Rfd8 31. Rc6+ R8d6

32. Rxd6+ Rxd6 33. Rc2



Here the c-file is better for the rook than the

d-file because of the king placement. Both kings can help cover squares on the d-file, so the rook is more dangerous over on the c-file.

33. ... g5 34. Ke2 Kf5 35. Ke3 h5 36. f3

Both sides up to this point have handled the position well! But now it comes down to the little decisions.

36. ... Ke6

Black could try to shut down White's pawns with 36. ... h4, leaving that g2-pawn as a possible concern if White wants to activate the rook. For example, 37. Rc8 Rd1 38. Rf8+ Ke6 39. Ra8 Rb1 40. Rxa6+ Kf5 41. b3 Rb2 with equality.

37. g4 hxg4?!

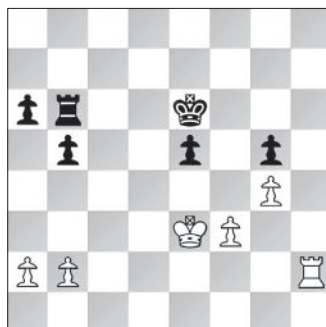
The first clear inaccuracy. White can use the open h-file, but Black struggles to do the same because his king blocks the rook.

It's true that 37. ... h4 doesn't shut down White's play, but keeping the h-file closed reduces his chances!

38. hxg4 Rb6

Black could try to go active at the cost of a pawn with 38. ... Rd1 39. Rc6+ Kd5 40. Rxa6 Re1+, and while White could play forever, Black's active counterplay should allow him to hold.

39. Rh2!



Taking the more useful open file! Now Black is on the defensive.

39. ... Kd5 40. Rh5 Rg6 41. Kd3 Rf6 42.

Ke3 Rg6 43. Rh8 Rc6 44. Kd3 Rd6

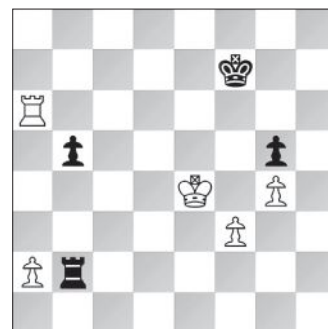
Active defense with 44. ... Rc1 is better, but it's tough to do at the board! The position is equal after 45. Rg8 Rd1+ 46. Ke3 Re1+ 47. Kf2 Ra1.

45. Rg8 Ke6+ 46. Ke3 Kf6 47. Rf8+ Kg6 48. Rf5 Rc6

Finally Black goes for active defense, and while the position is still defensible, the task is now very difficult.

49. Rxe5 Rc2 50. Re6+ Kf7 51. Rxa6 Rxb2

52. Ke4



52. ... Rb4+?

Black goes to trade the f-pawn for the g-pawn, but this trade is not an equal one! The g-pawn neutralizes two White pawns, but as soon as it goes, White's g-pawn becomes too dangerous.

The only move to hold is 52. ... Rc2!. Now the rook keeps its distance from the king while being ready to check from the side and keep it back. After 53. a3 Rc4+ 54. Kd5 Rc3 55. Ke4 Black is fine.

53. Kf5 Rf4+ 54. Kxg5 Rxf3 55. Ra7+!

Kicking the king back so White's king can move forward!

55. ... Kg8 56. Kg6

Black's chances to hold are falling apart. On f3, the rook just can't help defend the way it needs to.

56. ... Kf8 57. g5 Rg3 58. Ra8+ Ke7 59. Rb8

Ra3 60. Rxb5 Rxa2 61. Kg7 Ke6 62. g6 Ke7

63. Re5+ Kd6 64. Re1 Rg2 65. Kh7 Rh2+

66. Kg8 Rg2 67. g7 Kd7 68. Rh1

The final nail in the coffin! Sasha shows great technique.

68. ... Ke7 69. Kh7 Kf7 70. Rf1+ Ke7 71.

g8=Q Rh2+ 72. Kg7 Rg2+ 73. Kh8 Rxcg8+

74. Kxg8, Black resigned.

I want to focus a bit on the K-6 Championship, as it had the most exciting finish, and improving players could draw a number of lessons from it.

Most of the sections at this year's tournament had perhaps two or three people tied for first heading into the final round, but the K-6 Championship saw eight players tied! You can imagine the pressure that these young people felt, and I remember all too well what it felt like when I was their age.

It's challenging to play under pressure. In local events you might be content to

“just play good moves,” but when you’ve traveled and are on the top boards in the final round, it’s hard not to dwell on results and bringing home that first place medal.

It is critical for anyone in this situation to really work to stay focused on the moves instead of the results. You’ve put in the work, so trust yourself, and play the best game you know how. If you think about results, you begin to overthink things; you lose confidence, seek safety and often play too slowly. I’ve messed things up in final rounds many times over the years; fortunately, however, I’ve also benefitted from others doing the same thing!

One example: My opponent in the 2008 K-12 Grade Championships was a half-point ahead of me in the final round, and when it was my turn to move, he would go watch the developments on the top board to inform how hard he should push for a win against me.

If he had instead focused on our game, I think he could have beaten me — his position was much better at one point! Instead, he played it safe, refraining from committing one way or another, and I was able to take over and bring home the full point. This result gave me a second-place finish in the fifth-grade section.

What made the final games of the K-6 Championship so fascinating was the pressure that went along with them, imbuing the individual games with some interesting meta-game colors. I can’t go into each of them in detail, but generally speaking, two lessons can be drawn from what transpired: Do not rush in critical moments, and embrace taking scary risks if you believe in them.

Learning to identify critical moments — where the game is at an inflection point and you need to take time and care — is a key skill. All the top boards saw critical moments, but both board one (Yue – Degeest) and board four (Khanbutaev – Muneeppeerakul) saw players rush their moves in critical positions.

Tariq Yue had been pushing for the win most of the game, passing up queen trades on a few occasions, when suddenly Rocco Degeest had a shocking opportunity to turn the tables!

TAKE YOUR TIME

Tariq Yue (1891)
Rocco Jan Degeest (1905)
National Elementary K-6 Ch (7), Columbus, 04.28.2024



BLACK TO MOVE

30. ... Bc5+

A nice idea that clinches the draw, but misses a neat resource.

31. Nxc5 Rf8 32. h3 Qf1+, draw.

And with a repetition in the air, the game was agreed drawn. Instead Black had a win with 30. ... Rb8!, hitting the knight and also keeping the threat of ... Bf8-c5+! It’s still a complicated position if White defends well, but Black should win. A sample line is 31. c7? Bc5+! — when you have two hanging pieces, why not hang another!? — 32. Nxc5 Rb1+ 33. Qd1 Rxd1 mate.

What a wild position and game! Missing 30. ... Rb8 is understandable, but Rocco can draw a lesson from this. He still had 45 minutes on the clock! If you are in one of those decisive moments where the line you are analyzing leads to a draw, and you have time to burn, use it. It’s not that you doubt your calculation, but sometimes it just takes time to find the winning path, so give everything before you finish. After all, hundreds of hours of work can come down to those final 30 minutes at the board!

Analaya Muneeppeerakul fell to something similar on board four. After a wild game where Black earned a winning advantage but then let it slip away, Analaya played too quickly in a critical moment. The winds shifted in Artemiy’s favor, allowing him to become the K-6 champion.

ALBIN COUNTER-GAMBIT (D09)

Artemii Khanbutaev (1984)
Analaya Muneeppeerakul (1854)
National Elementary K-6 Ch (7), Columbus, 04.28.2024





POSITION AFTER 24. Qf3

after 24. ... Nxd4 25. Rxd4 (naturally Black is hoping for 25. Qxb7?? Ne2 mate) 25. ... c6 26. Rb1, but the game continuation hands material to White along with the game.

25. Nf5! Bc5 26. Nxe6 Qxe6 27. Rxd8+ Nxd8 28. Rd1 Qe6 29. Qd3 Qe7 30. a4 Ne6 31. Qe4 Qf8 32. a5 Nd8 33. a6 c6 34. axb7+ Nxb7 35. Qxc6+ Kb8 36. e6+ Ka8 37. Rd7, Black resigned.

Now for the second lesson: After the draw on board one, something very interesting happened. Boards two and three had positions where White had massive advantages, and results seemed likely to go in White's favor in both cases. Sabina and I were excitedly following the games in the commentary room,

when they both suddenly finished in draws!

It is always much more difficult being a player than being a spectator. So I want to be clear and say that I understand how difficult it is to be the one making the moves. I've been there, and I haven't always handled such moments well myself.

But both these lessons are closely related. When it comes time, you must show up and give it everything you can, on every move, until the tournament ends. This can mean taking more time in critical moments, or pushing for a win instead of taking a more comfortable draw. Such traits are worth working on, practicing, and enacting where possible.

Does it mean it will always work out perfectly? No. Sometimes pushing for the win can backfire. But look at the position and be honest. Are you taking a draw because it is easy? Or because you believe it is a draw? Such honesty will help you grow as a player!

It was an absolute pleasure to follow these games and discuss them with our viewers. A big shoutout to WGM Sabina Foisor, who is always a joy to do commentary alongside!

Finally, to all the participants reading this, keep fighting! If you didn't place where you wanted this time, keep working, keep studying, and keep playing. You'll come back stronger next time! No one reaches the heights they want to hit without climbing some hills. ♠

2024 NATIONAL ELEMENTARY (K-6) CHAMPIONSHIPS AT A GLANCE

APRIL 26-28, 2024 | COLUMBUS, OH

INDIVIDUAL WINNERS:

K-6 CHAMPIONSHIP: Artemii Khanbutaev, 6/7. **K-6 U1400:** Matthew Liu, 6½/7. **K-6 U1000:** Oliver Santora, Trintyn Chambers, 6½/7. **K-6 UNRATED:** Aaban Baig Mogal, 5½/7. **K-5 CHAMPIONSHIP:** Ted Wang, 7/7. **K-5 U1200:** Arihant Chaudhuri, 6½/7. **K-5 U900:** Charles Edward Smith, 7/7. **K-3 CHAMPIONSHIP:** Sasha Milo Schaefer, 6½/7. **K-3 U1000:** William Zhao, 7/7. **K-3 U700:** Saanvisri Akkipally, 7/7. **K-3 UNRATED:** Clifford Anthony Xavier, 7/7. **K-1 CHAMPIONSHIP:** Devansh Vallanki, Ajay Beuria Sreenivasan, Mustafa Muhammad, 6½/7. **K-1 U500 / UNRATED:** Kaison Zhu, Julian Cho, 6½/7. **BLITZ K-6:** Vihaan Jammalamadaka, 11½/12. **BLITZ K-3:** Albert Li, 11/12. **BUGHOUSE:** Tommy Kozlek & Leon Li, 10/12.

TEAM WINNERS:

K-6 CHAMPIONSHIP: Speyer Legacy School (New York, NY), 18. **K-6 U1400:** Success Academy Midtown West (New York, NY), 19. **K-6 U1000:** Avondale Gate Magnet School (Rochester Hills, MI), 20½. **K-6 UNR:** Davison (Detroit, MI), 2. **K-5 CHAMPIONSHIP:** P.S. 77 - Lower Lab (New York, NY), 19. **K-5 U1200:** Success Academy Hudson Yards (New York, NY), 19. **K-5 U900:** PS 130 K The Parkside School (Brooklyn, NY), 21½. **K-3 CHAMPIONSHIP:** Oak Hall (Gainesville, FL), 20. **K-3 U1000:** The Greene School (West Palm Beach, FL), 17. **K-3 U700:** Idlewild Elementary (Memphis, TN), 18½. **K-3 UNR:** Madison Elementary (Warsaw, IN), 14½. **K-1 CHAMPIONSHIP:** Trinity School (New York, NY), 19. **K-1 U500 / UNR:** Success Academy Bronx 3 (Bronx, NY), 17½. **BLITZ K-6:** P.S. 77 - Lower Lab (New York, NY), 35. **BLITZ K-3:** NYG008 (New York, NY), 30.

1. d4 d5 2. c4 e5 3. dxe5 d4 4. Nf3 Nc6 5. g3 Nge7 6. Nbd2 Be6 7. Bg2 Nf5 8. 0-0 Be7 9. a3 h5 10. Qc2 Qd7 11. b4 h4 12. g4? h3! 13. gxf5? hxg2 14. Rd1 Bxf5 15. Qb2 d3! 16. Nb3 Be4 17. Nbd4 Qh3 18. Bf4 dxe2? 19. Qxe2 Bxf3 20. Nxf3 g5 21. b5 Nd8 22. Bg3 Ne6 23. Nd4 Rh6?! 24. Qf3

(see diagram top of next next column)

24. ... 0-0-0?

It's true that White is significantly better



BALLER

It's nothing but net for Tani Adewumi at the 2024 Cadet Championship.

BY **DANIAL WILSON**

ANNOTATIONS BY **FM TANITOLUWA ADEWUMI**



EIGHT OF THE TOP AMERICAN chess players under 16 competed in the 2024 U.S. Cadet Championship for a \$10,000 scholarship sponsored by US Chess and the Dewain Barber Foundation as well as \$2,000 in place prizes. Wilson Chess and King Tournaments were the co-organizers, and the event was held June 20-23 at the DoubleTree in Lisle, Illinois, alongside the 2024 Chicago Summer Open and Blitz.

FM Tanitoluwa Adewumi dominated the Cadet, starting the event with the second-highest rating just behind last year's winner, FM Erick Zhao, and finishing undefeated with six points, two points ahead of IM Ryo Chen.

This is one of many great recent accomplishments for Tani: Not only did he win the \$10,000 scholarship and \$1,000 in cash, but he earned his final IM norm a few months ago and his FIDE rating is now only 14 points away from 2400, which will get him the title! Tani and I sat down after the tournament to discuss his victory.

Dan: How did you feel during the weeks leading up to the tournament?

Tani: I felt confident. I was happy to be back because I wanted to redeem myself, as last year I got eighth place.

I am sure you are proud of your five wins and two draws. This was some of your best chess and much better than last year.

Yeah, I'm proud and would probably say so too.

Okay, the field was pretty tough, with an average rating of 2340, and all of you are young, talented players. Had you faced all the cadets before this tournament?

No. I don't think I've played FM Ryan Sun. Maybe I have in Titled Tuesday. I don't think I've ever played FM Isaac Wang or FM Zoey Tang.

What did you do to prepare for this event, and was it any different from last year's tournament?

I would probably say so. Last year, I didn't prepare as well. Probably, what I did different was I really tried to break my opponents down to see how they played and tried to counter against that. I would say I really focused on each player. I would say not like an overall — I really went deep down to focus on each player. That was probably the difference in my preparation. I mean, I didn't know who I was playing as white or black, so I just did white and black.

I know you had many issues with delayed flights the day of the tournament. How much did it affect you in round one?

I mean, it gave me some adrenaline, but it was a little taxing [and] annoying. But ... I told my dad, all I wanted was a cold shower when I got to the hotel. That was mostly what I needed, just the cold shower, because I already looked at everything I needed to look at way before the tournament started.

The 2024 Cadet Championships were held in conjunction with the 2024 Chicago Summer Open played in the same

room. How has that experience been? Were there any notable or memorable moments or interactions?

I know last year, right before my game, someone asked me to sign their score sheet. ... I know in the Summer Open and in the Cadet this year right before my game, someone asked me to take a picture and sign an autograph, so I think that was pretty nice. It felt like an open tournament because of so many people. But it was much better than I expected because the noise level was actually perfect. It was like an open tournament but much quieter.

Do you think pairing the Cadet with an event like the Summer Open adds to the Cadet championship or takes away from it?

I think it adds, because it is the U.S. Cadet and it's a big tournament and it probably should be more spread out so more people can see the tournament. So, with the Chicago Summer Open, I think it adds to the Cadet.

Walk me through your thoughts as the tournament went on.

I felt quite confident, because basically, the first day was very weird because of the flight delays. So, I would say when I won my first game that gave me a lot of confidence. Because even with all the things that happened, I still managed to win. So, that gave me a lot of confidence and then I was like "Great, so I can start."

After winning your first three, you go into day three and you beat FM Isaac Wang, a first-time player at the Cadet, but then you had to play IM Ryo Chen, and that was a game that, if you won, you would have locked up the tournament. Did you know that at the time? And what was going through your head?

That was an insane game! It looks like he was winning in the opening. It wasn't that clear, and then it was very back and forth, but it was equal the whole time, which is insane. And then I was winning in the end



GRANT AND TANI

One of the great things about chess is that kids and adults can compete on an even playing field. That's not true on, say, a basketball court, where few 12-year-olds can keep up with someone six-and-a-half feet tall.

It turns out that our two August interviewees have a bit of a history. As Grant Williams tells it, he invited Tani Adewumi to visit him in Boston last April to play a few games, where Tani played without sight of the board to make things interesting. Could Grant beat Tani in HORSE with a blindfold on? Maybe a rematch is in order.

game at some point, but I missed that, and I was not losing, but much worse, and then we settled and found a draw. But yeah, what a great game.

Even after I drew, I think I had it locked up. But the way I thought of it the whole tournament, I just thought: "Play one game at a time." Because in the last game, many people just take a draw and you won the tournament. I still wanted to win the game. I was playing every single game like I just started the tournament.

What was the very first thing you did after learning you had the tournament locked up?

I mean, I was happy. I celebrated but not

like celebrating in a major way. I just hugged my dad and I was happy, called my mom and brother. I guess I just relaxed before my next game, because I knew I wanted to gain as many rating points as possible. So, I was like, "OK, I have Ryan with white, so I could try to push for a win." So, I just thought about that and just played the next game until the tournament was fully over. Then, I actually celebrated.

Did you do anything special to celebrate?

Not really but maybe just everyone together, like I would say, enjoying the moment.

Do you have your eyes set on any university? Is there a university that you're already thinking if I could get there if I get accepted?

I don't know if I'll get accepted into Harvard, but if I do, I think I'm gonna go to Harvard.

What advice would you give young chess players between grades 3 to 8, and with ratings between 1000 and 1500, who look at your games, look up to you, and want to be the best chess player they can be?

I would say puzzles are very important. They really stimulate the brain and thinking. But you also have to be determined, because you have to know that you want to get better at chess, and you want to just keep going.

I think there's this Thomas Edison quote: "I have not failed. I have just found 10,000 ways that don't work." After you play a game, don't be discouraged. If you lose, you just have to keep going. Let's say you lose to the four-move checkmate. You really didn't lose the game; you just found how you won't lose another game because of the four-move checkmate. If you lose to a pin, try your best not to get into bad pins. I would say just keep working at it and then don't get discouraged if you lose, and [look at] a lot of puzzles and review your games.

Very good advice. I'm hoping many of the young players that read this will heed that advice. Maybe they'll listen to some of their coaches when they tell them to do their puzzles. Thank you, Tani, for taking the time for this interview. My last question: When you want to step away from chess, what is another activity you really enjoy?

I play a lot of basketball. I'm actually good at it, I'd say. I also enjoy relaxing watching movies or TV shows.

TWO FROM TANI

SICILIAN DEFENSE, ROSSOLI-MO VARIATION (B31)

FM Tanitoluwa Adewumi (2448)

IM Eric Chang Liu (2446)

U.S. Cadet Ch (2), Lisle, 06.21.2024

1. e4 c5 2. Nf3 Nc6 3. Bb5 g6 4. Bxc6 bxc6

The main move in this position is 4. ... dxc6, but Black's choice is completely fine. White just has to know what they are doing, or they can end up worse.

5. 0-0 Bg7 6. Re1 Qc7 7. h3 d6 8. c3

Preparing for d2-d4.

8. ... Nf6 9. d4 cxd4 10. cxd4

I have completed my center!

10. ... 0-0 11. Nc3 c5

Black found a very good, dynamic move to open the center.

12. e5

After 12. dxc5 Qxc5 13. e5 dxe5 14. Rxe5 Qc7 15. Bf4 White's position might look active and menacing, but things are equal.

12. ... dxe5 13. dxe5 Rd8 14. Qa4



Exploiting the knight's lack of squares.

14. ... Nh5

Other moves are much worse. If (a) 14. ... Bd7?? 15. Qh4; (b) 14. ... Nd7?? is met by 15. Nd5 Qb7 16. Nxe7+; (c) after 14. ... Ne8? it's hard for Black to move his knight; and (d) 14. ... Nd5?? loses to 15. Nxd5 Rxd5 16. Qe8+ Bf8 17. Ng5 e6 18. Nxh7.

15. Be3

Trying to win the trapped knight can backfire. After 15. g4 Bb7 16. Re4 (16. Ne4 f5 is slightly better for Black) 16. ... Qd7 17. Qxd7 Rxd7 18. gxf5 Bxe4 19. Nxe4 Rd1+ 20. Kg2 Bh6 21. Nfg5 gxf5 the position is way too complicated.

15. ... Bb7

After 15. ... Bxe5 I thought 16. Nb5 (16. Nxe5! Qxe5 17. Bh6!) Qb8 17. Bxc5 is good for White.

16. Ne4 Bxe5

Maybe Black could have tried 16. ... c4 17. Rac1 Bd5 (not 17. ... Bxe4? 18. Rxc4 with a double attack) 18. Ned2 Qb7 19. Rc2 with chances for both sides.

17. Nxe5 Qxe5 18. Nxc5 Bd5 19. b3 Qf6 20. Rad1



Now I have an advantage because my pieces are better.

20. ... Ng7 21. Qa5! Nf5 22. Ne4 Qc6

Black loses after 22. ... Bxe4 23. Rxd8+ Rxd8 24. Qxd8+ Kg7.

23. Nc3



The pin is causing a lot of pressure.

23. ... Nxe3??

A mistake. I think my opponent missed my 25th move. After the stronger 23. ... e6 24. Bg5 Rd7 25. Bf6 White is in control of the position.

24. fxe3 e6 25. e4

Now the bishop is trapped.

25. ... Rdc8 26. Re3 Bxb3 27. axb3 Rab8

28. Qxa7 Rxb3 29. Nd5 Qc2 30. Rf1 Rf8

Even worse is 30. ... exd5 31. Qxf7+ Kh8 32. Rxb3 Qxb3 33. Qf6+ Kg8 34. Qe6+ Kg7 35. Qxc8.

31. Nf6+ Kg7 32. Rxb3 Qxb3 33. Qd4, Black resigned.

FOUR KNIGHTS GAME (C49)

FM Tanitoluwa Adewumi (2448)

FM Ryan Sun (2372)

U.S. Cadet Ch (7), Lisle, 06.23.2024

1. e4 e5 2. Nf3 Nc6 3. Nc3 Nf6 4. Bb5

I decided I wanted to play a positional game, and the Four Knights allows this.

4. ... Bb4 5. 0-0 0-0

If Black tries to grab the e-pawn with 5. ... Bxc3 6. bxc3 Nxe4 (6. ... 0-0 7. Re1 d6

Below: The 2024 U.S. Cadet Championship players, along with IA Bill Buklis (third from left) and FA Daniel Wilson (far right).



