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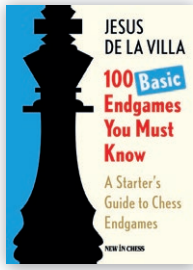


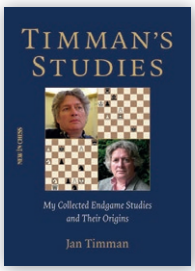
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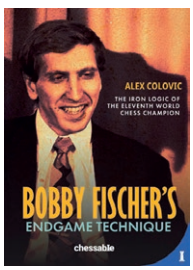
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In *Timman's Studies*, Jan Timman presents 160 of his finest endgame compositions, revealing their origins and creative process. A unique glimpse into the mind of a grandmaster who found artistry and inspiration in endgame studies.

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Paul van der Sterren & Erwin l'Ami

Max Euwe's tenure as World Chess Champion has often been dismissed as a brief intermezzo. This book sets the record straight. Drawing on contemporary sources and modern game analysis, it shows that Euwe truly belonged at the very top – and that for a while he was the strongest player in the world.



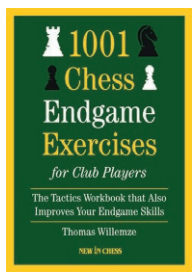


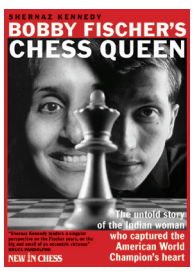
Bobby Fischer's Endgame Technique
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1001 Chess Endgame Exercises for Club Players
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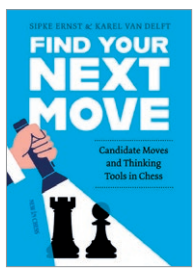


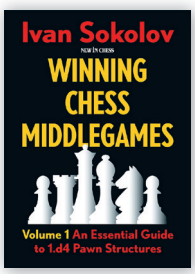
Bobby Fischer's Chess Queen
Shernaz Kennedy

When a young woman from India moves to America and reaches out to Bobby Fischer, it sparks a lifelong bond few ever knew existed. *Bobby Fischer's Chess Queen* is a true story of friendship, resilience, and the hidden heart of a genius. Discover the love that defied distance and fame.

Find Your Next Move
Sipke Ernst and Karel van Delft

The candidate move is perhaps the most elusive concept in chess theory. It seems straightforward and methodical enough: when considering a move, you make a list of 'candidates' in your mind, compare their merits, and make your choice. But how do you determine what a candidate move is, and how do you proceed from there?



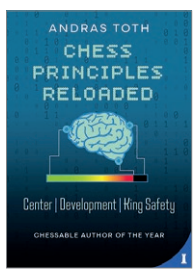


Winning Chess Middlegames – Revised Edition
Ivan Sokolov

Ever wondered why grandmasters take only seconds to see what's really going on in a chess position? It's all about structures, as Ivan Sokolov explains in this groundbreaking book. It addresses the often ignored but extremely important topic of pawn structures, divided into four main types: doubled pawns, isolated pawns, hanging pawns and pawn majorities.

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IM Andras Toth's coaching experience has taught him that a common weakness among ambitious improvers, club players, and even seasoned experts is their failure to fully grasp some basic chess principles or their tendency to neglect them. This book will help make you more confident in your decision-making by reviving the most essential principles of the game.



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Playing It Out
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ON THE **COVER**

Chess is hard. It's hard to find good moves at the board. It's hard to study and not see improvement. It's hard to lose. But chess, as Hans Ree once said, is also beautiful enough to waste your life on. I'm not sure what GM Ju Wenjun is feeling in this photo, but to me, it captures that complexity perfectly.

PHOTOGRAPH BY **DAVID LLADA**

PHOTO: DAVID LLADA


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CHESSLIFE *June*

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PHOTOS: OOTES (VIDONYAK, NIEMANN), DOGGERS (VAN FOREEST), KHORDAKOVSKY (CHERNIN), ANEFO / BOEGARTS (CHERNIN), WIKIPEDIA (VAN DER STERREN) COURTESY SUBJECTS (DOGGERS, HILBERT)

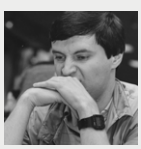
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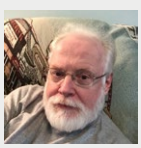
GM PAUL VAN DER STERREN (Empty Mind) learned chess at 13 and never looked back. One of the best Dutch players of his generation, he became an IM in 1979 and a GM in 1989. In 1993 he finished second in the Biel Interzonal and lost a 1994 Candidates Match against GM Gata Kamsky. He retired from active play in 2001, but has continued to teach and write about chess.



PETER DOGGERS (TePe Sigeman) is a chess journalist, author, and public speaker. He has covered most of the major chess events of the past 30 years, and his 2024 book *The Chess Revolution* is a definitive chronicle of the modern chess world. Check out our interview with him in the November 2024 issue of *Chess Life*.



GM ALEX CHERNIN (Playing It Out) has represented the Soviet Union and his adopted country of Hungary in international play. After many individual tournament victories, he has turned his attention to training and coaching, and has worked with some of today's best players.



JOHN S. HILBERT (First Moves) is a chess historian. The author of books on numerous chess personalities, including Fox, Hodges, Kemeny, Pollock, Richardson, Shipley and Whitaker, his latest effort is *George H. Mackenzie: A Chess Biography with 1297 Games*.

GAME PLAN

THE STRATEGY OF CHESS & SPORTS

Magnus Carlsen
World Number 1 & Former World Chess Champion

GM Magnus Carlsen Playing Soccer, 2019, Courtesy of Lennart Ootes

Guitong Li
Chess Boxer

Guitong Li Chess Boxing, 2023, Courtesy of Stev Bonhage



Game Plan: The Strategy of Chess & Sports is an expansive exhibition spanning three galleries that explores how discipline and strategy unite the physical and mental arenas of play. Discover how elite athletes use chess to sharpen their tactics, and how chess players participate in athletics to increase their mental focus and physical endurance. This year-long celebration also highlights hybrid sports like chessboxing, Missouri sports legends, and the dynamic Saint Louis chess scene fostered by Dr. Jeanne Cairns Sinquefield and Rex Sinquefield.

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LOOKING AHEAD TO JULY

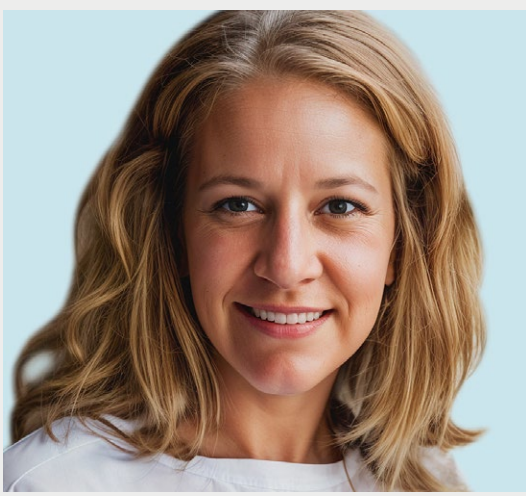
JULY 2026 MARKS THE 250th ANNIVERSARY OF THE FOUNDING of the United States. We celebrate it with an issue that looks to our past and our future.

The 2026 Spring Scholastics were a huge hit! We'll cover them in depth. Plus: The Junior and Senior Championships kick off this month in St. Louis, and we'll celebrate our senior team champs!





WELCOME WENDY! **Wendy Macomber is recognized for her exceptional talent by PRINT Magazine, the Ad Club of Westchester, and the American Packaging Design Awards. For over 20 years she has worked with numerous high-profile clients and brings a unique blend of experience to her role as graphic designer for US Chess.**



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

PHOTOS: KING FOR US CHESS (SPEYER), TSODIKOVA (SENIOR WOMEN) COURTESY SUBJECT (MACOMBER)

America's First True Chess Pro

How George Henry Mackenzie made his way

BY **JOHN S. HILBERT**

IT'S 1863. YOU'RE 26 YEARS old. You've received an education, but since your father suddenly died, you're forced to forge a living on your own, and your prospects are limited. You sold your commission in the British Army, but London's expensive. You have three gifts: your education, a genial nature, and a knack for playing chess. At London 1862, you won the Handicap Tournament, including scoring 2-0 (at odds of pawn and move) against the great Adolf Anderssen. But money and time are growing scarce. What do you do? What bet on your future do you make?

Faced with this conundrum, George Henry Mackenzie (1837-1891) chose to cross the Atlantic and seek his fortune in the United States. The near-master hedged his bet: He intended to enlist in the Union Army, but not before seeking out the country's prominent chess centers — Boston, Philadelphia, and, of course, New York City. He was well received in each, at a time when America's Civil War dragged on and chessplayers' hopes were fading for a return of the once and future legend Paul Morphy.

Mackenzie's choice of chess experiences in the New World was fortunate. His gentle manner and quiet presence quickly gained him important friends and connections. His play, the epitome of the dashing, sacrificing, swashbuckling sort, struck home and gained him a following. And not surprisingly: Consider the position below, reached against Boston's acknowledged champion, George Hammond (against whom Mackenzie won an informal match 9 wins to 4, with one draw). Hammond had just played 21. ... Qe8?, allowing Mackenzie a pleasant finish. The mate, easier for players to anticipate today than back then, was played out over the board. It must have pleased bystanders starved for Morphy's brilliancies.

AN EARLY GEM

George Mackenzie
George Hammond
Boston Chess Club, 1864



WHITE TO MOVE

22. Qxg6! Bxf2+
Merely delaying the obvious.

23. Kxf2 Rxf1+ 24. Kxf1 hxg6
Now Mackenzie finished with a mate in 3:

25. Rh3+ Kg8 26. Rg7+ Kf8 27. Rh8 mate.

Mackenzie's military experience, however, proved a disaster. Mustered in as a captain on Nov. 19, 1863, only a day after his new unit was formed, Mackenzie deserted his post on May 4, 1864, taking a steamer to Baltimore as his unit moved to the front. A few weeks later, he made his way back to Boston. Unbeknownst to him, he was soon dismissed from service, forfeiting all pay and allowances.

Was he a coward? Curiously enough, it's debatable. Complicating his story, and as unlikely as it seems, Mackenzie, now in Boston, sought enlistment as a lieutenant in a Massachusetts company. He accompanied them to Virginia, where he was recognized and arrested for his earlier desertion, spending the rest of the war on a prison ship and in a prison camp. Despite this ugly experience, and contrary to reason, Mackenzie was ever after remembered in the chess world as "Captain Mackenzie."

