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CHESS LIFE/CHESS LIFE
KIDS EDITOR
John Hartmann
john.hartmann@uschess.org

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Natasha Roberts

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ON THE COVER

What will you remember about SuperNationals VIII? There was blitz, bughouse, and a first-ever puzzle solving championship. Teams and families traveled from far and wide to meet up in Orlando with like-minded people. Some won medals, and others took home trophies. But perhaps it was the friendships both

new and old that mattered most.

PHOTO: BENNY SIBBITT / ORLANDO EVENT PHOTOGRAPHY



Patterns of Attack

Part 4

BY NM TIM MCGREW

KINGSIDE CASTLES WITH the h-pawn moved forward one square occur in many games, probably because they occur in so many ways. Black might be trying to prevent an early Nf3-g5 or a pin with Bg5. There might already be a piece there, and Black wants to brush it away. Or perhaps White lines up some pressure against h7 in a perfect castle, and Black decides the best way to cope is to move the pawn out of the line of fire. Whatever the reason, the attacker needs to have a full arsenal of techniques ready for approaching that structure.

In the past two columns, we've looked at two techniques: the sacrifice (usually of a bishop) on h6, and the use of the g-pawn like a can opener to pry open one or more files. But there are other methods. This time, we're going to look at one of the more spectacular ones — where an attacking piece appears suddenly, and quite powerfully, on f6 as a sacrifice.

The most common version of this

technique is an Exchange sacrifice on f6. Of course, for that to work, a rook has to have a line on the minor piece there, and that means either an open f-file or a fancy rook lift. But it would be a mistake to think that this is always the outcome of a successful strategy — sometimes, it arises out of desperation, and the entire concept is nothing more than an inspired bluff. Here's a case in point.

SICILIAN DEFENSE (B47)

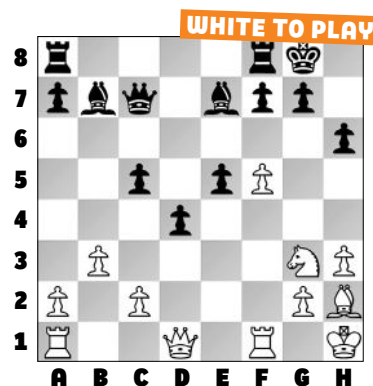
Kidefence (2673)

[chessxiaoxiang \(2876\)](#)

[Lichess.org, 2024](#)

1. e4 c5 2. d4 cxd4 3. Nf3 Nc6 4. Nxd4 e6 5. Nc3 Qc7 6. Nxc6 bxc6 7. Bd3 Nf6 8. 0-0 Bd6 9. h3 Bb7 10. f4 e5!? Transformations of the central pawn structure are common in many variations of the Sicilian, and handling them well can be extremely challenging. 11. f5?! White stumbles. Black will now expand in the center and concentrate his fire on the e-pawn. Better was 11. Qe1, keeping some

tension in the center. **11. ... h6 12. Be3 Be7 13. Kh1 0-0 14. Bg1 d5 15. Bh2 d4 16. Ne2 c5 17. b3 Nxe4 18. Bxe4 Bxe4 19. Ng3 Bb7**



Objectively, White's position is now lost, but he gambles everything on a grand bluff. **20. f6!? Bxf6?** And Black falls for it! Instead, 20. ... Qc6!, threatening mate on g2 and defending the f6-square horizontally, is the right way to snuff out White's attack. **21. Rxf6!** Here comes the Exchange sacrifice. Black's chance for a clean win is now gone, but he could still hold the balance with a counter-sacrifice. **21. ... gxf6 22. Nf5** The moment of truth. Black must now try 22. ... Bxg2+, which

leads to obscure complications.

22. ... Bc8?? Such things happen in blitz and bullet! **23. Qg4+, Black resigned.**

Computers can also “see” the value of putting a rook on f6 in the ... h7-h6 structures. Here is a nice finish from a game between two strong bots.

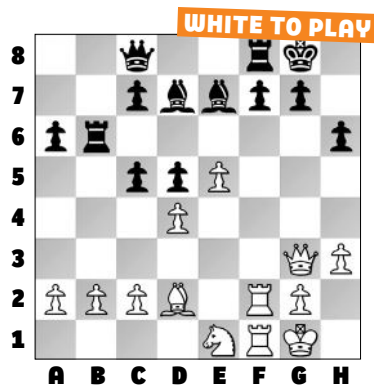
VIENNA GAME (C29)

DarkOnBot (2835)

GarboBot (2342)

Lichess.org, 2025

1. Nc3 Nf6 2. e4 e5 Transposing into a Vienna Game. **3. f4 d5 4. fxe5 Nxe4 5. Nf3 Nc6** Perhaps the computers are out of book already — 5. ... Bc5 6. d4 Bb4 is the recommended path for Black to equalize. **6. Bb5 a6 7. Bxc6+ bxc6 8. 0-0 Be7 9. Na4 Bg4 10. d3 Nc5 11. Nxc5 Bxc5+ 12. d4 Be7 13. h3 Be6 14. Qe1 0-0 15. Qc3 Bd7 16. Rf2 h6 17. Bd2 Qc8?! 18. Rf1 Rb8 19. Ne1 Rb6?** Black is fiddling around on the queenside while White’s pieces flow to the kingside. **20. Qg3 c5** Apparently, this was the point: Black’s rook now has a view across the third rank. But the structure is just brittle enough, with White’s pin on the g-file and Black’s queen distracted from the defense of f6, to allow the crushing blow:



21. Rf6! Only this move works. The idea of dropping a whole

piece on the empty f6 square is well-enough known that Victor Charushin wrote an entire book on it entitled *Alekhine’s Block*. Here, it enables White to jam up lines around Black’s king, wall off potential defenders, and break up the pawn cover. The pawn on h6, in particular, is usually a target once the g7-pawn has been deflected. **21. ... Bxf6** Instead, 21. ... Kh8 allows White to make use of his enhanced firepower with **22. Bxh6! gxh6 23. Qf4!** and Black has to start shedding material to delay a mate. **22. exf6 g6 23. Bxh6 Re8 24. Bg7** All is now lost, as the queen needs only to work her way to h8 to deliver the mate, and Black cannot stop this idea. **24. ... Re4 25. Qg5 Bxh3 26. Qh6 Rh4 27. Qxh4 Bg4 28. Qh8 mate.**

Our third example features a slightly offbeat opening.

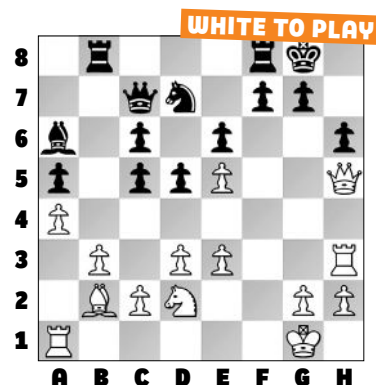
BIRD’S OPENING (A03)

Doctor_check_99 (2551)

Pomegranate_Hearts (2420)

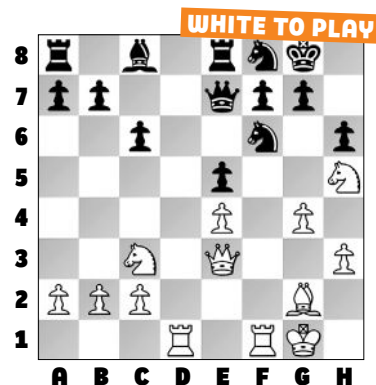
Lichess.org, 2024

1. f4 d5 2. Nf3 Nf6 3. e3 c5 4. b3 Nc6 5. Bb2 e6 6. Bb5 a6 7. Bxc6+ bxc6 In his book *100 Chess Master Trade Secrets*, GM Andy Soltis selects 25 strategic positions as “pnyomes” that every master knows. This structure, the “Bird Bind,” is the first one in the book. Black’s position isn’t objectively terrible, but it is hard to play, while White has a clear plan of putting a knight on e5 and funneling pieces over to the kingside. **8. 0-0 Bd6 9. d3 0-0 10. Nbd2 a5 11. a4 Ba6 12. Ne5 Qc7 13. Rf3 Nd7 14. Rh3 Bxe5 15. fxe5 Rab8 16. Qh5 h6** Without any obvious errors, Black has drifted into a lost position. But how should White break through now?



17. Rf1! Bringing this piece into the attack makes everything clear. **17. ... c4 18. Rf6!** Now everything fails. For example, 18. ... gxf6 is met by 19. Qxh6 and an immediate mate, and 18. ... Nxf6 19. exf6 leaves Black with no good answer to the threat of 20. fxg7 and 21. gxf8=Q+, winning gobs of material. **18. ... Rfe8 19. Qxf7+, Black resigned.** Fittingly, the final blow will fall on h6: 19. ... Kh8 20. Rhxh6+ gxh6 21. Rxh6 mate. If you like the way White’s position unfolded in this game, you should look into Bird’s Opening for White, and also the Dutch for Black.

Here’s a final quiz: What is the best way to break through on the kingside? The answer is below. 📌



21. ... Ng6 22. Qg7 mate. In the online game Argaluno (2559) – LhakpaLa (2384), White crushed it with **20. Rxf6! gxf6 21. Qxh6** White kept the knight, so now there is a mate threat on g7.



Gambits in the Italian

BY JOHN HARTMANN

OVER THE PAST three issues we have studied the Two Knights Defense and the Italian Game. We complete our coverage of 1. e4 e5 2. Nf3 Nc6 3. Bc4 Nf6 this month by investigating two gambits for White: 4. d4 exd4 5. e5 and 5. 0-0.

These two moves might not be favored with grandmasters, but at the club or scholastic level you'll see them more than you'd probably expect. They have been recommended by popular authors, including GM Alex Fishbein, IM Levy Rozman, and the team of GMs Eugene Perelshteyn and Roman Dzindzichashvili. And they can pack a punch if Black doesn't know what they're doing.

Fortunately, you will know what to do after reading this article!

A note before we proceed: This analysis is a bit longer and more in-depth than usual. Unfortunately, theory can't be completely avoided, and knowing how to respond to these two gambits requires a bit of study.

Focus on the ideas behind the moves as much as the moves themselves, and check out the illustrative games at the end of

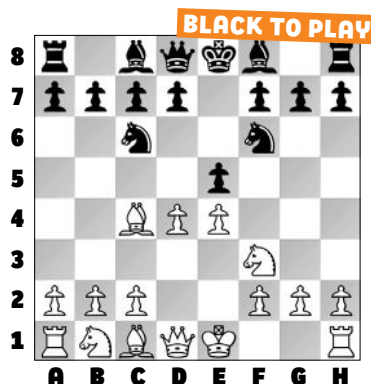
the column. You'll find examples of how White can go wrong in our sidelines, and model play for both colors in our main lines.

Sidelines

1. e4 e5 2. Nf3 Nc6 3. Bc4

It's important to remember that these variations are often reached by the Scotch move order: 3. d4 exd4 and now, instead of 4. Nxd4, White can offer the gambit pawn with 4. Bc4. We'll treat the Scotch in our next issue!

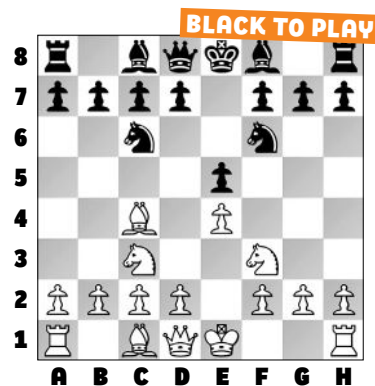
3. ... Nf6 4. d4



This is the third-most popular move in this position after 4. d3 and 4. Ng5, but I think it is

even more popular on the club/scholastic level than among masters because it's a decent gambit that can be reached through a few move orders.

Take note of **4. Nc3?!**, as this is seen very often!