PHOTO: DANIAL WILSON

8. d4 leaves White ahead) White gets a great position after 7. Re1 Nd6 8. Bxc6 dxc6 9. Rxe5+ Be6 10. Ng5 0-0 11. Qh5 h6 12. Nxe6 fxe6 13. Rxe6.

6. Bxc6 dxc6 7. d3

My position is solid, while Black's pawn structure is damaged.

7. ... Nd7 8. Ne2 Re8



9. Ne1

This is not the best move in the position, but I knew that f2-f4 could be annoying, and that my opponent might make mistakes trying to stop it.

9. ... Bc5

Already Black is concerned with stopping my pawn break.

10. Kh1 Nf6

This again prevents f2-f4, but now Black has lost a lot of his most natural plans, including ... Nf6-d7-f8.

11. Bg5

If 11. f4? Nxe4 is great for Black.

11. ... Qd6

During the game I looked at 11. ... h6 12. Bh4 (12. Be3 is equal) 12. ... g5 13. Bg3 Nh5 which felt dangerous.

12. h3 h6 13. Be3 Bxe3 14. fxe3 c5 15. Nc3



15. ... Bd7

After 15. ... c4!? 16. dxc4 Qc6 17. Qd3 I am up a pawn but Black definitely has compensation.

16. Nf3 Bc6?! 17. Nh4 g6 18. Qf3 Kg7 19. Qg3 Nh5



20. Qg4!

Putting Black into semi-zugzwang! White also has an advantage after 20. Nf5+ Kh7 21. Qh4 Qd8.

20. ... Qd7

White is much better after 20. ... Bd7 21. Qf3 Nf6 22. Qxf6+ Qxf6 23. Rxf6 Kxf6 24. Nd5+ Kg7 25. Nxc7 c4 26. Nxa8, while I have a lot of pressure after 20. ... Qe6 21. Rf5 Nf6 22. Qg3.

21. Rf5!

Another really nice move. Black would be back in the game after 21. Nf5+ Kh7 22. Rf3 Ng7 23. Nxc7 Qxc4 24. Nxe8 Qc8.

21. ... Kh7

If 21. ... Nf6 22. Qg3 keeps White ahead.

22. Raf1 gxf5

This is the best move, but Black is losing anyway.

23. Qxh5 Qe6 24. Rxf5 Re7 25. Nd5 Bxd5 26. exd5



26. ... Qd6

If 26. ... Qxd5 27. Rf6 and White wins.

27. Rxf7+ Kg8 28. Rf3 e4 29. Rf4 Re5

This allows White a forced mate.

30. Qf7+ Kh8 31. Ng6+ Qxg6 32. Qxg6, Black resigned.

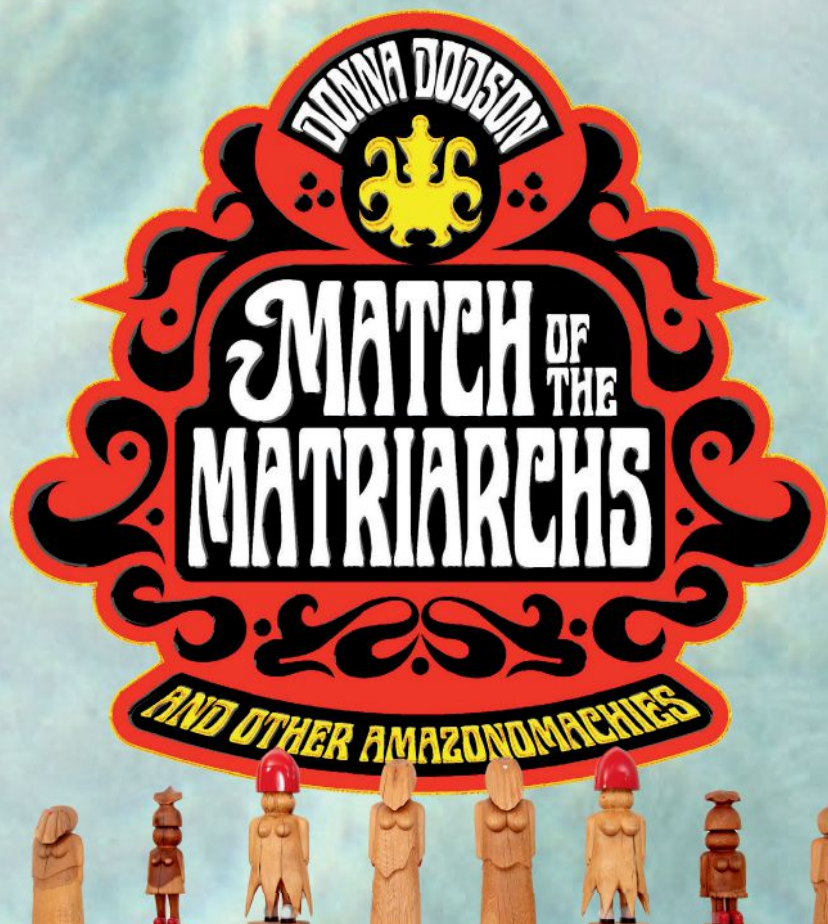
Now it's mate in four: 32. ... Re7 (or else White takes the seventh rank) 33. Qxh6+ Kg8 34. Rg4+ Kf7 35. Qg6+ Kf8 36. Qg8 mate. ♖



2024 U.S. CADET CHAMPIONSHIP AT A GLANCE

JUNE 20-23, 2024 | LISLE, IL

1ST: FM Tanitoluwa Adewumi, 6/7, **2ND:** IM Ryo Chen, 4. **3RD-4TH:** IM Bach Ngo, FM Ryan Sun, 3½. **5TH-6TH:** FM Erick Zhao, FM Zoey Tang, 3. **7TH-8TH:** IM Eric Chang Liu, FM Isaac Wang, 2½.



ON VIEW
February 15 –
September 15, 2024

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



ON VIEW
April 11, 2024 –
January 12, 2025

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

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

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

“CHESS EXPANDS YOUR MIND.”

NBA STAR GRANT WILLIAMS IN CONVERSATION WITH AMY JAMIESON

HOW DO NBA PLAYERS spend their off season? Resting up, staying fit, and promoting projects are typically on the to-do list. Whenever Grant Williams is back home in Charlotte, he enjoys brushing up on one of his favorite pastimes: over-the-board chess. Introduced to the sport by his grandfather, the power forward for the Charlotte Hornets grew up in North Carolina playing in clubs and national chess tournaments.

As Williams grew — he’s 6 feet, 6 inches tall — basketball would eventually take over, but he still holds on to that love for chess, which, he says, informs his strategy on the court. It also connects him with fellow NBA players, such as Maxi Kleber and Danilo Gallinari, who he’s met over the board as well as on the court.

In our May conversation — which took place via Zoom in his mother’s living room where a chess board sits beside the fireplace, ripe and ready for competition — Williams shared what he loves about playing, which professional chess players and YouTubers he follows, and what he’s actively doing to improve his chess game.

US Chess is grateful to Quest Nutrition for facilitating this interview. (Williams is a brand ambassador for Quest.) Learn more about them at www.questnutrition.com. Some quotes have been edited for clarity.

Amy Jamieson: I was interested to find out that you are a chess player as well as being an NBA star. So I pitched a story to *Chess Life* magazine and here we are.

How much over-the-board chess have you played?

Grant Williams: [I played] a lot of over-the-board chess when I was younger. The only time I really had the chance to play over the board recently has been with my brother Gabon [Williams]. I played Maxi Kleber [from the Dallas Mavericks] in a bullet game, in which I was just trying to see if he was good or not. I sacrificed my queen within the first three moves to see if he could beat me; he did and I was like, “OK, maybe I can play him again.”

That’s awesome.

I play consistently on *Chess.com* with a guy who interviewed me a long time ago. I’m 5 and 2 against him right now. I’ve played Danilo Gallinari [Milwaukee Bucks] and a couple others. I’ve played Gordon Hayward [Oklahoma City Thunder], beat Gordon. I enjoy playing. I need to read more and study more tactics because I literally was just playing right before you hopped on five seconds ago and I lost. I love playing.

So when you play with other NBA players is it fun? Is it serious? Is there joking around?

I feel like originally it’s joking around, just to see if we’re at the same level — just to see where people are. I’ve played games where I’ve thought, “Yeah, they know how to play but they don’t play often, or they haven’t played in years.” There are other people where I say, “Oh, yeah, they play consistently and I have to focus.” There’s definitely been some games where we’ve played and either they’ve won or I’ve won and they say, “OK,

we need to add a [clock].” All of a sudden it gets competitive.

How do you work to improve your chess game then?

I just started playing again about a year ago, but I played growing up and I was in chess club and everything. I need to study and watch more videos or even read. Honestly, I’ve learned through playing and trying different openings, like the Open Sicilian as Black. If not, then I have the French — it just depends on what I’m opening with. As White, I want to learn the King’s Gambit because I learned it’s the most common in bullet chess — at least at beginner levels. As time goes on you can change it up. But when I was a kid all I played was the Four Knights and I learned that that was not what I should be playing consistently. The one that I think is the most complex, but the one that I feel is also the most simple to learn and be great at, is the London. That’s something that I think I’ll probably adopt in the next year.

OK. Who is more competitive in your experience — NBA players or chess players?

Chess players. Yeah, with NBA players, there’s a limit. There’s going to be a point where it’s like, “OK, yeah, I can’t beat this person.” In chess, you may play a guy 10 times, you might win one of the 10, but that one is what you feel great about. They’re not going to want to lose to you, so they’re going to want to keep playing. So you’ll play 20, 30 games all at once — maybe more — and rematch one another until one of you fatigues or one of you finally says, “All right, you’re that much better than me, I need to go learn more.”





In basketball, your body can only take so much. Your mind can handle it but at one point, game four or game five, playing to 21, you're going to be, like, "All right, whew. My shots are starting to get flat; we're just only taking jumpers; we're not playing defense anymore; what are we doing?"

Right, OK. What is your ELO? I read it was around 1300.

It depends on what game we're playing. Daily I think I'm at 1450. Rapid, I think I'm 1200 or something like that. But as we get lower and lower my ELO goes down. As of this morning I was a 990 in bullet. I've been on a frustrating tilt right now. On average I probably could make it in the thousands in bullet, like 1050, around that range. Blitz, I feel like I'm a little bit better. It might not show it on my ELO right now, but I can get there. I just haven't played blitz in over six months.

Do you follow any chess YouTubers or streamers?

Of course. A lot of my feed is Gotham [*@GothamChess*] just 'cause I like Levy [Rozman]. He's very goofy and stuff like that. I've watched Hikaru [Nakamura] streams and everything else — I enjoy watching him because he's quiet but at the same time his personality comes out when things happen. The Botez [sisters] are funny because they're more like the young generation, like, "We'll go play somebody in the park."

I actually played against Tani [Adewumi] while I was in Boston [see page 28 *~ed*] and he beat me blindfolded with his eyes closed, turned around, so that was fun. But at the same time, I won a game on time. He told me, "Don't say you won a game on time," but I would never disrespect him by not saying I beat him on time. But I beat him and I felt pretty good about it. At the same time, there's levels to this and I'm trying to get there.

Can you explain how chess informs your basketball game?

It allows you to strategize. For me, I think it helps me understand different [perspectives]. My mom taught me that there's seven solutions to any problem — that's how she raised me to be — and in chess you've got to think about all of it. There are so many different openings. So many different counters. So many different tactics, and so many different ways of understanding your opponent.

That's kind of how basketball is, you know? You're countering their game plan. They may be switching tonight, so what do we do to counteract that? They might be planning a

deep drop for Rudy Gobert, but then when Naz Reid comes in, they're blitzing or they're showing, stuff like that. It's like, "OK, who do we utilize? Who can we sacrifice?" That's how I always joke about it — who may not be as active this game, and who might be more? It's fun to be really creative.

Do you like being back in Charlotte?

I love it. I actually have a chess board right beside our fireplace [*He shows me a chess board in Mom's living room behind camera*]. My brother Gabon [Williams] comes back in hopefully the next week or two, so we'll start playing again. He's probably a consistent 1200, 1300 ELO no matter what game he plays. Yeah, he's the smart one.

Did you play a lot of chess tournaments when you were young?

Yes. So there's a picture of me — it's either at this house or my dad's house — when I beat the number one chess player at the time in K-12. I felt really cool. I was, like, number 8,060 or something like that.

That's a great memory!

Oh, yeah, to this day I talk trash about it. It's something that I always feel cool about because, you know, it's a long time ago, but it shows my roots. My grandfather is the reason why I started playing chess. He introduced me to it and then my mom put me in all the different chess clubs and tournaments.

My brother continued to play [chess] while he was in high school. Sports picked up for me more so I couldn't necessarily do it as much as I wanted to, but now that I'm in the NBA, I picked it back up and have been loving it since. It's how I pass my time. If you don't see me watching TV or doing something to calm down, you'll see me playing on *Chess.com*.

Do you bring a chess board with you when you travel?

I would but I don't have anyone to play with. If I had a group that was willing to or if I knew that I was in this city and this guy likes to play, I would be, like, "All right, cool, I'm bringing my board," but currently it's easier to play virtually.

I know you do some mentoring work. Do you introduce chess when you mentor?

I originally planned to when I was in Boston with those kids, but that was during COVID so we only were able to do it over the phone. Then when I got to Dallas, I wasn't there long enough to start the initiatives that I wanted to. But now that I'm here in North Carolina,

I have my mentee David Sanders Jr., and I think that's a good idea. It would make him slow down, which I don't think he'd want to at this age, but at the same time, I think it'd be great for him. He's a football player. He's the number two player in the country. He's a senior now, [and] he'll hopefully make his decision in the next couple of weeks.

So you're mentoring David Sanders?

Yeah, since he was in eighth grade. I want to say he's the better version of me because I was the three-star, no-one-cared-about-me kid. I ended up being good. He's the five-star kid — everybody wants him, but he's also very intelligent. Very well spoken. Great guy.

Would you encourage other athletes to play chess then? For what reasons?

I always say that chess expands your mind and your ability to learn. But also, as a competitor — like any competitive sport you love — chess is probably one of the most competitive international sports you can think of. So I always say, as an athlete, it could help you both calm your mind and also keep it going. It allows you to sit in one location yet be active, versus feeling like you have to be on the move, or feeling like you have to lay down and not do anything — chess lets you do both. It's very, very beneficial in terms of activity. It allows your brain to continue to operate and work in a different way. So if

you don't feel like watching a film or doing these things, and you don't feel like going to sleep, rather than just scrolling on TikTok or looking at nonsense, it's a good way to keep your mind going.

Is there any other name dropping you can do about people you've played with before or any anecdotes you can share about funny games you've played?

I played Amile Jefferson, who is an assistant coach at Boston now. I was on the road when I played him. He beat me. I didn't realize how good he was. I was, like, "Wait, wait, wait, you're trying to hustle me! You pretended like you were just messing around!" — and he hasn't played me since. And then Gordon [Hayward] — I played him in a five-minute game and he said, "No, I play 5+5." I was, like, "Ahhhh, OK, now this is where the competitive side of Gordon comes out." He's trying to not lose to me.

Gordon Hayward plays for the Oklahoma City Thunder right now. He was with Charlotte before and then Boston before that. He got very upset 'cause I sent him the five-minute game and he played and I won. That's when he said, "I normally play 5+5, the time didn't allow me to ..." I was, like, "Yeah, OK." With athletes there's always going to be a competitive edge or excuse. We're going to have to agree on a game, sit there, play multiples of them. If not, we're always going to compete and say we have to play again.

Is this over-the-board chess you're talking about playing with these people or was it on your phone?

These were all virtual. The over-the-board encounters that I've had were with Tani [Adeyemi] when we were in Boston. That was cool because we played six or seven games. Played different openings and I won one of those seven. But I don't think I would do that ever again because I don't think he would let me! Another over-the-board was Maxi Kleber in Dallas. And, did I play Luca Dončić? I don't think I did. We talked about it, but I don't think he ever sat down to play me.

Who's your idol in the chess world?

Hikaru [Nakamura]. I love Hikaru because of his ability to adapt. He could play you in 30 different games and pick up on things that no one would ever know and take advantage of that, but he would also adapt his own game to beat you. ♠

Grant Williams doesn't get to play a lot of over-the-board chess, but looking at these photos from his June 19 visit to the Charlotte Chess Center (CCC), it's clear that he enjoys it immensely.

Grant met with CCC Elite campers and matched wits with resident GM Daniel Naroditsky. Look for more on his visit at www.charlottechesscenter.org/photos!



The Sveshnikov for Club Players

Try this popular variation in the Sicilian after reading this handy guide to key lines.

BY **GM JESPER THYBO**



GM Evgeny Sveshnikov, the author of the variation

THIS ARTICLE INTENDS to offer an easy Sveshnikov Sicilian repertoire for club players. I have played the opening myself for many years, and I am happy to share my knowledge with *Chess Life* readers! The lines covered are checked by engines, and I have also taken important games into consideration. My aim is to explain relevant ideas in the opening as well as concrete theoretical moves.

I think that the Sveshnikov is a great opening for club players, as it puts pressure on White from the get-go. Once you have grasped the key ideas and learned the theory, it can be played for a lifetime. White is currently struggling to find ideas, while Black can repeat the same sound lines without too much worry.



GM Jesper Thybo

PHOTOS: ROB BOGAERTS / NA / ANEFO (SVESHNIKOV) COURTESY JESPER SIMONSEN (THYBO)

Naturally you can take all of what follows into your repertoire, or select the parts you prefer. There are many books and video courses that can supplement or fill in gaps.

INTRODUCTION

1. e4 c5 2. Nf3 Nc6

This is already a key position. The Sveshnikov is a branch of the Open Sicilian after 3. d4, but 3. Bb5 (the Rossolimo) is White's other main move, and 3. Nc3 and 3. c3 (transposing to the Alapin) are serious options as well.

3. d4 cxd4 4. Nxd4 Nf6 5. Nc3 e5



This is the distinguishing move of the Sveshnikov variation.

6. Ndb5

By far the main move, aiming for the d6-square. Alternatives such as 6. Nxc6, 6. Nf5, and 6. Nb3 will also be covered.

6. ... d6 7. Bg5

White pins the black knight on f6, fighting for the d5-square.

The alternative 7. Nd5 has gained quite a bit of popularity both at professional and club levels since it was used by GM Fabiano Caruana in the 2018 World Championship. We must therefore be prepared for it! Black has no option but to take with 7. ... Nxd5, when after 8. exd5 White's idea is to grab space with the d5-pawn and gain a tempo on the c6-knight.

Here I recommend 8. ... Nb8! when the knight will later go to d7 and then aim for either the c5- or f6-square. White will often try to expand on the queenside, whereas Black will try to stabilize the queenside and expand on the kingside.

7. ... a6 8. Na3

The immediate 8. Bxf6 forces us to recapture with the g-pawn, thereby doubling the f-pawns. After 8. ... gxf6 9. Na3 b5 10. Nd5, play transposes to the lines after 8. Na3 and 9. Bxf6.

8. ... b5 9. Nd5

If White captures with 9. Bxf6, then 9. ... gxf6 is the way to go. This reaches another important line with 10. Nd5, where I recommend the immediate 10. ... f5!

Note that Black should not play 9. ... Qxf6? because of a neat tactic: 10. Nd5 Qd8 11. Bxb5! axb5 12. Nxb5 Qa5+ 13. c3, when Black can't take the knight on b5 due to Nd5-c7+, so he is in a lot of trouble. Therefore, we recapture on f6 with the g-pawn, not the queen!

9. ... Be7 10. Bxf6 Bxf6

Now that our bishop is on e7, 10. ... gxf6?? would be a terrible mistake, shutting in the e7-bishop. In this position, White has two options: 11. c4 and 11. c3.

11. c4 b4

1. e4 c5 2. Nf3 Nc6 3. d4 cxd4 4. Nxd4 Nf6 5. Nc3 e5 6. Ndb5 d6 7. Bg5 a6 8. Na3 b5 9. Nd5 Be7 10. Bxf6 Bxf6 11. c4

White aims to play in a more positional fashion. Taking the pawn on c4 is undesirable, as it helps White control the light squares, but Black can just close down the position instead.

11. ... b4 12. Nc2 0-0



A potential pawn sacrifice, but a very good one if White chooses to accept.

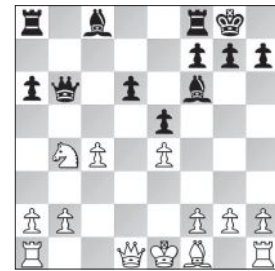
Defending the pawn with 12. ... a5 is also possible, but let's give White the chance to get greedy!

13. g3

Alternatives:

(a) White can start pushing with 13. h4, but it will very likely transpose to our 13. g3 lines. Black can play 13. ... a5 followed by ... Bc8-e6 next.

(b) Taking the b4-pawn with 13. Ndx b4 is not such a worry. Black will either regain the pawn or become very active after 13. ... Nxb4 14. Nxb4 Qb6! when we reach a decision point for White:



POSITION AFTER 14. ... Qb6

(b1) Trying to protect the b2-pawn with 15. Nd3? loses too much time, and after 15. ... Bb7 Black has a great position.

(b2) White has not resolved anything after 15. a3 a5 16. Nd5 (or 16. Nd3 Bb7 is still comfortable) 16. ... Qxb2 and again Black regains the pawn without any problems.

(b3) Best might be 15. Nd5, when after 15. ... Qxb2 16. Be2 Bd8!? Black will retreat the queen via the a3-square, and he enjoys the pair of bishops to counter White's knight on d5. The position is balanced.

(c) White can also immediately develop with 13. Be2 a5, bringing up another choice:



POSITION AFTER 13. ... a5

(c1) White can angle to trade off light-squared bishops with 14. Bg4, trying to consolidate his control over the d5-square. A key point: The dream scenario for White is to have a strong knight on d5 against a bad black bishop on f6. Whenever White tries to exchange the bishops, we will almost always put the c8-bishop on either the b7-square, avoiding the exchange, or we can play 14. ... Be6, when White can still trade bishops, but will no longer be able to use the d5-square after the exchange, which is a big achievement for Black.

(c2) If White does not try to trade bishops, then Black is doing fine after 14. 0-0 Bg5, borrowing an idea from White's book to trade off his bad bishop on e3. The next couple of moves would typically be to develop the light-squared bishop, and maybe also play ... g7-g6 followed by ... Kg8-g7. In some cases, Black can open up the position with ... f7-f5, too.

(d) White can also try to pressure Black's dark-squared bishop with 13. Qf3 when

we play the under-explored **13. ... Be7!?**, following up with ... a6-a5 and ... Bc8-e6 achieving a nice position. Play can continue in two ways:



POSITION AFTER 13. ... Be7

(d1) The developing **14. Be2** allows **14. ... a5!** with ... Bc8-e6 next. Black enjoys a very solid position.

(d2) It is still very risky for White to get greedy with **14. Ncxb4 Nxb4 15. Nxb4 Bb7**, when Black will get quite a lot of compensation for the pawn. Next up are ideas such as ... Qd8-a5 and ... f7-f5. The open files on the queenside will become very useful for Black if White ever decides to castle long.