The coverup of his desertion held good for the rest of his life and well after. Its success may have been due to his affable personality as well as to the silence of the only two men in chess who likely knew of his disgrace: Hammond, the well-to-do Boston merchant mated above, and one of Mackenzie's future match opponents, a young Philadelphia chess columnist named Gustavus Reichhelm. The little evidence available, long ignored and forgotten, strongly suggests Reichhelm kept Hammond apprised of Mackenzie's imprisonment as well as his attempts to clear his name.

Mackenzie was released from prison right around the end of the war. Seeking yet another fresh start, Mackenzie drifted to New York, where he made his home for the rest of his life. In those postwar years, he could not hope to earn even a frugal living off playing alone. Before long he became a chess columnist for the weekly sporting journal *Turf, Field and Farm*. Work in journalism and odds games for a coin (a quarter was the most popular bet in those decades) kept him barely afloat.

Over time, Mackenzie found a way to combine his engaging personality; his penchant for creating "gems," as he called them, especially in games at odds against amateurs, and his work as a columnist. Mackenzie published his gems in his *Turf* column, their sparkling tactical finishes almost a calling card, an advertisement attracting new fans and new opponents, who, if they did not often win, could at least hope Mackenzie's spectacular imagination might land their games in the news. If you couldn't be a Morphy, you might yet be a Duke of Brunswick, or a Count Isouard.

As the nation slowly emerged from fi-

nancial depression after the war, another opportunity arose for Mackenzie in the booming café trade, where chess soon found a home. In 1868, the Café Europa opened on Division Street, near the Bowery. Although in a questionable neighborhood, the Europa helped attract attention and interest in chess, holding tournaments and other events. After the Europa closed in 1870, the Café International opened at a more decorous location: Broadway near Fourth Street. After dominating at the International, Mackenzie added running the International's chess room and its tournaments to his income stream. In an era when a week's lodging in a boarding house went for just a few dollars, and meals were equally cheap, every quarter helped.

Dozens of Mackenzie's "gems" were played at the Café International, including the one below, from a game played at pawn and move odds:

'NONE EXCEEDS IN BEAUTY'

Amateur
George Mackenzie
Casual game (pawn and move odds), Café International, 1876



BLACK TO MOVE

White, about to be overrun, had just played 20. g3. Black can win in several ways, but Mackenzie was hoping for another "gem."

20. ... Bxg3+
White has only three options, none of them good, and chose the one Mackenzie was certainly hoping for.

21. Kxg3
Miron Hazeltine, the longest-running American chess columnist of the period, later wrote, "of the many entertaining endings for which the chess world is indebted to Capt. Mackenzie, none exceeds in beauty this, in which he announces mate in four." The conclusion is a delightful melding of minor pieces and pawns — along with another queen sac, of course.

21. ... Qh4+ 22. Kxh4 Nf5+ 23. Kg4 h5+ 24. Kf4 g5 mate.

With his reputation established in American chess and his livelihood, however meager, covered by his games for small stakes, his column, and his work at the Café International, "the Captain" in the 1870s took to the road, and over time conducted simultaneous exhibitions from Montreal to New Orleans, from Boston to St. Louis. Besides winning tournament after tournament in the United States, he would return to Europe, playing in a number of international tournaments over the years, culminating in his winning Frankfurt 1887 over the likes of Weiss, Blackburne, Tarrasch, and a host of others. But America remained his home by choice, and New York City his base of operations. America had its first, and one of its finest, chess entertainers.

As a recognized top-10 player for years on the international scene, Mackenzie had his share of fine play, as well as the occasional "gem," against even the greatest masters of the day. For a few readers, the conclusion to the following game will be an old chestnut, but for a new generation of chess lovers, it's still a rousing joust of joy. Wilhelm Steinitz wrote of it, "The termination was so brilliant that it marks the game as one of the finest that ever occurred in any great contest." A few contemporary notes are included:



George Mackenzie, circa 1890

PHOTO: COURTESY OF THE WHITE COLLECTION

'NO MERCY'

George Mackenzie
James Mason
Paris (9), 07.15.1878



WHITE TO MOVE (AFTER 16. ... Ra8-g8)

17. Qh6+
"A most ingenious and brilliant sacrifice," Steinitz wrote. "It would have been offered in any case, even if Black on the last move had played [... Rh8-e8]; the only difference would have been that Black would not have been compelled to take it."

In his classic *Soviet Middlegame Technique*, Peter Romanovsky wrote, "By sacrificing his queen, White compels Black's king to journey into the enemy camp, where of course he can expect no mercy. We shall later see that this kind of play — drawing the king by force into the zone of the hostile army — has almost acquired the status of a typical device. The combination in the present game, however, was one of the first to be based on this idea."

17. ... Kxh6 18. Nhf5+ Bxf5 19. Nxf5+ Kh5 20. g4+
"This pawn sacrifice is not obligatory. White could also have mated in at most 3 moves with 20. Rh3+, and now 20. ... Kg4 21. Nh6 mate (or *21. Ne3 mate* — ed.) or 20. ... Nxh4 21. Rxh4+ Kg6 22. Rh6 mate." — Romanovsky

20. ... Kxg4 21. Rg3+ Kh5 22. Be2 mate.
Not every game Mackenzie played included a queen sacrifice, but many of his games are fascinating to play over — they come from a day when defense was nowhere near as developed as attack, but we discount such a part of our chess heritage at our own risk. Like every generation, we forget upon whose shoulders we stand.

Of course, nothing, and no one, lasts forever. Mackenzie lived, and died, in the boarding house he had frequented for the last 17 years of his life. Sadly, it was hardly the most respectable of homes. His own endgame, like earlier periods in his life, was played out among swirling controversy: death by tuberculosis, or by overdose of morphine? If the latter, was it intended or accidental? He had been increasingly sick for years but struggled on. What choice did he have? Retirement was unknown, except for the well-to-do. Certainly impossible, then, for a chessplayer. Just days before his death, Mackenzie spoke optimistically of sailing to England for one more match against his good friend Blackburne. But it was not to be.

Near penniless, Mackenzie was put to rest in his adopted New York, buried in a friend's cemetery plot far from his native land. He never sought American citizenship, as Steinitz did, and yet he kept chess alive in the United States at a time it easily could have faded, without such a talent and without his gems. He arrived in New York City shortly after Morphy abandoned public play for good and left life just before a young Boston Chess Club player named Harry Pillsbury arrived on the scene. Mackenzie's life and chess are far more fascinating and complex than this brief piece suggests, but chess, especially in the United States, owes him far more than he ever received. ♦

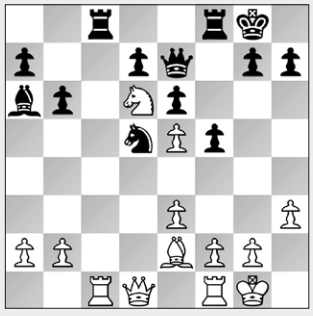


Tactical TESTS

BY **JOHN HARTMANN**

TRY YOUR HAND AT THESE 12 TACTICS PUZZLES, ALL DRAWN FROM RECENT GAMES. The positions generally increase in difficulty, and you may be faced with a range of tasks including mates, winning material, and defending. Let us know what you think about them with an email to *letters@uschess.org*. 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.



BLACK TO MOVE

TACTIC 8.



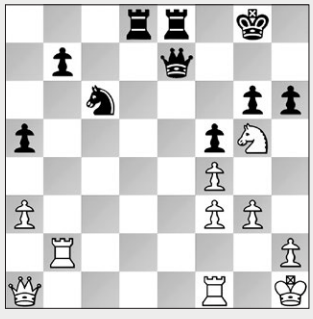
BLACK TO MOVE

TACTIC 9.



BLACK TO MOVE

TACTIC 10.



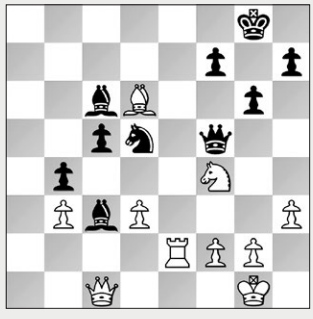
WHITE TO MOVE

TACTIC 11.



BLACK TO MOVE

TACTIC 12.



BLACK TO MOVE

IN THE NEWS

BY **JOHN HARTMANN**

Saint Louis Masters

It was a triumphant return to the Show-Me State for Mikhail Antipov, as the 28-year-old GM won the 2026 Saint Louis Masters with a score of 7½/9, a half-point ahead of top seed GM Fabiano Caruana. Italian GM Lorenzo Lodici took clear third with 6½.

Antipov competed for the University of Missouri chess team earlier this decade; he now helms the team at the University of Texas at Dallas. He showed steady strength in the Saint Louis Masters, following three mid-event draws (including with Caruana) with four consecutive wins to take top honors.

Caruana had chances to share first in the final round, but after trading errors in the endgame with GM Francesco Sonis, their game ended in a draw, relegating Caruana to second place.

SICILIAN DEFENSE, ALAPIN VARIATION (B22)

GM Francesco Sonis (2625)
GM Fabiano Caruana (2874)
Saint Louis Masters (9), St. Louis, 03.01.2026

1. e4 c5 2. c3 d5 3. exd5 Qxd5 4. Nf3 Nf6 5. d4 e6 6. Bd3 Be7 7. 0-0 0-0 8. Qe2 cxd4 9. cxd4 Nc6 10. Rd1 Nb4 11. Nc3 Qd8 12. Bg5 Nxd3 13. Qxd3 h6 14. Bh4 b6 15. d5 Nxd5 16. Bxe7 Qxe7 17. Nxd5 exd5 18. Qxd5 Be6 19. Qe5 Rad8 20. Nd4 Qd7 21. Rd2 Qd6 22. Qxd6 Rxd6 23. a3 Rfd8 24. Rad1 g5 25. f3 Kh7 26. Kf2 Kg6 27. g3 a5 28. Nb3 Rxd2+ 29. Rxd2 Rxd2+ 30. Nxd2 Kf5 31. Ke3 Ke5 32. Kd3 b5 33. Kc3 f5 34. Kd3 f4



35. gxf4+? Kxf4 36. Ke2 a4 37. Kf2 Bd5 38. Ke2 h5 39. Kf2 h4 40. Ke2 Bc4+? 41. Nxc4 bxc4 42. Kf2 g4 43. fxg4 Kxg4 44. Kg2 Kf4 45. Kf2 h3 46. Ke2 Ke4 47. Kd2 Kf3 48. Kd1 Ke3 49. Kc2 Kf2 50. Kd2 Kf3 51. Kd1 Ke3, draw.