Here Black can equalize (or better) immediately with the "fork trick"

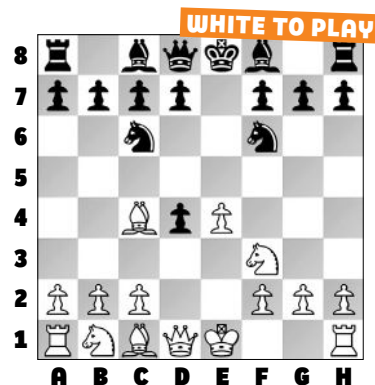
4. ... Nxe4! 5. Nxe4 d5! 6. Bd3 dxe4

7. Bxe4 Bd6, with easy equality.

Some will try to make the best of the situation with **5. Bxf7+? Kxf7 6. Nxe4!** but Black takes over after **6. ... d5 7. Ng5+ Kg8!** followed by ...

h7-h6 and ... Bc8-g4 with a huge advantage. Control of the center is more important than the poor placement of the black king.

4. ... exd4



5. Nxd4?!

This is the best move other than 5. e5 and 5. 0-0, but it's not great. Other moves are even worse:

(a) **5. Bxf7+?** doesn't make sense. After **5. ... Kxf7 6. Ng5+** the black

king goes to e8 or g8 and White has no attack.

(b) **5. c3?** can be met with **5. ... Nxe4** and if **6. Qb3 Qf6!** defends the f-pawn.

(c) After **5. Ng5?!** Black has the standard **5. ... d5!** push. Black might already be better after **6. exd5 Qe7+! 7. Kf1 Ne5.**

Back to 5. Nxd4. Black gets a good position with:

5. ... Nxe4! 6. Bxf7+

White plays for tactics, but they don't quite work out.

(a) **6. Nxc6** is more common, but Black gets a great position with **6. ... bxc6!** with the idea of ... d7-d5, i.e., **7. Qe2 d5.**

Other moves are no better: (b) **6. 0-0 d5!**; (c) **6. Qe2? Nxd4 7. Qxe4+ Qe7**; and (d) **6. Qf3?! d5!.**

6. ... Kxf7 7. Qh5+ g6 8. Qd5+ Kg7

9. Nxc6

White loses the right to castle after **9. Qxe4? Bb4+!**.

9. ... Qe8!

Better than **9. ... bxc6** **10. Qxe4 d5** **11. Qd4+ Kf7.**

10. Qe5+ Qxe5 11. Nxe5

Black's bishop pair gives good hope for the future.

5. e5

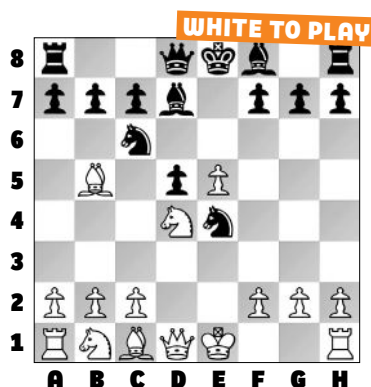
1. e4 e5 2. Nf3 Nc6 3. Bc4 Nf6 4. d4 exd4 5. e5 d5!

Black strikes back in the center with this typical pawn push. Now **6. exf6? dxc4** **7. 0-0 Qxf6** is terrible for White, so White almost always decides to pin the c6-knight instead.

6. Bb5 Ne4

This puts the knight on a strong square in the center.

7. Nxd4 Bd7



Breaking the pin and defending the knight again.

7. ... Bc5 is a sharper way to play the position because it offers a gambit pawn or two. If you want to investigate it, go ahead, but it requires memorization and it's not clear that it's any better than **7. ... Bd7.**

8. Bxc6

The strongest move in the position.

Taking the other way with (a) **8. Nxc6?! bxc6 9. Bd3** is met with **9. ... Qh4! 10. 0-0** (**10. Bxe4? Qxe4+** wins material) **10. ... Bc5** and now the common **11. Bxe4?!** gives Black a good position after **11. ... Qxe4 12. Nc3 Qg6.**

(b) **8. 0-0** allows **8. ... Nxd4! 9. Bxd7+ Qxd7 10. Qxd4 Bc5! 11. Qd3** and Black can castle to either side with a good game.

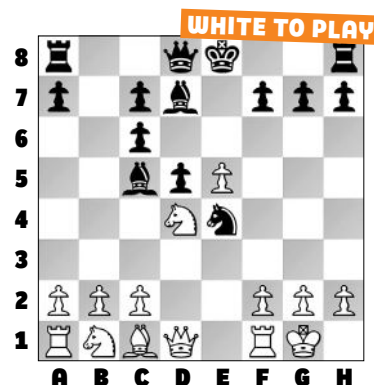
(c) Finally, and just for the record, **8. f3?** loses to the thematic **8. ... Qh4+.**

8. ... bxc6 9. 0-0

9. Be3?! **Bc5** transposes to our main line, but Black can also try **9. ... c5!** immediately to get the central pawns rolling. It's a common idea in these positions.

9. ... Bc5

Attacking the knight and indirectly pressuring f2.



10. f3

Probably White's best move here, but why?

The idea is that White wants to strengthen the center with (a) **10. f4?**, but this allows Black to take over with **10. ... Bg4!** deflecting the queen; if **11. Qd3 Be2! 12. Qxe2 Bxd4+** wins material. So instead White "loses a tempo" to attack the knight, winning a tempo to play **f3-f4** on the next move!

What else can White try?

(b) **10. Be3** is less forcing, leaving Black the time to choose how to set up. Here are two ideas:

(b1) **10. ... Bb6** frees the c5-square for a pawn or knight: **11. Nd2** (**11. f3 Nc5** and the knight heads to e4 or e6) **11. ... Nxd2 12. Qxd2 c5 13. Nb3 d4.**

(b2) Black can also attack the e-pawn with **10. ... Qe7**. If **11. f3** Black can play **11. ... Nd6! 12. Bf2 Nf5**, while **11. Re1 0-0** (not **11. ... Qxe5? 12. f3**) **12. f3 Ng5 13. Qd2 f6!** defends the knight and opens lines to attack the white king.

(c) **10. c3** is slow, allowing Black to carry out the thematic plans: **10. ... Bb6 11. f3 Nc5! 12. Be3 0-0** and Black is already slightly better.

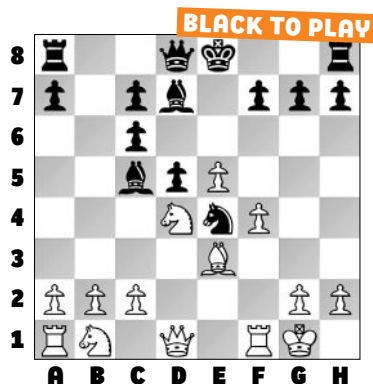
(d) **10. Nc3?!** lets Black double White's pawns for no good reason: **10. ... Nxc3 11. bxc3 0-0 12. Be3 Qe7.**

10. ... Ng5 11. f4

Now **11. Be3 Bb6 12. f4 Ne4** transposes to our main line. But **11. Be3 Qb8?!** would be a miss

here: 12. Nd2 Qxb2? 13. N2b3 and White has great play for the pawn.

11. ... Ne4 12. Be3

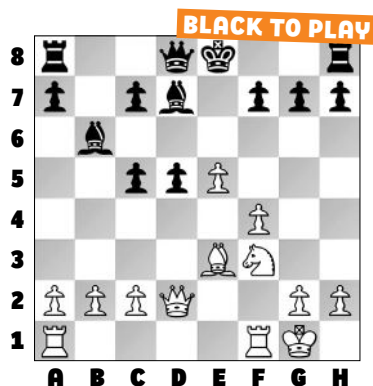


12. ... Bb6

A key idea to remember, enabling the central pawns to get moving with ... c6-c5 and eventually ... d5-d4. This can happen a lot in this variation. Meanwhile, White will attempt to attack the black kingside with the e- and f-pawns.

This move order gives Black the chance to vary with 12. ... Qb8 when the position can get messy. I think the bishop retreat is simpler and just as good.

13. Nd2 Nxd2 14. Qxd2 c5 15. Nf3



The best square for the knight, supporting the center pawns and gumming up the b7-g2 diagonal.

Worse is (a) 15. Nb3 d4! 16. Bf2 Bb5! 17. Rfe1 Qd5! when Black has pressure on the long diagonal and the b3-knight is offside, while (b) 15. Ne2 d4 16. Bf2 0-0 followed by

... Bd7-c6 and perhaps ... Qd8-d5 leaves Black fully equal.

15. ... Bf5!?

Shifting plans and trying to slow down White's kingside pawn push.

The older way of playing this position is 15. ... d4 16. Bf2 Bc6, but in this line the knight shows its value on f3. After 17. f5!? Bxf3 18. gxf3 Qd5 19. Bh4 it's objectively equal, but I think White's attacking chances are good in a practical game.

16. c3

This is strongest. It tries to prevent ... d5-d4 and has a second idea behind it.

White can also try to avoid ... d5-d4 with (a) 16. Bf2 when 16. ... 0-0 is equal. White can try to attack the b6-bishop with 17. a4 but it's safe after 17. ... a5. The "threat" to the d5-pawn isn't real after 18. Rad1 because Qd2xd5 can be met with ... Bf5xc2.

(b) 16. Rad1 allows Black to gain space in the center with 16. ... d4 17. Bf2 Qd5.

(c) 16. a4 tries to trap the bishop, but this is easily met with 16. ... a5 17. c3 0-0.

16. ... 0-0 17. b4!?

Trying to break down the central pawns. Other moves are not hard to meet: (a) 17. a4 a5; (b) 17. Rad1 c6 followed by ... Qd8-e7, freeing the bishop from the defense of c5; (c) 17. Qf2 Qe7, defending the c5-pawn.

Now, Black gets an equal game after one of two moves.

17. ... Qe7

Or 17. ... cxb4 18. cxb4 Be4.

18. bxc5 Bxc5 19. Rae1 Rad8

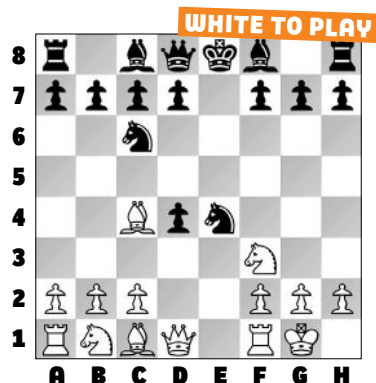
Here the pawn sacrifice 19. ... Bb6!? 20. Qxd5 Rfd8 is interesting.

20. Bxc5 Qxc5+ 21. Nd4

The position is complicated but even.

5. 0-0

1. e4 e5 2. Nf3 Nc6 3. Bc4 Nf6 4. d4 exd4 5. 0-0 Nxe4



Black can also defend the "Max Lange Attack" with 5. ... Bc5, but I think taking the e4-pawn is Black's best choice.

6. Re1

Pinning the knight.

White can offer more material with 6. Nc3?!, but Black can simply take with 6. ... Nxc3! (6. ... dxc3?! 7. Bxf7+ Kxf7 8. Qd5+ is good for Black according to the engine, but it's not comfortable for a human player to have the king running around!) 7. bxc3 Be7! blocking the e-file and preparing to castle. After 8. cxd4 d5 9. Bb5 0-0 Black is slightly better.

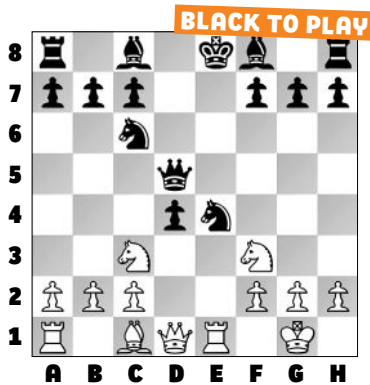
6. ... d5

Defending the knight with our favorite move in 1. e4 e5 openings!