13. ... a5



Now we have reached the main lines, which could also arise after 12. ... a5. As mentioned, I prefer this move order, as it tempts White to go for the risky pawn grab discussed above.

14. Bg2

White can also try to trade light-squared bishops yet again, starting with **14. h4** in order to play Bf1-h3. We can counter this by playing **14. ... Be6**, always being ready to recapture with the f-pawn and control the critical d5-square.

(see diagram top of next column)

After **15. Bh3** (not **15. Nxf6+?! Qxf6 16. Qxd6? Qf3!** winning) I recommend **15. ... g6** intending to stop White's kingside attack with ... h7-h5. White can either react to this plan or ignore it:



POSITION AFTER 14. ... Be6

(a) Greed again loses for White, as after **16. Nxf6+ Qxf6 17. Qxd6?? Qf3** he cannot protect everything.

(b) If White plays **16. h5**, we can now play **16. ... Bg5!** when Black is perfectly fine.

(c) White is wise to play slowly with **16. Kf1** when Black must play **16. ... h5!** in order to stop White's idea of h4-h5 and then shift the bishop to g7.

14. ... g6

A cool move! Black wants to retreat the bishop to g7, securing the bishop pair for later.

15. Nxf6+

The complacent **15. 0-0 Bg7** equalizes. The next move will be ... Bc8-e6, and Black could think about putting pressure on White with ... h7-h5-h4.

15. ... Qxf6 16. 0-0

If White's knight ever leaves the c2-square, such as with **16. Ne3**, then **16. ... Nd4!** gains the attractive d4-square.

16. ... h5!

Black often wants to play ... h5-h4, when they could either take the pawn on g3 or push to the h3-square, limiting the options of White's g2-bishop.

17. Ne3

If White tries to stop Black's h-pawn with **17. h4**, Black has two options leading to a fine game. First, **17. ... Be6 18. Ne3** (not **18. Qxd6 Rac8** when White's queen is misplaced on d6) **18. ... Rfd8** equalizes, with ideas of ... a5-a4 and ... Nc6-d4 to follow. He can also try the dynamic **17. ... a4!?** immediately.

17. ... h4

The position is unclear; Black is not worse and has good chances to outplay White. Black will often try to place a pawn on h3 to disturb the white bishop, and perhaps try to plant a knight on d4. A dream scenario would be to trade Black's bishop for the white knight, leaving Black with a good knight versus a bad bishop.

11. c3 Bb7!?

1. e4 c5 2. Nf3 Nc6 3. d4 cxd4 4. Nxd4 Nf6 5. Nc3 e5 6. Ndb5 d6 7. Bg5 a6 8. Na3 b5 9. Nd5 Be7 10. Bxf6 Bxf6 11. c3 Bb7!?

The main lines are **11. ... 0-0** and **11. ... Bg5**, but I recommend this newly trendy continuation, which is quite easy to play. And there isn't too much theory, at least compared to Black's other options.

12. Nc2

Almost everyone will improve the misplaced knight on a3 by moving it to c2.

12. ... Ne7

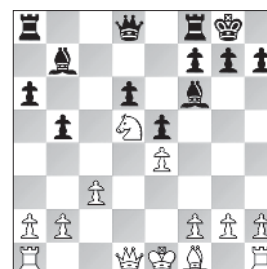


This is the point of Black's play. The c6-knight was misplaced, blocking the b7-bishop, so we aim to exchange it for the knight on d5.

13. Nxf6+

White recaptures the bishop pair after this exchange and damages the black structure, but Black will have play in the center!

White's main alternative is (a) **13. Ncb4 Nxd5 14. Nxd5 0-0**, when White must be accurate:



POSITION AFTER 14. ... 0-0

(a1) Eliminating Black's dark-squared bishop with **15. Nxf6+?!?** is dubious.

In the Sveshnikov, control of the d5-square is typically more important than the bishop pair, which is why White gave up their dark-squared bishop in the first place. Black will now gain a lead in development and a strong b7-bishop after **15. ...**

Qxf6 16. Bd3 Qg6!, attacking the g2-pawn and playing ... f7-f5 next with pressure on White's position.

(a2) If White attacks the b5-pawn with **15. a4**, then **15. ... Bc6!** asks White to make a decision on the queenside.

(a3) The main plan is **15. Be2** when White will aim for the a2-a4 break next. For this reason, it is useful to play **15. ... Rb8!** and eye the b2-pawn. After **16. 0-0** (not 16. a4 bxa4! when the rook eyes the b-pawn) **16. ... Bg5** Black is doing fine, and can play either ... Kg8-h8 followed by ... f7-f5, or ... g7-g6 with a later f-pawn thrust in the cards.

Rerouting the knight with (b) **13. Nce3 Nxd5** transposes to the 13. Ncb4 line; however, another option for Black here is **13. ... Bg5!?**, which is worth exploring.

13. ... gxf6 14. Bd3

This is by far the most logical move, defending the e4-pawn while developing.

Not critical is 14. Qd3 d5 15. exd5 Qxd5 when Black has no problems. Alternatively, guarding the e4-pawn with 14. f3 weakens squares around the white king. Black will continue with the usual pawn break of 14. ... d5! and equalize.

14. ... d5



15. Qe2

Again, passive defense with (a) **15. f3?!** is not recommended! After **15. ... dxe4 16. Bxe4** it is important for Black to play **16. ... Qb6!** to keep the queens on. The point of Black's sequence is revealed after **17. Bxb7** with the intermezzo of **17. ... Rd8!** recapturing the bishop next turn with a fine game.

The liquidation with (b) **15. exd5 Qxd5 16. Ne3 Qe6** is about as much as most players need to know, but I will add a few comments and moves for the thorough reader.

(see diagram top of next column)

This position is very double-edged. Black has a strong bishop on b7 and boasts good



POSITION AFTER 16. ... Qe6

central control, but their pawn structure on the queenside can become vulnerable. White has a few options to consider.

(b1) White's king will come under a strong attack after **17. 0-0? Rg8!** Black is not afraid to give up the h7-pawn!

(b2) A more critical try is **17. Qh5**, aiming to control the important f5-square. Black must be fast here and bring his king to the other side with **17. ... 0-0-0!**

In this position, White often plays the "human" **18. Bc2**, which allows **18. ... f5!** (although 18. ... Kb8!? is fine) giving up a pawn to pressure White before he can bring his king to safety. (Note that instead of 18. Bc2, 18. 0-0-0 is an engine option, although it is very unlikely that human players will allow the equalizing 18. ... Qxa2.)

After 18. Bc2 f5 White must be careful:



POSITION AFTER 18. ... f5

(b2a) An inferior capture is **19. Bxf5?! Nxf5 20. Qxf5 Qxf5 21. Nxf5 Bxg2**, when Black has reached a slightly better endgame due to a good bishop and potential in his central pawns.

(b2b) The slow **19. Bb3** allows **19. ... Qg6!** when Black is very active and has a lovely bishop on b7.

(b2c) White can capture with **19. Nxf5**, and now Black's point is **19. ... Ng6!** aiming for the strong f4-square. White can cover the g2-pawn with **20. Ne3 Nf4 21. Qf5 Bxg2!**, but Black will be fine in the upcoming endgame: The strong f4-knight will compensate for the doubled e-pawns. Note that Black must avoid 19. ... Bxg2??? due to 20. Nxe7+ Qxe7 21. Qg4+ when Black loses the g2-bishop.

c) The main try is **17. a4 Rd8!** when Black is planning to play ... e5-e4 to disturb the white bishop.



POSITION AFTER 17. ... Rd8

(c1) Breaking the pin with **18. Qe2** allows

SERGEI ZHIGALKO

Among the many heroes of the Sveshnikov Sicilian, one name reigns supreme ... if the MegaBase statistics are to be believed, in any case.

With 270 games in the database, GM Sergei Zhigalko is one of the most resolute top-level defenders of the variation. Hailing from Belarus, the 35-year old scores about 66% in the main lines of the Sveshnikov.



18. ... e4! 19. Bc2 b4!, when Black gives up a pawn to close down the position. Next is **20. cxb4 f5!** with unclear, although objectively equal, chances.

(c2) White can't avoid Black's e-pawn with **18. Qc2 e4! 19. Be2 f5!**, when Black still makes use of his pawns in the center and aims to disturb the e3-knight with ... f5-f4. Now for one final fork in the road:

(c2a) White's queenside play with **20. axb5** can be ignored, as **20. ... f4 21. bxa6 Bc6 22. Bc4 Qh6!** prepares to capture the e3-knight. If **23. Ng4 Qg5** prepares ... h7-h5 to trap the knight, although the position remains complex.

(c2b) Unclear is **20. g3 0-0** when Black will

give up the b5-pawn and play for activity with ... Ne7-g6 and ... f5-f4.

15. ... f5!?



This is the aggressive approach for Black.

The safer option is **15. ... dxe4**, leading to a marginally worse endgame for Black after **16. Bxe4 Bxe4 17. Qxe4 Qd5 18. Qxd5 Nxd5 19. 0-0-0 0-0-0**, when I wouldn't be too worried here even though White has a slight edge.

If White instead opts for **18. Qb4**, then **18. ... a5!?** (even **18. ... Qxg2!?** is playable, but scary) **19. Qb3 Qxb3 20. axb3 Kd7** is a perfectly fine endgame.

16. exf5

After the defensive **16. f3**, the endgame after **16. ... dxe4 17. fxe4 fxe4 18. Bxe4 Bxe4 19. Qxe4 Qd5** is similar to the one above, but with an equal position and good chances for Black to outplay their opponent.

Relying on the pin along the d-file with **16. 0-0-0** should not worry Black after **16. ... fxe4! 17. Bxe4 Qc7** when Black will castle long on the next move with a perfectly fine position and nice central pawns.

16. ... e4

It looks like the bishop is trapped on d3 and Black will win a piece. However, White has a tricky intermediate move!

17. f6! Nf5! 18. f3

It is very logical to try and break up the center.

The sharp **18. g4 Nh4!** leads to a complicated game. Black has occupied the center, but White will likely make use of the d4-square in the future.

18. ... Qxf6 19. 0-0

The obvious **19. fxe4** allows Black to make use of White's uncastled king with **19. ... Qh4+! 20. Qf2** (not **20. g3 Nxg3!** winning) **20. ... dxe4** when Black should have reasonable chances in a fairly complicated position.

19. ... Qb6+ 20. Rf2

If White invites repetition with **20. Kh1 Qh6 21. Kg1**, Black can either agree to the draw or play on with **21. ... Nd6!?** when the position stays complicated, but Black is not worse.

20. ... Nd6! 21. Nd4 0-0-0

The position is quite interesting due to the opposite-side castling. Black has the center, but White can be happy about the knight on d4. The next moves for Black could be ... Kc8-b8 and ... Rh8-e8. Black should aim to play dynamically with a timely ... e4-e3 or ... b5-b4, and prevent White from achieving a full blockade with **Bd3-c2-b3**, **Qe2-e3** and so on.

7. Nd5 – THE CARUANA LINE

1. e4 c5 2. Nf3 Nc6 3. d4 cxd4 4. Nxd4 Nf6 5. Nc3 e5 6. Ndb5 d6 7. Nd5 Nxd5 8. exd5 Nb8



I recommend this retreat. The knight will later go to d7, when it can aim for either the c5- or f6-squares. White will often try to expand on the queenside, whereas Black will try to stabilize the queenside and expand on the kingside. Black typically plays ... Bf8-e7 and castles, although sometimes we kick away the b5-knight away first.

The alternative is **8. ... Ne7**, but I am not a huge fan. The knight can often become misplaced on either f5 or g6. It must be said, however, that it is a viable option!

9. a4

Caruana popularized this way of playing in the 2018 match versus Carlsen. I find this the most critical continuation. White looks to retreat the knight to a3 and later bring it to c4, where it will be very well placed.

Alternatives include:

(a) A very aggressive and novel approach is **9. g4!?** aiming to control more kingside squares with the g-pawn. It's funny that Black can just play **9. ... Be7** and calmly develop just as if nothing special happened.



The normal **10. Be3** (instead *10. Rg1* is nothing special after *10. ... Nd7* when Black prepares ... a7-a6 and ... b7-b5 with counter-play) **10. ... a6! 11. Nc3 Bg5!** allows Black to exchange the bishops, after which he has absolutely no problems. Furthermore, Black has a potentially strong bishop on c8, as his central pawns are on dark squares.

(b) The awkward **9. Qf3** aims for either Qf3-a3 or Qf3-c3, with the point that **9. ... a6 10. Qa3!** pins the a6-pawn.



POSITION AFTER 10. Qa3

Black continues normally, but he should be aware that White is sitting on the critical **10. ... Be7** waiting to play (b1) **11. Bg5!**, preventing Black from castling. Allowing Nb5xd6+ is unacceptable, so Black cannot capture on g5 either. Instead, **11. ... f6 12. Bd2 0-0 13. Bb4 Qd7!** allows Black to again rely on tactics so that the d6-pawn cannot be captured. The position is complicated but equal after **14. 0-0-0** (worse is *14. Nxd6? a5! 15. Bc5 b6* when Black wins material) **14. ... Rd8!** when next up are ... b7-b6 and ... Bc8-b7, untangling.

The inferior (b2) **11. Bd2?!**, intending to play Bd2-b4, leaves White worse after **11. ... 0-0 12. Bb4?** (also bad, but tricky, is *12. Ba5? b6! 13. Bb4 Qd7!* when Black is better after this move and only this move) **12. ... axb5! 13. Qxa8 Na6** when White's queen is stuck! Retreating with **14. Bd2** (or *14. Bc3 Qb6* when Black will take the trapped queen on a8) **14. ... Bg5** leaves Black better in this complicated position, mainly because of White's misplaced queen on a8.

(c) White can also play **9. c4**, when Black prepares to castle with **9. ... Be7!** and White has two very different routes forward:



POSITION AFTER 9. ... Be7

(c1) White can try **10. c5**, which Black should decline with **10. ... 0-0!** achieving a good position. If White takes on d6 twice, they will end up with a potentially weak pawn on d5. Instead, **11. Bd3 a6!?** forces the issue more than using this square for the knight, which is probably also fine. Now **12. cxd6 Bxd6 13. Nxd6 Qxd6** equalizes. Black will play ... Nb8-d7-f6 with a solid position.

(c2) Instead, **10. Be2** prepares to castle. Play can continue **10. ... 0-0 11. 0-0 a6 12. Nc3 f5** when Black will follow up with ... Nb8-d7 next, and the position is double-edged. One example is **13. f4 Nd7!** preparing to recapture the e-pawn with the knight, leaving Black for choice.

9. ... Be7 10. Be2

White loses access to the a3-square after *10. a5*, because after *10. ... a6* the knight would prefer to head to the c4-square, but the a-pawn would hang after Nb5-a3. Black has no problems after *11. Nc3 0-0* and can follow up with the typical ... Nb8-d7 and ... f7-f5 idea.

Alternatively, there is nothing scary about *10. Be3 Nd7!* as the a7-pawn cannot currently be taken. Black can recapture with the rook, followed up by ... Qd8-a5+ ending up with two pieces for a rook. Either ... f7-f5 or ... a7-a6 are up next.

10. ... 0-0 11. 0-0 Nd7



This is the typical development for the knight, which will later go to f6 (after ... f7-f5) or c5.

12. Kh1

A critical position, where White has several options to consider.

(a) It is too early for White to push with **12. f4?!** due to the well-timed **12. ... a6! 13. Na3 b5!** when Black makes use of the a-file to open up the queenside. The pawn on b5 cannot be taken because of **14. axb5 axb5 15. Bxb5 Qb6+! 16. Kh1 Rxa3!** again leaving Black with two minor pieces for a rook, not to mention a winning position.

(b) Another try is **12. Bd2 a6 13. Na3 f5** and now:



POSITION AFTER 13. ... f5

(b1) **14. f4**, trying to limit Black's kingside expansion. Now **14. ... exf4 15. Bxf4** leaves Black with many good choices, but **15. ... Ne5** seems like the easiest. The position is equal with chances for both sides.

(b2) White can eye the b6-square with **14. Nc4**, but **14. ... b6** stops a4-a5. The position is dynamically equal, with good chances to outplay White.

(b3) The immediate **14. a5 e4** leads to a double-edged position after the impending ... Nd7-e5. Black is even willing to double his pawns with **15. Nc4 Ne5**, aiming for a kingside attack!

(c) The recent trend is to play **12. b4**, and for good reason. Black must play precisely here, and there is no easy solution. I suggest **12. ... a6 13. Na3 b6!?** since White's idea was to play Na3-c4 followed by a4-a5. With this move, we try to hinder that plan.



POSITION AFTER 13. ... b6

c1) Again, **14. f4 exf4 15. Bxf4 Ne5** allows Black to establish his knight on the protected e5-square. Black will follow up with ... Bc8-d7 and the position remains double-edged.

c2) If White plays **14. Nc4**, we stop the a4-a5 idea physically by playing **14. ... a5!** ourselves. We continue:

(c2a) The less-forcing **15. b5** leads to a semi-closed position. Black can expand on the kingside and make use of the c5-square later in the game after **15. ... f5 16. f4 Qc7!** when Black should be doing fine, although the game remains complicated. The important thing to remember is **17. fxe5 Nxe5!** rather than recapturing with the d-pawn.

(c2b) Capturing with **15. bxa5 bxa5 16. Bd2** allows White to target the a5-pawn immediately. Luckily, Black has an adequate reply in **16. ... Bb7**. Now White has two final tries:

(c2b1) The slow **17. Qe1 Bxd5 18. Bxa5 Qc8** removes the d5-pawn, and so Black should no longer be worried.

(c2b2) The tricky **17. Rb1!** is resoundingly met by **17. ... Ba6!!** (Black should avoid **17. ... Bxd5? 18. Bxa5** when he is in trouble) and Black is fine. If White takes the a5-pawn, he will run into coordination problems. After **18. Qe1** (not **18. Bxa5? Qc8!** with loose pieces everywhere) **18. ... Bxc4! 19. Bxc4 Bg5**, Black gives up the bishop, but mainly because he can also aim for a trade of the dark-squared bishops. Black is without worry, and he can play for an advantage if the dark-squared bishops get traded.

12. ... a6 13. Na3 f5 14. f4



With this move, White tries to stop Black's expansion on the kingside. Black should be precise to maintain equality.

After 14. Nc4 Black has a variety of options, including a continued kingside expansion with 14. ... f4, which makes for an unclear battle. The more positional 14. ... a5 goes for ... b7-b6 next to stabilize the queenside.

14. ... exf4! 15. Bxf4 Nc5 16. Nc4 a5!

Black stabilizes the knight on c5 by avoiding a potential b2-b4. Black will play ... b7-b6 next, with an equal but unbalanced position.

9. Bxf6

1. e4 c5 2. Nf3 Nc6 3. d4 cxd4 4. Nxd4 Nf6 5. Nc3 e5 6. Ndb5 d6 7. Bg5 a6 8. Na3 b5 9. Bxf6 gxf6 10. Nd5

We have reached another one of the main lines of the Sveshnikov. Black has the pair of bishops, but the weakened structure can soon turn into a problem. It is important to act quickly, especially before White has time to reposition the a3-knight.

10. ... f5



The main alternative is 10. ... Bg7, but I find Black's task slightly harder here.

11. Bd3

White prepares to capture the f5-pawn, which is now defended by the bishop. Black must play precisely here and target the d5-knight. White has other options as well, including some piece sacrifices worth familiarizing yourself with:

(a) White can sac a piece with **11. Bxb5** to reach the c7-square with a knight, but it is by no means decisive. Black must remember **11. ... axb5 12. Nxb5 Ra4!** removing the rook from a8 as well as aiming for counterplay.



POSITION AFTER 12. ... Ra4

(a1) Now, **13. Nbc7+ Kd7 14. 0-0 Rxe4** leads to a fairly forcing line, but the play remains unbalanced. With **15. Qh5 Qh4! 16. Qxf7+ Be7 17. Nxe7 Nxe7 18. Nd5 Kd8!** Black will likely sacrifice his rook for the strong d5-knight, but will remain ahead with two minor pieces for the rook. The position is complicated, and one sample line goes **19. g3 Rg4! 20. Nf6 Qh6!** giving up the Exchange but aiming to achieve piece coordination where the minor pieces can outclass the rooks.

(a2) Alternatively, **13. b4 Rxb4 14. Nbc7+ Kd7 15. 0-0 Qh4!** is powerful, stopping White's ideas of Qd1-h5 and preparing to give up the queen for three minor pieces. Best is **16. g3** (not **16. Nxb4? Nxb4** with a great position for Black) **16. ... Qxe4!? 17. c3!** (not **17. Nf6+? Kxc7 18. Nxe4 Rxe4** when Black is much better) **17. ... Rb7 18. Nf6+ Kxc7 19. Nxe4 fxe4** when the position is unclear, but

I prefer the pieces to the queen.

(b) The immediate **11. exf5 Bxf5 12. c3** transposes to 11. c3. (Note that while **12. Qf3?** looks tempting for White, he will regret it immensely after **12. ... Nd4!** when Black is much better.)

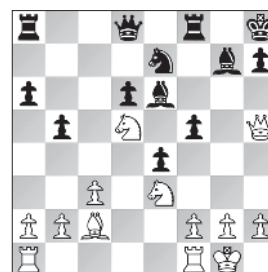
(c) The harmless-looking **11. g3** gives White a clear plan of controlling the light squares. After **11. ... fxe4 12. Bg2 Be6!** Black avoids trouble on the long diagonal thanks to this precise move order. White regains the e-pawn with **13. Bxe4 Rc8** but now that the c6-knight is defended, Black can follow up with ... Bf8-g7 next, followed by exchanging knights with ... Nc6-e7 and earning a solid position.

(d) One of White's major setups (along with our main move) is **11. c3 Bg7 12. exf5 Bxf5 13. Nc2 0-0 14. Nce3 Be6 15. Bd3** with Qd1-h5 to follow, trying to control the kingside. Black must play **15. ... f5!** otherwise White will clamp down on the light squares.



POSITION AFTER 15. ... f5

Black's position makes sense after **16. 0-0** (now **16. Qh5 e4** is powerful) **16. ... Kh8!**, as it is often hard to touch the king on a dark square and Black can make use of the half open g-file with a timely ... Rf8-g8. After **17. Qh5 e4 18. Bc2** Black should play the solid **18. ... Ne7** (or **18. ... Ne5!?**, trying to keep more pieces on) preparing to exchange the knights.