Among those finishing with six points was 15-year-old IM Tani Adewumi, who followed a first-round loss to GM Max Warmerdam strongly with four wins and four draws. His Round 8 victory over GM Viktor Matviishen was a highlight.

QUEEN'S GAMBIT ACCEPTED (D26)

GM Viktor Matviishen (2598)
IM Tanitoluwa Adewumi (2540)
Saint Louis Masters (8), St. Louis, 02.28.2026

1. d4 d5 2. c4 dxc4 3. Nf3 Nf6 4. e3 e6 5. Bxc4 c5 6. 0-0 cxd4 7. exd4 Be7 8. Nc3 0-0 9. Re1 a6 10. Ne5 Nc6 11. Nxc6 bxc6 12. Bf4 a5 13. Rc1 Ba6 14. Bb3 Ra7 15. Qf3 Rd7 16. Qxc6 Bb7 17. Qb5 Qa8



18. Be5 Bxg2 19. Bxf6 Bc6 20. Bxe7 Bxb5 21. Bxf8 Rxd4 22. Bd6 Bc6 23. Bg3 Bh1 24. f3 Bxf3 25. Rc2 h5 26. h3 a4 27. Bxa4 Rxa4 28. Nxa4 Qxa4 29. Rf2 Bc6 30. b3 Qd4 31. h4 f6 32. Kh2 e5 33. Rc2 Bd7 34. Bf2 Qd3 35. Rec1 Qh3+ 36. Kg1 Bg4 37. Be1 Bf3 38. Kf2 Be4 39. Rc3 Qg2+ 40. Ke3 f5, White resigned.

I also enjoyed this final-round slugfest between GMs Denis Kadric and Luka Budisavljevic:

FRENCH DEFENSE, CHIGORIN VARIATON (C00)

GM Denis Kadric (2626)
GM Luka Budisavljevic (2579)
Saint Louis Masters (9), St. Louis, 03.01.2026

1. e4 e6 2. Qe2 Be7 3. g3 d5 4. d3 Nf6 5. Bg2 0-0 6. Nf3 b5 7. 0-0 c5 8. a4 b4 9. c4 bxc3 *e.p.* 10. bxc3 Nc6 11. Na3 a6 12. Bf4 Ra7 13. h4 Re8 14. e5 Nd7 15. h5 h6 16. Nc2 Bb7 17. Rfd1 Ba8 18. d4 Nf8 19. Ne3 cxd4 20. cxd4 Qd7 21. Ng4 Nh7 22. Bf1



GM Mikhail Antipov

PHOTO: COURTESY SLCC / A. FULLER

Rc8 23. Qd2 Nb4 24. Rab1 a5



25. Bxh6! gxh6 26. Qxh6 Qd8 27. Rxb4! Bf8 28. Qf4 axb4 29. Bd3 Bg7 30. Bxh7+ Kxh7 31. Ng5+ Kh8 32. h6 Bf8 33. Nf6 b3 34. Qf3 Qc7 35. Nd7 Bxh6 36. Qh5 Qxd7 37. Qxh6+ Kg8 38. Kg2 f6 39. exf6 Qh7 40. Nxh7 Rxh7 41. Qg6+ Kh8 42. Rh1, Black resigned.

Nakamura – Liang Match

GM Hikaru Nakamura hadn't played much over-the-board chess after his speedrun through the United States last fall, so he prepared for the FIDE Candidates with a public training match held March 13-15 against GM Awonder Liang at the Saint Louis Chess Club.

The match format featured two classical games, four rapid games, and four blitz games. Both classical games were drawn and the blitz games were split. Liang won the rapid set by a score of 3-1.

The players made creative opening choices, in part due to Nakamura's desire to avoid using his preparation before the Candidates. This rapid game was perhaps the most fun of the bunch.

KING'S PAWN OPENING (C20)

GM Hikaru Nakamura (2872)
GM Awonder Liang (2789)
Match – Rapid (3), St. Louis, 03.15.2026

1. e4 e5 2. d3 Nc6 3. Nc3 Nf6 4. g4 Ng8 5. Be3 Bb4 6. a3 Ba5 7. Bg2 Nge7 8. b4 Bb6 9. h4 d6 10. g5 Be6 11. Qf3 Qd7 12. Nge2 0-0-0 13. Nd5 Kb8 14. c4 Bg4 15. Nxb6 axb6 16. Qg3 f5 17. gxf6 *e.p.* gxf6 18. b5 Na5 19. Rb1 Rhg8 20. Qh2 f5 21. f3 fxe4 22. fxe4 Rdf8 23. Nc3 Bf3 24. Rg1 Qg4 25. Bg5 Ng6 26. Bh3 Qh5 27. Be6 h6! 28. Bxg8 hxg5 29. Bd5 Nxh4 30. Kd2 Bg2 31. Kc1 Qf3 32. Rb2 Qxd3 33. Nd1 Nb3+ 34. Rxb3 Qxb3 35. Rxg2 Rf1 36. Rd2 Nf3, White resigned.

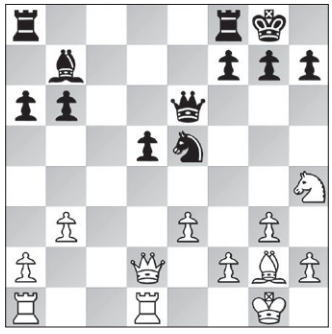
Atlantic City Open

GMs Jianchao Zhou and Bharath Subramaniyam H had all the luck at the Atlantic City Open, held April 1-5. At 7½/9 each, they finished a full point ahead of GM Harsha Bharathakoti, GM Robby Kevlishvili, and IM Thomas Bartell, who shared third at 6½ points.

ENGLISH OPENING (A15)

GM Jianchao Zhou (2670)
FM Rose Atwell (2466)
Atlantic City Open (9), 04.05.2026

1. Nf3 Nf6 2. c4 e6 3. b3 d5 4. Bb2 b6 5. g3 Bb7 6. Bg2 Nbd7 7. 0-0 Bd6 8. Nc3 0-0 9. e3 a6 10. Qe2 Qe7 11. Rfd1 Ne4 12. cxd5 Nxc3 13. dxc3 exd5 14. Nh4 Qe6 15. c4 c6 16. cxd5 cxd5 17. Qd2 Be5 18. Bxe5 Nxe5



19. Bxd5 Bxd5 20. Qxd5 g5!? 21. Ng2 Rad8 22. Qxe6 Nf3+ 23. Kf1 Nxh2+ 24. Ke2 fxe6 25. Rxd8 Rxd8 26. Rc1 Rd6 27. Ne1 Ng4 28. Nf3 h6 29. Rc4 Nf6 30. Ne5 Rd5 31. f4 gxf4?! 32. exf4 Rc5? 33. Rxc5 bxc5 34. g4 Nd5 35. Kf3 Nb4 36. a4 Nc2 37. Ke4 Na1 38. Kd3 Nxb3 39. Kc4 Nd2+ 40. Kxc5 Kf8 41. Kb6 Ke7 42. Kxa6 Kd6 43. Kb6 Nb3 44. a5 Nc5 45. a6 Na4+ 46. Ka5 Kd5, and Black resigned.

NIMZO-INDIAN DEFENSE (E49)

WIM Chloe Gaw (2235)
Zhihan Xu (2149)
Atlantic City Open (6), 04.04.2026

Among the most interesting games of the event was this battle between two of America's bright young talents: New York's WIM Chloe Gaw and Florida's 13-year-old Zhihan Xu. Gaw picked up 40 rating points in the event with a 6/9 score.

1. d4 Nf6 2. c4 e6 3. Nc3 Bb4 4. e3 0-0 5. Bd3 d5 6. a3 Bxc3+ 7. bxc3 dxc4 8. Bxc4 c5 9. Ne2 Qc7 10. Bd3 Nc6 11. f4 b6 12. 0-0 Bb7 13. Ng3 Ne7 14. Bb2 c4 15. Bc2 Nf5 16. Nxf5 exf5 17. Bxf5 Rfe8 18. Bc1 Nd5 19. Qe1 g6 20. Bc2 Nxf4 21. e4 Nd5



22. Qd2! Ne7 23. Qh6 f5 24. Bf4 Qd7 25. Be5 Nc6 26. exf5 Nxe5 27. dxe5 Qg7 28. Qxg7+ Kxg7 29. Rad1 Bc6 30. Rd6 Rac8 31. fxg6 Rxe5 32. Rf7+ Kg8 33. Rxc6 Rxc6 34. gxh7+ Kxf7 35. h8=Q Rce6 36. h4 Rf6 37. h5 Re1+ 38. Kh2 Ree6 39. Bg6+ Ke7 40. Qg7+ Kd6 41. Bf7 a5 42. Bxe6 Rxe6 43. h6 Re7 44. Qxe7+ Kxe7 45. h7, Black resigned.

IAs David Hater and Charles Hatherill directed for Continental Chess, with 422 players turning out across seven sections.

Showdown in Miami

Team USA will take on four of Uzbekistan's 2024 gold medal Olympians at a rapid and blitz event July 27-28 in Miami.

The event, sponsored by Wadim Rosenstein's WR Chess group, pits the top four American players — GMs Hikaru Nakamura, Fabiano Caruana, Wesley So, and Levon Aronian — against Team Uzbekistan's GMs Javokhir Sindarov, Nodirbek Abdusattorov, Nodirbek Yakubbaev, and Shamsiddin Vokhidov. GM Leinier Dominguez will serve as the American alternate, while GM Mukhiddin Madaminov will play the same role for Uzbekistan.

The event will be paired as a Scheveningen Team Tournament, in which each player plays every player on the opposing team. The rapid component features four games played at G/15+10; the blitz will feature two games between each player at G/3+2.