7. Bxd5

The ancient 7. Nc3 is the Canal Variation. Black gets a good game after 7. ... dxc3 8. Bxd5 Be6! 9. Bxe4 (note that 9. Rxe4? Ne7! wins material) 9. ... Qxd1 10. Rxd1 cxb2 11. Bxb2 f6.

7. ... Qxd5 8. Nc3



This is the key position in the 5. 0-0 lines. White attacks the queen and the knight and will get the piece back with excellent development. Now Black has to choose where to put the queen. There are plenty of options (8. ... Qh5, 8 ... Qd8, even 8. ... Qd7 — but not 8. ... Qc4? 9. Nd2!) but I'll recommend a new idea in an old line.

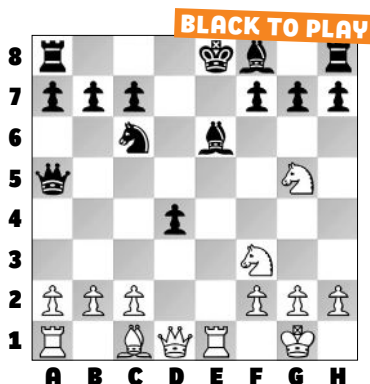
8. ... Qa5 9. Nxe4

9. Rxe4+?! Be6 10. Nxd4 0-0-0 is very good for Black.

9. ... Be6!?

The best way to get a sharp game in this variation. 9. ... Be7 10. Bg5 0-0 11. Bxe7 Nxe7 12. Nxd4 Qb6 is equal but dry.

10. Neg5



With a two-fold attack on the pinned e6-bishop. Now Black gives the pawn back to complete

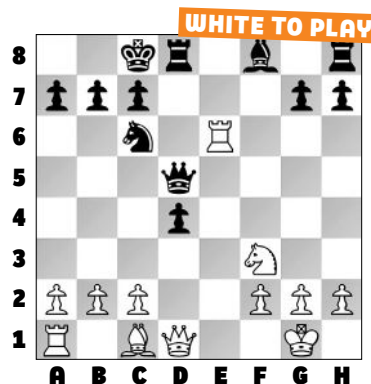
development.

(a) **10. Bd2** gives Black plenty of choice as to where to move the queen. I like **10. ... Qf5 11. Bg5** (stopping castling) **11. ... Bd6 12. Nxd4 Nxd4 13. Qxd4 0-0 14. Nxd6 Qxg5 15. Ne4** (15. Nxb7? Bd5) **15. ... Qd5 16. Qxd5 Bxd5 17. Nc3 Be6**, when Black has the bishop-versus-knight imbalance to play with. It's not much, but it's something.

(b) Some have fallen for **10. Nxd4? Nxd4 11. Qxd4? Qxe1 mate** — hopefully not you!

(c) **10. Bg5** stops Black from castling, and there's a little trap. After **10. ... h6 11. Bh4**, 11. ... g5 allows 12. Nf6+ Ke7 which is a bit unclear after 13. b4 Qf5 (13. ... Qxb4?? 14. Nd5+) 14. b5, but **11. ... Bb4!** is good for Black.

10. ... 0-0-0! 11. Nxe6 fxe6 12. Rxe6 Qd5!



The main move in this position is 12. ... Bd6. There's lots of theory after 13. Bg5 Rde8 14. Qe2 Kd7 15. Rxe8 Rxe8 16. Qd3, but I think our main line is a lot more promising, and it is definitely less well known.

The idea is to centralize the queen and use Black's active pieces to pressure White's position. The rooks will come to the kingside and aim at the king, and Black will look for pawn breaks/sacrifices with ... d4-d3 and ... g7-g5-g4 to open lines.

13. Qe2

The most common move, defending the rook. Other moves are worse: (a) **13. Re1** hands Black the initiative after **13. ... Bd6 14. Bg5 Rdf8**, while (b) **13. Qe1** allows **13. ... Nb4!? 14. Re2 d3 15. cxd3 Nxd3 16. Qc3 Bc5**.

13. ... h6

One of a number of good moves for Black. Our move stops Bc1-g5 and prepares ... g7-g5-g4. Black will develop the f8-bishop and bring a rook to the f-file. It may be possible to sacrifice the d-pawn with ... d4-d3 to give the black bishop more room on the dark squares.

Now White tends to develop the c1-bishop to one of two squares.

14. Bd2

14. Bf4?! is weaker: 14. ... g5 15. Bg3 d3! 16. cxd3 g4 17. Rxc6 (17. Ne1 Nd4!) 17. ... Qxc6 18. Ne5 Qe6 is nice for Black.

14. ... Bc5

Another idea: 14. ... g5 15. Qe4 Bg7.

15. a3 d3 16. cxd3 Qxd3 17. Qxd3 Rxd3 18. Bc3 Rhd8!

Black is fully equal. The key idea is 19. Bxg7? Rg8! with sudden pressure on the white king.

ILLUSTRATIVE GAMES

TWO KNIGHTS DEFENSE (C56)

Irina Petrova (2110)

Isak Storme (2397)

Titled Tuesday (6), *Chess.com*, 06.01.2021

1. e4 e5 2. Bc4 Nf6 3. d4 Nc6 4. Nf3 exd4 5. Nxd4 Nxe4 6. Nxc6 bxc6

7. Qd4 d5 8. Bd3 Qf6 9. Qxf6 Nxf6
10. 0-0 Bd6 11. Re1+ Be6 12. Nc3
Kd7 13. Be3 c5 14. Bg5 h6 15. Bxf6
gxf6 16. Rad1 Rhg8 17. Bb5+ c6 18.
Ba4 Kc7 19. Ne2 Rab8 20. b3 Rb4 21.
Ng3 Rg5 22. a3 Rbg4 23. c3 h5 24. f3
Rh4 25. b4 Bxg3 26. hxg3 Rxg3 27.
bxc5 Rxa4, White resigned.

TWO KNIGHTS DEFENSE (C56)

John Yates

Jochen Wittmann

Oxford Open (3), Oxford, 1998

1. e4 e5 2. Bc4 Nf6 3. d4 exd4 4. Nf3
Nc6 5. Nxd4 Nxe4 6. Bxf7+ Kxf7 7.
Qh5+ g6 8. Qd5+ Kg7 9. Nxc6 Qe8
10. Qe5+ Qxe5 11. Nxe5 Bc5 12. 0-0
Re8 13. Nd3 Bb6 14. c4 d6 15. Nd2
Bf5 16. Nb4 c6 17. a3 a5 18. Na2
Nxf2 19. Rxf2 Re2 20. c5 Bxc5 21.
b4 Bxf2+, White resigned.

TWO KNIGHTS DEFENSE (C55)

GM Shakhriyar Mamedyarov (2767)

GM Wesley So (2767)

Chess.com, 10.03.2019

1. Nc3 Nc6 2. e4 e5 3. Nf3 Nf6 4.
Bc4 Nxe4 5. Bxf7+ Kxf7 6. Nxe4 d5
7. Neg5+ Kg8 8. d3 h6 9. Nh3 g5 10.
Nhg1 Bg7 11. c3 Bf5 12. Ne2 e4 13.
Nfd4 Nxd4 14. Nxd4 Bxd4 15. cxd4
exd3 16. 0-0 Kg7 17. h4 Qf6 18. Qf3
Be4 19. Qg3 Qd6 20. Qg4 Raf8 21.
hxg5 hxg5 22. f4 Qg6 23. Bd2 Rh4
24. Qg3 Qh5 25. Kf2 Rg4 26. Rh1
Rxg3 27. Rxh5 Rxg2+ 28. Ke1 Rg1+,
White resigned.

TWO KNIGHTS DEFENSE (C56)

GM Gawain Jones (2661)

GM Erwin L'Ami (2618)

Remco Heite (1), Wolvega, 11.14.2014

1. e4 e5 2. Nf3 Nc6 3. Bc4 Nf6 4. d4
exd4 5. e5 d5 6. Bb5 Ne4 7. Nxd4
Bd7 8. Bxc6 bxc6 9. 0-0 Bc5 10.
f3 Ng5 11. Be3 Bb6 12. f4 Ne4 13.
Nd2 Nxd2 14. Qxd2 c5 15. Nf3 d4
16. Bf2 Bc6 17. a4 a5 18. f5 Qd5
19. Qg5 h6 20. Qxg7 0-0-0 21. Qf6
Rhg8 22. Bg3 c4 23. Kh1 h5 24. b3
cxb3 25. cxb3 d3 26. Qh6 Kb7 27.
Qd2 Rg4 28. b4 Rxb4 29. Qg5 Rh8
30. Qg7 Qd8 31. e6 h4 32. Be5 Rg8
33. Qxf7 h3 34. Bg3 Rb2 35. gxh3
Qd5 36. Qh5 Rg5 37. Qxg5 Qxf3+
38. Rxf3 Bxf3 mate.

TWO KNIGHTS DEFENSE (C56)

Mark Rich (2166)

Grant Bucher (2012)

Great Britain Ch (3), Canterbury,
07.28.2010

1. e4 e5 2. Nf3 Nc6 3. d4 exd4 4.
Bc4 Nf6 5. e5 d5 6. Bb5 Ne4 7. Nxd4
Bd7 8. Bxc6 bxc6 9. 0-0 Bc5 10. f3
Ng5 11. f4 Ne4 12. Be3 Qe7 13. Nd2
Nxd2 14. Qxd2 0-0 15. Rae1 Rfb8
16. f5 Bxd4 17. Bxd4 c5 18. f6 Qf8
19. fxg7 Qe7 20. Be3 Be6 21. Bg5
Qd7 22. Bf6 Rxb2 23. Rf4 Rab8
24. Re3 d4 25. Ra3 R8b7 26. Qd3
Rb1+ 27. Kf2 Rc1 28. Qxh7+, Black
resigned.

TWO KNIGHTS DEFENSE (C56)

Uno Wessing

Frank Anderson

Gambit CC Ch (4), Toronto, 1950

1. e4 e5 2. Nf3 Nc6 3. Bc4 Nf6 4. d4
exd4 5. 0-0 Nxe4 6. Re1 d5 7. Bxd5
Qxd5 8. Nc3 Qa5 9. Nxe4 Be6 10.
Bg5 h6 11. Bh4 Bb4 12. Re2 g5 13.
a3 Be7 14. Bg3 0-0-0 15. b4 Qd5
16. Ned2 Rhe8 17. Nb3 Bg4 18. Qe1
Bxf3 19. gxf3 f5 20. Be5 d3 21. Rd1
dxe2 22. Rxd5 Rxd5 23. Qxe2 Rxe5
24. Qc4 Bd6 25. b5 Re1+ 26. Kg2

Ne5 27. Qd5 Ng6 28. Qxf5+ R1e6
29. f4 Nh4+, White resigned.

TWO KNIGHTS DEFENSE (C56)

Max Euwe

CH Piccardt

Amsterdam (3), 1925

1. e4 e5 2. Nf3 Nc6 3. Bc4 Nf6 4. d4
exd4 5. 0-0 Nxe4 6. Re1 d5 7. Bxd5
Qxd5 8. Nc3 Qa5 9. Nxe4 Be6 10.
Neg5 0-0-0 11. Nxe6 fxe6 12. Rxe6
Qd5 13. Qe2 d3 14. cxd3 Qxd3 15.
Bg5 Qxe2 16. Rxe2 Rd5 17. Re8+
Kd7 18. Rae1 Bb4 19. Rxh8 Bxe1
20. Nxe1 Rxg5 21. Rxh7 Nd4 22. h4
Rg6 23. h5 Rg5 24. h6 Ke6 25. hxg7
Kd6 26. Rh6+ Ke7 27. Rh7 Kd6 28.
Nd3 Ne6 29. Rh6 Ke7 30. f4 Rg3
31. f5 Nxg7 32. f6+ Kf7 33. Ne5+
Ke6 34. f7+ Ke7 35. Rh8, Black
resigned.