POSITION AFTER 18. ... Ne7

Here White has some control in blocking the d6-pawn, but Black has the bishop pair and dynamic central pawns. Now there is a fork in the road:

d1) White can improve the a-rook with **19. Rad1** when Black's easiest option is **19. ... Bf7! 20. Qh3 Nxd5 21. Nxd5 Qg5!** with an equal position. Black has a somewhat weak

pawn on d6, but it can be protected nicely by the dark-squared bishop. Now **22. Qe3 Qxe3** (or 22. ... Qh4!? remaining balanced) **23. fxe3 Bxd5 24. Rxd5 Be5** leaves Black with a very solid bishop on e5 and clear plans of ... Rf8-f6 and ... Kh8-g7 to follow.

d2) Inferior is **19. Rfd1! Nxd5 20. Nxd5 Be5!** when Black has a very nice bishop on e5, anchored by the d6-pawn. When the rook is no longer on f1, Black does not have to worry about f2-f4 ideas.

11. ... Be6! 12. c3

As always, alternatives exist.

(a) White should avoid opening up the game too early with **12. c4?!**, mainly because of an annoying check: **12. ... Qa5+** and Black takes over the initiative.

(b) Also mistimed is **12. Qh5 Rg8!** when Black develops the rook with tempo because of the vulnerable pawn on g2.

(c) The straightforward **12. 0-0** leads to an interesting pawn sac with **12. ... Bxd5 13. exd5 Ne7** when Black will play ... Bf8-g7 and castle next, even after **14. Nxb5** when the knight is untouchable. Black is happy to continue with **14. ... Bg7! 15. Nc3 e4** with compensation for the pawn due to the superior g7-bishop and strong central control.

12. ... Bg7

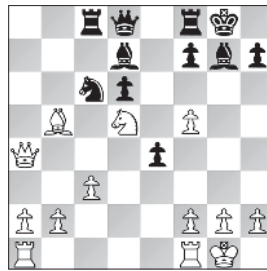


13. Qh5

A famous piece sac begins with **13. Nxb5!?** where White will gain three pawns for the piece. Black should not worry, however; this can be solved with a few precise moves after **13. ... axb5 14. Bxb5 Rc8! 15. Qa4 Bd7 16. exf5 0-0 17. 0-0** when the point is **17. ... e4!** sacrificing another pawn for activity. The extra piece will eventually prove definitive. Two lines:

(see diagram top of next column)

(a) If White captures with **18. Qxe4** then there is **18. ... Re8!** with the point that Black's rook is going for the e5-square, where it will help regain the f5-pawn and target the knight on d5. Black is for choice.



POSITION AFTER 17. ... e4

(b) The slower **18. Rfe1** allows **18. ... Ne5!** with a very complicated position after **19. Bxd7 Nxd7!** when Black will exchange the knights with ... Nd7-f6 next. The position is quite unclear, but Black has a nice bishop on g7 to protect his king, as well as a plan to break open the position with ... d6-d5-d4 coming later.

13. ... 0-0

Now follows a sequence of forced moves that will lead to a perfectly playable position for Black.

14. exf5

Remember that 14. 0-0 f4! is the way to go, closing down the bishop on d3. Black has plans of going ... Kg8-h8, as well as ... Rf8-g8 to make use of the g-file.

14. ... Bxd5 15. f6 e4! 16. fxg7

Black is much better after 16. Qxd5 exd3 because White's king is still in the center.

16. ... Re8!

We are using the g7-pawn as a shield for our king.

17. Be2

There is no time for 17. Qxd5? due to 17. ... exd3+ when we can keep White's king in the center with a winning position for Black.

17. ... Ne5 18. 0-0 Qf6

Black is definitely not worse in this unbalanced position, with many active pieces to compensate for the potential pawn weaknesses.

MOVE 5 & 6 SIDELINES

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

(see diagram top of next column)

Before moving on to the sixth-move alternatives, we can consider alternatives on move five:

(a) After the unforced **5. Nxc6**, Black



POSITION AFTER 4. ... Nf6

should recapture towards the center with **5. ... bxc6**. After (a1) **6. Bd3** Black has the

MAGNUS CARLSEN

The Sveshnikov has long been a key weapon for GM Magnus Carlsen.

After successfully defending the Sveshnikov against GM Fabiano Caruana in their 2018 World Championship match, it became one of his first-rank defenses against 1. e4 in the following years. There is even a Chessable course devoted to his interpretation of the opening!



luxury option of either playing a Dragon setup or sticking with the Sveshnikov spirit. The latter would be most consistent, so I recommend **6. ... e5** with ... Bf8-e7 and castling to follow.

Remember that White cannot play (a2) **6. e5??** because of **6. ... Qa5+!** picking up the pawn. Instead, the logical (a3) **6. Nc3 e5** transposes to the above line after 5. Nc3 e5 6. Nxc6.

(b) A slightly tricky idea is **5. f3** with the point that now ... e7-e5 is not Black's best reply! To wit: 5. ... e5?! 6. Nb5! leads to an undesirable Maróczy Bind structure after c2-c4, gripping the light squares.

Instead, Black should play **5. ... d5!** aiming for a direct attack on the center due to

the soft f2-f3 move. Black has no problems regardless of White's next move.

(b1) Pointless is **6. Nc3 dxe4!** when Black has no problems in the upcoming endgame.

(b2) Black is simply better after **6. Nxc6 bxc6** because of his strong center.

(b3) Black still has no problems after **6. exd5 Qxd5 7. Nxc6** (Black can avoid the fork threat of 7. Nb5 with 7. ... Qxd1+ 8. Kxd1 Rb8! with better development) **7. ... Qxc6 8. Nc3 a6!** when Black is for choice, mainly because the f2-f3 move has weakened White's king.

5. Nc3 e5



6. Nxc6

This move is fundamentally not sound, as it helps Black capture towards the center with his b-pawn. However, I have seen many players turn to this option to avoid the theory of the main line, so it will be our "main line" here.

Let's consider the alternatives:

(a) The dubious **6. Nf5** is met by **6. ... d5!**, which Black must remember. White has no path to an advantage:

(a1) The immediate **7. Nxd5? Nxe4** allows Black to take over the initiative.

(a2) It might seem logical to fight for the center with **7. Bg5?** but this leads to a very bad position! Black is crushing after **7. ... d4! 8. Bxf6 gxf6** with dominance in the center.

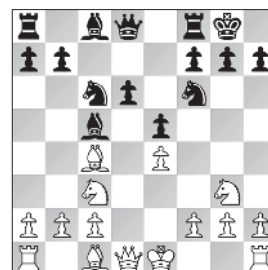
(a3) Best is **7. exd5 Bxf5 8. dxc6 Qxd1+ 9. Nxd1 bxc6** reaching an equal endgame with chances for both sides.

(b) While **6. Nb3?!** is thematic in many Sicilian lines, this is not a great square for the knight here. Black will quickly take over the initiative with **6. ... Bb4!**, threatening the pawn on e4 due to the pin. The awkward **7. Bd3 d5!** proves that Black is in time to break effectively in the center with a better position. Play could follow **8. exd5 Nxd5 9. Bd2 Nxc3 10. bxc3 Be7** with no weaknesses to speak of.

(c) Retreating with **6. Nf3?!** is rarely optimal in such an early stage of the game. Again, Black takes the initiative with **6. ... Bb4 7. Bd3 Bxc3+!** (or 7. ... d5 is perfectly fine as well) **8. bxc3 d6** when Black enjoys the better position because of the White's

fractured pawn structure.

(d) Surprising as it may seem, **6. Nde2** is the best of White's sixth-move sidelines! The idea is to put the knight on g3 and develop harmoniously. Black should play **6. ... Bc5** as it would no longer be great on b4 since the knight on c3 is now defended by the knight on e2. Once Black commits to placing the bishop here, White can play **7. Ng3 0-0 (d1) 8. Bc4 d6** and, for most players, knowing this much should be sufficient for a fine game.



POSITION AFTER 8. ... d6

To give a little more detail: **9. 0-0 a6!? 10. Bg5** is a typical idea, giving up the bishop for the f6-knight in order to strengthen the control of the d5-square. But Black is doing fine with **10. ... h6! 11. Bxf6 Qxf6 12. Nd5 Qd8** with a double-edged position. White has good control of the d5-square, but Black has the pair of bishops and might follow up with ideas such as ... g7-g6 followed by ... Kg8-g7 and ... Bc8-e6, consolidating.

If White tries the less active (d2) **8. Be2**, this allows **8. ... Bb4!** now that the knight has left e2. Black wants to destroy White's pawn structure, and the position is roughly equal.

6. ... bxc6! 7. Bc4

Abandoning the b2-pawn with 7. Bg5 turns out to be a problem after 7. ... h6! 8. Bh4 Rb8! when Black is better because White cannot defend the b2-pawn in a natural way.

7. ... Bb4

Black will castle next with zero problems and a preferable position.

BY WAY OF CONCLUSION

IM Robert Shlyakhtenko has recently made an excellent case in these pages for the need to study complete games to understand a variation. To that end, I have collected 25 games that will help you understand the Sveshnikov. You can find these games in a LiChess study at lichess.org/study/7xy7uqBq or at lichess.org/study/by/ChessLifeOnline. Good luck with the Sveshnikov! ♠



FABIANO CARUANA

After some early dalliances with the opening, GM Fabiano Caruana transformed the theory of the Sveshnikov with the shift to 7. Nd5 in his 2018 match with GM Magnus Carlsen.

Having spent many hours studying the opening, he adopted it with Black after the match, and today Caruana regularly defends the Sveshnikov, particularly in online events.

MAKE YOUR MOVE

BY **FM CARSTEN HANSEN**

THIS MONTH'S PUZZLES ARE TAKEN FROM VARIOUS OVER-the-board events played in May 2024.

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

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

TACTIC 1.



BLACK TO MOVE

TACTIC 2.



BLACK TO MOVE

TACTIC 3.



WHITE TO MOVE

TACTIC 4.



WHITE TO MOVE

TACTIC 5.



WHITE TO MOVE

TACTIC 6.



WHITE TO MOVE

TACTIC 7.



WHITE TO MOVE

TACTIC 8.



WHITE TO MOVE

TACTIC 9.



WHITE TO MOVE

Position 1: LOOSE PIECES...

Position 2: MAKING INVESTMENTS

Position 3: LOOSE PIECES, WEAKNESSES

Position 4: INSUFFICIENT DEFENDERS

Position 5: THE KOOL-AID MAN

Position 6: FINDING THE WAY THROUGH

Position 7: CLEAR THE PATH

Position 8: REMOVE THE DOOR HINGES

Position 9: LOCATE THE FIRE

Sharjah Binks

You don't need to be a Jedi to learn from these games.

BY GM JOEL BENJAMIN

G

RANDMASTER TOURNAMENTS will always offer up endgame education.

While most GMs are combing the latest tournaments for opening ideas, I'm on the lookout for tasty endgames. The Sharjah Masters provided some nice instructive material.

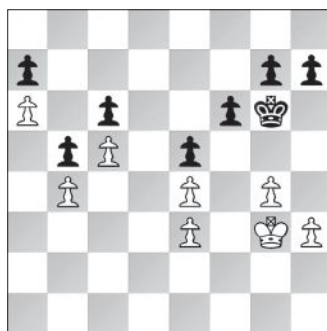
Our appetizer is an all-American battle in a pawn ending. Sam Shankland used a fatal error from Hans Niemann to springboard into a tie for first place.

PICK A KING MOVE, ANY KING MOVE

GM Hans Niemann (2689)

GM Sam Shankland (2671)

7th Sharjah Masters (7), 05.20.2024



WHITE TO MOVE

32. h4??

Was this a naive winning attempt? White can draw with any king move.

For example, White can play 32. Kh4 Kh6 33. Kg3 Kg5 34. h4+ (now the pawn can advance) 34. ... Kg6 35. h5+! (this move is obligatory!) 35. ... Kg5 36. Kh3 g6 37. hxg6 hxg6 38. Kg3 f5 39. gxf5 gxf5 40. Kf3 (White could also enter a queen ending after 40. exf5 Kxf5 41. Kf3 e4+ 42. Kg3 Ke5 43. Kg4 Kd5

44. Kf5 Kc4 45. Ke6! Kxb4 46. Kd6 Ka5 47. Kxc6 b4 48. Kd6 b3 49. c6 b2 50. c7 b1=Q 51. c8=Q Qd3+ 52. Ke5 Qxe3 53. Qc7+ and Black has no winning chances at all) 40. ... f4 41. exf4+ exf4 42. Ke2 Kf6 43. Kf2! Ke6 44. Ke2 with a standstill.

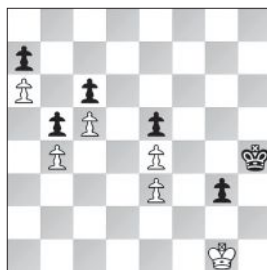
White can wait with his king as well, so no activity is required. After 32. Kg2 Kg5 33. Kg3 h5 34. gxh5 Kxh5 35. Kf3 (White has to continue to avoid pushing the pawn to h4) 35...Kh4 36. Kg2 g6 37. Kh2 g5 (37. ... f5 38. exf5 gxf5 gives White an outside passed pawn so there's nothing to play for there) 38. Kg2 g4 39. hxg4 Kxg4 40. Kf2 Black cannot make progress. He can force the queen ending that we have already seen is drawn.

32. ... h5 33. Kh3 Kh6!

This tempo move is surprisingly critical, as after 33. ... hxg4+? 34. Kxg4 Kh6 (34. ... Kf7 35. Kh5 and wins) 35. Kf5 White runs to the c6-pawn and wins.

34. Kg3 hxg4 35. Kxg4 g6 36. h5

Desperation. But Black is on the verge of an outside passed pawn, which will win with a bit of finesse: 36. Kg3 Kh5 37. Kh3 g5 38. hxg5 fxg5 39. Kg3 g4 40. Kg2 Kh4 41. Kh2 g3+ 42. Kg1



POSITION AFTER 42. Kg1

Black only has to "know something about triangles" — after 42. ... Kg5 43. Kh1 Kh5 44. Kg1 Kh4 White is on move and fatally

zugged: 45. Kh1 (45. Kg2 Kg4) 45. ... Kh3 46. Kg1 g2, etc.

36. ... gxh5+

Here 36. ... g5? 37. Kf5 Kxh5 38. Ke6 g4 39. Kd7 g3 40. Kxc6 g2 41. Kb7 g1=Q 42. Kxa7! unnecessarily complicates matters, requiring highly accurate play to win.

37. Kf5 Kg7 38. Ke6 h4 39. Kd6 h3 40.

Kxc6 h2 41. Kb7 h1=Q 42. Kxa7 Qxe4 43.

Kb8 Qxb4 44. c6 Qc5 45. Kb7 b4 46. a7

Qb5+, White resigned.

After 47. Kc7 Qa6 Black will scoop up White's pawns.

Our main course is almost two endgames in one: first, a flurry of promotion tactics, then a clinic on queen and pawn versus queen.

TACTICS AND TECHNIQUE

GM Abhimanyu Puranik (2631)

GM M. Amin Tabatabaei (2707)

7th Sharjah Masters (5), 05.18.2024



BLACK TO MOVE

50. ... Ne6

Objectively correct is 50. ... Kg6 51. Ng4 Ne6, preserving a substantial advantage.

51. Nxf5?

It is certainly more natural to capture with the knight, which has been itching to re-enter the fray. But 51. Bxf5 does not allow a tactical response. I'm not sure what Black had in mind here. On 51. ... Nxf4 White can capture either minor piece, while 51. ... a3 52. Bxa3 (52. Bb1 also holds) 52. ... Bxf4+ 53. Kf2 Bxh6 54. Bxe6 Bxe6 55. Bxc5 leaves Black without any pawns.

51. ... Bxf4+! 52. Bxf4 Nxf4 53. Nd6

White tries to complicate. Here 53. Kxf4 a3! recovers the piece while the a-pawn remains a deadly threat. After (a) 54. Bb3 Bxf5 55. Ba2 Bh7 continual zugzwangs will open a decisive path for Black's king, while (b) 54. Nd4! is a

bit trickier but Black wins without problems, e.g. 54. ... cxd4 55. Bb3 Bc6 56. c5 Ke7 57. Bc4 (or 57. Ke5 Ba4! 58. Kxd4 Bxb3 59. Kc3 Bd1) 57. ... Kd7 58. Ba2 Kc7 59. Bb3 Bh1 60. Ke5 d3 61. Kd4 Bd5! forcing a queen.



53. ... Ke5

This move is good enough but allows White to resist for a long time. A good rule of thumb is to start with possibilities that aim to queen the pawn immediately: 53. ... a3! scores a touchdown. After 54. Ne4+ Ke5 55. Nxc5 a2 56. Nb3 Ne2+ 57. Kf2 Nd4 58. Na1 Nxc2 59. Nxc2 Ba4 60. Na1 Kd4 the king walks all the way to a1. Black can also start with 53. ... Ne2+.

54. Nf7+ Kd4 55. Kxf4

Or 55. Bxa4 Nh5+! 56. Kh4 Bxa4 57. Kxh5 (White can drag things out with 57. Nd8 and sacrificing his knight for the last pawn, but presumably Black would execute checkmate with a knight and bishop) 57. ... Be8! with a queen to follow.

55. ... a3 56. Bb1 Kc3 57. Nd6!

On 57. Ne5 Black has several wins, like 57. ... Ba4 58. Nd3 Bc2.

57. ... Kb2 58. Nb5!



Puranik finds an ingenious resource. Unfortunately for him, Tabatabaei's technique in the ensuing queen ending is flawless.

58. ... Bxb5 59. cxb5 Kxb1 60. b6 a2 61. b7 a1=Q 62. b8=Q+ Kc2

White's king is in a particularly bad location,

impeding White's queen while being vulnerable to liquidating crosschecks.

63. Kg3 c4 64. Qb7 Qc3+ 65. Kh4 Qd4+ 66. Kh3 Qe3+ 67. Kh4 Qh6+ 68. Kg4 Qg6+ 69. Kh4 c3

There is a lovely geometry in Black's play. The queen restricts White's checking options.

70. Qb4 Qh7+ 71. Kg4 Qg8+ 72. Kh4 Qd5

73. Qa4+ Kc1 74. Qf4+ Qd2 75. Qe5 Qd3 Here 75. ... c2?? 76. Qa1 mate would qualify as really bad technique.

76. Qf4+ Qd2 77. Qe5 Qh6+ 78. Kg3 Qg6+

79. Kh4 Qh7+ 80. Kg4 Qd3 81. Qf4+ Kd1 Note that an extra check forced White's king onto a check-killing square.

82. Kh4 c2 83. Qg4+ Kc1 84. Qb4

Otherwise the king comes to the short side: 84. Qf4+ Kb2 85. Qb4+ Qb3 86. Qd4+ Qc3 87. Qb6+ Ka3 88. Qa7+ Kb3 and the only remaining checks will bounce.

84. ... Qh7+ 85. Kg4 Qd7+ 86. Kg3 Kd1

87. Qb3 Qg7+ 88. Kh3 Qh7+ 89. Kg3 Qe4

90. Kh3 Kd2 91. Qa2 Qe5 92. Kh4 Qb5,

White resigned.

Black forces promotion with 93. ... Kd1.

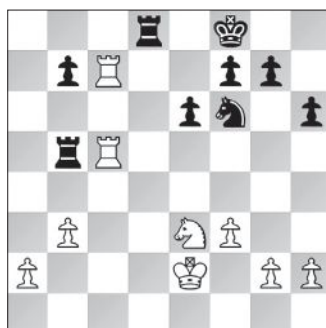
KNIGHT GAME OR KING GAME

GM Panneerselvam Iniyan (2497)

GM Pouya Idani (2605)

7th Sharjah Masters 2024 (1),

05.14.2024



BLACK TO MOVE

And now for dessert. Here White's queen-side majority grows in value with each exchange, so Black's cooperation in trading is a bit surprising.

29. ... Rxc5?!

It's true that 29. ... Rb4 may look a bit awkward, but the b-pawn remains secure, and White's rooks don't coordinate that well.

30. Rxc5 Ke7?! 31. Rc7+ Rd7 32. Rxd7+ Kxd7 33. a4 Kc6 34. Kd3 Nd7 35. Nc4 f6 36. b4?!

This inaccuracy coughs up White's edge. Objectively stronger was 36. Ne3.

36. ... h5 37. Kd4 b5! 38. axb5+ Kxb5

39. Kc3 e5?

Another puzzling decision leaves Black's pawns subject to attack. After 39. ... Kc6 White is hard-pressed to make progress with his king tied down and the b-pawn a bit too vulnerable.

40. Nd6+ Kc6 41. Nf5 g5 42. Kd3 Nb6

43. Ng7 h4 44. Ke4 Kd7??

Black falls off the slippery slope of trading. He needed an accurate move to secure sufficient counterplay. Correct was 44. ... Nd5! and now:

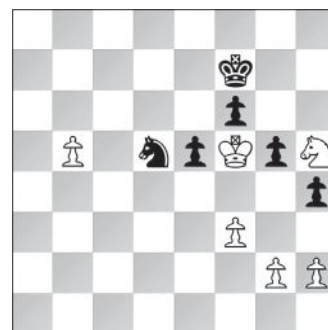
(a) 45. b5+ Kd6 46. Kf5 (46. Nf5+ Ke6 keeps hold of the d5-knight) 46. ... Ne3+ 47. Kxf6 g4! 48. h3 (not 48. Nf5+?? Nxf5 49. Kxf5 h3) 48. ... Nxg2! 49. hxg4 Ne3! and Black has enough activity, e.g. 50. Kg5 (not 50. g5? h3 51. Nh5 Nf1! queening the h-pawn!) 50. ... h3 51. Ne8+ Kc5 52. Nf6 h2 53. Ne4+ Kxb5 54. Nf2 Kc4 55. Kh4 Kd4 56. Kg3 Nf1+ 57. Kg2 Nd2 with equality.

(b) After 45. Nh5 Nxb4 46. Nxf6 Kd6 47. Nh7 Ke6 48. Nxg5+ Kf6 49. Nh3 Na6 50. Nf2 Nc5+ 51. Kd5 Ne6 White doesn't seem to have enough ammunition to win.

45. Kf5 Nd5 46. Nh5 Ke7

There's no refuge to be found in 46. ... Nxb4 as 47. Nxf6+ Ke7 48. Ng4 coughs up too many pawns.

47. b5 Kf7



48. Nxf6! Nxf6 49. b6 h3, and Black resigned.

Black resigned without waiting for a reply. The finish could have been 50. g4 Nd7 51. b7 Ke7 52. Kxg5 Kd8 53. Kf5 Kc7 54. g5 Kd8 55. Kg4 Kc7 56. g6 Nf6+ 57. Kf5 Nh5 58. Kxe5 Kxb7 59. Kd6! Kc8 60. Ke7 and the pawns are unstoppable. ♠

Mighty Maróczy

The underappreciated Hungarian great gets his due.