FOREIGN REPORT

BY MARK CROWTHER

GCT Super Rapid & Blitz Poland

WARSAW | MAY 5-9, 2026

1st: GM Hans Moke Niemann, (13/18 rapid, 9½/18 blitz) 22½/36. 2nd: GM Fabiano Caruana, (9, 13) 22. 3rd: GM Wesley So, (12, 9) 21. 4th: GM Vladimir Fedoseev, (11, 7) 18. 5th: GM Alireza Firouzja, (6, 11½) 17½. 6th: GM Gukesh Dommaraju, (9, 8) 17. 7th-9th: GMs Javokhir Sindarov, (8, 8½), GM Maxime Vachier-Lagrave, (8, 8½), and GM Jan-Krzysztof Duda, (9, 7½) 16½. 10th: GM Radoslaw Wojtaszek, (5, 7½) 12½. 10 players.

The three U.S. players dominated the first event of the 2026 Grand Chess Tour, finishing well clear of the rest of the field.

GM Hans Niemann won the rapid section, in which games were double-weighted, by a half-point over GM Wesley So; in the blitz, GM Fabiano Caruana scored heavily to challenge, but Niemann clung on to win by a half-point total. The other point of interest was the encounter between World Champion Gukesh and his newly minted challenger, GM Javokhir Sindarov. Gukesh won the rapid game after an unsound sacrifice from Sindarov, but lost both the blitz games.

CARO-KANN DEFENSE (B10)

GM Javokhir Sindarov (2776)
GM Gukesh Dommaraju (2732)
GCT Super Rapid Poland (5), Warsaw , 05.06.2026

1. e4 c6 2. Nf3 d5 3. d3 Qc7 4. exd5 cxd5 5. c4 Nf6 6. Nc3 e6 7. g3 Bb4 8. Bg2 dxc4 9. Bf4 Qa5 10. dxc4 Bxc3+ 11. bxc3 Qxc3+ 12. Nd2 e5 13. Rc1 Qa5 14. Bg5 Bg4 15. Qc2 Nc6 16. 0-0 0-0 17. h3 Be6 18. Bxf6 gxf6 19. Ne4 Kg7 20. f4 f5 21. Ng5 e4 22. Qb2+ Kg8 23. Kh2 Qb6 24. Qe2 Qd4



25. Nxe4? fxe4 26. f5 Bc8 27. Rcd1 Qf6 28. Qxe4 Rd8 29. Rxd8+ Nxd8 30. Qe8+ Kg7 31. Rf4 h5 32. Qe2 Bd7 33. Qxh5 Nc6 34. Rh4 Re8 35. Qg4+ Kf8 36. Qf4 Re2 37. Qf3 Rxa2 38. Qe3 Qb2 39. Qh6+ Ke8 40. Qh8+ Qxh8 41. Rxh8+ Ke7 42. g4 a5 43. Kg3 a4 44. Ra8 a3 45. h4 Ne5 46. Bd5 Bc6 47. h5 Bxd5 48. cxd5 Ra1 49. h6 Rg1+ 50. Kf4 f6 51. h7 Rxg4+ 52. Ke3 Nf7, White resigned.

SICILIAN DEFENSE, NAJDORF VARIATION (B92)

GM Hans Moke Niemann (2728)
GM Fabiano Caruana (2788)
GCT Super Rapid Poland (5), Warsaw, 05.06.2026

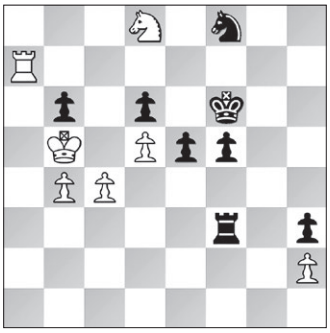
1. e4 c5 2. Nf3 d6 3. d4 cxd4 4. Nxd4 Nf6 5. Nc3 a6 6. Be2 e5 7. Nb3 Be6 8. Be3 Be7 9. Nd5 Nbd7 10. Qd3 Bxd5 11. exd5 0-0 12. 0-0 Rc8 13. c4 b6 14. Nd2 Nc5 15. Qc2 a5 16. Rad1 Nfd7 17. Bg4 g6 18. Bxd7 Nxd7 19. Nb1 f5 20. f3 Bg5 21. Bxg5 Qxg5 22. Na3 Qe3+ 23. Qf2 Qxf2+ 24. Kxf2 Kf7 25. Nb5 Ke7 26. b3 Nc5 27. Rfe1 Kd7 28. Nc3 g5 29. Ke3 h5 30. Kd2 g4 31. Kc2 Rg8 32. Re2 gxf3 33. gxf3 h4 34. a3 Ke7 35. b4 Nd7 36. Kb3 h3 37. Rd4 Rh8 38. Nb5 Rcg8 39. Rdd2 Rh4 40. Rf2 Rf4 41. Rc2 Rg1 42. Na7 Rg8 43. Ka4 Ra8? 44. Nc6+ Kf6



GM Hans Niemann

PHOTO: COURTESY GCT / LENNART OOTES

45. Kb5 axb4 46. axb4 Ra3 47. Ra2 Rxa2?! 48. Rxa2 Rxf3 49. Ra7 Nf8 50. Nd8



50. ... Kg6? 51. Ne6 e4 52. Nxf8+ Kf6 53. c5 bxc5 54. bxc5 dxc5 55. d6 Rd3 56. Nd7+ Kg5 57. Ne5 Rd1 58. d7 Kf4 59. Nf7 e3 60. d8=Q Rxd8 61. Nxd8 Kf3 62. Ne6 e2 63. Ra3+ Kf2 64. Nf4, Black resigned.



Dehtiarov and Ukrainian president Volodymyr Zelenskyy

26th European Individual Championship

KATOWICE | APRIL 6-20, 2026

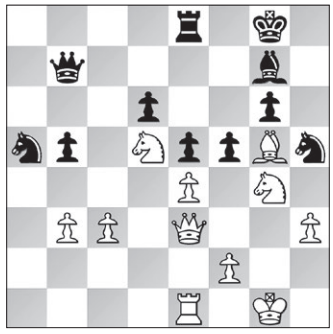
1st: IM Roman Dehtiarov, 9/11. 2nd-4th: GMs Nijat Abasov, Aydin Suleymanli, and Mahammad Muradli, 8½. 501 players.

Ukranian IM Roman Dehtiarov, 17 years old, caused a sensation by defeating GM David Anton in a double-edged fight in the last round to become the youngest winner and lowest seed to win this traditionally tough tournament. Dehtiarov's victory earned him the GM title and a place in the World Cup, and he was feted at home by his country's president.

RUY LOPEZ (C84)

IM Roman Dehtiarov (2452)
GM David Anton Guijarro (2656)
26th European Individual Ch (11), Katowice, 04.19.2026

1. e4 e5 2. Nf3 Nc6 3. Bb5 a6 4. Ba4 Nf6 5. 0-0 Be7 6. d3 b5 7. Bb3 d6 8. c3 0-0 9. h3 h6 10. Nbd2 Re8 11. Re1 Bf8 12. Nf1 Be6 13. a4 Bxb3 14. Qxb3 Na5 15. Qc2 c5 16. Ne3 Qc7 17. Nh2 h5 18. g4 c4 19. axb5 axb5 20. gxh5 Nxh5 21. Nd5 Qb7 22. dxc4 Nxc4 23. Rxa8 Rxa8 24. Qe2 g6 25. Ng4 Bg7 26. b3 Na5 27. Bg5 Re8 28. Qe3 f5



29. Ra1! f4? 30. Qe2 Nc6 31. b4 Kh8 32. Kg2 f3+ 33. Qxf3 Rf8 34. Qe3 Qc8 35. Bh6 Nf4+ 36. Nxf4 exf4 37. Bxf4 Qd7 38. Bh6 Re8 39. Ra6 Ne5 40. Ra7 Nxg4 41. Bxg7+ Qxg7 42. hxg4, Black resigned.

Clash of Generations III: Topalov-Erdogmus

The 14-year-old GM Yagiz Kaan Erdogmus had previously faced GMs Peter Svidler and Maxime Vachier-Lagrave in Clash of the Generations matches; he won this match, held April 12-17 in Monaco, by 5-1 over GM Veselin Topalov, and his win in Game 5 took him over 2700 at the age of 14 years, 10 months and 28 days, beating Wei Yi's record of 15 years, 8 months and 27 days. Carlsen, Firouzja and Gukesh had to wait until they were 16.

The match result gives a little bit of a false impression: Topalov was doing well in a number of the games before going on to lose, lack of recent practice being a likely explanation.

CARO-KANN DEFENSE, ADVANCE VARIATION (B12)

GM Veselin Topalov (2717)
GM Yagiz Kaan Erdogmus (2687)
Clash of Generations III (5), Monaco, 04.16.2026

1. e4 c6 2. d4 d5 3. e5 Bf5 4. Nf3 e6 5. Be2 a6 6. 0-0 c5 7. Be3 cxd4 8. Nxd4 Ne7 9. f4 h5 10. Nd2 Nbc6 11. Nxf5 Nxf5 12. Bf2 g6 13. Bd3 Rc8 14. a3 Be7 15. Rc1 b5 16. b4 Nh6 17. h3 Nf5 18. Kh2 h4 19. Nf3 Ng3 20. Re1 g5 21. Qd2 Rg8 22. c3 gxf4 23. Rc2 Qc7 24. a4 bxa4 25. Ra2 d4 26. Nxd4 Nxe5 27. Bxa6 f3 28. Bb5+ Nd7 29. Kg1 Ne2+ 30. Nxe2 Rxg2+ 31. Kf1 Rxf2+ 32. Kxf2 Qh2+ 33. Kxf3 Qxh3+ 34. Kf2 Qf5+ 35. Qf4 Qxb5 36. Rg1 Nf6 37. Qf3 Qc4 38. Rxa4 Ne4+ 39. Ke1 Ng5 40. Qb7 Rc7 41. Qa8+ Rc8 42. Rg4 Qc7 43. Qh1 h3 44. Ra5 f5 45. Rxg5 Bxg5 46. Qxh3 Bf6 47. Kf1 Rd8 48. Ra6 Qc4 49. Qh5+ Kf8

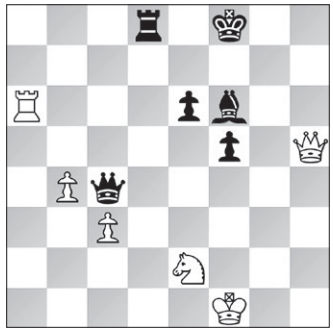


PHOTO: TWITTER

50. Qh6+? Bg7 51. Qxe6 Rd1+ 52. Kg2 Qg4+ 53. Kh2 Qh4+ 54. Kg2 Qh1+ 55. Kf2 Qh2+ 56. Ke3 Qh3+ 57. Kf2 Rf1 mate.

Sardinia World Chess Festival

OROSEI | MAY 3-10, 2026

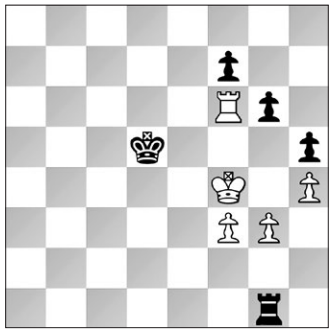
1st: GM Frederik Svane, 7½/9. 2nd-4th: GMs Haik M. Martirosyan, Ian Nepomniachtchi, and Mamikon Gharibyan, 7. 5th-14th: GMs Brandon Jacobson, GM Murali Karthikeyan, GM Mustafa Yilmaz, IM Atilla Kuru, GM Parham Maghsoodloo, GM Vuppala Praneeth, GM Lorenzo Lodici, GM Pouya Idani, GM Yahli Sokolovsky, and GM Chongsheng Zeng, 6½. 160 players.