TWO KNIGHTS DEFENSE (C56)

Peter Schulze

Peter Leisebein

Correspondence, 1989

1. e4 e5 2. Nf3 Nc6 3. d4 exd4 4. Bc4
Nf6 5. 0-0 Nxe4 6. Re1 d5 7. Bxd5
Qxd5 8. Nc3 Qa5 9. Nxe4 Be6 10.
Neg5 0-0-0 11. Nxe6 fxe6 12. Rxe6
Qd5 13. Qe2 h6 14. Bf4 g5 15. Bg3
d3 16. cxd3 g4 17. Rxc6 Qxc6 18.
Ne5 Qe6 19. Qe3 Bd6 20. Qxa7 Bxe5
21. Qa8+ Kd7 22. Qa4+ Ke7 23. Re1
Rd5 24. Qb3 c5 25. Qxd5 Qxd5 26.
Rxe5+ Qxe5 27. Bxe5 Rd8 28. Kf1
Rxd3 29. Ke2 Rd5 30. Bf4 h5 31. f3
Ke6 32. h4 gxh3 e.p. 33. gxh3 Rf5
34. Bd2 b5 35. a3 Kd5 36. f4 Ke4 37.
b3 Rf6, White resigned.

With this we complete our
coverage of White's options after
3. Bc4. In our next issue we'll turn
to 3. d4 — the Scotch. ♠

1.

BLACK TO PLAY



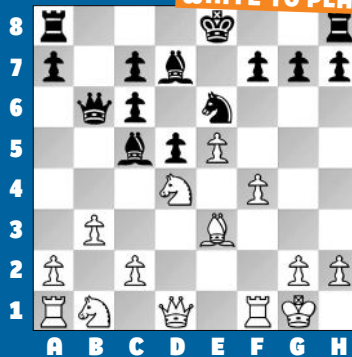
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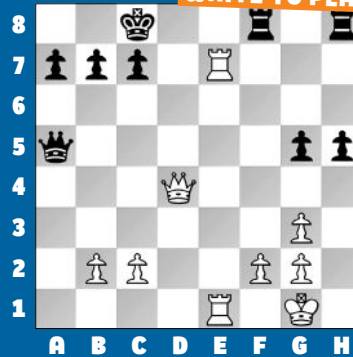
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WHITE TO PLAY



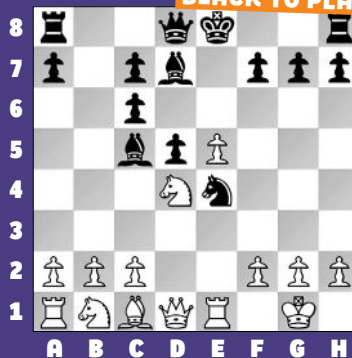
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WHITE TO PLAY



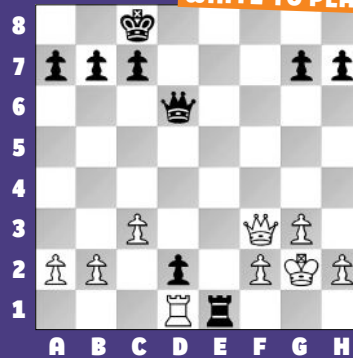
5.

BLACK TO PLAY



6.

WHITE TO PLAY



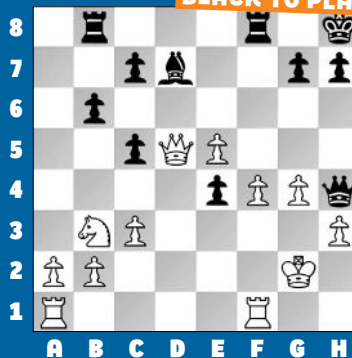
7.

WHITE TO PLAY



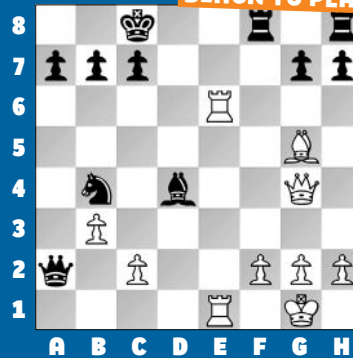
8.

BLACK TO PLAY



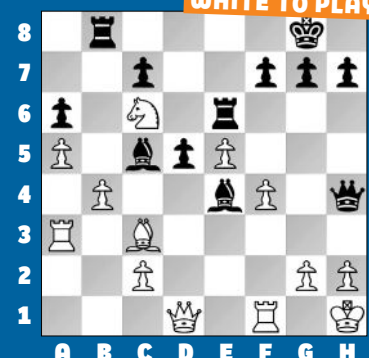
9.

BLACK TO PLAY



10.

WHITE TO PLAY



GAMBITS IN THE ITALIAN

The positions after 1. e4 e5 2. Nf3 Nc6 3. Bc4 (or 3. d4 exd4 4. Bc4 Nf6) 3. ... Nf6 4. d4 exd4 5. e5 or 5. 0-0 are lots of fun if you like tactical chess. Both sides have plenty of chances to win with flair.

These 10 positions are all drawn from internet blitz games in the openings analyzed in "In Session." They generally move from easier to tougher, but be warned: It's not all checkmates and won queens. Sometimes you just have to find the best move, whatever it might be.

Keep your eyes open and check your answers on page 23.



THE SCENE AT SUPERNATIONALS

All the fun, and games from the K-1 through K-5 winners

BY JOHN HARTMANN



SUPERNATIONALS VIII WAS a blast! More than 4,500 players from across the country came to Orlando in May to test themselves in blitz, bughouse, and classical chess. Some players brought home medals — maybe you were one of them!

Just in case you didn't get to play, here's a recap of what happened.

The B's

National scholastics always begin with bughouse and blitz. This year's K-12 champions were teacher and student! IM Nico Chasin and third-grader Ian Avery Singh finished first with a score of $8\frac{1}{2}/10$. Two Californians — Suyuan Gui and CM Ethan Guo — were a perfect 10/10 in the K-8 Bughouse, while Aakash Jani and CM Tariq Yue won the K-6 at 9/10.

In what would become a theme for the weekend, Chasin also won the K-12 blitz with a score of 11/12, and his bughouse partner Singh won the K-3 Blitz! The K-8 blitz title went to Florida's own Oscar Izzy Williams, while there was a tie for first in the K-6 between Yue and another Floridian, Vivan Mulay.

The P's

This year's SuperNationals also featured the first-ever National Puzzle Championship in partnership with *Chesskid.com*! Some 275 competitors raced each other to solve the most puzzles in 15 minutes on brand-new *Chesskid* accounts.

Congratulations to CM Rohan Rajaram and Elliot Goodrich, our first National Puzzle Champions!



IM Nico Chasin
and Ian Singh



Guests and Simuls

There are always titled guests at national scholastics, and this year five of America's best — **WGM Tatev Abrahamyan**, **GM Awonder Liang**, **GM Elshan Moradiabadi**, **IM Carissa Yip**, and special guest **GM Leinier Dominguez** — were on hand for blitz, lectures, and simultaneous exhibitions.

The tandem simuls were especially interesting to watch. Two of the guests would take turns making moves against 30 young players, but the two teams had very different attitudes towards the events. Abrahamyan and Liang were relaxed, letting their opponents take up to five passes per game, but Moradiabadi and Yip were out for blood! They moved fast and only let players have one pass for the whole game.

The Girls Club

The Girls Club is a place where girls and their families can hang out, have their games analyzed, and meet other chessplaying girls. This year's Girls Club was sponsored by the Susan Polgar Foundation, and former women's world champion GM Susan Polgar was on hand to talk chess!

The Main Event

With all this fun, you might think that SuperNationals was a chess vacation. But things got serious

on Friday when the first classical games got under way.

There's no way we can cover all 26 sections — this magazine would be huge! — so we've split our reporting. Here we'll congratulate the winners of the K-1, K-3, and K-5 Championships, and we'll bring you their favorite games. For the K-6, K-8, and K-12 Championships, check out the September issue of *Chess Life*. The digital version of the magazine is available to every US Chess member!

K-1

At 1797, top seed Mehmet Yilanli outranked the number two player in the K-1 Championship by nearly 400 rating points. This made him the favorite to win the title, but everyone knows that there are no easy games at Nationals! In the end Yilanli scored a perfect 7/7 to take first place. Here's his favorite game from the event.

LONDON SYSTEM (D00)

Mehmet Yilanli (1797)

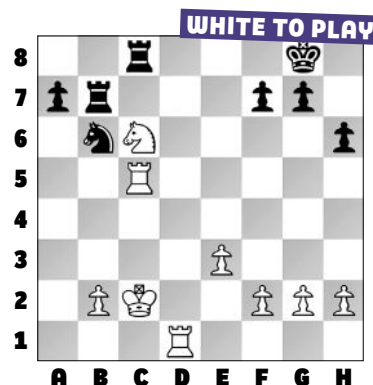
Matthew Wang (1391)

SuperNationals VIII K-1 Championship (6), 05.11.2025

1. d4 d5 2. Bf4 Nf6 3. e3 Bf5 4. c4 c5 5. Qb3 Qb6 6. dxc5 Qxb3 7. axb3 Nc6 8. Nf3 e6 9. Bd6 Bxd6 10. cxd6 Ne4 11. cxd5 exd5 12. Bb5 Nxd6 13. Nc3 0-0 14. Bxc6 bxc6 15. Ne5 Rfb8 16. Nxc6 Rxb3 17. 0-0-0 Be6 18. Nxd5 Nc4 19. Nc7 Rf8 20. Kc2 Rb7 21. Nd5 Bxd5 22. Rxd5 Rc8 23. Rc5 Nb6 24. Rd1 h6

(see diagram top of next column)

25. Ne7+ Rxe7 26. Rxc8+ Nxc8 27. Rd8+ Kh7 28. Rxc8 Rd7 29. b4 Kg6 30. Kb3 Kf6 31. Ra8 Kg6 32. b5 Rc7



33. Kb4 Kf6 34. Ka5 Rb7 35. Ka6 Rb6+ 36. Ka5 Rb7 37. Rc8 Rb6 38. Rc7, Black resigned.

The Trinity School (New York, NY) won the K-1 Championship team title.

K-3

Lukas LeBakken was also the top seed in the K-3 Championship, but with just 25 rating points separating him and second seed Samuel Xu, his path was a lot more dangerous. LeBakken defeated Xu in Round 6 and bughouse / blitz winner Singh in the final round to win the K-3 with 7/7. He sent us his annotated Round 5 win over WCM Abigail Zhou, a key victory on the way to the title.

CARO-KANN DEFENSE (B15)

WCM Abigail Zhou (1893)

Lukas LeBakken (2032)

SuperNationals VIII K-3 Championship (5), 05.10.2025

Annotations by Lukas LeBakken

1. e4

I have played Zhou before and this surprised me.

1. ... c6 2. d4 d5 3. Nc3 dxe4 4. Nxe4 Nf6 5. Nxf6+ exf6 6. c3 Bd6 7. Bd3 0-0 8. Ne2 Re8 9. 0-0 Nd7 10. a4
Not the most natural continuation.

WGM Tatev
Abrahamyan



IM Carissa Yip



Blitz with GM
Dominguez!



Coaches need
nice nails too!



GM Elshan
Moradiabadi



GM Susan Pol-
gar lectures



Liang, Yip,
Blanco, Croxton



WHY I LOVE THE
GIRLS CLUB?