BY IM JOHN WATSON

W

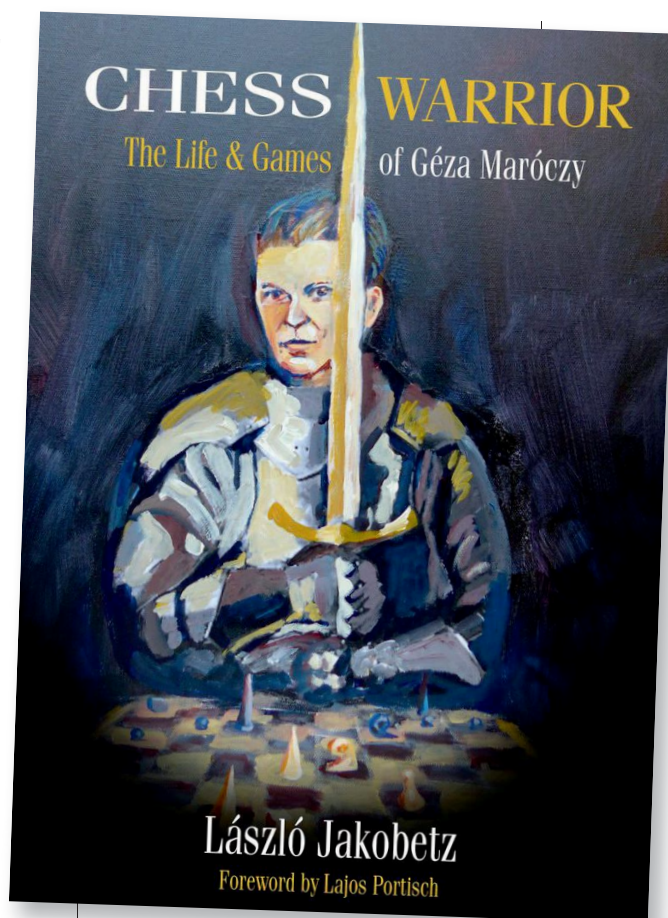
HEN I FIRST BECAME an avid fan of chess history, I was struck by the relative obscurity of the

great Hungarian player Geza Maróczy. His successes and longevity stood out from almost all of his contemporaries and, with Lasker playing infrequently during much of the first decade of the 20th century, you could make a case for Maróczy being the best (or at any rate most successful) player in the world.

Jeff Sonas's wonderful Chessmetrics site, which generates historical ratings, may have its limitations when comparing players from era to era, but for comparing contemporaries it's very revealing. In Sonas's 2005 update of the site, Maróczy is listed as the world's highest ranked player at the end of 1906, and he is listed 11th all-time in Peak Average Rating for periods of one, two, and three (1905-1907) years. Sonas places him 14th in Peak Average Rating for 10 years (1900-1909), all ahead of numerous World Champions and legends of the game.

To be sure, these ratings do not necessarily translate into an assessment of a player's greatness — and Sonas's earlier lists had Maróczy placed lower — but they indicate how amazingly successful the Hungarian was. As an indication of longevity, Sonas has Maróczy in the all-time top-10 rating lists for players of every age from 60 through 68. This places him in the company of Smyslov, Lasker, Korchnoi, Reshevsky and other famously enduring stars.

This is one of the reasons that, when asked in various interviews about what chess books I'd like to see written, I'd always mention a biography of Maróczy in English. Now



László Jakobetz, a Hungarian FIDE master, chess coach, historian, and prolific author ("25 volumes and over 1000 articles"), has fulfilled my wish with *Chess Warrior: The Life and Games of Geza Maróczy*.

Jakobetz begins with a detailed history of the families of Maróczy and his wife, Magdolna Irén Mann, and then proceeds to Maróczy's work life outside of chess. Maróczy was never a full-time chess player (Jakobetz calls him a "semi-professional") and had an extraordinary number of jobs:

technical draftsman, assistant engineer, manager at the Municipal Engineering Office of Budapest.

Throughout his period of peak chess accomplishments (1903-1908), he was a mathematics professor at the Municipal Boys' School in Budapest. During "retirement" from chess from 1909 to 1919 (when he played quite rarely), Maróczy had a variety of jobs in The National Workers' Accident Assistance and Insurance Fund. At various times, Maróczy also ran for office, worked for financial firms, was active in musical circles, and invented the "Maróczy System" in contract bridge.

But the bulk of the book naturally focuses on his chess career. Maróczy learned the moves at the ripe old age of 14 and quickly proceeded to improve to the extent that he surpassed all his local competition and enjoyed winning blindfold games against his classmates. After some time playing in cafes, he began to

beat the best Hungarian players. As time went on, his problem was a lack of the competition needed to improve.

A fortuitous invitation to, and victory in, the Hastings Challengers tournament in 1895 (at age 25, his first foreign event and trip) won the attention of leading players and got him into the powerful 1896 tournament at Nuremberg. There the virtually unknown Hungarian burst onto the international scene with a second-place finish to Lasker, ahead of Pillsbury, Tarrasch, Steinitz,

Janowski, Schlechter, Chigorin, and many other stars of the game.

Still only an occasional tournament player with a day job, he had to beg for time off to go to international events, finishing tied for second in the 1899 City of London tournament, tied for first (with Pillsbury and Schlechter) in Munich 1900, and tied for first in the 1902 Monte Carlo supertournament. These results against the best players of the world magnified his reputation, and introduced an eight-year string of spectacular results. The high point was arguably his 1905 win in a supertournament in Ostende by 1½ points, followed by another first in Barmen, after which a world championship match with Lasker began to look inevitable.

Indeed, Maróczy was invited to the United States in large part to discuss the details of such a match with Lasker himself. Not surprisingly, the book gives considerable coverage to the match negotiations; first, the agreement itself and then, following Maróczy's return to Europe, a breakdown due to disagreements on various details, ultimately leading to its cancellation.

As it happened, Lasker ended up playing matches against Marshall and Janowski, two players against whom Maróczy had large plus scores, as well as Tarrasch (against whom he had a slight plus) and Schlechter (who had an even score). To be sure, Lasker himself had a solid plus score against Maróczy and certainly would have been the favorite in a match, but none of their games were played in Maróczy's dominant period of 1901-1909, and I suspect the match would have been quite competitive.

After the Lasker match was definitively canceled, Maróczy announced his "retirement" in 1909 and played very little for the next decade. The second part of his active chess career began in 1920 at age 50, in exile from Hungary for political reasons. Maróczy enjoyed considerable success throughout the 1920s, although obviously not at the level of two decades before.

But the achievements which made him most proud were as coach and trainer for the Hungarian national team. Hungary won the very first Olympiad in 1927 in London with the 57-year-old Maróczy acting as team captain and scoring 75%. In 1928, Hungary won the second Olympiad over the U.S. team, and in 1930 in Hamburg, the Hungarians finished second to the Polish team. Taking his career as a whole, Geza Maróczy could legitimately be called the greatest Hungarian chess player ever, although depending on the criteria used, you could make the case for Lajos Portisch or Judit Polgar (and

László Szabó and Peter Leko are certainly high on the list).

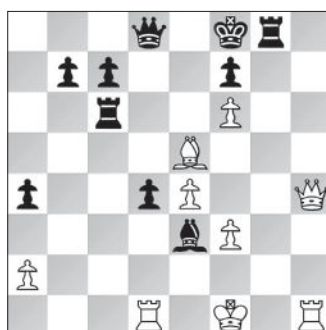
Maróczy had a reputation as a positional player, but could trade blows with the best of them. He had many exciting battles over three decades with the attacking master David Janowski, typified by this conclusion to a wild game in time pressure:

GOOD AND BETTER

David Janowski

Geza Maróczy

DSB Kongress, Munich, 1900



BLACK TO MOVE

33. ... Rc2

Practical and good. But it turns out that 33. ... Qa8! first is better still, threatening ... Qa8-a6+, because 34. Qe1 Qa6+ 35. Qe2 Rxf6!! 36. Bxf6 Qxf6 threatens ... Qf6-f4 and ... Rg8-g3, which cannot be defended against. Not easy to play with little time, of course.

34. Bxd4!?

With 34. Qe1 Ke8 35. Qb4 White holds out longer, but 35. ... Qd7! threatening ... Qd7-h3+!! will win.

34. ... Qa8

This appears to win immediately, threatening ... Qa8-a6+.

35. Rd3?

Amazingly, the engine move 35. Ba7! holds for a while. Black can still win, but only by 35. ... b6!! (not 35. ... Qxa7?? 36. Rd8 mate; nor 35. ... Bxa7 36. Qh6+ Ke8 37. Qg5!! when White wins) 36. Rd3 Bg5 37. Qh8! Rc1+ 38. Kf2 Rxh1 39. Qxh1 Bxf6, etc.

35. ... Qa6!, White resigned.

Mate follows shortly.

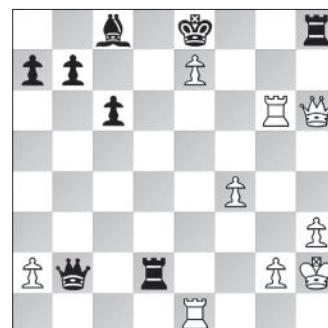
Here's the finish to another tactical slugfest. Find the only winning move for White in this position:

KA-POW!

Geza Maróczy

Massimiliano Romi

San Remo, 1930



WHITE TO MOVE

Maróczy seems to be in trouble, but had anticipated this position arising and played:

41. Qh5!! Rxd2+

Naturally if 41. ... Rxh5 42. Rg8+ Kd7 43. e8=Q+ Kc7 44. Qxh5! wins.

42. Rxd2+ Rxd2 43. Rxb2 Rxd2+ 44. Kg1 Rh7 45. Rh2 Rg7+ 46. Kf2 Rg8

If 46. ... Rxe7 47. Rh8+ Kd7 48. Rxe7+ Kxe7 49. Rxc8.

47. Rh6 Kf7 48. e8=Q+ Rxe8 49. Rh7+, Black resigned.

Jakobetz's biography is a very welcome tribute to this important player. He annotates 182 games and includes over 250 photographs, while providing crosstables for nearly every event and a table of results for every tournament, match, and simultaneous exhibition Maróczy participated in. The book provides an overview of Hungarian culture and current events throughout, which will be a bonus for those interested in Hungary's struggles and perseverance through two World Wars.

Personally I found *Chess Warrior, the Life and Games of Geza Maróczy* fascinating. I highly recommend it, although I realize that it will mainly appeal to a fairly specialized audience, i.e., fans of chess history and players who enjoy games collections. In any case, László Jakobetz and Russell Enterprises deserve our thanks for this important contribution to chess literature. ♠

Jakobetz, László. Chess Warrior: The Life & Games of Geza Maróczy. Milford: Russell Enterprises, 2024. ISBN 9781949859935. HB, 400pp. (Available at uscfsales.com, product code B0156RE, \$39.95)

Classically Classic

Twice the rook sacrifices, twice the fun!

BY **BRUCE PANDOLFINI**

S

OME THINGS IN CHESS ARE classical, others merely classic. For example, there's the "classic bishop sacrifice."

That's where you sac your bishop against the opponent's kingside castled position, followed by a knight check and an invasive queen, as analyzed a long time ago by Greco. There's the "classic two-bishop sacrifice," where sacrifice both your bishops to clear away the opposing g- and h-pawns, as in the 1892 game between Lasker and Bauer in Amsterdam. Then there's the "classic two-rook sacrifice," where you let the opposing queen capture both of your rooks, hopefully for a winning attack, as in a 1920 match game between Max Euwe (White) and Richard Réti — curiously, also played in Amsterdam.

TWO KNIGHTS DEFENSE (C56)

Max Euwe
Richard Réti
Amsterdam, 1920

1. e4 e5 2. Nf3 Nc6 3. Bc4



Now ensure that the position above is set up on your chessboard. As you play through the remaining moves in this game, use a piece of paper to cover the article, exposing Black's

next move only after trying to guess it. If you guess correctly, give yourself the par score. Sometimes points are also awarded for second-best moves, and there may even be bonus points — or deductions — for other moves and variations. Note that ** means that Black's move is on the next line. **

3. **Par Score 5** **Nf6**
The Two Knights Defense. You may accept **full credit** for either 3. ... Bc5, the Giuoco Piano, or even 3. ... Be7, the Hungarian Game.

4. **d4**
A less often-seen variation these days (though not back then). More typical are 4. Ng5 or 4. d3. **

4. **Par Score 5** **exd4**
This is best. On 4. ... Nxe4 5. dxe5, Black must watch out for 6. Bxf7+.

5. **0-0**
White removes the king quickly from the center, increasing tactical options. On 5. e5, Black would have continued with 5. ... d5. **

5. **Par Score 5** **Nxe4**
It may seem dangerous to take the e-pawn with his own king still in the center, but Black is okay.

6. **Re1**
A natural move. White tries to take advantage of the open e-file. **

6. **Par Score 6** **d5**
Réti defends his knight and clears the c8-bishop's diagonal, but White has an adequate answer. Less good was 6. ... f5, which could be answered by 7. Bg5 or even 7. Bd5.

7. **Bxd5**

Not really a sac, since White immediately gets back the sacrificed piece. **

7. **Par Score 4** **Qxd5**

8. **Nc3**
White's point is that both the d4-pawn and the e4-knight are pinned. **

8. **Par Score 6** **Qa5**
This shift keeps the queen aggressively placed and out of immediate trouble.

9. **Nxd4**
After this, Black has the better of it. More prudent was 9. Nxe4, threatening mate in two, more or less forcing 9. ... Be7 or 9. ... Be6. **

9. **Par Score 5** **Nxd4**
White must now recapture on d4, since 10. Rxe4+ is met by 10. ... Ne6.

10. **Qxd4**
Black is up a piece, but can he keep it without incurring real problems? We shall see. **

10. **Par Score 5** **f5**
Black secures his knight, since both 11. f3 (11. ... Bc5) and 11. Nxe4 (11. ... Qxe1 mate) lose. Add a total of **1 bonus point** for seeing both variations ahead of time.

11. **Bg5**
This menaces a possible queen invasion at d8, while also covertly defending the e1-rook. **

11. **Par Score 6** **Qc5**
White has attacking chances, but he's down a piece, so naturally he doesn't want to trade queens.

12. **Qd8+**
With this check, White avoids the queen trade and forces Black's king to move. **

ABCS OF CHESS

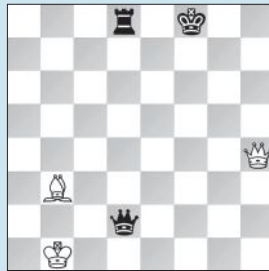
THESE PROBLEMS ARE ALL related to key positions in this month's game. In each case, White is to move. The answers can be found in Solutions on page 63.

AUGUST EXERCISE:

It's a good idea to work with a routine. For example, after the opponent moves, ask yourself why the opponent played that move. See where your thinking takes you. The answer may suggest you need to do something in particular or you don't need to respond in any definite way at all. Thwart your opponent, or follow your own plans. With practice, you'll be equipped to always do both, so that you can merge attack and defense on each move.

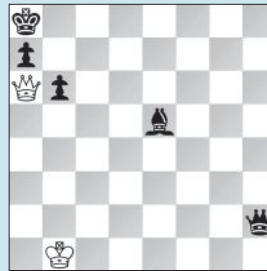
PROBLEM 1

Mating net



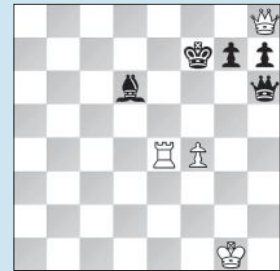
PROBLEM 2

Mating net



PROBLEM 3

Mating net



PROBLEM 4

Mating net



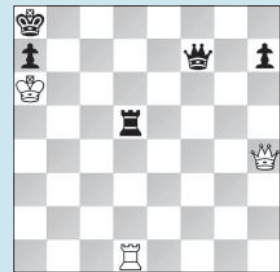
PROBLEM 5

Mating net



PROBLEM 6

Mating net



12. Par Score 5 Kf7
Black's king seems a bit exposed here, but it's not that easy to get at it.

13. Nxe4
Euwe gets rid of Black's pesky knight. **

13. Par Score 4 fxe4

14. Rad1
White activates his last piece. On 14. Rxe4, Black would have 14. ... Bf5 15. Qxa8 Bxe4 (1 bonus point). **

14. Par Score 8 Bd6
Réti finds a way to get out his remaining pieces. He starts by sacrificing the Exchange. In doing so, he squelches White's central initiative.

15. Qxh8**

15. Par Score 5 Qxg5
Suddenly, Black has attacking ideas as well.

16. f4
What's this, a free pawn? Not quite. **

16. Par Score 5 Qh4
White had a trick up his sleeve. If 16. ... Qxf4?, there would follow 17. Rf1 and things start to get unpleasant (17. ... Bc5+ 18. Kh1 Bf2 19. Rd8).

17. Rxe4
White has a few threats after this capture, such as 18. Qe8+. **

17. Par Score 8 Bh3
Réti deals with White's threats by sacrificing another rook! White doesn't have much choice but to take it.

18. Qxa8**

18. Par Score 6 Bc5+
This check seals the deal. Now mate is not far off.

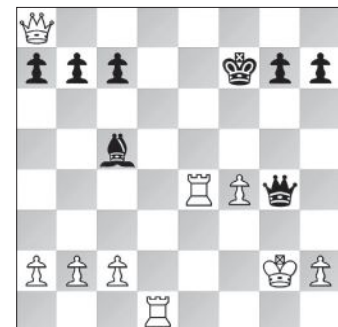
19. Kh1
After 19. Rd4 Bxd4+ 20. Rxd4 Black has 20. ... Qe1 mate (1 bonus point). **

19. Par Score 6 Bxg2+
Forcibly annihilating White's pawn cover.

20. Kxg2**

20. Par Score 6 Qg4+
In view of 21. Kh1 Qf3 mate, as well as 21. Kf1 Qf3+ 22. Ke1 Qf2 mate, Euwe gave up. Add 1 bonus point for seeing those final moves.

21. White resigned.
A classic performance indeed, with tactics worth remembering. ♠



POSITION AFTER 20. ... Qg4+

TOTAL YOUR SCORE TO DETERMINE YOUR APPROXIMATE RATING BELOW:

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

Good Knight, Bad Bishop

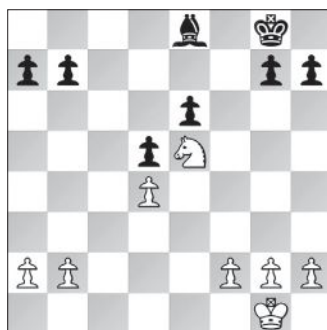
Which minor piece is better depends on many factors.

BY **WGM TATEV ABRAHAMYAN**

M

Y PREVIOUS COLUMNS ON minor piece play might have left the impression that bishops are simply superior to knights.

While it's true that bishops can have long-term potential, the knights thrive in certain types of positions, and can easily dominate the prelate. A typical example of a good knight versus a bad bishop occurs when the bishop is hindered by its own pawns, and the knight has an outpost on the opposite color of the opponent's bishop. And while bishops are happy in open positions, knights prefer closed positions — pawns don't block their paths in such cases.



Above we see a clear demonstration of a knight's superiority over a bishop. The knight sits comfortably on e5, a dark square that the bishop will never be able to access. The knight also controls several squares that the bishop might go to, and even if the bishop shifts to the f1-a6 diagonal, it still won't be doing anything special to help with the pawn weaknesses.

ATTACKING IN THE MIDDLE- GAME

Because knights are not long-range pieces like bishops, they need to be centralized, or at least facing towards the center, to maximize their effectiveness. A white knight on f5 can be an extremely dangerous piece when the opponent's king has castled kingside. In many Sicilian positions, there is a common idea of using (and perhaps sacrificing) a knight on d5 to attack and/or to open the position.

In our next example, a former world champion gives a master class in how a centralized knight can contribute to a devastating attack.

CLASSIC FOR A REASON

Vassily Smyslov
Iosif Rudakovsky
Soviet Ch, Moscow, 1945

(see diagram top of next column)

The d5-knight is a beautiful piece! Perched on its outpost, it is forever blocking the backwards d6-pawn while simultaneously eyeing the kingside. The dominated d8-bishop can jump to b6, but it is unclear what it will be doing there once the king slides over to h1. The bishop is also the only defensive piece



WHITE TO MOVE

Black has; moving it would leave the dark squares in peril.

18. c3

Smyslov begins by securing the queenside.

18. ... b5 19. b3 Qc5+ 20. Kh1 Rc8 21. Rf3

And so begins the transfer of the major pieces to the kingside. The immediate 21. f6! would have been very strong too.

21. ... Kh8 22. f6

A devastating pawn push. Black has no choice but to accept the destruction of his kingside defenses.

22. ... gxf6

After 22. ... g6 23. Qh4 the bishop cannot reach the kingside to protect the weak dark squares. The threats of Qh4-h6 and Rf3-h3 cannot be dealt with.

23. Qh4 Rg8 24. Nxf6 Rg7 25. Rg3

With the big threat of Qh4xh7+ followed by Rg3-g8 mate.

25. ... Bxf6 26. Qxf6 Rcg8 27. Rd1 d5 28. Rxg7, Black resigned.

TRADING A BISHOP FOR A KNIGHT

Trading a bishop for a knight can be difficult decision to make, as many players, especially in recent years, have a general preference for bishops. But as always in chess, we have to force ourselves to push past preconceived notions, and always at least consider these trades.

Take into account the pawn structure and the potential of the pieces after the trades. Ask yourself whether the bishop left on the board, even if on a long diagonal, is actually contributing to the game. Here's a

position where trading the bishop for a knight was clearly the right move.

THE RIGHT EXCHANGE

GM Irina Krush (2435)

IM Anna Zatonskih (2428)

1st Cairns Cup (analysis), St. Louis,

02.09.2019



WHITE TO MOVE

14. Bxg6!

Knights on the rim are indeed often dim, but taking this one would have given White a big advantage.

In the game, Irina chose another good move. After 14. Bxa6 Nxa6 15. Qb7 she eventually won on move 59.

14. ... hxg6

White had to calculate 14. ... Bxf1 in order to take on g6, but the line is relatively straightforward: 15. Rxf1 hxg6 16. Qb7 wins a piece for White as the rook is trapped.

15. Rfe1

Black is left with a useless bishop. While it is not stuck behind a pawn chain, it does nothing productive, especially when compared to the knight that will land on e5. Meanwhile, Black is also struggling to finish her development. Her best fighting chance is to offer a queen trade.

15. ... Qd8

If instead 15. ... Rc8 16. Qg3 Nd7 17. e4! White has a big initiative here too, with the same idea of Nf3-g5 and Qg3-h4.

16. Qf4 Nd7 17. Ng5

Now White will switch gears and start playing on the kingside.

17. ... Nf6 18. Qh4

The f6-knight cannot move as it must protect the h7-square, and White has the straightforward plan of attacking it with Rc1-d1, f2-f3, and e3-e4-e5. The a6-bishop

cannot work to counter this plan. Although the c3-knight does not look very impressive at the moment either, it at least has the potential to transfer to the e5-square via c3-b1-d2-f3.