GM Frederik Svane knew he had inferior tiebreaks, so he needed to win in the last round against fellow leader GM Murali Karthikeyan; he won a long grind to take clear first place. The tournament will mostly be remembered for Faustino Oro's final GM norm, achieved after eight rounds at the age of 12 years, 6 months, 26 days. He becomes the second-youngest in history to earn the title, behind American GM Abhimanyu Mishra, and beat GM Sergey Karjakin's previously long-standing record by a few days.

RUY LOPEZ, BERLIN DEFENSE (C67)

GM Frederik Svane (2645)
GM Murali Karthikeyan (2648)
Sardinia World Open A (9), Sardinia, 05.10.2026

1. e4 e5 2. Nf3 Nc6 3. Bb5 Nf6 4. 0-0 Nxe4 5. Re1 Nd6 6. a4 Be7 7. Nc3 a6 8. Bf1 Nf5 9. Nxe5 Nxe5 10. Rxe5 d6 11. Re1 d5 12. d4 0-0 13. Ne2 c6 14. c3 Re8 15. Nf4 Nd6 16. Nd3 a5 17. Bf4 Bf5 18. Qb3 Bxd3 19. Bxd3 Qd7 20. g3 g6 21. h4 Bf8 22. Kg2 h5 23. Be5 Bg7 24. Re2 Re7 25. Rae1 Bxe5 26. Rxe5 Rae8 27. Qb6 Rxe5 28. dxe5 Nc4 29. Bxc4 dxc4 30. Qxa5 b5 31. axb5 cxb5 32. Qb6 Qd5+ 33. f3 b4 34. Qe3 bxc3 35. bxc3 Kg7 36. Re2 Qe6 37. Qd4 Re7 38. Rd2 Qxe5 39. Qxc4 Rc7 40. Qd4 Qxd4 41. cxd4 Kf6 42. Kf2 Rc3 43. Ke2 Ke6 44. Rd3 Rc2+ 45. Ke3 Rg2 46. Kf4 Kd5 47. Ra3 Kxd4 48. Ra7 Kd5 49. Ra6 Rg1 50. Rf6



50. ... Rh1?

Hoping for 51. Rxf7? Ke6, when the king gets back to defend. Instead the right move was 50. ... Rg2, keeping pressure on the g-pawn, and again if 51. Rxf7 Ke6! holds.

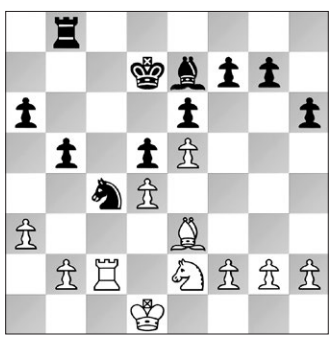
Now White finds a series of only-moves to win the game and the tournament.

51. Kg5! Rg1 52. g4! Rf1 53. gxh5! Rg1+ 54. Kh6! gxh5 55. f4! Rg8 56. Kxh5! Rh8+ 57. Kg5 Ke4 58. Rxf7 Rg8+ 59. Kf6 Rh8 60. f5 Rxh4 61. Kg5 Rh1 62. Re7+ Kd5, and Black resigned.

CARO-KANN DEFENSE, ADVANCE VARIATION (B12)

IM Bartlomiej Niedbala (2378)
IM Faustino Oro (2528)
Sardinia World Open A (8), Sardinia, 05.09.2026

1. e4 c6 2. d4 d5 3. e5 Bf5 4. Nf3 e6 5. Be2 Ne7 6. 0-0 Nd7 7. c3 h6 8. Na3 Be4 9. Nc2 c5 10. Bd3 Bxd3 11. Qxd3 Rc8 12. Be3 Nc6 13. Qd2 Be7 14. Nfe1 Qa5 15. Qe2 cxd4 16. cxd4 Nb4 17. Nxb4 Qxb4 18. Nd3 Qb5 19. Rac1 Rxc1 20. Rxc1 0-0 21. Nf4 Qxe2 22. Nxe2 Bd8 23. Nc3 Nb8 24. Kf1 Nc6 25. Ke2 Bb6 26. Kd3 Rc8 27. a3 a6 28. Ne2 Kf8 29. Rc2 Ke7 30. Rc1 Kd7 31. Rc2 Bd8 32. Rc1 Be7 33. Rc2 b5 34. Kd2 Rb8 35. Rc1 Na5 36. Rc2 Nc4+ 37. Kd1



37. ... b4 38. axb4 Rxb4 39. Bc1 Bd8 40. Ke1 Bb6 41. Kd1 Rb3 42. Rc3 Nxb2+ 43. Bxb2 Rxb2 44. Rg3 g6 45. Rh3 h5 46. Rf3 Ke7 47. Rd3 a5 48. Ra3 Rb4 49. Rd3 Rc4 50. Kd2 a4 51. Ke3 Kd7 52. Ra3 Kc6 53. Kd3 Kb5 54. Ra1 Ba5 55. Ra2 Bb4 56. Ra1 a3 57. Rb1 Ka4 58. Ra1 Kb3, White resigned.

Baku Open

BAKU | APRIL 28-MAY 6, 2026

1st: GM Sina Movahed, 8/9. 2nd-8th: IM Santhosh Parvathareddy Ajay, IM Khazar Babazada, GM Vahap Sanal, GM Daniil Dubov, IM Chakraborty Mayank, GM A R Ilamparthi, and GM Ruslan Ponomariov, 6½. 100 players.

The 15-year-old Iranian GM Sina Movahed took clear first by a point and a half, capped by a win against GM Pranav Anand in the final round. Movahed may be one to watch — in March he won a *Chess.com* Titled Tuesday tournament, beating Magnus Carlsen and GM Denis Lazavik along the way.

BOGO-INDIAN DEFENSE (E11)

GM Pranav Anand (2596)
GM Sina Movahed (2575)
Baku Open (9), Baku, 05.06.2026

1. d4 d5 2. c4 e6 3. Nf3 Nf6 4. g3 Bb4+ 5. Bd2 Be7 6. Bg2 0-0 7. 0-0 c6 8. Qc2 b6 9. Nc3 Ba6 10. Ne5 Nfd7 11. cxd5 Nxe5 12. d6 Bxd6 13. dxe5 Bxe5 14. Rfd1 Qe7 15. Ne4 f5 16. Ng5 Bf6 17. h4 h6 18. Nh3 Bxe2 19. Re1 Bh5 20. Qc4 Bf7 21. Bb4 c5 22. Bxc5 bxc5 23. Bxa8 Nd7 24. Bg2 Bxb2 25. Rab1 Ne5 26. Qa6 Bd4 27. Rb7 Qf6 28. Rxa7 g5 29. hxg5 hxg5 30. Ra8 Rxa8 31. Qxa8+ Kg7 32. a4 c4 33. Rd1 Nd3 34. Bf1 Nb2 35. Rb1 c3 36. a5 e5 37. Qb7 g4 38. a6 gxh3 39. a7 Bxa7 40. Qxa7 f4



41. Rc1 fxg3 42. Rxc3 h2+ 43. Kh1 Nd3 44. Rxd3 Qc6+ 45. f3 Qc1, White resigned.

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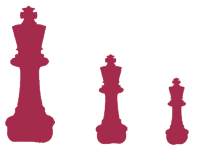


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Confusing Controls

Your favorite time limit may be wrong for you.

BY **GM ANDY SOLTIS**

WHICH TIME LIMIT IS BEST FOR you? It may not be the one you think.

Along with the traditional controls — classical, rapid and blitz — there is a growing menu of options. For example, "fast classic." This is a format of 45 minutes for a game with a 30-second increment that is now eligible for FIDE rating. Then there is "fast rapid" — 10 minutes with a 5-second increment.

The terminology is getting confusing. What's next? "Slow bullet"? "Fast blitz"?

Whatever the brand name of the format, conventional wisdom says success is linked to your age:

Older players are supposed to benefit from slow controls. Younger players benefit from fast ones, especially in online games.

But conventional wisdom was turned upside down in a pair of recent matches dubbed the "Clash of Generations." They paired the dazzling new star of 2025, 14-year-old GM Yagiz Kaan Erdogmus, against 49-year-old veteran Peter Svidler.

The first match was played with a classical control — 100 minutes for the first 40 moves, 50 minutes for the next 20 moves, then 15 minutes for the rest of the game with a 30-second increment.

Svidler, an eight-time Russian champion, lost 2-4. No big news here.

GRÜNFELD DEFENSE (D80)

GM Yagiz Kaan Erdogmus (2642)
GM Peter Svidler (2682)
Marseille, 7.27.2025

1. d4 Nf6 2. c4 g6 3. Nc3 d5 4. Bg5 Ne4 5. cxd5 Nxg5 6. h4 Ne4 7. Nxe4 Qxd5 8. Nc3 Qd8? 9. h5 Bg7 10. Nf3 c5 11. d5! e6 12. Qa4+ Bd7 13. Qf4 0-0 14. 0-0-0

Svidler, for many years the world's Grünfeld Defense authority, is in trouble, as 14. ... Qf6 15. Qh2! indicates (*15. ... exd5 16. hxg6 Qxg6 17. Rxd5*).