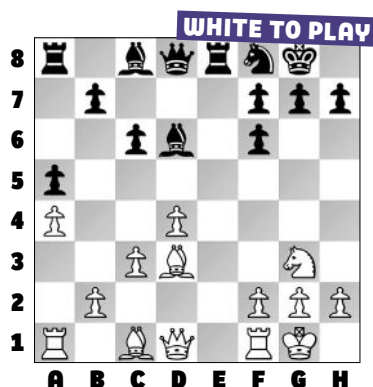
Awonder plays,
Carissa kibitzes



Learning from
WGM Nemcova



10. ... a5 11. Ng3 Nf8



The wrong square for the knight! I think 11. ... Nb6 would have been better, with equal chances for both sides.

12. f4

A good move. The idea is to play f4-f5 and control my knight's activity.

12. ... Qc7 13. c4

13. f5! was strong, offering to sacrifice a pawn. After 13. ... Bxg3 14. hxg3 Qxg3 15. Bf4 Qh4 my queen is stuck and White is much better.

13. ... Ne6! 14. Ne2 h6 15. c5 Bf8 16. f5

Now my next moves are forced.

16. ... Nxd4 17. Nxd4 Bxc5 18. Rf4? 18. Kh1 followed by Qd1-g4 is very good for White.

18. ... Qb6

Pinning the knight looks good, but 18. ... Qe5 might have been even stronger.

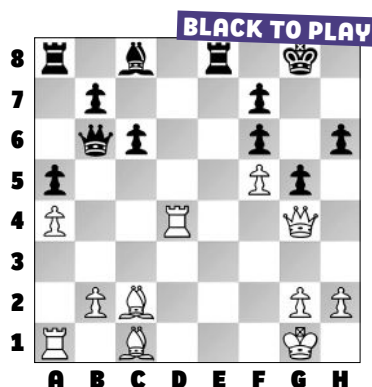
19. Qg4

19. Bf1! would have held everything together.

19. ... Bxd4+?!

19. ... g5! was best. White can't take *en passant* because of the pin, and soon I'll win the knight.

20. Rxd4 g5 21. Bc2?



White's best chance was 21. Bxg5, but then she'd still be down a pawn and in a pin.

21. ... Re1+ 22. Kf2 h5!

Now White's king will be exposed, and I'll be up material.

23. Qxh5 Rxc1 24. Rxc1 Qxd4+ 25. Ke1 Bxf5 26. Qe2

Taking the bishop doesn't help: 26. Bxf5 Re8+ and it's game over.

26. ... Qg1+ 27. Kd2 Rd8+ 28. Bd3 Rxd3+ 29. Qxd3 Qxc1+ 30. Kxc1 Bxd3 31. Kd2 Be4 32. g3 b5 33. Ke3 Bd5 34. axb5 cxb5 35. Kd4 Bc4 36. Kc5 Be2 37. Kb6 a4 38. Ka5 f5 39. Kb4 f4 40. gxf4 gxf4 41. Kc3 f3 42. Kd2 b4 43. h4 a3 44. bxa3 bxa3 45. Kc3 f2 46. Kb3 f1=Q 47. Kxa3 Qb1 48. Ka4 Bc4 49. h5 Qb5+ 50. Ka3 Qb3 mate.

But Singh and Zhou didn't leave empty-handed. Their school, The Speyer Legacy School (New York, NY), won the K-3 team championship!

K-5

The K-5 Championship saw a two-way tie for first place, and neither player was the top seed!

CM Sasha Schaefer and CM Vivan Mulay took two different

paths to their titles. (Co-champions are all champions at US Chess national scholastics.) Schaefer entered the final round as the only player at 6/6, with Mulay and Lev Shargin hot on his heels at 5½. This meant that a draw guaranteed Schaefer a share of first, and after a long, hard-fought battle, that's exactly how his game with Shargin ended.

SICILIAN DEFENSE (B51)

CM Sasha Schaefer (2189)

Lev Shargin (2224)

SuperNationals VIII K-5 Championship (7), 05.11.2025

Annotations by Sasha Schaefer

This was the last round, and if I won or drew then I would be the 2025 K-5 SuperNationals champion. I had a big bowl of rice and beans in my hotel room for lunch while I prepared, and I was very confident that I would not lose.

1. e4 c5 2. Nf3 d6 3. Bb5+ Nd7 4. c3 Ngf6 5. Qe2 a6 6. Ba4 g6 7. 0-0 b5 8. Bc2 Bg7 9. d4 cxd4 10. cxd4

This was all basic preparation here. I had played this line before, with good results.

10. ... Bb7 11. a4

I spent a long time on this move because I was getting confused between lines. I knew that I play Rf1-e1, a2-a4, and Bc2-d3, but I wasn't sure of the timing.

11. ... 0-0 12. Bd3 e6 13. Re1 Qb8

He wants to attack the e4-pawn by putting the bishop on c6 and the queen on b7.

14. Nbd2 Bc6 15. axb5

It was a bit better to keep files closed by playing 15. a5.

15. ... Bxb5 16. b3

If 16. Bxb5 Qxb5 17. Qxb5 axb5 18. Rxa8 Rxa8 Black has a strong open file.

16. ... Rc8 17. Ba3



Now if he tries any ... Rc8-c2 tactics, I have some tactics on my side as well.

17. ... Nh5

I had been hoping he wouldn't play this. He is going to bring his knight to the f4-square and it's hard to do anything about it. After 17. ... Rc2 18. Bxd6 Qxd6 19. Bxb5 I'm up a pawn with a winning position.

18. Bxb5

At first I thought of 18. Qe3, but it fails to 18. ... Rc3 when the bishop is pinned.

I remember considering 18. g3, but I have no idea why I didn't play it. The engine's top recommendation is 18. ... Nhf6, when play could go 19. Nc4 Nxe4!. They will get the piece back, and the engine rates the position after 20. Bxe4 d5 21. Nfe5 dxe4 22. Qxe4 Bxc4 23. bxc4 as equal, but I like the space advantage.

18. ... axb5 19. Bb4

Otherwise he could play ... b5-b4 and then bring his rook to c2.

19. ... Qb6 20. Qe3

I didn't want to go into 20. Qd3?

Nf4 21. Qe3 Bh6 because the queen is trapped on e3 and Black's knight has multiple ways to give a discovered attack.

20. ... Rxa1 21. Rxa1 Nb8

He plays a backward knight move, leaving the d7-square to start a new life on a6 or c6.

22. g4

I want to kick the knight out of the h5-square so that it can't go to f4. Then I can play Qe3-d3, keeping control of the important squares on the c-file.

But 21. ... Nb8 lost control of the center, and I missed the chance to take advantage of it with 22. e5! dxe5 23. dxe5 Qxe3 24. fxe3 Nd7 25. Bd6 when I have an easy position to play and solid plans.

22. ... Nf6 23. h3 Na6

If 23. ... Nc6? 24. Bxd6 initiates a long tactical sequence, leading me to a slightly better position. After 24. ... Nxd4 25. Qxd4 Qxd4 26. Nxd4 Ne8 27. e5 Nxd6 28. N4f3 the d6-knight is misplaced, and I'll play Ra1-d1 and Nd2-e4 next.

24. Ba3

24. Bxd6! doesn't change the evaluation by much, but it still almost forces a draw: 24. ... Qxd6 25. e5 Qb6 26. exf6 Bxf6 27. Qf4 Bg7 28. Ne5 Bxe5 29. dxe5 Nc5 30. Qe3, with Ra1-c1 and Nd2-e4 and massive simplification.

24. ... Nd7

The problem with my position is that I am stuck and he gets to make all the threats. I actually thought that he had the better position here, and if he had moved a bit faster I think he would have won.

25. Rc1 Rxc1+ 26. Bxc1 Nb4 27. Bb2 Nc6 28. Qd3 h6 29. Nb1

My knight was not good on d2, so I want to bring it to a3 or c3 so that it's doing something. Now I am not afraid, and I think that I have a very nice position.

29. ... e5 30. dxe5 Ncxe5 31. Nxe5 Nxe5

I was surprised to see this. He's trying for an attack, but it was much better to take with the bishop: 31. ... Bxe5! 32. Bxe5 Nxe5 33. Qe3 Qxe3 34. fxe3 b4 and even though it is hard for me to lose, he has the much easier position and better winning chances.

32. Bxe5 Bxe5 33. Na3 Bd4

I didn't see this move; I thought he would play 33. ... b4? 34. Nc4 Qc5 35. Qd5, when I would have a very easy-to-play position with big drawing chances.

34. Qd2 Be5 35. Qd3 Bd4 36. Qd2 Qa6 37. Nxb5 Bc5

If 37. ... Qxb5 38. Qxd4 Qxb3 39. Kg2! I will draw with ease.

38. Nc7 Qb6 39. Nd5 Qxb3 40. Kg2!

This move basically makes sure that he can never take my pawn on h3, and I can attack his king without having to worry about my own.

40. ... Qc4 41. Qf4 Qd4 42. h4

I want to try to play h4-h5, opening up the kingside.

42. ... Kg7 43. g5!

A draw is OK! I am forcing a queen trade, leaving me with a drawn endgame.

43. ... hxc5 44. hxc5 Qb2

(see diagram top of next page)

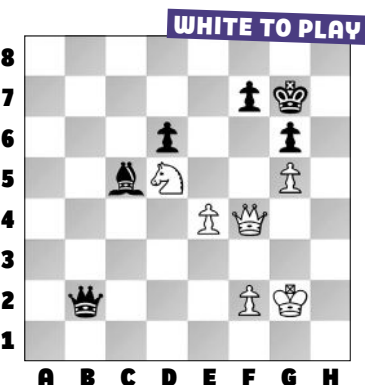
45. Qf6+

I can't win by attacking with 45. Qh4 Kf8 46. Nf6 Ke7 47. Nd5+ Kf8



OUR CHAMPIONS

Starting at top: K-5: Schaefer, Mulay; K-6: Yue, Nemiroff, Santhosh; K-1 team: Trinity School; K-1: Yilanli; K-3 team: Speyer Legacy School; K-3: LeBakken; K-6 team: Speyer Legacy; K-3 team: P.S. 77 Lower Lab



48. Qh6+ Ke8 49. Nf6+ Ke7 50. Nd5+ Ke8. Black's queen is always attacking the f2-pawn, so I can only proceed with checks.

45. ... Qxf6 46. Nxf6 Kf8 47. f4
I might have very slim winning chances, but most likely we will trade some pawns and draw.

47. ... Ke7 48. Kf3 Ba3 49. f5 gxf5
50. exf5 Bb2 51. Nd5+ Kd7 52. Ke4 Be5 53. Ne3 Kc6
A blunder!

54. Ng4 Ba1 55. g6
I could have won with 55. Nh6!

55. ... fxf6 56. fxf6 Kd7 57. Kd5 Ke7 58. Ne3 Kf6 59. Kxd6 Be5+ 60. Kd5 Ba1 61. Nc4 Bc3 62. Ne5 Kg7 63. Ke6 Bb2 64. Kf5 Bxe5 65. Kxe5 Kxg6, draw.

After seven rounds of long games, I was a national champion.

Mulay had to win to reach the podium, and he took care of this task in good fashion with this Round 7 victory over WFM Sophie Li.

RETI OPENING (A09)

CM Vivan Mulay (2170)
WFM Sophie Li (2115)
SuperNationals VIII K-5 Championship (7), 05.11.2025
Annotations by Vivan Mulay

1. Nf3 d5 2. c4 dxc4 3. Qa4+ Nd7

4. Qxc4 a6 5. g3 b5 6. Qc2 Bb7

7. Bg2 c5 8. 0-0 Ngf6 9. a4

I don't want to let her trade light-squared bishops with 9. d4?!. After 9. ... cxd4 10. Nxd4 Bxg2 11. Kxg2 Rc8 Black is already slightly better.

9. ... Rc8 10. axb5 axb5 11. d4

Playing d2-d4 this way, though, is an interesting pawn sacrifice that gives me an active position.