LONG TERM CONTROL

Last month I touched upon some French structures as part of my lifetime quest to defend the honor of this difficult opening. In the Winawer variation of the French, White accepts a long-term strategic inferiority in exchange for the initiative and the ability to jump-start an attack. The risk is that the White side can end up with a fractured pawn structure and a useless bishop if the position is not handled carefully. Consider the following:

FRANCOPHILE

WIM Ashritha Eswaran (2234)

WGM Tatev Abrahamyan (2377)

U.S. Women's Ch (5), St. Louis,

03.24.2019



WHITE TO MOVE

The c4-knight is dominant, making the c1-bishop look completely useless — the bishop hasn't moved yet, and it lacks a square to go to. The f6-knight looks pretty, as it is deep in my camp, but it will quickly be traded for the b8-knight. White has to worry about her king, but has no chance for pawn breakthroughs and cannot improve her pieces. The position is winning for Black.

20. hxg5 hxg5 21. Qxh8 Rxh8 22. Rxh8+ Kb7

White tried to change the course of the game by imbalancing it, but to no avail.

23. Rh6 Nd7 24. Kf1 Nxf6 25. exf6

Even though White gets a passed pawn, it is temporary as it will soon fall. If 25. Rxf6

Qh7 hits the loose c2-pawn and threatens ... Qh7-h1+.

25. ... Nd6

With complete control of the light squares, there is no fear of moving my knight away from c4. The knight can always go back, but for now, the f6-pawn must be captured.

26. a5 Nf5 27. Rh3 Qxf6 28. Rd3 Nd6 29. Bd2 Nc4

Task completed; the knight can return to its best square.

30. axb6 cxb6 31. f3 Nb2

And now the knight completes its work by picking up material.

32. Be1 Nxd3 33. cxd3 Qf5 34. Rd1 a5

35. Rd2 a4 36. Ke2 e5 37. Ra2 b5 38. Bf2

e4 39. dxe4 dxe4 40. Rb2 e3 41. Be1 a3,

White resigned.

IN THE ENDGAME

Knights do better in the endgame when the pawns are all on one flank. If the knight doesn't have to worry about rushing to the other side of the board to defend pawns, it can absolutely outmaneuver a bishop. No less than GM Magnus Carlsen accomplished just that at the recently completed Norway Chess 2024, defeating Praggnanandhaa.

THE MAESTRO

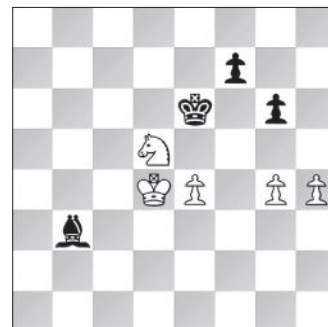
GM Magnus Carlsen (2830)

GM Praggnanandhaa Rameshbabu

(2747)

Norway Chess (16), Stavanger,

06.04.2024



WHITE TO MOVE

White is up a pawn, but the position is holdable with best play. Black has two ideas to worry about: White creating a passed pawn with h4-h5, or what Magnus did in the game.

51. Nf4+ Kf6 52. g5+

Magnus decides to fix the pawn structure. By putting his pawns on dark squares, they cannot be targeted by the bishop.

52. ... Kg7 53. Ke5 Bc2 54. Nd5

With this move, White hampers Black's ability to trade pawns via the ... f7-f6 pawn break. White needs to keep as many pawns on the board as possible in order to keep winning chances alive.

54. ... Bd3??

This looks reasonable, but is in fact the fatal error.

Black needs to prevent the white king from getting to e7; therefore, he must bring the king around with 54. ... Kf8 55. Nf6 Ke7. Here the fortress holds.

55. Nf6

Since the e4-pawn is under attack, White must first defend the pawn with the knight before the king is free to move.

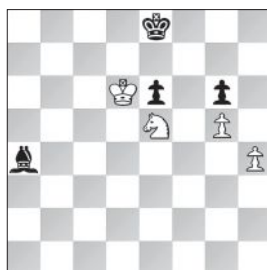
55. ... Kf8 56. Kd6

The f7-pawn is the target. First the white king will go to d8 and push the enemy king out of the way.

56. ... Bb1

Attempting to block access to d8 with 56.

... Bb5 fails: 57. e5 Ba4 58. Nd7+ Ke8 59. e6 fxe6 60. Ne5!!.



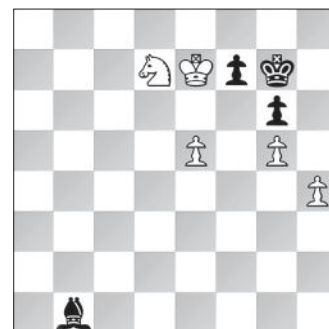
POSITION AFTER 60. Ne5

This is an excellent example of a knight's domination of a bishop. The g6-pawn will fall. The knight then will go to f4 to pick up the e6-pawn as well. The two passed pawns will then roll down the board.

57. Kd7 Bc2 58. Kd8 Bb1 59. Nd7+ Kg7 60. e5 Bf5 61. Ke7 Bb1

(see diagram top of next column)

It looks like Black still has some kind of a fortress. He has a light-squared bishop and both his pawns are on light squares, so the bishop should be able to defend the f7-pawn successfully. Magnus (of course) finds the most straightforward path to victory.



62. Nc5 Bc2 63. Nb7

The bishop shuffles while the knight is free to maneuver. Black is helpless.

63. ... Bb1 64. Nd6 Ba2 65. Nxf7!!

The final blow. Magnus temporarily gives up the knight, but since the bishop is completely dominated, there is no way to deal with the e6-pawn without returning material.

65. ... Bxf7 66. e6 Bg8 67. Kd7, Black resigned.

AND FINALLY...

One last tip: always remember that tricky knights are often better than bishops in a blitz! The points you save could be your own! ♠



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TOURNAMENT LIFE ANNOUNCEMENTS

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

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

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

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

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

Nationals

GRAND PRIX • NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP EVENT

2024 U.S. National Championship: G60

AUGUST 11, 2024, CALIFORNIA, N.

Event site: Sonesta Silicon Valley Event Center (South Milpitas) **Address:** 1800 Barber Ln., Milpitas, CA 95035
Overall prize fund: \$10,000 **GP Points:** 15 **FIDE Rated:** N **Handicap accessible:** Y **Residency restriction:** N **Organizer:** BayAreaChess **Email:** events@bayareachess.com **Phone:** 408.409.6596 **Website:** [n/a](https://bayareachess.com) **TLA ID:** 44674

Grand Prix

The Grand Prix point totals reflect all rated event information as of December 31, 2023 for the 2023 Grand Prix.

FINAL 2023 GRAND PRIX STANDINGS

Congratulations to the 2023 Grand Prix Champion

GM JIANCHAO ZHOU

Name	State/Ctry	Pts
1. GM JIANCHAO ZHOU	MA	562.94
2. GM FIDEL CORRALES JIMENEZ	NY	481.29
3. GM MIKHAIL ANTIPOV	MO	194.33
4. GM ARMAN MIKAELIAN	--	157.10
5. GM RAHUL P SRIVATSHAV	--	128.74
6. FM SHARVESH R DEVIPRASATH	TX	121.10
7. IM SAFAL BORA	MI	115.33
8. GM ALEXANDER FISHBEIN	TN	111.47
9. IM JUSTIN WANG	TX	108.62
10. GM VIKTOR MATVIISHEN	TX	106.09

2023 Awards

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

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

The Grand Prix continues in 2024. For information visit new.uschess.org/us-chess-grand-prix-program

GRAND PRIX • ENHANCED GRAND PRIX

2024 Dragon Knight National Mustard Day Classic

AUGUST 3, 2024, NORTH CAROLINA

Event site: Dragon Knight Chess Center **Address:** 2000 Bearcat Way, Suite 104, Morrisville, NC 27560
Overall prize fund: \$580 **GP Points:** 10 **FIDE Rated:** N **Handicap accessible:** Y **Residency restriction:** N **Organizer:** Dragon Knight Chess **Email:** jon@dragonknightchess.com **Phone:** 919-422-2535 **Website:** dragonknightchess.com **TLA ID:** 44133

GRAND PRIX • ENHANCED GRAND PRIX • JUNIOR GRAND PRIX

14th annual Central California Open

AUGUST 9-11, 2024, CALIFORNIA

Event site: Doubletree Hotel **Address:** 2233 Ventura Street, Fresno, CA 93710 **Overall prize fund:** \$10,000 **GP Points:** 100 **FIDE Rated:** Y **Handicap accessible:** N **Residency restriction:** N **Organizer:** Continental Chess **Email:** director@chess.us **Phone:** [n/a](https://chess.us) **Website:** chess.us **TLA ID:** 43685

GRAND PRIX • ENHANCED GRAND PRIX

Dragon Knight World Lion Day Classic

AUGUST 10, 2024, NORTH CAROLINA

Event site: Dragon Knight Chess Center **Address:**

2000 Bearcat Way, Suite 104, Morrisville, NC 27560
Overall prize fund: \$580 **GP Points:** 10 **FIDE Rated:** N **Handicap accessible:** Y **Residency restriction:** N **Organizer:** Dragon Knight Chess **Email:** jon@dragonknightchess.com **Phone:** 919-422-2535 **Website:** dragonknightchess.com **TLA ID:** 44144

GRAND PRIX • STATE CHAMPIONSHIP EVENT

2024 Michigan Upper Peninsula Open

AUGUST 10-11, 2024, MICHIGAN

Event site: Bay Mills Community College **Address:** 12214 W Lakeshore Drive, Brimley, MI 49715 **Overall prize fund:** \$1,000 **GP Points:** 6 **FIDE Rated:** N **Handicap accessible:** N **Residency restriction:** N **Organizer:** Jim Sawaski **Email:** jsawaski@yahoo.com **Phone:** 810-955-7271 **Website:** michess.org **TLA ID:** 43975

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

54th Annual Continental Open

AUGUST 15-18, 2024, MASSACHUSETTS

Event site: Best Western Royal Plaza Hotel **Address:** 181 Boston Post Road West, Marlborough, MA 01752
Overall prize fund: \$30,000 **GP Points:** 150 **FIDE Rated:** Y **Handicap accessible:** N **Residency restriction:** N **Organizer:** Continental Chess **Email:** director@chess.us **Phone:** [n/a](https://chess.us) **Website:** chess.us **TLA ID:** 43659

GRAND PRIX

2024 Austin Chess Club Summer Open

AUGUST 16-18, 2024, TEXAS

Event site: Austin Southpark Hotel **Address:** 4140 Governors Row, Austin, TX 78744 **Overall prize fund:** \$5,000 **GP Points:** 30 **FIDE Rated:** Y **Handicap accessible:** N **Residency restriction:** N **Organizer:** Austin Chess Club **Email:** austinchessclub@austinchess-tournaments.com **Phone:** [n/a](https://austinchess-tournaments.com) **Website:** austinchess-tournaments.com **TLA ID:** 44084

GRAND PRIX • STATE CHAMPIONSHIP EVENT

96th Wisconsin Closed Championship / Marshall Rohland Memorial

AUGUST 16-18, 2024, WISCONSIN

Event site: Holiday Inn - Manitowoc **Address:** 4601 Calumet Ave., Manitowoc, WI 54220 **Overall prize fund:** \$4,500 **GP Points:** 40 **FIDE Rated:** N **Handicap accessible:** Y **Residency restriction:** Y **Organizer:** Terran Chess Federation **Email:** terranchess@gmail.com **Phone:** 920-279-5688 **Website:** [n/a](https://terranchess.com) **TLA ID:** 41708

GRAND PRIX • ENHANCED GRAND PRIX

10th annual Continental Open Blitz Championship

AUGUST 17, 2024, MASSACHUSETTS

Event site: Best Western Royal Plaza Hotel **Address:** 181 Boston Post Road W, Marlborough, MA 01752
Overall prize fund: \$500 **GP Points:** 10 **FIDE Rated:** N **Handicap accessible:** N **Residency restriction:** N **Organizer:** Continental Chess **Email:** director@chess.us **Phone:** [n/a](https://chess.us) **Website:** chess.us **TLA ID:** 44014

GRAND PRIX • ENHANCED GRAND PRIX

Big August Dragon Knight Classic

AUGUST 17, 2024, NORTH CAROLINA

Event site: Dragon Knight Chess Center **Address:** 2000 Bearcat Way, Suite 104, Morrisville, NC 27560
Overall prize fund: \$1,390 **GP Points:** 20 **FIDE Rated:** N **Handicap accessible:** Y **Residency restriction:** N **Organizer:** Dragon Knight Chess **Email:** Jon@DragonKnightChess.com **Phone:** 919-422-2535 **Website:** DragonKnightChess.com **TLA ID:** 44578

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

56th annual Atlantic Open

AUGUST 23-25, 2024, DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

Event site: Omni Shoreham Hotel **Address:** 2500 Calvert St., NW, Washington, DC 20008 **Overall prize fund:** \$30,000 **GP Points:** 150 **FIDE Rated:** Y **Handicap accessible:** N **Residency restriction:** N **Organizer:** Continental Chess **Email:** director@chess.us **Phone:** [n/a](https://chess.us) **Website:** chess.us **TLA ID:** 43683

GRAND PRIX • ENHANCED GRAND PRIX • JUNIOR GRAND PRIX

19th annual Indianapolis Open

AUGUST 23-25, 2024, INDIANA

Event site: Hilton Garden Inn Indianapolis Airport **Address:** 8910 Hatfield Drive, Indianapolis, IN 46241
Overall prize fund: \$15,000 **GP Points:** 100 **FIDE Rated:** Y **Handicap accessible:** N **Residency restriction:** N **Organizer:** Continental Chess **Email:** vegaschess@gmail.com **Phone:** 702-930-9550 **Website:** chess.vegas **TLA ID:** 43684

GRAND PRIX

2024 Las Vegas Open

AUGUST 23-25, 2024, NEVADA

Event site: Rio Hotel & Casino **Address:** 3700 W Flamingo Rd., Las Vegas, NV 89103 **Overall prize fund:** \$20,000 **GP Points:** 50 **FIDE Rated:** Y **Handicap accessible:** Y **Residency restriction:** N **Organizer:** Vegas Chess Festivals **Email:** director@chess.us **Phone:** [n/a](https://chess.us) **Website:** chess.us **TLA ID:** 44782

GRAND PRIX • ENHANCED GRAND PRIX

11th annual Atlantic Open Blitz Championship

AUGUST 24, 2024, DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

Event site: Omni Shoreham Hotel **Address:** 2500 Calvert St., NW, Washington, DC 20008 **Overall prize fund:** \$500 **GP Points:** 10 **FIDE Rated:** N **Handicap accessible:** N **Residency restriction:** N **Organizer:** Continental Chess **Email:** director@chess.us **Phone:** [n/a](https://chess.us) **Website:** chess.us **TLA ID:** 44015

GRAND PRIX • ENHANCED GRAND PRIX

Dragon Knight National Waffle Day Classic

AUGUST 24, 2024, NORTH CAROLINA

Event site: Dragon Knight Chess Center **Address:** 2000 Bearcat Way, Suite 104, Morrisville, NC 27560
Overall prize fund: \$580 **GP Points:** 10 **FIDE Rated:** N **Handicap accessible:** Y **Residency restriction:** N **Organizer:** Dragon Knight Chess **Email:** Jon@DragonKnightChess.com **Phone:** 919-422-2535 **Website:** DragonKnightChess.com **TLA ID:** 44574

GRAND PRIX

90th Annual Southwest Open

AUGUST 29-SEPTEMBER 2, 2024, TEXAS

Event site: DoubleTree by Hilton Bush International **Address:** 15747 John F. Kennedy Blvd., Houston, TX 77032 **Overall prize fund:** [n/a](https://chess.us) **GP Points:** 100 **FIDE Rated:** Y **Handicap accessible:** Y **Residency restriction:** N **Organizer:** Kwunnie Ng **Email:** southwestopen@gmail.com **Phone:** [n/a](https://chess.us) **Website:** kingreg-istration.com/event/90SWO **TLA ID:** 44469

HERITAGE EVENT • GRAND PRIX • STATE CHAMPIONSHIP EVENT

2024 Colorado Open

AUGUST 30-SEPTEMBER 1, 2024, COLORADO

Event site: Sheraton Denver Tech Center Hotel **Address:** 7007 S Clinton St., Greenwood Village, CO 80112

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.

Overall prize fund: \$5,400 **GP Points:** 15 **FIDE Rated:** N **Handicap accessible:** Y **Residency restriction:** N
Organizer: Earle Wikle **Email:** earle.wikle7@gmail.com
Phone: n/a **Website:** coloradochess.com/newtour.sht
m?id=1515#tournamentContent **TLA ID:** 44550

GRAND PRIX • STATE CHAMPIONSHIP EVENT

2024 Ohio Chess Congress

AUGUST 30-SEPTEMBER 1, 2024, OHIO

Event site: Cherry Valley Hotel **Address:** 2299 Cherry Valley Rd SE, Newark, OH 43055 **Overall prize fund:** \$10,200 **GP Points:** 60 **FIDE Rated:** Y **Handicap accessible:** Y **Residency restriction:** Y **Organizer:** Katherine Lin **Email:** info@columbuschessacademy.org **Phone:** n/a **Website:** columbuschessacademy.org **TLA ID:** 44611

GRAND PRIX • STATE CHAMPIONSHIP EVENT

2024 Michigan Open

AUGUST 30-SEPTEMBER 2, 2024, MICHIGAN

Event site: Radisson Hotel Detroit Southfield **Address:** 26555 Telegraph Rd, Southfield, MI 48033 **Overall prize fund:** \$4,500 **GP Points:** 30 **FIDE Rated:** Y **Handicap accessible:** Y **Residency restriction:** N **Organizer:** Michigan Chess Association **Email:** jeffchess64@gmail.com **Phone:** 810-955-7271 **Website:** michess.org **TLA ID:** 44152

HERITAGE EVENT • GRAND PRIX • ENHANCED GRAND PRIX • JUNIOR GRAND PRIX • STATE CHAMPIONSHIP EVENT

146th annual New York State Championship – America's oldest annual tournament!

AUGUST 30-SEPTEMBER 2, 2024, NEW YORK

Event site: Albany Marriott **Address:** 189 Wolf Road, (NY Thruway Exit 24, I-87 north to Wolf Rd, Exit 4), Albany, NY 12205 **Overall prize fund:** \$18,000 **GP Points:** 150 **FIDE Rated:** Y **Handicap accessible:** N **Residency restriction:** N **Organizer:** Continental Chess **Email:** director@chess.us **Phone:** n/a **Website:** chessour.com **TLA ID:** 43687

GRAND PRIX • ENHANCED GRAND PRIX

Dragon Knight Speak Kind Words Saturday Classic

AUGUST 31, 2024, NORTH CAROLINA

Event site: Dragon Knight Chess Center **Address:** 2000 Bearcat Way, Suite 104, Morrisville, NC 27560 **Overall prize fund:** \$580 **GP Points:** 10 **FIDE Rated:** N **Handicap accessible:** Y **Residency restriction:** N **Organizer:** Dragon Knight Chess **Email:** Jon@DragonKnightChess.com **Phone:** 919-422-2535 **Website:** DragonKnightChess.com **TLA ID:** 44575

AMERICAN CLASSIC • ENHANCED GRAND PRIX • STATE CHAMPIONSHIP EVENT

Southern California Open

AUGUST 31-SEPTEMBER 2, 2024, CALIFORNIA, S.

Event site: Marriott San Diego Airport/Liberty Station **Address:** 2592 Laning Rd, San Diego, CA 92106 **Overall prize fund:** \$20,000 **GP Points:** 150 **FIDE Rated:** Y **Handicap accessible:** Y **Residency restriction:** N **Organizer:** Charles Ensey **Email:** chucnglo@aol.com **Phone:** 858-432-8006 **Website:** n/a **TLA ID:** 44329

GRAND PRIX • STATE CHAMPIONSHIP EVENT

2024 Harvey Lerman Florida State Chess Championship

AUGUST 31-SEPTEMBER 2, 2024, FLORIDA

Event site: DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel **Address:** 4431 PGA Boulevard, Palm Beach Gardens, FL 33410 **Overall prize fund:** \$10,300 **GP Points:** 30 **FIDE Rated:** N **Handicap accessible:** Y **Residency restriction:** N **Organizer:** Bryan Tillis **Email:** nmbtillis@gmail.com **Phone:** 3347140453 **Website:** n/a **TLA ID:** 44609

GRAND PRIX • STATE CHAMPIONSHIP EVENT

2024 Michigan Speed Championship

AUGUST 31, 2024, MICHIGAN

Event site: Radisson Hotel Detroit Southfield **Address:** 26555 Telegraph Rd, Southfield, MI 48033 **Overall prize fund:** \$600 **GP Points:** 10 **FIDE Rated:** N **Handicap accessible:** N **Residency restriction:** N **Organizer:** Michigan Chess Association **Email:** jeffchess64@gmail.com **Phone:** 810-955-7271 **Website:** michess.org **TLA ID:** 44161

GRAND PRIX • ENHANCED GRAND PRIX

2024 Illinois Open

AUGUST 31-SEPTEMBER 2, 2024, ILLINOIS

Event site: DoubleTree by Hilton Lisle-Naperville **Address:** 3003 Corporate W Dr, Lisle, IL 60532 **Overall prize fund:** \$10,000 **GP Points:** 50 **FIDE Rated:** Y **Handicap accessible:** N **Residency restriction:** N **Organizer:** Wilson's Chess & King Registration **Email:** info@kingregistration.com **Phone:** n/a **Website:** kingregistration.com/event/ilopen24 **TLA ID:** 44141

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

83rd New England Open

AUGUST 31-SEPTEMBER 2, 2024, MASSACHUSETTS

Event site: Westford Regency Inn & Conference Center **Address:** 219 Littleton Road, Westford, MA 01886 **Overall prize fund:** \$4,300 **GP Points:** 30 **FIDE Rated:** Y **Handicap accessible:** Y **Residency restriction:** N **Organizer:** Massachusetts Chess Association **Email:** info@masschess.org **Phone:** 603-891-2484 **Website:** masschess.org **TLA ID:** 44113

HERITAGE EVENT • GRAND PRIX • ENHANCED GRAND PRIX • STATE CHAMPIONSHIP EVENT

76th Annual New Jersey Open

AUGUST 31-SEPTEMBER 2, 2024, NEW JERSEY

Event site: Cherry Hill DoubleTree by Hilton **Address:** 2349 Marlton Pike West, Cherry Hill, NJ 08002 **Overall prize fund:** \$8,650 **GP Points:** 80 **FIDE Rated:** N **Handicap accessible:** Y **Residency restriction:** N **Organizer:** New Jersey State Chess Federation **Email:** tournaments@njscf.org **Phone:** n/a **Website:** n/a **TLA ID:** 43925

GRAND PRIX • ENHANCED GRAND PRIX • STATE CHAMPIONSHIP EVENT

10th annual New York State Blitz Championship!