14. ... exd5 15. Nxd5 Nc6 16. e3 h6 17. hxg6 fxg6 18. Qg3 Bf5 19. Bc4 Kh8 20. Ng5! Qe8



21. Rxh6+! Bxh6 22. Rh1, Black resigned.

In view of 22. ... Kg7 23. Rxh6! Kxh6 24. Qh4+ Kg7 25. Qh7 mate, or 23. ... Rh8 24. Rxh8 Qxh8 25. Qc7+.

But when the two grandmasters began a 12-game blitz match, they looked like completely different players. Erdogmus was crushed, 10-2.

SICILIAN DEFENSE, NIMZOVICH VARIATION (B29)

GM Peter Svidler (2682)
GM Yagiz Kaan Erdogmus (2642)
Marseille, 7.30.2025

1. e4 c5 2. Nf3 Nf6 3. e5 Nd5 4. Nc3 e6 5. Nxd5 exd5 6. d4 Nc6 7. dxc5 Bxc5 8. Qxd5 Qb6 9. Bc4! Bxf2+ 10. Ke2 0-0 11. Rf1 Bc5 12. Ng5 Nd4+ 13. Kd1 Ne6 14. Ne4 Be7 15. c3 Qc7

This is the first new move in a once-controversial variation.

16. Nd6 b5

Black would be in the game after 17. Bxb5 Bxd6 18. exd6 Qb6, and better after 17. Qxa8 Bxd6 18. exd6? Qxc4.

17. Bd3 Rb8 18. Qe4 g6 19. Bh6 Bxd6 20. exd6 Qxd6 21. Bxf8 Kxf8 22. Kc2

This was not White's most testing answer to Black's 16th move. But it was a strategy based on experience when dealing with innovations.

22. ... Bb7 23. Qh4 Bxg2? 24. Rf2 Nc5 25. Rd1 Qd5 26. Bxg6! Be4+ 27. Bxe4 Qxe4+ 28. Qxe4 Nxe4 29. Rf4 Nc5 30. Rf5 Rc8 31. Rdd5 d6 32. Rxd6 b4 33. Rdd5 Ne6 34. Rd7 Ke8 35. Rfxf7, Black resigned.

To figure out the best time control for you means factoring in other criteria, such as intuition. This was underlined more than 40 years ago, when tournament organizers introduced what they called "active" chess. It was Game/25 and Game/30.

It's hard to imagine today, but this was so controversial it sharply divided grandmasters — and not in the way you might expect.

Younger GMs were appalled. They feared that FIDE would create a new title, "Active Grandmaster," that would depreciate their titles.

Older GMs loved it. "I find it quite easy to play Active Chess," said former world champion Vasily Smyslov, when he was 62. "You just follow your intuition."

Boris Spassky was 51 at the time, and he agreed: Shorter controls freed him from exhausting calculation. "If the time control would be 15 minutes I would even be happier," Spassky said.

Young players often say they don't know how to use the extra time in a classical control. "No matter how long I sit, I just

QUIZ FOR JUNE

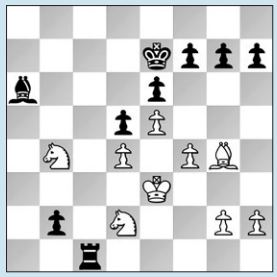
THIS MONTH'S QUIZ features games from the two strongest American tournaments of 100 years ago, in the summer of 1926. The first was a double round robin in Lake Hopatcong, N.J., among five elite players, including World Champion Jose Capablanca, who won easily. A month later, the other four players — Geza Maróczy, Frank Marshall, Edward Lasker, and Abraham Kupchik — were in Chicago for a tournament with Carlos Torre, checker champion Newell Banks, and other masters. Your task is to find the fastest winning line of play in games from these two events. This will usually mean the forced win of a decisive amount of material. Solutions on page 63.

PROBLEM 1
Frank Marshall
Edward Lasker



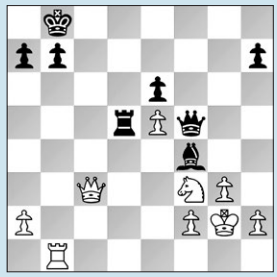
BLACK TO MOVE

PROBLEM 2
Newell Banks
Geza Maróczy



BLACK TO MOVE

PROBLEM 3
Jose Capablanca
Edward Lasker



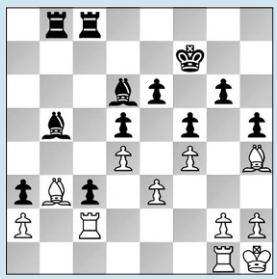
WHITE TO MOVE

PROBLEM 4
Edward Lasker
Geza Maróczy



BLACK TO MOVE

PROBLEM 5
Abraham Kupchik
Jose Capablanca



BLACK TO MOVE

PROBLEM 6
Geza Maróczy
Oscar Chajes



WHITE TO MOVE

get bored," Viswanathan Anand said when he was 17. "Therefore, I make my moves as quickly as possible so that the position looks new."

By the time he was a 30-something GM, calculation had become more important in his games, and more clock time was helpful. When he won the World Rapid Championship — at age 48 — he had found a way to use his acquired experience to beat younger players such as Magnus Carlsen.

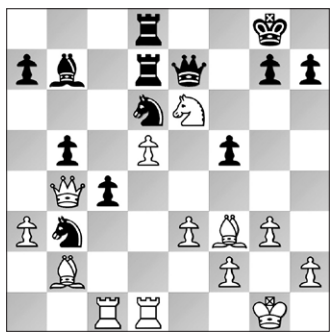
NIMZO-INDIAN DEFENSE (E49)

GM Magnus Carlsen
GM Viswanathan Anand
World Rapid Championship, Riyadh, 12.27.2017

1. d4 Nf6 2. c4 e6 3. Nc3 Bb4 4. e3 0-0 5. Bd3 d5 6. a3 Bxc3+ 7. bxc3 dxc4 8. Bxc4 c5 9. Nf3 Qc7 10. Be2 b6 11. Bb2 Bb7 12. 0-0 Nbd7 13. c4 Rac8 14. Rc1 Rfd8 15. Qb3 Ng4 16. g3 Ngf6! 17. Rfd1 Ne4 18. Ne1 Nd6

Vishy was famous for artful play with knights. After they weakened White's kingside, he took aim at his center: He's threatening 19. ... cxd4 and 20. ... Nf5.

19. d5 exd5 20. cxd5 c4 21. Qc2 b5 22. Ng2 Nc5 23. Nf4 Qe7 24. Bg4 Rc7 25. Qc3 f5 26. Bf3 Rcd7 27. Qb4 Nb3 28. Ne6!?



This is the kind of sacrifice that made Magnus the terror of speed tournaments. The consequences can't be accurately calculated in a rapid event, and that makes it dangerous — for both players.

28. ... Nxc1 29. Rxc1 Nc8 30. Qxb5 Rxd5! 31. Bxd5 Rxd5 32. Qb4 Nd6

Magnus may have feared 33. Nf4 Rb5 because of the mating threats after 34. Qc3 Rxb2 35. Qxb2 Qe4. But Black has nothing more than equality after 36. Kf1.

33. ... Rxc5 34. Qxc5 Qe4, White resigned.

If your strong suit is calculation, classical may be your best format. If it's intuition, try rapid. But if the opening is your optimum phase, blitz may not be kind to you.

Elite GMs, who prepare 20-plus moves in the opening, are content to begin a blitz game with a routine sequence such as 1. Nf3, 2. g3, 3. Bg2 and then a queenside fianchetto. They know this offers little chance of an advantage against a good player; they just want to get to the middlegame in seconds.

Of course, the quality of your moves is likely to decline the faster you make them. When Carlsen plays quickly he becomes, well, almost mortal.

"Roughly speaking, Magnus playing blitz is like a normal GM playing rapid," said computer authority GM Larry Kaufman, who analyzed his fast games.

How does that compare with the moves of a mere FIDE Master playing a slow game? "I don't think there's anything that can easily tell whether a game score is from a Magnus blitz game or a random FM classical game," he said.

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High-Class Chess

Examples from the Candidates Tournament

BY **IM TATEV ABRAHAMYAN**

THE 2026 CANDIDATES TOURNAMENT was a historic one. GM Javokhir Sindarov, 20, of Uzbekistan, took the tournament by storm, blazing through his competition to win by 1½ points with fresh opening preparation, fearlessness, good time management and confidence. As impressive as Sindarov was, this tournament featured many other brilliant and instructive games from which we can learn a great deal.

Creative Piece Improvement

Strong players sometimes find unorthodox ways to improve their pieces. Giri looked at this position and decided that the piece he wanted to improve next is his queen. At first glance, it is not so clear what would be the best square for the queen. Turns out, that square is b6 and Giri shows us the way.

MANEUVERING
GM Fabiano Caruana (2795)
GM Anish Giri (2753)
Candidates Tournament (9), Cyprus, 04.08.2026



BLACK TO MOVE

19. ... b5
Giri grabs some more space while preparing the idea of bringing the queen to b8, then b6.

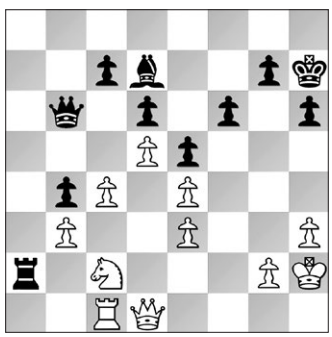
20. b4 axb3 *e.p.* 21. axb3 Qb8 22. c4 Qb6
The queen has landed on the best square in this position. From here, she is attacking the e3-pawn, controlling the entire g1-a7 diagonal, and keeping an eye on the queenside.

23. Nf5 Rfe8 24. N3h4 b4!?
A committal move, closing the queenside. The idea is to put the rook on a3.

25. Kh2 Ra3 26. Rab1
Of course, giving Black a passed pawn with 26. Rxa3? bxa3 would be bad news for White after 27. Ra1 Nxh4 28. Nxh4 Qb4.

26. ... Ra2 27. Qd1 Nxh4 28. Nxh4 Rea8 29. Re2 Qa7 30. Rc1 Qb6 31. Nf3 h6 32. Ne1 Kh7
Another typical improvement we see at the highest level: improving the king in anticipation of the endgame.

33. Rxa2 Rxa2 34. Nc2
With the idea of piling on the b4-pawn, but Black has a way of attacking White's pawns. White had a better setup with 34. Rc2 Ra5 35. Qd2 with the idea of Ne1-d3.