I could play 11. Qb3!? hoping for 11. ... b4? 12. Ne5 Nxe5 (12. ... c4 13. Nxc4) 13. Bxb7 Rb8 14. d4! with a big advantage, but 11. ... Qb6 12. Na3 Bc6 is just equal.

There's also 11. Na3 b4 (11. ... Qb6 12. d3; 11. ... Ra8 12. b4) 12. Nc4 and White can fianchetto the dark-squared bishop next. Or White can just play 11. d3!?

11. ... cxd4

Black could get a solid position, with almost no tactical play for White, after 11. ... e6.

12. Qb3 Qb6 13. Na3

This move threatens to win back the missing pawn. If Black tries to defend the pawn, they'll lag in development.

13. ... Nc5

Now I am forced to go into an endgame. White gets a slight advantage after 13. ... Bc6 14. Rd1!.

14. Qxb5+ Qxb5 15. Nxb5 Nb3

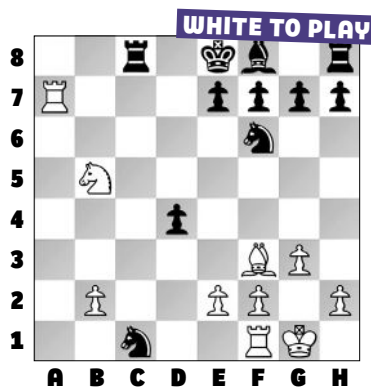
This was Black's idea.

16. Ra7! Bxf3 17. Bxf3 Nxc1?

(see diagram top of next column)

The only move was 17. ... e5!, which results in equality, but not 17. ... Rxc1?? 18. Rxc1 Nxc1 19. Bc6+ Kd8 20. Ra8 mate.

18. Nxd4!!



The threat is 19. Bc6+.

It's equal after 18. Rc7 Rxc7 19. Nxc7+ Kd7 20. Rxc1 e5. I was going to play 18. Nc7+ but after 18. ... Kd8 19. Rxc1 e5 it's also just equal.

18. ... e5

18. ... Nxe2+ 19. Bxe2 is similar to the game.

19. Bc6+ Kd8

After 19. ... Rxc6 20. Nxc6 Nxe2+ 21. Kg2 Black's position is underdeveloped, and White has the initiative.

20. Rd1!

Threatening 21. Ne6 mate. Not 20. Rxc1? exd4.

20. ... Bd6

If 20. ... exd4 21. Rxd4+ mating, and if 20. ... Nd5 21. Rd7+ Ke8 22. Rxd5+ Ke7 23. Rxe5+ wins.

21. Ne6+! fxe6 22. Rxd6+ Nd7 23. Raxd7+

I actually missed a faster mate with 23. Rxd7+ Ke8 24. Re7+ Kf8 25. Rf7+ Kg8 26. Rxd7+ Kf8 27. Raxd7 mate.

23. ... Ke8 24. Rc7+, Black resigned.

Congratulations to P.S. 77 Lower Lab (New York, NY), who brought home the K-5 team championship trophy!

Up Next

Your next chance to play in a US Chess national scholastic comes this December at the K-12 Grade Championships in Spokane, Wash. We'll have a preview of the K-12 in our October issue to fill you in on all the details! 🏆

SUPERNATIONALS VIII AT A GLANCE

MAY 8-11, 2025 | ORLANDO, FL

CHAMPIONSHIP RESULTS

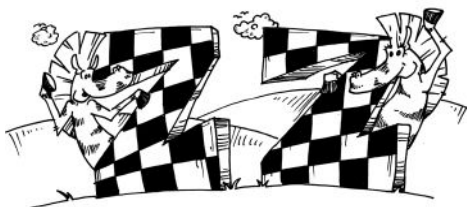
INDIVIDUAL K-12 CHAMPIONSHIP: Joseph Levine (WA), Eric Chang Liu (TX), Brewington Hardaway (NY), Isaac Wang (CA), Nico Werner Chasin (NY), Tanitoluwa Adewumi (NY), William Safraneck (NY), 6/7. **K-8 CHAMPIONSHIP:** Nitesh Cherukuri (MD), 6½. **K-6 CHAMPIONSHIP:** Tariq Yue (PA), 6½. **K-5 CHAMPIONSHIP:** Sasha Milo Schaefer (NY), Vivan Prakash Mulay (FL), 6½. **K-3 CHAMPIONSHIP:** Lukas LeBakken (VA), 7/7. **K-1 CHAMPIONSHIP:** Mehmet Yilanli (OH), 7.

TEAM K-12 CHAMPIONSHIP: Columbia Grammar & Prep (NY), 22 points. **K-8 CHAMPIONSHIP:** Hunter College Campus School (NY), 18. **K-6 CHAMPIONSHIP:** Speyer Legacy School (NY), 20½. **K-5 CHAMPIONSHIP:** P.S. 77 Lower Lab School (NY) & Oak Hall (FL), 20. **K-3 CHAMPIONSHIP:** Speyer Legacy School (NY), 20. **K-1 CHAMPIONSHIP:** Trinity School (NY), 19½.

For a complete list of individual and team winners, visit www.uschess.org/results/2025/sn8

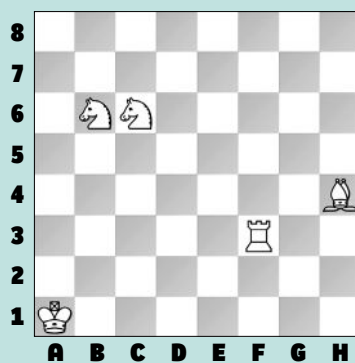
Puzzle Me THIS Puzzle Me THAT

BY JEFF COAKLEY



Hello, kids! We're the zebra twins, Zed and Zephyr, bringing you a new batch of "zany zingers." A little bit of this and a little bit of that. Some of the puzzles have special rules. Others are the standard kind of positions that might happen in your games. Good luck!

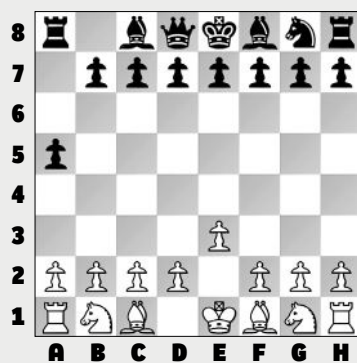
1. Triple Loyd



Place the black king on the board so that

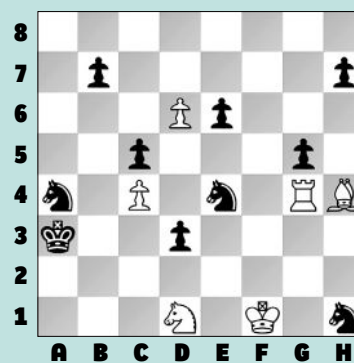
- Black is in checkmate.
- Black is in stalemate.
- White has mate in one.

2. Proof Game



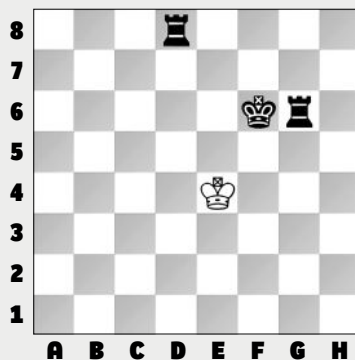
This position was reached after Black's fourth turn. What were the moves?

3. Maze Race



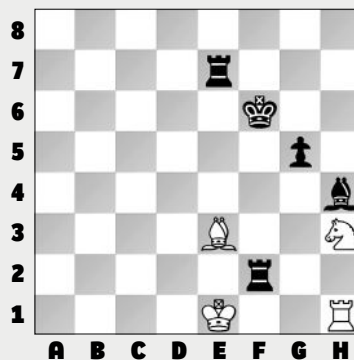
Only one white piece (rook, bishop, or knight) may move. Black does not get a turn. Capture the black king without taking any pieces or moving to a square guarded by Black. Which piece is the fastest? Which is slowest?

4. Inverted Loyd



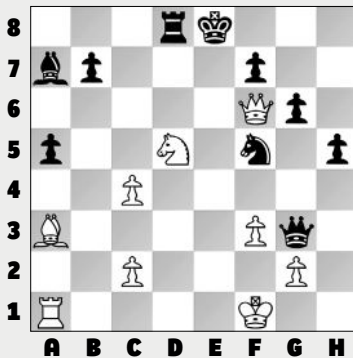
Add three white knights so that White has mate in one.

5. Series-Mate in 6



White plays six moves in a row to checkmate Black. Only the final move may give check. Captures are allowed. Black does not get a turn. White may not place their own king in check, even if they get out of check on the next move.

6. Mate in 3



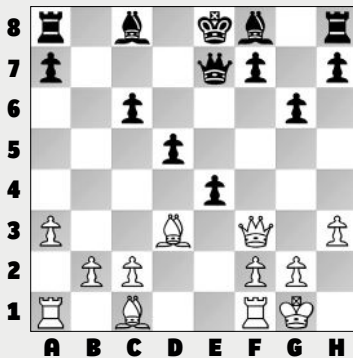
White to play. Mate in three.

7. Combo



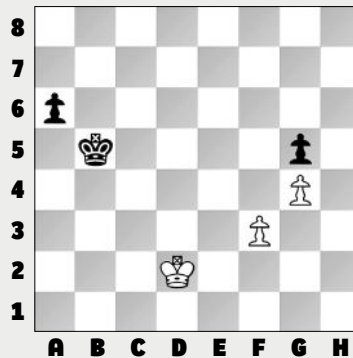
White to play and win material.

8. Defense



White to play and not lose.

9. Endgame



White to play and win.

10. Synthetic game

Make up a game in which White wins with the move 5. Nh5 mate.

Answers:

1) A. Ka3 mate. B. Ke8 stalemate. C. Ke6, allowing 1. Rf6 mate. **2)** 1. e3 a5 2. Qe2 Na6 3. Qxa6 Rb8 4. Qa8 Rxa8. **3)** The rook is fastest. The knight is slowest. Here are the lines: Rg4-g2-h2-h3-f3-f8-a8-a5-b5-b1-a1xa3 (11 moves), Bh4-e1-a5-d8-e7-f8-g7-e5-h2-g1-e3-c1xa3 (12), Nd1-e3-g2-e1-f3-e5-f7-h6-g8-e7-c8-a7-b5xa3 (13). **4)** Add Nf5 Nf8 Ng5 for 1. N8h7 mate. **5)** 1. Nf4 2. Ne6 The knight *unpins* the bishop on e3. 3. Bxf2 4. 0-0 Is any move cooler than castling? 5. Nf8 6. Bd4 Double check and **mate**. 6) Imagine the

white queen is not on the board. Then White wins immediately with 1. Nf6 mate. **1. Qc6+** The queen is sacrificed with check to *clear* square f6. The obvious 1. Re1+? leads to an equal game after 1. ... Kd7 2. Qxf7+ Kc8. **1. ... bxc6 2. Nf6 mate.** If Black declines the sacrifice with **1. ... Rd7**, White can win by **2. Nf6+ Kd8 3. Qxd7 mate** or **2. Qc8+ Rd8 3. Nf6 mate.** **7)** Things look bad for White. Their queen is attacked and Black is up the Exchange. But White achieves a big advantage with the *cross-pin* **1. Bd4.**

The black bishop cannot take the white queen because it is pinned against the king. The bishop is also pinned by the white queen against the black queen. That is, if 1. ... Bxd4?, then 2. Qxc7+. Moving out of the pin with 1. ... Kg8 loses to 2. Bxe5, so Black defends the bishop by **1. ... Kf6**. White then exploits the pinned bishop by **2. Qf4+! Ke7 3. Bxe5**. White has two strong bishops for a rook, plus a much superior position. **8)** The black e-pawn is attacking the white queen and bishop. White escapes the *fork* by **1. Bxe4**. Black can capture the bishop in two ways, but both give White a winning position. **1. ... Qxe4? 2. Qf6 Rg8 3. Qxc6+ Kd8 4. Qxa8** (or 4. Rd1!) and **1. ... dxe4? 2. Qc3**, forking the rook on h8 and pawn on c6, **2. ... f6** (2. ... Bd7 3. Qxh8) **3. Qxc6+ Kf7 4. Qxa8**. Black's best reply is **1. ... Bg7** with an equal game after **2. Bd3**. **9)** Black has a passed a-pawn and White a backward f-pawn. The position after 1. Kc3? Kc5! is winning for Black. The game is equal following 1. Ke3 a5 2. f4 gxf4+ 3. Kxf4 a4. However, White wins with **1. f4!**. After 1. ... gxf4 2.g5, the white pawn queens quickly, so Black plays **1. ... Kc5**. Now 2. fxg5? is adequately defended by 1. ... Kd6. The key idea is **2. f5**, making a *protected passer* which restricts the mobility of the black king. The white king is then free to go and capture the black a-pawn. After **2. ... Kd5 3. Kc3 Kc5 4. Kb3 Kd5** (4. ... Kb5 5.f6!) **5. Kb4 Kd6 6. Ka5 Kc5 7. Kxa6** the game might continue 7. ... Kc6 8. Ka5 Kc5 9. Ka4 Kd5 10. Kb5 Kd6 11. Kc4 Kc6 12. Kd4 Kd6 13. Ke4 Kd7 14. Ke5 Ke7 15. f6+ Kf7 16. Kf5 Kf8 17. Kxg5. **10)** **1. d4 e6 2. Qd3 Ke7 3. Nh3 Kf6 4. Nf4 Be7 5. Nh5 mate.** White's moves can be played in different orders. Black could also play 4. ... Qe7 or 4. ... Ne7.