SEPTEMBER 1, 2024, NEW YORK

Event site: Albany Marriott Hotel **Address:** 189 Wolf Road, Albany, NY 12205 **Overall prize fund:** \$800 **GP Points:** 10 **FIDE Rated:** N **Handicap accessible:** N **Residency restriction:** N **Organizer:** Continental

Chess Email: director@chess.us **Phone:** n/a **Website:** chessour.com **TLA ID:** 44016

HERITAGE EVENT • GRAND PRIX • JUNIOR GRAND PRIX • STATE CHAMPIONSHIP EVENT

Thomas Bergquist Memorial, 85th WV State Championship

SEPTEMBER 14-15, 2024, WEST VIRGINIA

Event site: Harrison County Senior Citizen Center, 500 W. Main Street, Clarksburg, WV **Address:** 500 W Main St., Clarksburg, WV 26301 **Overall prize fund:** \$500 **GP Points:** 6 **FIDE Rated:** N **Handicap accessible:** Y **Residency restriction:** N **Organizer:** Harrison County Chess Club **Email:** greerlaw@aol.com **Phone:** n/a **Website:** n/a **TLA ID:** 43199

GRAND PRIX • REGIONALS

1st Greater Baystate Open

SEPTEMBER 14-15, 2024, MASSACHUSETTS

Event site: Best Western Royal Plaza Hotel & Trade Center **Address:** 181 Boston Post Road W, Marlborough, MA 01752 **Overall prize fund:** \$6,100 **GP Points:** 30 **FIDE Rated:** N **Handicap accessible:** Y **Residency restriction:** N **Organizer:** Greater Baystate Chess **Email:** greater.baystate.chess@gmail.com **Phone:** 413-356-0303 **Website:** greaterbaystatechess.com **TLA ID:** 44489

GRAND PRIX • JUNIOR GRAND PRIX • STATE CHAMPIONSHIP EVENT

78th Peter P. Lahde Tennessee OPEN and State Championship! (2024)

SEPTEMBER 27-29, 2024, TENNESSEE

Event site: Memphis Chess Club **Address:** 195 Madison Avenue, Memphis, TN 38103 **Overall prize fund:** \$6,025 **GP Points:** 15 **FIDE Rated:** N **Handicap accessible:** Y **Residency restriction:** N **Organizer:** Memphis Chess Club **Email:** info@memphischessclub.com **Phone:** n/a **Website:** memphischessclub.com **TLA ID:** 44142

GRAND PRIX • STATE CHAMPIONSHIP EVENT

2024 PA State Game/60 Championship - West

SEPTEMBER 28, 2024, PENNSYLVANIA

Event site: William Pitt Union, Univ. of Pittsburgh

34th annual NORTH AMERICAN OPEN **Dec 26-30, 26-29 or 27-29, 2024, 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 also 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 \$7000-4000-2000-1200-800-600-500-500-400-400.

Under 1700: \$6000-3000-1500-1000-800-600-500-500-400-400.

Under 1500: \$5000-2500-1300-1000-700-600-500-400-300-300.

Under 1300: \$4000-2000-1000-800-600-500-400-400-300-300.

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 12/20/23-12/20/24 or current Online Regular rating 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 chesssevents.us.

Top 6 sections entry fee: \$245 at chessaction.com by 9/20, \$275 by 12/23, \$300 later online or at site until 1 hour before round 1. Open Section \$800 additional fee if not USCF-rated 2300+ and if not FIDE rated 2100+.

Special entry fee: U1000 Section \$150 less, Senior 65/over in U1300/up, \$100 less. Re-entry (no Open) \$120.

Titled player entry: See chesssevents.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 Section).

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 chesssevents.us for special rates.

Special room rate at Horseshoe \$109-109. Use link at chesssevents.us or 800-833-3308. Rooms may sell out by Nov 15.

Entry: chessaction.com. No mail entries, no checks. Refunds, \$15 service charge.

Questions, email: chessour.info, director@chess.us.

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.

Address: 5th Ave. & Bigelow Blvd., Pittsburgh, PA 15213 **Overall prize fund:** \$695 **GP Points:** 6 **FIDE Rated:** N **Handicap accessible:** Y **Residency restriction:** N **Organizer:** Tom M Martinak **Email:** martinak_tom_m@hotmail.com **Phone:** 412-908-0286 **Website:** pscfchess.org/clearinghouse **TLA ID:** 44561

HERITAGE EVENT • AMERICAN CLASSIC • GRAND PRIZ • ENHANCED GRAND PRIZ

41st Annual Reno Western States Open
OCTOBER 4-6, 2024, NEVADA
Event site: CIRCUS CIRCUS RENO HOTEL/CASINO, Address: 500 N. Sierra Street, Reno, NV 89503 **Overall prize fund:** \$27,500 **GP Points:** 150 **FIDE Rated:** Y **Handicap accessible:** N **Residency restriction:** N **Organizer:** Jerry Weikel **Email:** wackyyk@aol.com **Phone:** 775-354-8728 **Website:** renochess.org **TLA ID:** 44252

HERITAGE EVENT • GRAND PRIZ • ENHANCED GRAND PRIZ • JUNIOR GRAND PRIZ

32nd annual Midwest Class Championships
OCTOBER 11-13, 2024, ILLINOIS
Event site: Westin Chicago North Shore Hotel Address: 601 North Milwaukee Ave., Wheeling, IL 60090 **Overall prize fund:** \$20,000 **GP Points:** 120 **FIDE Rated:** Y **Handicap accessible:** N **Residency restriction:** N **Organizer:** Continental Chess **Email:** director@chess.us **Phone:** n/a **Website:** chesstour.com **TLA ID:** 44668

HERITAGE EVENT • GRAND PRIZ • ENHANCED GRAND PRIZ

89th Greater Boston Open
OCTOBER 13, 2024, MASSACHUSETTS
Event site: Westford Regency Inn & Conference Center

Address: 219 Littleton Rd., Westford MA 01886 **Overall prize fund:** \$3,000 **GP Points:** 15 **FIDE Rated:** N **Handicap accessible:** Y **Residency restriction:** N **Organizer:** Massachusetts Chess Association **Email:** info@masschess.org **Phone:** 603-891-2484 **Website:** masschess.org **TLA ID:** 44737

GRAND PRIZ • ENHANCED GRAND PRIZ • JUNIOR GRAND PRIZ

13th annual Hartford Open
OCTOBER 18-20, 2024, CONNECTICUT
Event site: Sheraton Hotel Address: 1 Bradley Airport, Windsor Locks, CT 06096 **Overall prize fund:** \$10,000 **GP Points:** 60 **FIDE Rated:** Y **Handicap accessible:** N **Residency restriction:** N **Organizer:** Continental Chess **Email:** director@chess.us **Phone:** n/a **Website:** chesstour.com **TLA ID:** 44669

GRAND PRIZ • ENHANCED GRAND PRIZ • JUNIOR GRAND PRIZ

1st Origami Open!
OCTOBER 25-27, 2024, MASSACHUSETTS
Event site: Westford Regency Inn & Conference Center Address: 219 Littleton Road, Westford, MA 01886 **Overall prize fund:** \$5,500 **GP Points:** 30 **FIDE Rated:** N **Handicap accessible:** N **Residency restriction:** N **Organizer:** Northern New England Chess Association **Email:** josephtruelson@gmail.com **Phone:** 651-443-6341 **Website:** newenglandchess.org **TLA ID:** 44314

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

28th annual Eastern Chess Congress
OCTOBER 25-27, 2024, NEW JERSEY

Event site: Westin Princeton at Forrestal Village Address: 201 Village Blvd, Princeton, NJ 08540 **Overall prize fund:** \$25,000 **GP Points:** 150 **FIDE Rated:** N **Handicap accessible:** N **Residency restriction:** N **Organizer:** Continental Chess **Email:** director@chess.us **Phone:** n/a **Website:** chesstour.com **TLA ID:** 44670

GRAND PRIZ • ENHANCED GRAND PRIZ • JUNIOR GRAND PRIZ

19th annual Los Angeles Open
NOVEMBER 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:** N **Residency restriction:** N **Organizer:** Continental Chess **Email:** director@chess.us **Phone:** n/a **Website:** chesstour.com **TLA ID:** 44671

HERITAGE EVENT • AMERICAN CLASSIC • GRAND PRIZ • ENHANCED GRAND PRIZ

59th American Open
NOVEMBER 26-DECEMBER 1, 2024, CALIFORNIA, S.
Event site: Hyatt Regency Orange County Address: 11999 Harbor Blvd, Garden Grove, CA 92840 **Overall prize fund:** n/a **GP Points:** 150 **FIDE Rated:** Y **Handicap accessible:** Y **Residency restriction:** N **Organizer:** ChessPalace **Email:** play@americanopen.org **Phone:** 714-643-8828 **Website:** americanopen.org **TLA ID:** 44595

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

34th annual North American Open
DECEMBER 26-30, 2024, 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:** N **Residency restriction:** N **Organizer:** Continental Chess **Email:** director@chess.us **Phone:** n/a **Website:** chesstour.com **TLA ID:** 44741

Regional

ALABAMA

SEPTEMBER 27-29, 2024

78th Peter P. Lahde Tennessee OPEN and State Championship! (2024) (TN)
See Grand Prix.

ALASKA

OCTOBER 12, 2024

National Chess Day in Soldotna, Alaska!
Event site: Cook Inlet Academy Address: 145872 Kalifornsky Beach Rd, Soldotna, AK 99669 **Overall prize fund:** n/a **GP Points:** n/a **FIDE Rated:** N **Handicap accessible:** Y **Residency restriction:** N **Organizer:** Alaska Arctic Chess Club **Email:** alaskaarcticchessclub@fastmail.com **Phone:** n/a **Website:** twitter.com/Arctic-ChessClub **TLA ID:** 44724

ARIZONA

NOVEMBER 1-3, 2024

19th annual Los Angeles Open (CA)
See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

DECEMBER 26-30, 2024

34th annual North American Open (NV)
See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

ARKANSAS

STATE CHAMPIONSHIP EVENT

AUGUST 16-18, 2024

2024 Arkansas State Chess Championship
Event site: Courtyard by Marriott Address: 154 E Aspen Lane, Russellville, AR 72802 **Overall prize fund:** \$5,000 **GP Points:** n/a **FIDE Rated:** N **Handicap accessible:** Y **Residency restriction:** N **Organizer:** Tony W. Davis **Email:** tony64davis@yahoo.com **Phone:** 501-744-4911 **Website:** n/a **TLA ID:** 43947

56th annual Atlantic Open

August 23-25 or 24-25, 2024 - New site: Omni Shoreham Hotel, DC

A Heritage Event With \$30,000 GUARANTEED PRIZES!

5-rd Swiss, 40/80, SD/30; d30 (2-day option, rds 1-2 G/60 d10), Omni Shoreham Hotel, 2500 Calvert St. NW, Washington, DC 20008.

7 sections. 150 Grand Prix Points.
Major Section (1900/up): \$3000-1500-700-400-300, clear/tiebreak 1st \$100 bonus, top USCF Under 2300 \$1300-700. FIDE rated.

U2100: \$2000-1000-500-400-300. FIDE rated.

U1900: \$2000-1000-500-400-300.

U1700: \$1800-900-500-300-200.

U1500: \$1500-800-400-300-200.

U1300: \$1300-700-400-300-200.

U1000: \$800-400-300-200-100.

Unrated prize limits: U1000 \$150, U1300 \$300, U1500 \$450, U1700 \$600, U1900 \$750.

Mixed doubles: best male/female 2-player team combined score (team average under 2200): \$1000-500-300-200. Different sections, schedules OK; register (no extra fee) by 2 pm Sat.

Top 6 sections entry fee: \$148 at chessaction.com by 8/21, \$170 later or at site until 1 hour before round 1 (no checks, credit cards OK). **GMs free,** \$130 from prize.

Under 1000 Section: all \$50 less.

Re-entry \$70 (no Major to Major).

Cannot play below Online Regular rating - 100 points. August official ratings used; unofficial USCF ratings usually used if otherwise unrated. **USCF membership** required. See chessevents.us for special rates.

3-day schedule: Reg. ends Fri 6 pm, rds. Fri 7 pm, Sat 11 am & 5 pm, Sun. 10 am & 3:30 pm.

2-day schedule: Reg. ends Sat 10 am, rds. Sat 11 am, 2 pm & 5 pm; Sun. 10 am & 3:30 pm.

1/2-point byes OK all (limit 2), must commit before round 2.

Bring set, board, & clock if possible- none supplied.

Hotel rates: \$159-159, use link at chessevents.us or call 202-234-0700, reserve by 8/8 or rate may increase. Hotel parking is valet only: \$45/day; see chessevents.us for more parking.

Enter online: Chessaction.com. \$15 service charge for refunds.

Email: director@chess.us. (see also: chessevents.us, chesstour.info).

Blitz Sat. 9:30 pm, enter by 9:10.

SEPTEMBER 27-29, 2024

78th Peter P. Lahde Tennessee OPEN and State Championship! (2024) (TN)
See Grand Prix.

CALIFORNIA

AUGUST 9-11, 2024

14th annual Central California Open (CA)
See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

AUGUST 31-SEPTEMBER 2, 2024

Southern California Open (CA)
See Grand Prix.

NOVEMBER 1-3, 2024

19th annual Los Angeles Open (CA)
See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

DECEMBER 26-30, 2024

34th annual North American Open (NV)
See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

COLORADO

AUGUST 30-SEPTEMBER 1, 2024

2024 Colorado Open (CO)
See Grand Prix.

DECEMBER 26-30, 2024

34th annual North American Open (NV)
See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

CONNECTICUT

AUGUST 15-18, 2024

54th Annual Continental Open (MA)
See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

OCTOBER 18-20, 2024

13th annual Hartford Open (CT)
See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

DIST. OF COLUMBIA

AUGUST 24, 2024

11th annual Atlantic Open Blitz Championship (DC)
See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

FLORIDA

AUGUST 31-SEPTEMBER 2, 2024

2024 Harvey Lerman Florida State Chess Championship (FL)
See Grand Prix.

GEORGIA

APRIL 8, 2024-MONTHLY ON SATURDAY

Pizza Scholastic

Event site: The Boardroom **Address:** 1675 Peachtree Pkwy, Suite #180, Cumming, Georgia 30041 **Overall prize fund:** n/a **GP Points:** n/a **FIDE Rated:** N **Handicap accessible:** Y **Residency restriction:** N **Organizer:** ThinkChess, LLC **Email:** info@myThinkChess.com **Phone:** 770.744.8595 **Website:** mythinkchess.com **TLAID:** 37216

SEPTEMBER 27-29, 2024

78th Peter P. Lahde Tennessee OPEN and State Championship! (2024) (TN)
See Grand Prix.

HAWAII

STATE CHAMPIONSHIP EVENT

Hawaii Open

AUGUST 31-SEPTEMBER 2, 2024, HAWAII
Event site: Capitol Modern (Hawaii State Art Museum) **Address:** 250 S Hotel St, Honolulu, HI 96813, Honolulu, HI 96813 **Overall prize fund:** \$5,000 **GP Points:** 20 **FIDE Rated:** N **Handicap accessible:** Y **Residency restriction:** N **Organizer:** Damian Nash **Email:** kauaichessclub@gmail.com **Phone:** n/a **Website:** hawaiiichess.com **TLAID:** 44603

ILLINOIS

AUGUST 23-25, 2024

19th annual Indianapolis Open (IN)
See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

AUGUST 31-SEPTEMBER 2, 2024

2024 Illinois Open (IL)
See Grand Prix.

OCTOBER 11-13, 2024

32nd annual Midwest Class Championships (IL)
See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

INDIANA

AUGUST 23-25, 2024

19th annual Indianapolis Open (IN)
See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

AUGUST 31-SEPTEMBER 2, 2024

2024 Illinois Open (IL)
See Grand Prix.

OCTOBER 11-13, 2024

32nd annual Midwest Class Championships (IL)
See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

IOWA

AUGUST 31-SEPTEMBER 2, 2024

2024 Illinois Open (IL)
See Grand Prix.

KENTUCKY

AUGUST 23-25, 2024

19th annual Indianapolis Open (IN)
See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

SEPTEMBER 27-29, 2024

78th Peter P. Lahde Tennessee OPEN and State Championship! (2024) (TN)
See Grand Prix.

LOUISIANA

SEPTEMBER 27-29, 2024

78th Peter P. Lahde Tennessee OPEN and State Championship! (2024) (TN)
See Grand Prix.

MARYLAND

MARYLAND CHESS TOURNAMENTS (NORTH PENN CHESS CLUB)

Maryland Chess runs 21+ annual K-12 tournaments every other Saturday from September through June & 12+ annual 1-day or multi-day open tournaments for adults & K-12 players on weekends. See www.MD-Chess.org for tournament announcements, registration for tournaments, updated wallcharts, live standings, signup for K-12 & open e-newsletters, lists of coaches & clubs, camp announcements, & news. K-12 MD players who compete in the Varsity section (for players rated 1600+) of 1 of 8+ annual MD-Sweet-16 Qualifiers can qualify for the \$48,000+ scholarship to the University of Maryland, Baltimore County awarded annually. UMBC is a perennial top-10 contender for the collegiate national chess championship.

AUGUST 23-25, 2024

56th annual Atlantic Open (DC)
See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

OCTOBER 25-27, 2024

28th annual Eastern Chess Congress (NJ)
See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

NOVEMBER 16-17, 2024

PA Team Championship (PA)
See Pennsylvania. august 23-25, 2024

54th annual CONTINENTAL OPEN

August 15-18, 16-18 or 17-18, 2024 - \$30,000 Guaranteed prizes!

7 rounds at Best Western Royal Plaza, Marlborough, Massachusetts

Best Western Royal Plaza, 181 Boston Post Road W, Marlborough MA 01752. Free parking. 7 sections.

Top 5 sections: August 15-18 or 16-18, 40/80, SD/30; d30 (3-day option, rds 1-2 G/60 d10), both schedules merge and play for same prizes within each of the sections.

Under 1300 & Under 1100 sections: August 17-18, G/60, d10.

Premier section: Open to 2000+ (see peakrating.us). Prizes \$3000-1500-800-400-300, clear/tiebreak win \$100 bonus, top USCF Under 2300 \$1300-700. FIDE rated.

U2100, U1900, U1700 sections: Prizes each section \$2000-1000-500-300-200. Under 2100 is also FIDE rated.

U1500, U1300 sections: Prizes each section \$1400-800-400-300-200.

U1100 section: \$800-500-300-200-100.

Unrated prize limits: U1100 \$100, U1300 \$200, U1500 \$300, U1700 \$400, U1900 \$500, U2100 \$600.

Mixed doubles: best male/female 2-player team combined score (team average under 2200) among all sections: \$1000-500-300. May play different sections and schedules; register (no extra fee) before both players begin round 2.

Cannot play below Online Regular rating minus 100 points. August Official ratings used, unofficial or Online Regular ratings usually used if otherwise unrated.

Top 6 sections entry fee: \$158 online by 8/13, \$180 later online or at site until 1 hour before round 1. GMs free, \$150 from prize. Re-entry \$80; no Premier to Premier.

U1100 Section EF: all \$60 less than top 6 sections fee. U1100 re-entry \$40. No checks at site, credit cards OK.

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

Online entry fee \$5 less to MACA members, join/renew at masschess.org.

4-day schedule: Reg Thu to 6 pm, rds Thu 7, Fri 11 & 5, Sat & Sun 10 & 4.

3-day schedule: Reg. Fri to 10 am, rds Fri 11, 2 & 5, merges with 4-day, Fri 5 pm.

2-day schedule (Under 1300, Under 1100 only): Reg. Sat to 9, rds Sat 10, 1, 4, 7, Sun 10, 1 & 4.

Half-point byes OK all rds (limit 2, must commit before rd 3). Bring set, board, clock if possible- **none supplied**.

Hotel rates: \$134-134, includes hot breakfast, use link at chessevents.us or call 508-460-0700, reserve by 7/31.

Entry: Chessaction.com. No mailed entry. Refunds, \$15 service charge.

Email: director@chess.us (also see chesstour.info, chessevents.us).

Blitz: Sat 9:30 pm, enter by 9:10 pm.

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

MASSACHUSETTS

AUGUST 15-18, 2024

54th Annual Continental Open (MA)
See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

AUGUST 17, 2024

10th annual Continental Open Blitz Championship (MA)
See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

OCTOBER 18-20, 2024

13th annual Hartford Open (CT)
See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

MICHIGAN

AUGUST 31-SEPTEMBER 2, 2024

2024 Illinois Open (IL)
See Grand Prix.

MISSISSIPPI

STATE CHAMPIONSHIP EVENT

SEPTEMBER 14, 2024, MISSISSIPPI

2024 Mississippi State Women's Championship

Event site: Nissan Training Center Address: 300 Nissan Dr, Gate 1, Canton, MS 39047 Overall prize fund: n/a GP Points: n/a FIDE Rated: N Handicap accessible: Y Residency restriction: N Organizer: Mark Nicholas Email: mark@mcchess.org Phone: 615-631-3876 Website: mcchess.org TLA ID: 44567

STATE CHAMPIONSHIP EVENT

OCTOBER 19-20, 2024, MISSISSIPPI

2024 Mississippi State Chess Championship

Event site: CSpire Address: 1000 Highland Colony Pkwy, Ridgeland, MS 39157 Overall prize fund: \$0 GP Points: n/a FIDE Rated: N Handicap accessible: N Residency restriction: N Organizer: Mississippi Chess Association Email: mark@mcchess.org Phone: 615-631-3876 Website: mcchess.org TLA ID: 44331

MISSOURI

SEPTEMBER 27-29, 2024

78th Peter P. Lahde Tennessee OPEN and State Championship! (2024) (TN)
See Grand Prix.

NEVADA

AUGUST 9-11, 2024

14th annual Central California Open (CA)
See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

NOVEMBER 1-3, 2024

19th annual Los Angeles Open (CA)
See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

DECEMBER 26-30, 2024

34th annual North American Open (NV)
See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

NEW JERSEY

AUGUST 15-18, 2024

54th Annual Continental Open (MA)
See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

AUGUST 23-25, 2024

56th annual Atlantic Open (DC)
See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

HERITAGE EVENT • STATE CHAMPIONSHIP EVENT

AUGUST 31, 2024, NEW JERSEY

2024 NJ Open Scholastic

Event site: Cherry Hill DoubleTree by Hilton Address: 2349 Marlton Pike West, Cherry Hill, NJ 08002 Overall prize fund: n/a GP Points: n/a FIDE Rated: N Handicap accessible: Y Residency restriction: N Organizer:

New Jersey State Chess Federation Email: tournaments@njscf.org Phone: n/a Website: n/a TLA ID: 44045

AUGUST 31-SEPTEMBER 2, 2024

76th Annual New Jersey Open (NJ)
See Grand Prix.