34. ... Be8!
This is reminiscent of a typical maneuver in the French. The bishop is not doing anything on d7 and is headed to g6, from where it will attack the e4-pawn.

35. Qd3 Bg6 36. Ra1 Rxa1
Trading the rooks is incorrect. Black would have a decisive advantage after 36. ... Rb2 with the idea of ... c7-c6 to open the c-file. The position that would arise after 37. Kg1 c6 is similar to what could have happened in the game, and keeping the rooks on would have been better for Black: 38. Kh2 (*38. dxc6 Qxc6* and at least a pawn falls after *39. Nxb4 Qxe4 40. Qxe4 Bxe4*) 38. ... cxd5 39. cxd5 Qc5 followed by ... Qc5-c3, picking up several pawns.

37. Nxa1 c5?
Another big commitment from Giri, but it gave Caruana one chance to make a draw. He should have played similarly to the game, without committing the pawn to c5: 37. ... Qa5 38. Nc2 h5.

38. Kg3?
With minutes left on the clock, Caruana missed a golden opportunity with 38. dxc6 *e.p.*! Qxc6 39. Nc2 Bxe4 when White wins the pawn back tactically with 40. Nxb4! Qb7 41. Qxd6 Bxg2 42. Nd5.

White turns out to be OK here, because if 42. ... Be4 with the idea of bringing the queen to a7 to start a mating attack, White survives with 43. Qe6 Qa7 (or *43. ... Qxb3 44. Nxf6+ gxf6 45. Qf7+ Kh8 46. Qf8+*) 44. Kg3 and the black queen cannot leave the rank because of the drawing idea. If 44. ... h5 45. Qe7.

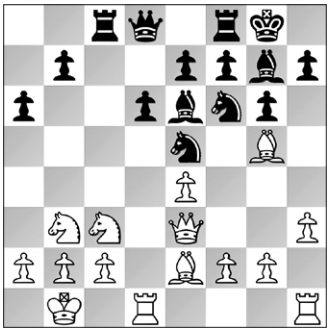
38. ... Qa7 39. Qb1 h5 40. Kf3 h4 41. Kg4 Qe7 42. Qd3 f5+ 43. exf5 Kh6!, White resigned.
A beautiful finish. White will either get checkmated or lose the queen. If 44. fxg6 e4 45. Qe2 Qg5 mate, and if 44. Kf3 e4+ 45. Qxe4 (*45. Kf4 Qg5+ 46. Kxe4 Qxf5 mate*) 45. ... Bh5+ 46. Kf2 Qxe4.

The Sicilian Exchange Sacrifice

I first wrote about the thematic Exchange sacrifice in my January 2024 column. Since then, this is second time I have seen Caruana execute this sacrifice in the Dragon Sicilian in a classical over-the-board game. The previous one was against GM Ian Nepomniachtchi from the 2024 Sinquefield Cup.

THE SAC

GM Andrey Esipenko (2698)
GM Fabiano Caruana (2795)
Candidates Tournament (14), Cyprus, 04.15.2026



BLACK TO MOVE

13. ... Rxc3! 14. bxc3
Not an easy decision, but White doesn't want to lose his e4-pawn after 14. Qxc3 Nxe4 15. Qe3 Nxg5 16. Qxg5 Qc7, when White's queenside stays intact but nonetheless Black has great compensation, mainly due to the bishop pair. Black can also continue to attack by pushing the queenside pawns. White's attack on the kingside is not as scary without a dark-squared bishop. As long as Black's bishop stays on g7, the king will be safe.

14. ... Qc7 15. f4 Ned7!
The knight is headed to a4, from where it will attack the weak c3-pawn. Less accurate is 15. ... Nc4, as White would be thrilled to trade the bishop, which can't defend c3, for the knight, which can attack it. After 16. Bxc4 Bxc4 17. Rhe1 Black still has compensation due to his bishop pair and White's weak king and bad pawn structure, but compared to the game, White is doing much better.

16. Rd4
Defending the e4-pawn.

16. ... b5
Securing the a4-square for the knight.

17. g4 Nb6
Headed for a4. We can see that White's attack isn't really going anywhere, while his own king is quite vulnerable.

18. f5 Bc4 19. Bxc4 Nxc4
White has temporarily prevented the knight from going to a4, but as we will see soon, this isn't much better.

20. Qe1 a5 21. Bc1 Nd7 22. h4 Rc8
White leaves the rook on d4 *en prise,* but Black does not want to trade his great attacking bishop for it.

23. fxg6 hxg6 24. h5 a4 25. hxg6 fxg6!
King safety first! After 25. ... axb3 26. gxf7+ Kf8 27. cxb3 the white king is much safer, and now it is the black king that is vulnerable. This is not what Black wants.

26. e5
White is desperately trying to muddy the waters, because the knight on b3 is under attack and does not have a good retreating square.

If 26. Nd2 Na3+! 27. Bxa3 Qxc3 White can't defend the diagonal now. After 28. Bb2 Qxc2+ 29. Ka1 a3! the bishop can no longer stay on the diagonal and all the pieces will fall: 30. Qb1 axb2+ 31. Qxb2 Qxb2+ 32. Kxb2 Bxd4+ and Black wins.

26. ... Ncxe5
26. ... axb3 works out tactically for Black after 27. exd6 bxc2+ 28. Kxc2 Nxd6 29. Qe6+ Nf7, but Caruana probably didn't want any complications.



27. Na1
This is a sad retreat, as the knight is actually trapped here.

27. ... Qc6 28. Rh3 Nf6 29. g5 Nd5
Black is attacking with a full army.

30. Bd2 Rf8 31. Rdh4 Rf3 32. Kc1 Qd7 33. Qh1 Qf5
A nice queen maneuver!

34. Rh8+ Bxh8 35. Rxh8+ Kf7 36. Qh7+ Ke6
White got some checks in, but the black king is perfectly safe.

37. Qg8+ Qf7 38. Qc8+ Nd7 39. Rh2 Rf1+ 40. Kb2 N5b6, White resigned.
The black knight will land on c4 next.

The Power of Quiet Moves

Sometimes quiet moves are the deadliest ones. In order to keep more pieces on the board, Esipenko retreated his dark-squared bishop from f4, getting ready to castle queenside. Wei Yi put an end to this plan with a surprising move.

THE SIDESTEP

GM Andrey Esipenko (2698)
GM Wei Yi (2754)
Candidates Tournament (7), Cyprus, 04.05.2026



BLACK TO MOVE

14. ... Qe8!
This is one of my favorite moves from the entire tournament. This quiet move is quite venomous, as White simply doesn't have any decent moves in this position: The queen cannot move; the e2-knight is pinned, and the bishop that just went to d2 can't move back to f4 because the pinned knight on e2 cannot defend it. But worst of all, castling queenside runs into a big problem.

15. Kd1
After a 35-minute think, Esipenko decides to step out of the pin.

The main point of Black's last move was 15. 0-0-0? Qa4!, when we see White doesn't have a way of defending a2. 16. Kb1 is

(Continued on page 50)

The Candidate's Coach

An interview with IM Roman Vidonyak

IT WAS SURPRISING ENOUGH that 20-year-old Uzbek GM Javokhir Sindarov won the 2026 Candidates Tournament and set up a showdown later this year with 19-year-old World Champion Gukesh Dommaraju. But the ease with which he ran away from the field really stunned the chess world — Sindarov was at one point two full points ahead of the field, and won the double round robin with an undefeated 10/14. As GM Elshan Moradiabadi pointed out in his coverage last month, GM Anish Giri achieved the same score that won the Candidates for GM Viswanathan Anand (2014) and GM Sergey Karjakin (2016), yet finished a distant second, a point and a half back.

How did he do it?

There's never just one answer, but one person in a good position to answer that question is Sindarov's coach, IM Roman Vidonyak. In an interview with *Chess Life* conducted over email, Vidonyak explains how the two started working together, what he saw in Sindarov, how they work together between and at events, and some of Vidonyak's own philosophy on how to teach and learn chess.

***Chess Life*: When did you first meet Javokhir? How did you begin working with him? What was it you saw in him?**

I met Javokhir in January 2025. The beginning was unusual — he did not come to me as a student. He came as a sparring partner for Vladimir Fedoseev.



My system requires two very strong players in every camp, and finding a genuine sparring partner at Fedoseev's level is not easy. Over the years I have had Jorden van Foreest, Anish Giri, and others in that role. At that moment we needed someone new, and Vladimir said to me: "Roman, take a look at Javokhir. This young boy — his mind reminds me of Botvinnik." Coming from Fedoseev, that is a serious comparison. Javokhir himself was looking for a new step in his career. Vladimir explained my system to him; he came to Munich for one day of training, and after that day we both felt there was something special there. From then on, we trained very intensively — nine camps in about a year, each lasting 10 to 14 days, eight hours a day, no engine, only the board.

From the very beginning I noticed three things in him. First, raw chess talent of a kind that cannot really be taught — pattern recognition; a feel for coordination; the structural, Botvinnik-like mind that Vladimir had described. Second, an exceptional capacity for hard work — not only the willingness to train hard, but also the ability to sustain that load, session after session, month after month. Many talented players want to work hard; fewer can truly do it. Third, the psychological profile of a great competitor. I used to call him "Sunny Boy" — relaxed, smiling, joking away from the board. Today I call him "TNT," after the AC/DC song. At the board he is explosive, like dynamite. That combination is rare.

Going into the Candidates Tournament, what was your estimation of the chances that he'd win?

Realistic, but probably not in the way most people expected. On paper, Javokhir was not among the top seeds, and most commentators placed him outside the top three favorites. Inside our team, the picture looked somewhat different.

I had seen what nine camps had done to his chess. I had seen the evaluations across my 17 skills rise broadly, from C- up to B+. And I had seen his endurance improve — the ability to maintain the same quality of thinking at the end of a long, difficult game, and all the way through to the final rounds of a major event. That is something quite different from raw tactical strength, and it is often exactly where young players lose points they should not lose.

So before the tournament I considered him a genuine contender. I would not have told anyone, "He will win" — that would have been unprofessional, because in chess you also need luck: Your preparation has to appear on the board, and your opponents have to cooperate with it at least some of the time. But I thought a top-three finish was realistic, and I believed that if he played his chess and did not lose early, he had a real chance of first place. The margin of 1½ points surprised me. The fact that he won did not.