TOURNAMENT LIFE ANNOUNCEMENTS

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. The Executive Board also 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, effective immediately. Please refer to the Tournament Life Announcement section in *Chess Life* for more information.

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

Nationals

NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP EVENT

2025 US National G/30 and G/60 Chess Championship Tournament

SEPTEMBER 27-28, 2025 — IA TLA# 49959

Site: Holiday Inn & Suites @ Ameristar Address: 2202 River Road, Council Bluffs, IA 51501 Overall Prize Fund: n/a GP Pts: n/a FIDE: N Accessible: N Residency: N Org: Seetharaman Renganathan • chessrockez@gmail.com • www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100089563144798

Grand Prix

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

30th Annual Pacific Coast Open

AUGUST 8-10, 2025 — CA TLA# 48968

Site: Hilton Orange County Airport Hotel Address: 18800 MacArthur Blvd., Irvine, CA 92612 Overall Prize Fund: \$30,000 GP Pts: 150 FIDE: Y Accessible: Y Residency: N Org: Continental Chess • director@chess.us • www.chesstour.com

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

55th Annual Continental Open

AUGUST 14-17, 2025 — MA TLA# 48969

Site: Best Western Royal Plaza Hotel Address: 181 Boston Post Road W, Marlborough, MA 01752 Overall Prize Fund: \$30,000 GP Pts: 150 FIDE: Y Accessible: Y Residency: N Org: Continental Chess • director@chess.us • www.chesstour.com

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

57th Annual Atlantic Open

AUGUST 22-24, 2025 — DC TLA# 49021

Site: Omni Shoreham Hotel Address: 2500 Calvert St. NW, Washington, DC 20008 Overall Prize Fund: \$30,000 GP Pts: 150 FIDE: Y Accessible: Y Residency: N Org: Continental Chess • director@chess.us • www.chesstour.com

GRAND PRIX • ENHANCED GRAND PRIX • JUNIOR GRAND PRIX

15th Annual Central California Open

AUGUST 22-24, 2025 — CA TLA# 49352

Site: Doubletree Hotel Address: 2233 Ventura St., Fresno, CA 93710 Overall Prize Fund: \$10,000 GP Pts: 100 FIDE: Y Accessible: Y Residency: N Org: Continental Chess • director@chess.us • www.chesstour.com

GRAND PRIX • ENHANCED GRAND PRIX • JUNIOR GRAND PRIX

20th Annual Indianapolis Open

AUGUST 22-24, 2025 — IN TLA# 49375

Site: Hilton Garden Inn Indianapolis Airport Address: 8910 Hatfield Drive, Indianapolis, IN 42641 Overall Prize Fund: \$15,000 GP Pts: 100 FIDE: Y Accessible: Y Residency: N Org: Continental Chess • director@chess.us • www.chesstour.com

GRAND PRIX

4th Nashville Summer Classic

AUGUST 22-24, 2025 — TN TLA# 50205

Site: Millennium Maxwell House Hotel Address: 2025 Rosa L Parks Blvd, Nashville, TN 37228 Overall Prize Fund: \$20,000 GP Pts: 60 FIDE: N Accessible: Y Residency: N Org: Nashville Chess Center • director@nashvillechess.org • 6292544737 • ncc.clubexpress.com/content.aspx?page_id=4091&club_id=164844&item_id=2562865

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

91st Southwest Open

AUGUST 28-SEPT. 1, 2025 — TX TLA# 50869

Site: Wyndham Garden McAllen Address: 1921 S 10th St, McAllen, TX 78503 Overall Prize Fund: \$5,000 GP Pts: 120 FIDE: Y Accessible: Y Residency: N Org: David Ortiz • admin@texaschess.org • 8329085462 • https://www.texaschess.org

HERITAGE EVENT • GRAND PRIX • ENHANCED GRAND PRIX • JUNIOR GRAND PRIX • STATE CHAMPIONSHIP EVENT

147th Annual New York State Championship — America's Oldest Annual Tournament!

AUG. 29-SEPT. 1, 2025 — NY TLA# 49022

Site: Albany Marriott Address: 189 Wolf Road, Albany, NY 12205 Overall Prize Fund: \$18,000 GP Pts: 150 FIDE: Y Accessible: Y Residency: N Org: Continental Chess • director@chess.us • www.chesstour.com

HERITAGE EVENT • GRAND PRIX • ENHANCED GRAND PRIX • JUNIOR GRAND PRIX • STATE CHAMPIONSHIP EVENT

2025 Harvey Lerman Florida State Championship

AUG. 29-SEPT. 1, 2025 — FL TLA# 49841

Site: Holiday Inn Resort Address: 3011 Malingate Lane, Kissimmee, FL 34747 Overall Prize Fund: \$11,500 GP Pts: 50 FIDE: Y Accessible: Y Residency: N Org: Boca Raton Chess Club • jon@bocachess.com • 561-302-4377 • www.bocachess.com

HERITAGE EVENT • GRAND PRIX • STATE CHAMPIONSHIP EVENT

2025 Peter P. Lahde Tennessee Open & Blitz Championship

SEPTEMBER 5-7, 2025 — TN TLA# 49640

Site: The Center at Fairfield Glade Address: 128 Stonehenge Dr, Crossville, TN 38558 Overall Prize Fund: \$10,000 GP Pts: 50 FIDE: N Accessible: N Residency: N Org: Cumberland County Chess Club • cumberland-countychessclub@gmail.com • (931) 200-0875

GRAND PRIX • STATE CHAMPIONSHIP EVENT

2025 PA State Game/60 Championship — West

SEPTEMBER 13, 2025 — PA TLA# 50852

Site: William Pitt Union, Univ. of Pittsburgh Address: 5th Ave. & Bigelow Blvd., Pittsburgh, PA 15213 Overall Prize Fund: \$695 GP Pts: n/a FIDE: N Accessible: Y Residency: N Org: Tom M Martinak • martinak_tom@hotmail.com • 412-908-0286 • www.pscfchess.org/clearinghouse/

GRAND PRIX

CFCC 2025 Autumn Open & Scholastic

SEPTEMBER 26-28, 2025 — FL TLA# 50779

Site: Holiday Inn Orlando Lake Buena Vista Address: 13351 State Road 535, Orlando, FL 32821 95821 Overall Prize Fund: \$8,500 GP Pts: 20 FIDE: Y Accessible: Y Residency: N Org: Central Florida Chess Club (CFCC) • info@centralflchess.org • https://www.centralflchess.org/cfcc-2025-autumn-open-and-scholastic-weekend-tournament

GRAND PRIX • ENHANCED GRAND PRIX • JUNIOR GRAND PRIX

14th Annual Hartford Open

OCTOBER 10-12, 2025 — CT TLA# 50123

Site: Sheraton Hartford Hotel At Bradley International Airport Address: 1 Bradley Airport, Windsor Locks, CT 06096 Overall Prize Fund: \$10,000 GP Pts: 60 FIDE: Y Accessible: Y Residency: N Org: Continental Chess • director@chess.us • www.chesstour.com

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

29th Annual Eastern Chess Congress

OCTOBER 24-26, 2025 — NJ TLA# 50642

Site: Westin Princeton at Forrestal Village Address: 201 Village Blvd, Princeton, NJ 08540 Overall Prize Fund: \$25,000 GP Pts: 150 FIDE: Y Accessible: Y Residency: N Org: Continental Chess • director@chess.us • www.chesstour.com

HERITAGE EVENT • GRAND PRIX • ENHANCED GRAND PRIX

2025 Fredericksburg Open

OCTOBER 24-26, 2025 — VA TLA# 50693

Site: Country Inn & Suites by Radisson Fredericksburg

Address: 10358 Patriot Highway, Fredericksburg, VA 22408 Overall Prize Fund: \$4,700 b/70 GP Pts: 20 FIDE: N Accessible: Y Residency: N Org: Mike Hoffpauir, NTD/IA • mhoffpauir@aol.com • 757-846-4805 • www.vachess.org

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

20th Annual Los Angeles Open

NOVEMBER 7-9, 2025 — CA-S TLA# 50643

Site: Hilton Orange County Airport Address: 18800 MacArthur Blvd, Irvine CA 92612 Overall Prize Fund: \$20,000 GP Pts: 120 FIDE: Y Accessible: Y Residency: N Org: Continental Chess • director@chess.us • www.chesstour.com

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

34th Annual Kings Island Open

NOVEMBER 14-16, 2025 — OH TLA# 50644

Site: Embassy Suites Cincinnati NE Address: 4554 Lake Forest Dr, Blue Ash OH 45242 Overall Prize Fund: \$25,000 GP Pts: 150 FIDE: Y Accessible: Y Residency: N Org: Continental Chess • director@chess.us • www.chesstour.com

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

56th Annual National Chess Congress

NOVEMBER 28-30, 2025 — PA TLA# 50757

Site: Loews Hotel Address: 1200 Market St, Philadelphia PA 19107 Overall Prize Fund: \$45,000 GP Pts: 200 FIDE: Y Accessible: Y Residency: N Org: Continental Chess • director@chess.us • www.chesstour.com

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

35th Annual North American Open

DECEMBER 26-30, 2025 — NV TLA# 50756

Site: Horseshoe Casino Resort (formerly Bally's) Address: 3645 Las Vegas Blvd. S, Las Vegas, NV 89103 Overall Prize Fund: \$130,000 GP Pts: 300 FIDE: Y Accessible: Y Residency: N Org: Continental Chess • director@chess.us • www.chesstour.com

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

50th Annual Eastern Open!

DECEMBER 26-29, 2025 — VA TLA# 50760

Site: Hyatt Regency Crystal City Address: 2799 Richmond Highway, Arlington VA 22202 Overall Prize Fund: \$30,000 GP Pts: 150 FIDE: Y Accessible: Y Residency: N Org: Continental Chess • director@chess.us • www.chesstour.com

Regional

◆ DIST. OF COLUMBIA

AUGUST 30-SEPT. 1, 2025 — VA TLA# 50330

2025 (86th) Virginia Closed

See Virginia.