OCTOBER 18-20, 2024

13th annual Hartford Open (CT)
See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

OCTOBER 25-27, 2024

28th annual Eastern Chess Congress (NJ)
See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

NEW MEXICO

DECEMBER 26-30, 2024

34th annual North American Open (NV)
See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

NEW YORK

AUGUST 15-18, 2024

54th Annual Continental Open (MA)
See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

AUGUST 23-25, 2024

56th annual Atlantic Open (DC)
See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

AUGUST 30-SEPTEMBER 2, 2024

146th annual New York State Championship- America's oldest annual tournament! (NY)
See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

SEPTEMBER 1, 2024

10th annual New York State Blitz Championship! (NY)
See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

OCTOBER 18-20, 2024

13th annual Hartford Open (CT)
See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

OCTOBER 25-27, 2024

28th annual Eastern Chess Congress (NJ)
See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

NORTH CAROLINA

AUGUST 3, 2024

2024 Dragon Knight National Mustard Day Classic (NC)
See Grand Prix.

AUGUST 10, 2024

Dragon Knight World Lion Day Classic (NC)
See Grand Prix.

AUGUST 17, 2024

Big August Dragon Knight Classic (NC)
See Grand Prix.

AUGUST 24, 2024

Dragon Knight National Waffle Day Classic (NC)
See Grand Prix.

AUGUST 31, 2024

Dragon Knight Speak Kind Words Saturday Classic (NC)
See Grand Prix.

OHIO

AUGUST 23-25, 2024

19th annual Indianapolis Open (IN)
See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

STATE CHAMPIONSHIP EVENT

SEPTEMBER 28-29, 2024

9th Annual Golden Buckeye Senior Open & Adult U1800 Chess Tournament
Event site: Salt Fork State Park Address: 14755 Cadiz Rd, Lore City, OH 43755 Overall prize fund: \$0 GP Points: n/a FIDE Rated: N Handicap accessible: Y Residency restriction: N Organizer: Grant Neilley Email: grant@neilley.com Phone: n/a Website: neilley.com/chess TLA ID: 44543

OREGON

DECEMBER 26-30, 2024

34th annual North American Open (NV)
See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

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

AUGUST 30-SEPTEMBER 2, 2024

146th annual New York State Championship- America's oldest annual tournament! (NY)
See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

AUGUST 31-SEPTEMBER 2, 2024

76th Annual New Jersey Open (NJ)
See Grand Prix.

OCTOBER 25-27, 2024

28th annual Eastern Chess Congress (NJ)
See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

NOVEMBER 16-17, 2024

PA Team Championship

Event site: Tuscarora Room, Shippensburg University Address: 110 Lancaster Dr., Shippensburg, PA 17257 Overall prize fund: \$1,000 GP Points: n/a FIDE Rated: N Handicap accessible: N Residency restriction: N Organizer: Nathan Zeigler Email: nathzeig@gmail.com Phone: 6197481751 Website: tickettailor.com/events/shippensburguniversitychessclub/1262655 TLA ID: 43247

TEXAS

AUGUST 16-18, 2024

2024 Austin Chess Club Summer Open (TX)
See Grand Prix.

DECEMBER 26-30, 2024

34th annual North American Open (NV)
See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

VIRGINIA

AUGUST 17, 2024

Publix at John Rolfe

Event site: Publix at John Rolfe Commons Address: 2250 John Rolfe Parkway, Richmond, VA 23233 Overall prize fund: n/a GP Points: n/a FIDE Rated: N Handicap accessible: N Residency restriction: N Organizer: Chess RVA Email: CoachBrian@ChessRVA.com Phone: 8049212410 Website: ChessRVA.com TLA ID: 44900

AUGUST 23-25, 2024

56th annual Atlantic Open (DC)
See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

AUGUST 30, 2024

Blitz Tournament at the 86th Virginia Closed

Event site: Hilton Garden Inn - Innsbrook Address: 4050 Cox Road, Glen Allen, VA 23060 Overall prize fund: \$650 GP Points: n/a FIDE Rated: N Handicap accessible: Y Residency restriction: N Organizer: Mike Hoffpauir, NTD Email: mhoffpauir@aol.com Phone: 757-846-4805 Website: vachess.org TLA ID: 44110

HERITAGE EVENT • STATE CHAMPIONSHIP EVENT

AUGUST 31-SEPTEMBER 2, 2024

2024 (86th) Virginia Closed Chess Championships

Event site: Hilton Garden Inn - Innsbrook Address:

4050 Cox Road, Glen Allen, VA 23060 Overall prize fund: \$5,000 + trophies GP Points: n/a FIDE Rated: N Handicap accessible: Y Residency restriction: N Organizer: Mike Hoffpauir, NTD Email: mhoffpauir@aol.com Phone: 757-846-4805 Website: vachess.org TLA ID: 44108

SEPTEMBER 28, 2024

Fall Quads at the Meadowdale Public Library

Event site: Meadowdale Public Library Address: 4301 Meadowdale Blvd., North Chesterfield, VA 23234 Overall prize fund: \$110 per Quad GP Points: n/a FIDE Rated: N Handicap accessible: Y Residency restriction: N Organizer: Mike Hoffpauir Email: mhoffpauir@aol.com Phone: 757-846-4805 Website: vachess.org TLA ID: 44042

OCTOBER 25-27, 2024

28th annual Eastern Chess Congress (NJ)
See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

WASHINGTON

DECEMBER 26-30, 2024

34th annual North American Open (NV)
See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

WEST VIRGINIA

JUNIOR GRAND PRIX

AUGUST 24, 2024

2024 WV Italian Heritage Open & Scholastic

Event site: Harrison County Senior Citizen Center Address: 500 W Main St., Clarksburg, WV 26301 Overall prize fund: \$245 GP Points: n/a FIDE Rated: N Handicap accessible: Y Residency restriction: N Organizer: Harrison County Chess Club Email: greerlaw@aol.com Phone: 3046419241 Website: n/a TLA ID: 44155

SEPTEMBER 14-15, 2024

Thomas Bergquist Memorial, 85th WV State Championship (WV)

See Grand Prix.

WISCONSIN

AUGUST 16-18, 2024

96th Wisconsin Closed Championship / Marshall Rohland Memorial (WI)
See Grand Prix.

AUGUST 31-SEPTEMBER 2, 2024

2024 Illinois Open (IL)
See Grand Prix.

OCTOBER 11-13, 2024

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7-Player Round Robins

Victor Palciauskas Tournament (ICCF Server)

FORMAT: Players play 6 games as single round robin, groupings based on ratings. **ENTRY FEE:** \$5 per entry. **PRIZES:** 1st place receives a signed certificate.

4-Player Quads

John W. Collins Memorial (Postal) | Walter Muir E-Quads (ICCF Server)

FORMAT: Players play 6 games as double round robin, groupings based on ratings. **ENTRY FEE:** \$10 per entry. **PRIZES:** 1st place receives \$25 correspondence chess gift certificate and signed certificate.

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Solutions

PAGE 13 CHESS TO ENJOY

PROBLEM 1. White mates after 33. d5! and 34. Rg3+, or 33. ... Qxd5 34. Qf6+ Kg8 35. Qxf7+ Kh8 36. Qf8 mate.

PROBLEM 2. 28. Qxc7 is good but 28. Qf7! was faster, e.g. 28. ... Rxf7 29. Re8+ or 28. ... Rg8 29. Qxg8+! Kxg8 30. Re8+ Kf7 31. R2e7 mate. **PROBLEM 3.** White resigned after 48. ... Qf3! 49. Re2 Rxb3+ 50. axb3 Qxb3+ 51. Kc1 Bb2+. A bit faster is 49. ... Be3!. **PROBLEM 4.** Here 36. g4+ Kg6 37. Bf8! threatens Re1-e7xg7+. Black resigned after 37. ... Kf7 38. Bb4!. **PROBLEM 5.** In this position 29. Bf4! overloads the queen — if 29. ... Qxf4 30. Qf7 mate. Black resigned after 29. ... Qc4 30. Rc1! Qxb3 31. Bd6+. **PROBLEM 6.** Both 31. Rc3 and 31. Rc5 win. But fastest is 31. Nf6+! Kh8 (31. ... Kf8 32. Qb4+ mates) 32. Rh5! Qc1+ 33. Kh2 and 34. Qg4!.

PAGE 45 MAKE YOUR MOVE

TACTIC 1. 18. ... Bxg2! A neat little combination based on the unprotected bishop on b5. **19. Kxg2 Qd5+ 20. Kg1 Qxb5** Black has won a pawn and weakened White's kingside shelter. Black is already much better and should win. **21. Qb3 Qxb3 22. Nxb3 Nb4 23. a3 Nd5 24. Bf2 Rc2 25. Rd2 Rxd2 26. Nxd2 Rc8 27. Ne4 Rc2 28. Rb1 b6 29. Kf1 f6 30. exf6 Nxf6 31. Nxf6+ Bxf6 32. b3 Kf7 33. Re1 Rxf2+ 34. Kxf2 Bh4+, White resigned.** (Yao Lan – A. Ghasi, 4NCL 2024) **TACTIC 2.** 23. ... Rg6! Black temporarily sacrifices a piece, but as we will see, if White accepts the sacrifice, it is soon over. **24. Qxb7** Or 24. Qd4 Rg1+ 25. Bf1 Qh3 and Black is winning a piece. Even worse is 24. Qd3 as 24. ... Rg1+ wins on the spot. **24. ... Rg1+ 25. Bf1 Qd3, White resigned.** (Williams – Olson, 4NCL 2024) **TACTIC 3.** 32. e6! It looked like White's attack had come to a standstill, but the text move prepares the unstoppable and decisive Rf7. **32. ... Rf8** Obviously, 32. ... Qxe6? 33. Rf8+ was out of the question. **33. Rf7** Anyway! **Black resigned** as the rook cannot be left on f7 nor can it be captured as the queen will be left hanging on c8. (Ju Wenjun – Poormosavi, Dubai 2024) **TACTIC 4.** 21. Ng5! Boom! The attack picks up speed rapidly. **21. ... Be7** It looks like Black can stave off White's attack with this little move, but White has sinister intentions up his sleeve. If 21. ... Bxg2, then 22. Qh5! and Black will not be able to stop mate. **22. Qh5! fxxg5 23. Rxe7!** Boom again! **23. ... Rxe7 24. Qxg5+ Kf8 25. Qf6!, Black resigned.** (Stribuk – Shapiro, Russian Team Ch 2024) **TACTIC 5.** 13. Nxd5! cxd5 Not capturing the knight is not an option. **14. Qxd5+ Kh8 15. c6 h6** Or 15. ... Ndf6 16. Qxd8 Rxd8 17. c7 is a nice fork. **16. Rac1** This may have been the move that Black forgot about when allowing 13. Nxd5!. **16. ... hxxg5 17. c7 Qe8 18. cxb8=Q Nxb8 19. Nxxg5 Nf6 20. Qb3 e6 21. Rc7 Bd7 22. Rfc1 Qe7 23. Rb7 Bh6 24. h4 Rd8 25. Qe3 Bg7 26. d5 e5 27. Qb6, Black resigned.** (Salem – A. Rakhmatullaev, Dubai 2024) **TACTIC 6.** 21. Ne4!! Ne6 Or 21. ... Qd7 22. Raf2 followed by Ne4-d6+ and White is clearly better. If Black captures the knight, things go downhill fast: 21. ... dxe4 22. Qxf7+ Kd8 23. Qxg7 and it is game over for Black. **22. Nd6+ Bxd6 23. exd6** Black's position is

a total disaster. **23. ... Qb7 24. Qh3 g6 25. Rf6 0-0 26. Raf2 Rae8 27. Bh6 Ng7 28. d7 Re1+ 29. Kh2 Qc7+ 30. Bf4 Qd8 31. Bd6 Re6 32. Rxe6 Nxe6 33. Qxe6, Black resigned.** (Bratovic – Brunello, Ljubljana 2024) **TACTIC 7.** 26. Bd5! White would also be much better after 26. Qxe6+ Kxe6 27. Bg2 but the game continuation is much stronger. **26. ... Qxd5 27. Qh4+ Ke6 28. Qh3+ Ke7 29. Rcd1 Bxe5 30. Rxd5** Or 30. Qxh7+ and White is winning. **30. ... cxd5 31. Bxe5 Nxe5 32. Qh4+, Black resigned.** White would also, perhaps even more convincingly, be winning after 32. Qxh7+. (Safarli – Rakhmatullaev, Dubai 2024) **TACTIC 8.** 22. g4! White opens files to increase the strength of White's attack. **22. ... hxxg4 23. h3!** Another pawn is sacrificed in order to open files, primarily the h-file. **23. ... gxh3 24. Rh1?! 24. Re3** would have been more accurate; after 24. ... Bf6 25. Rxx3, we are back in the game continuation. **24. ... Bf6!** Black should have played 24. ... Kg7!?, when 25. Rdf1 gives White a small advantage. **25. Rxxh3 Bg7 26. Qh4 f5?** This is a major blunder. Black should have fought on with 26. ... Rfe8 27. Bxxg6 fxxg6 (not 27. ... Nxxg6?? when 28. Qh7+ Kf8 29. Rc3 and White is winning) 28. Qh7+ Kf7 29. Rf1+ Nf6 30. Rxxf6+ Kxf6 31. Rf3+ Ke6 32. Bxe5 Kxe5 (despite its prominent presence on the board, Black's king is rather remarkably okay, but only due to White's lack of remaining forces on the board) 33. Rc3 Qf7 34. Re3+ Kf6 35. Rf3+ Ke6 36. Rxf7 Kxf7 37. Qh1 and White is somewhat better. **27. Qh7+** The game continued: **27. Rg1 Rf6 28. Bxxf5 Nf8 29. Be4 Qf7 30. Nd2 Re8 31. Bc3 d5 32. Bg2 Rf5 33. Nf3 Rf4 34. Nxe5 Rxe5 35. Bxd5** and Black resigned in Can – Hayrapetyan, Dubai 2024. **27. ... Kf7 28. Bxe5 Nxe5 29. Bxxf5 gxf5 30. Rg3** and White is winning. **TACTIC 9.** 20. Bc4!! Adding fire power to the attack. **20. ... g6** Black cannot capture the errant rook which is tying Black down on the back rank: 20. ... Qxc8 21. Nxd6 Qc7 22. Nxf7 Nc6 23. N7xe5+ Kh8 24. Nf7+ Kg8 25. N3e5 Nxe5 26. Nxe5+ Kh8 27. Nf7+ Kg8 28. Rg4 when despite having just two minor pieces and two pawns for the queen, White is completely winning. Black's best option would be 20. ... Bb4, when 21. Nxe5 Qxc8 22. Bxf7+ Kh8 23. Bc4 Ne6 24. Nxd4 Nxd4 25. Bxd4 and White is clearly better. **21. h5!** White keeps pouring gasoline on the fire. The c8-rook is still untouchable. **21. ... a6** If 21. ... Qxc8, White wins with 22. Nxd6 Qc7 23. Bxf7+ Kh8 24. Nxe5 Qxd6 25. Bxd4 and Black is completely busted. **22. Nxd6 Qxd6 23. hxxg6 hxxg6 24. Rh1 Qd7 25. Nxe5 Qxc8 26. Nxf7** Black could resign, but carries on a while longer. **26. ... Qxc4 27. Nh6+ Kh7 28. bxxc4 Nc6 29. Nf5+ Kg8 30. Nxd4, Black resigned.** (Navara – Finek, Czech Ch 2024)

PAGE 51 ABCS OF CHESS

PROBLEM 1. Mating net: White mates in two: **1. Qf6+ Ke8 2. Qf7 mate.** **PROBLEM 2. Mating net:** It is mate in two: **1. Qc8+ Bb8 2. Qc6 mate.** **PROBLEM 3. Mating net:** White mates in two: **1. Qe8+ Kf6 2. Qe6 mate.** **PROBLEM 4. Mating net:** Black is mated in two: **1. Nf6+ Kd8 2. Re8 mate.** **PROBLEM 5. Mating net:** It's over after **1. Qf8+ Rxf8 2. Rxf8 mate.** **PROBLEM 6. Mating net:** White mates by **1. Qd8+ Rxd8 2. Rxd8 mate.**



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A

AS A DOCTORAL CANDIDATE STUDY-
ing economics, I'm fascinated by
how economists can tackle social
problems using mathematical and

statistical tools to inform good policy. Em-
pirical microeconomists in particular are
keen to solve cause-and-effect questions
using a data-driven approach.

With my background as a full-time chess
instructor and experienced player, I was
interested in the impact of chess education
on children's academic and non-academic
achievements. We all wonder: Does playing
chess improve math scores or have other
benefits? Partnering with The Gift of Chess,
an organization devoted to changing lives
by donating chess sets, I aim to answer this
through rigorous research in my doctoral
program.

While preparing for my qualifying exam
to advance to doctoral candidacy, I recently
put my research aside and immersed myself
in competition, playing in the CalChess
Women's State Championship.

Chess has had many benefits for me. It
taught me how to sit and concentrate for
hours without losing focus. Perhaps more
importantly, I have learned how to deal
with painful losses, and how to view them
as opportunities to improve and progress.
To me, this is one of the greatest life skills
one can acquire.

Here's an example from that recent Cal-
ifornia tournament.

SICILIAN DEFENSE, DRAGON VARIATION (B70)

WIM Ruiyang Yan (2349)
WFM Uyanga Byambaa (2120)
California Women's Ch (5), Berkeley,
04.14.2024

1. e4 c5 2. Nf3 d6 3. d4 cxd4 4. Nxd4 Nf6
5. Nc3 g6 6. Be2 Bg7 7. 0-0 0-0 8. Re1 Nc6
9. Nb3 a6 10. Bf1 b5 11. Nd5 Ne5 12. h3
Bb7 13. a4 Nc4 14. c3



“

...I was interested in
the impact of chess
education on
children's academic
and non-academic
achievements”



At first glance, the position seems tepid,
but richer possibilities are often hiding
underneath the surface. Simply giving up
a knight without a clear immediate gain
wasn't easy; it required careful calcula-
tion. The lines weren't forced, so I had to
check many alternative variations before
sacrificing. Surprisingly, I emerge with an
advantage in all lines if White accepts my
knight sacrifice.

Throughout my chess career, I've played
many wild tactical games and made more
spectacular sacrifices than this one. How-
ever, I was particularly proud to consider
this move — **MY BEST MOVE** — and have
the courage to play it, especially against an
opponent who was almost 200 rating points
higher than me.

14. ... Nxe4 15. axb5 axb5 16. Rxa8 Bxa8
17. Rxe4 e6 18. Bxc4 bxc4 19. Rxc4 Bxd5

20. Ra4 Qd7 21. Rb4 Qc7 22. Nd4 Rb8 23.
Nc2 Rxb4 24. Nxb4 Bb7 25. Qa4 h5 26.
Qa7 Qc8 27. Be3 d5 28. Nd3 e5 29. Nc5
Bc6 30. Qb6 d4 31. cxd4 exd4 32. Bf4 Qe8
33. Qb8 Qxb8 34. Bxb8 Bb5 35. Bf4 d3 36.
b3 f5 37. Bd2 Kf7 38. h4 Bd4 39. b4 Ke7
40. g3 Kd6 41. Kf1 Kd5 42. Ke1 Kc4 43.
Ne6 Bb2 44. Nf4 Kb3 45. Kd1 Bc4 46. Ke1
Kc2 47. Ng2 Bb5 48. Ne3+ Kb3 49. Kd1 Bc6
50. Ke1 Bc3 51. Nd1 Bd4 52. Ne3 Bc3 53.
Bxc3 Kxc3 54. Nd1+ Kc2 55. Ne3+ Kc1 56.
Nc4 Bb5 57. Nd2 Kc2 58. Nf3 Kc3 59. Kd1
Bc6 60. Nd2 Kxb4 61. Nb1 Kc4 62. Kd2
Kd4 63. Nc3 Bd7 64. Nb1 Ke4 65. Ke1 Kf3
66. Kf1 Kg4 67. Nd2 Kh3 68. Nf3 Bb5 69.
Ke1 Kg2 70. Nd2 Kg1 71. Nf3+ Kg2 72. Nd2
Bc6 73. Nc4 Be4 74. Nd2 Bd5 75. Nf1 Be4
76. Nd2 Kg1 77. Nc4 Kg2 78. Nd2 Kh3 79.
f3 Bxf3 80. Nxf3 Kxg3 81. Ne5 Kxh4 82.
Nxf6+ Kg3 83. Ne5 d2+ 84. Kxd2 h4 85.
Ke2 h3 86. Nd3 h2 87. Nf2 Kg2 88. Ke3 f4+
89. Ke2 Kg3 90. Kf1 Kf3 91. Nh1 Kg4
92. Kg2, draw.

This game was also one of the longest I've
played in my chess career. Unfortunately,
I couldn't convert my advantage under
time pressure, losing the opportunity to
tie for first place in the tournament and
share the state title with my opponent. But
that's chess. Computers might find the best
moves under extreme time pressure, but
we are human. ♠



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THE ULTIMATE CHESS CLOCK FOR SERIOUS CHESS PLAYERS!

- Are you tired of the frustration caused by your current chess clock? Is setting it a never-ending battle? Say goodbye to confusing presets and button combinations! The TAP N SET™ Pro is here to revolutionize your chess playing experience!
- The TAP N SET™ technology offers the world's FIRST chess clock settable from your smartphone! Download our Android® or iOS® app, input your desired time controls, and simply touch your phone to the clock. With our patent-pending NFC technology, your clock is instantly programmed. It supports one-, two-, and three-time control games, increment/delay, move counters, and even Freeze for FIDE-rated events. The app features an intuitive menu for setting delay, increment, hour-glass; it even offers Scrabble timing modes, all adjustable from 1 to 40 minutes (New Feature). Choose from three different delay modes!
- Crafted with precision in the USA, the TAP N SET™ Pro Digital Chess Clock is a game-changer that every chess player needs. Simple to use, you'll master its features within minutes. Ideal for players of all ages and skill levels, it boasts a sturdy metal case, a sleek low-profile design, and massive dual displays powered by touch-sensor technology. It's the pinnacle of chess clock perfection!
- DESIGNED AND ASSEMBLED IN THE USA! It is the first ever commercially available chess clock with dual displays, allowing spectators to follow the game. The clock comes with a magnetic cover

for tournament settings. Connect it to the HOS sensory board (coming soon, sold separately) with the included cable. Stainless steel touch-sensitive buttons make your moves precise.

- Embrace the tournament atmosphere with programmable modes, including move counters. Keep three preset settings/modes in memory for quick access. Our clock is incredibly accurate, thanks to a high-precision crystal oscillator. You can even mute the sound and LED indicators, making it suitable for various two-player board games like Scrabble, Shogi, and Go.
- Say goodbye to frequent battery changes – our clock is power-efficient, providing over 900 hours of continuous use under normal conditions.
- Unsure of the time control for your event? Choose from 70 presets for the most popular US Chess time controls or create your own preset for lightning-fast setup!

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\$124.95

Don't worry if you forget your smartphone – you can still manually program the TAP N SET™ Pro clock just like any other ZmartFun chess clock. Experience the easiest chess clock ever designed!

Upgrade your chess game with the TAP N SET™ Pro Digital Chess Clock – the future of chess timing is here! Don't wait – order yours now and elevate your chess experience to new heights!



Free Ground Shipping On All Orders Over \$100.00
Excludes Clearance, Shopworn and Items Otherwise Marked