◆ FLORIDA

AUGUST 23, 2025 — FL TLA# 50399

Monthly Chess Challenge at Stetson August 2025

Site: Stetson University Lynn Business Center Ad-

PLEASE NOTE

DEADLINE FOR PRINT TLA SUBMISSIONS

TLAs appearing in *Chess Life Kids* 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.

dress: 345 N. Woodland Blvd., Deland, FL 32720
Overall Prize Fund: n/a **GP Pts:** n/a **FIDE:** N **Accessible:** Y **Residency:** N **Org:** Stephen F Lampkin • chesssteve@gmail.com • 3866829527

SEPTEMBER 26-28, 2025 — FL TLA# 50779
CFCC 2025 Autumn Open & Scholastic
 See Grand Prix.

SEPTEMBER 27, 2025 — FL TLA# 50780
CFCC 2025 Autumn Open - Saturday Night Blitz
Site: Holiday Inn at Lake Buena Vista **Address:** 13351 State Road 535 Orlando, Florida 32821 **Overall Prize Fund:** n/a **GP Pts:** n/a **FIDE:** N **Accessible:** Y **Residency:** N **Org:** Central Florida Chess Club (CFCC) • info@centralfloridachess.org • www.centralfloridachess.org/cfcc-2025-autumn-open-and-scholastic-weekend-tournament

ILLINOIS

SEPTEMBER 26-28, 2025 — MI TLA# 50840
2025 Harold Steen Memorial Cup
 See Michigan.

SEPTEMBER 27, 2025 — IL TLA# 51078
The Marvin Cole Memorial Chess Tournament
Site: Park Forest American Legion Post 1198 **Address:** 1631 Western Ave, Chicago Heights, IL 60411 **Overall Prize Fund:** n/a **GP Pts:** n/a **FIDE:** N **Accessible:** Y **Residency:** N **Org:** Herbert Ferguson • saint21961@yahoo.com • 7089256469

INDIANA

SEPTEMBER 26-28, 2025 — MI TLA# 50840
2025 Harold Steen Memorial Cup
 See Michigan.

IOWA

NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP EVENT
2025 US National G/30 and G/60 Chess Championship Tournament
SEPTEMBER 27-28, 2025 — IA TLA# 49959
 See Nationals

MARYLAND

MARYLAND CHESS TOURNAMENTS (NORTH PENN CHSS 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.MDChess.org for tournament announcements, registration for tournaments, updated wallcharts, live standings, sign up for K-12 & open e-newsletters, lists of coaches & clubs, camp announcements, & news. K-12 MD players who compete in the Varsity section (for players rated 1600+) of 1 of 8+ annual MD-Sweet-16 Qualifiers can qualify for the \$48,000+ scholarship to the University of Maryland, Baltimore County awarded annually. UMB is a perennial top-10 contender for the collegiate national chess championship.

AUGUST 30-SEPT. 1, 2025 — VA TLA# 50330
2025 (86th) Virginia Closed
 See Virginia.

MASSACHUSETTS

REGIONALS
OCTOBER 18, 2025 — MA TLA# 48666
1st Harvest Chess Fest
Site: Florence Civic Center **Address:** 90 Park Street, Florence, MA 01062 **Overall Prize Fund:** \$700 b/30 **GP Pts:** n/a **FIDE:** N **Accessible:** Y **Residency:** N **Org:** Greater Baystate Chess • greater.baystate.chess@gmail.com • 4133560303 • www.greaterbay-statechess.com

MICHIGAN

SEPTEMBER 26-28, 2025 — MI TLA# 50840
2025 Harold Steen Memorial Cup
Site: Crowne Plaza - Auburn Hills **Address:** 1500 Opdyke Rd., Auburn Hills, MI 48326 **Overall Prize Fund:**

\$6,000 **GP Pts:** n/a **FIDE:** Y **Accessible:** Y **Residency:** N **Org:** Edward Mandell • eman1943@aol.com • 2486352375

NEBRASKA

NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP EVENT
2025 US National G/30 and G/60 Chess Championship Tournament
SEPTEMBER 27-28, 2025 — IA TLA# 49959
 See Nationals

NEW JERSEY

AUGUST 23, 2025 — NJ TLA# 47755
Hamilton Chess Club Quads
Site: Switlik Park Pavilion **Address:** Fisher Place/Joe Dimaggio Drive, Hamilton, NJ 08610 **Overall Prize Fund:** \$25 **GP Pts:** n/a **FIDE:** N **Accessible:** Y **Residency:** N **Org:** Edward Sytnik • edmendou@aol.com • 6097582326 • hamiltonchessclub.com

SEPTEMBER 20, 2025 — NJ TLA# 47756
Hamilton Chess Club Quads
Site: Switlik Park Pavilion **Address:** Fisher Place/Joe Dimaggio Drive, Hamilton, NJ 08610 **Overall Prize Fund:** \$25 **GP Pts:** n/a **FIDE:** N **Accessible:** Y **Residency:** N **Org:** Edward Sytnik • edmendou@aol.com • 6097582326 • hamiltonchessclub.com

NEW YORK

JUNIOR GRAND PRIX • STATE CHAMPIONSHIP EVENT
NOVEMBER 15-16, 2025 — NY TLA# 50845
9th Annual New York State Girls Championship!
Site: Columbia Grammar and Preparatory School **Address:** 36 West 93rd Street, New York, NY 10025 **Overall Prize Fund:** \$1,000 **GP Pts:** n/a **FIDE:** N **Accessible:** Y **Residency:** N **Org:** Chess Center Of New York • director@chessgirls.win, chesscentr@gmail.com • www.chessgirls.win

NORTH CAROLINA

AUGUST 30-SEPT. 1, 2025 — VA TLA# 50330
2025 (86th) Virginia Closed
 See Virginia.

OHIO

SEPTEMBER 26-28, 2025 — MI TLA# 50840
2025 Harold Steen Memorial Cup
 See Michigan.

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

SEPTEMBER 26-28, 2025 — MI TLA# 50840
2025 Harold Steen Memorial Cup
 See Michigan.

TENNESSEE

AUGUST 16, 2025 — TN TLA# 50677
Johnson City Swiss
Site: Mulligan's Gaming Pub **Address:** 308 E. Main St, Johnson City, TN 37601 **Overall Prize Fund:** \$350 b/30 **GP Pts:** n/a **FIDE:** N **Accessible:** N **Residency:** N **Org:** Johnson City Chess Club • johnsoncitychessclub@gmail.com • 5619290856

SEPTEMBER 5-7, 2025 — TN TLA# 49640
2025 Peter P. Lahde Tennessee Open & Blitz Championship
 See Grand Prix.

VIRGINIA

HERITAGE EVENT • STATE CHAMPIONSHIP EVENT
AUGUST 30-SEPT. 1, 2025 — VA TLA# 50330
2025 (86th) Virginia Closed
Site: Hilton Garden Inn - Innsbrook **Address:** 4050

Cox Road, Glen Allen, VA 23060 **Overall Prize Fund:** \$5,000 b/90 **GP Pts:** n/a **FIDE:** N **Accessible:** Y **Residency:** Y **Org:** Mike Hoffpauir, NTD/IA • mhoffpauir@aol.com • 757-846-4805 • www.vachess.org

WISCONSIN

STATE CHAMPIONSHIP EVENT
NOVEMBER 8-9, 2025 — MA TLA# 50051
2025-2026 Wisconsin Junior Open
Site: Holiday Inn Manitowoc **Address:** 4601 Calumet Ave., Manitowoc, WI 54220 **Overall Prize Fund:** n/a **GP Pts:** n/a **FIDE:** N **Accessible:** N **Residency:** N **Org:** Steve Erbarch • terranchess@gmail.com • 920-279-5688 • www.wisChess.org

Solutions

PAGE 11 TEST YOUR TACTICS

(1) 17. ... Qd5! This double attack threatens mate and the loose g5-bishop. **PIECE_** **GAMBIT_PLAYER** – donlulas_23, *lichess.org* 2025. (2) 19. ... Be4!, **White resigned**. Pinning the queen to the king and winning material! matartodos – GreAterU, *lichess.org* 2025. (3) With their last move Black brought another piece to attack d4. How should White respond? The game Gerry-Briggs – juandgro, *lichess.org* 2025, went 14. Nf5? Bxe3+ 15. Nxe3 Qxe3+, **White resigned**. But the correct 14. c3 just defends the knight and the position is slightly better for White. (4) Black's back rank isn't weak yet, but White can prepare the back-rank mate with 23. Qd7+! Kb8 24. Re8+. **Black resigned** in light of 24. ... Rxe8 25. Rxe8+ Rxe8 26. Qxe8 mate. Stonith1 – Vlad_Beringov, *lichess.org* 2025. (5) Black uses a typical tactical idea to win material: 10. ... Nxf2! 11. Kxf2 Moving the queen doesn't help: 11. Qd2 Ne4 12. Qe3 Qe7 and another pawn falls. 11. ... Qh4+ and **White resigned** as 12. Kf1 Bxd4 is winning for Black. alex3110 – Elena_Kobra, *lichess.org* 2025. (6) It sure looks like Black is going to promote that pawn! But White can win the d2-pawn with a series of checks: 24. Qf5+ Kd8 Nothing really helps: (a) 24. ... Re6 is met by 25. Rxd2!. (b) 24. ... Qd7 drops the pawn after 25. Qxd7+ Kxd7 26. Rxd2+, and (c) 24. ... Kb8 25. Rxd2! Qxd2?

26. Qf8+ is mate. 25. Qg5+! Kd7? Staying on the d-file leads to ruin. 26. Rxd2!, **Black resigned**. Not 26. Qxd2? Rxd1. Clarlsen (1919) – D4_Decimator, *lichess.org* 2025. (7) Here's an idea you should know: White wins with 15. Bf6! threatening 16. Qg5 with mate to follow. 15. ... Kh8?? There are no great options: (a) The odd-looking 15. ... h6 is best, to stop Qd2-g5, but White gets a strong attack with 16. Re3! Kh7 17. Qd3+ g6 18. Rg3. (b) If 15. ... gxf6 16. exf6 and Black wins the queen or delivers mate, while (c) 15. ... g6 obviously loses to 16. Qh6. 16. Bxg7+! Kxg7 17. Qg5+ Kh8 18. Qf6+ Kg8 19. Re3, **Black lost on time**. Slowhorse55 – Aethiops, *lichess.org* 2025. (8) The white king's position is a little drafty, and Black found a way to win with 22. ... Bxg4! 23. hxg4 Qxg4+ 24. Kh2 and now 24. ... Rf5! lifting the rook to deliver mate. Ze-Prodigy – Zemanski73, *lichess.org* 2025. (9) The tension is thick here! White threatens a discovered check and the d4-bishop is hanging. Is there any way out? 18. ... Kb8? Letting White back into the game, but only if White finds some precise moves. Black is completely winning after the in-between move 18. ... Bxf2+! 19. Kh1 Kb8!! (not 19. ... Bxe1? 20. Re8 mate) when there's no discovered check and Black remains up a piece and a pawn. 19. Qxd4 Nxc2 Now White has to find two precise moves to keep the balance. In the game, they only found the first one. 20. Qd2! Qxb3 21. Bf4?? 21. Qd1! renews the pin and saves the rook! 21. ... Nxe1 22. Bxc7+ Ka8 23. Qxe1? Qxe6! 24. Qxe6 Re8, **White resigned**. TIGERGM33 (2238) – MorbMorb, *lichess.org* 2025. (10) Black threatens ... Re6-h6 with mate to follow, and White has to defend actively. In the game White lost after 22. Nxb8?? Rh6! 23. h3 Qxh3 mate. The only move to survive is 22. Be1! attacking the queen, forcing it to a bad square and earning time to win material. After 22. ... Qh6 there's no rook lift, and 23. Nxb8 is winning for White. mahmood1991 – Classemeence, *lichess.org* 2025.)

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