How was Javokhir between rounds at the Candidates Tournament? Very level-headed, or did he get more excited as his lead widened?

Level-headed in a way that struck even me. After the wins against Pragg and Caruana, when he was already a full point clear, he was essentially the same Javokhir as on the evening before Round 1. Same food, same sleep, same rituals, same humor.

I thought a top-three finish was realistic, and I believed that if he played his chess and did not lose early, he had a real chance of first place. The margin of 1½ points surprised me. The fact that he won did not.

This was something we had prepared for very seriously. A big lead is dangerous. It invites the brain to relax, to calculate less carefully, to start thinking, "A draw is enough today." That is how players lose half-points they should not lose. We worked on the opposite mindset: Every game is a new tournament. Every morning the score is 0-0.

And honestly, his character helps enormously. He simply enjoys playing. He does not seem to carry the weight of the standings around with him between rounds. There were no long motivational speeches from my side — only when they were really necessary. We looked at the game; we looked at the next opponent; we went for a walk; we slept. That was the rhythm.

Tell us about your first steps in chess. Who was your first coach, and how did they inspire you to make chess your profession?

I was born in Lviv, which is something of a chess city — more than 30 grandmasters have come from there, and the clubs have a long tradition. I started going to the chess club at the age of 7. My parents were not chessplayers; both are musicians. But they supported me completely.

My first coach was Viktor Scherbakov. I trained with him for seven years, and he was a very charismatic man. What he did best was make the profession of chess coach look beautiful to a child. It was not only that he taught me openings and endgames; it was the way he thought about chess, the way he spoke about the great players of the past, the seriousness with which he approached the work. By the time I was 16, I had decided that I wanted to become a coach like him. My father was relieved, because he always said, "Three musicians in one family is a pathology — do something else." So chess was also a family compromise.

The decisive influences came later, from the Lviv school of GMs Iosif Dorfman and Adrian Mikhalchyshyn, and from the training camps of GM Igor Platonov. That is where the architecture of my own work really began to take shape.

You've mentioned the high-level grandmasters such as Sindarov, Fedoseev and Giri, but for a long time you worked with young, beginning players, right?

I worked with children and juniors for about 30 years, and at one stage I also taught chess in schools. I considered it important for a trainer to understand the entire developmental process — from the very first steps of a beginner to the level of a top player.

The training methods I advocate are just as applicable to advanced young players as they are to elite professionals, because they are based on general principles of sports science and structured training. Of course, the materials, the areas of training, and the training load must be adapted to the player's age, level, and psychological maturity. But the underlying logic remains the same.

You have mentioned two key influences on your training philosophy: Igor Platonov and Iosif Dorfman. Our readers may be familiar with Dorfman, or at least with his books, but I suspect fewer will know about Platonov. What can you tell us about each of them, and how they shaped your training style?

PHOTOS: LENNART OOTES FOR US CHESS (20, 23, 24); COURTESY FIDE / WALUSZA (25)

They gave me two quite different things, and in a sense my system is an attempt to combine them.

Iosif Dorfman gave me an understanding of chess mechanics — what he calls static balance. People know his book *The Method in Chess*, but the book is really only an entry point. The full theory is much larger and, honestly, very difficult to absorb from reading alone. I was fortunate: I worked with Dorfman and his students over six camps, and that is where the system became much clearer to me. Dorfman teaches you to evaluate a position in a structured way — who holds the static advantages, when the static turns dynamic, when to strike. In my view, it is the closest thing chess has to a true theory of decision-making at the board.

Igor Platonov gave me something different. Platonov was a very strong grandmaster — six Soviet Championship finals, which in that era meant playing in fields as strong as a modern Candidates — and he was also a remarkable trainer. He once told me something I never forgot: "Roman, if you have talent, if you are a good player, the work you must do is on endurance and on the intensity of your thinking at the board." Platonov had discussed these ideas with GM Alexander Kotov, whose book on candidate moves and the way grandmasters think was the first serious attempt to formalize the subject. Platonov took Kotov's framework and improved it. I later tried to expand Platonov's framework, because I became convinced that endurance and calculation intensity are only two of the skills — there are at least 17.

So from Dorfman I learned what to think about at the board. From Platonov I learned how to train the brain so that it can actually do that thinking under pressure. Both are essential. Neither is sufficient on its own.

What do training sessions with Roman Vidonyak look like? What do you work on with your students? How do you generate your material?

A typical camp lasts 10 to 14 days, eight hours a day, at the board, with no engine in the room. Two students of comparable strength — one main student, one sparring partner — plus me. That is it. Very few distractions.

Within a single camp we work on three or four specific skills from the list of 17 — never on all of them at once, and never on a random selection. Which three or four we choose depends on what the student most needs at that moment in his development. Within a single day we deliberately vary the format: solving positions aimed at different target skills, playing training games with the partner on the clock, short blitz-format exercises, rotating between the chosen skills so that the student is constantly switching context. This variety is essential. Eight hours a day on the same type of drill would break any student — the brain simply shuts down. By rotating between the target skills and between formats, we try to keep the intensity high without the load becoming destructive. Every attempt is graded on a scale from C- to A+, so the student can see very concretely where he stands and where the work still needs to be done.

The material is mine. By now I have collected and classified around 40,000 positions, and the collection is alive — every day I look through hundreds of games and add to it. Crucially, I also try to construct new methods specifically for a specific student's specific weakness. AI cannot really do this work. You have to know the player — his patterns, his blind spots, what his brain does when it is tired in the sixth hour — and then choose or create a method that places exactly that weakness under load. It is closer to the work of a medical specialist than to the work of a database manager.

We look at which skills held up under competitive pressure and which collapsed. Those collapses then shape the content of the next camp.

How does this differ from the methods of IM Mark Dvoretsky?

With great respect for Dvoretsky — he was one of the best trainers the game has ever seen, and I have read his books very carefully — the honest answer is that he worked in a different era and in a different mode.

A different era: Dvoretsky trained before engines. Constructing high-precision studies and training positions without an engine is extraordinarily difficult work; in practice, you almost had to be a supergrandmaster yourself to do it reliably. Today, an engine allows me to verify a candidate position in seconds, which makes it possible to build a collection of tens of thousands of exact exercises rather than hundreds. Paradoxically, although I train without an engine in the room with the student, I could not have built my material without engines in my own office.

A different mode: Dvoretsky's work was largely episodic — selected sessions, often one or two weeks with a strong player, and then back to independent work. My athletic model is somewhat different. I try to work with continuity: repeated camps through the year, continuous contact between camps, the kind of continuity you sometimes see in the relationship between a top tennis player and a personal athletic trainer over many years. Dvoretsky taught great players great things. I am trying to explore something slightly different — how to make the training effect more permanent and cumulative, rather than episodic.

So I am not trying to improve on Dvoretsky. I am trying to work in an area that today's tools and a sports-science mentality may make more possible than it was in his time.

How do tournaments affect your training practices? Do you and Javokhir work on different things when a tournament is approaching?

Yes, very much so. The calendar dictates the rhythm.

Between tournaments, we are in what I call the base-building phase. Long camps, eight hours a day, maximum load, working on skills we want to raise from B to B+, or from B+ to A-. The goal is to push the system — exactly like a marathon runner in the off-season doing high-volume training, knowing that right now she may be slower, but in two months she may be dramatically faster.

As a tournament approaches, the work changes completely. We reduce the total load, because the brain needs to be fresh at the start, not exhausted. We stop introducing new skills. We sharpen what he already has. And, of course, concrete opening preparation moves into the foreground, because now we need specific weapons against specific opponents. The last days before a tournament are deliberately lighter — good sleep, walking, rhythm.

After a tournament comes another distinct phase: recovery, then an honest post-mortem. We look at which skills held

up under competitive pressure and which collapsed. Those collapses then shape the content of the next camp.

In your ChessBase India interview, you mentioned that Javokhir had a blitz and rapid event in Warsaw and the Grand Chess Tour in Bucharest before the world championship match. Would your training routine be different if he had not had these events coming up?

Slightly, but less than people assume.

If Warsaw and Bucharest were not on the calendar, we would have a longer uninterrupted block of base-building before the match, and I would probably push a little harder on one or two skills I still want to raise before Gukesh. We could also do more playing practice in specific match-critical structures.

But honestly, I am not unhappy that those tournaments are there. Strong competition against the best players in the world is itself a form of athletic training — you cannot reproduce that intensity in a camp. You also learn things about your own condition in a real tournament that no sparring game can tell you. Blitz and rapid train exactly the skills we work on in camp: fast intuition, endurance, time management, emotional control. So Warsaw and Bucharest are not simply time taken away from our preparation — in some ways, they are part of it. What changes around them is scheduling and load management, not the philosophy.

You describe yourself as "an athletic trainer." Can you explain the difference between an "athletic" chess trainer and other types of chess trainers?

Look at football. Every top team has a head coach — Pep Guardiola, Jürgen Klopp. But every top player also has an athletic trainer whose job is the physical engine: endurance, explosiveness, recovery, injury prevention. The head coach decides the match plan; the athletic trainer helps make sure the player can still execute that plan in the 89th minute. Without the second, the first cannot fully succeed at the highest level. The same is true in tennis, basketball — everywhere.

Chess has almost never had this distinction. We have had opening theoreticians, seconds, and head-coach figures. What we have had much less often is someone whose full-time job is the athletic side — the conditioning of the brain: calculation stamina, concentration endurance, emotional regulation, memory architecture, intuition speed, recovery between rounds. In my view, this is one important reason why many very



talented players plateau. The engine of the player is not always developed systematically enough.

I would describe myself primarily as an athletic trainer. I am not an opening coach in the narrow sense. I try to train the brain as a trainable organ — with volume, regularity, progressive overload, periodization, and recovery — in much the same way that a serious track coach develops a runner. Opening work is, of course, an important part of any top team, but it is not my main area, and in my view, over the course of a long career, the engine of the player remains decisive.

What's the division of labor in Team Sindarov, or in any preparation you do with students? How does the opening work get done, and how does that mesh with your no-engine "athletic" training approach?

The team is small and the roles are clear. I handle the athletic training — skills, endurance, calculation, Dorfman mechanics, playing practice. For opening work, Javokhir has strong seconds; his close friend and countryman GM Mukhiddin Madaminov has become a very important part of that. Javokhir himself also does serious opening work — he is not passive in that area.

The two worlds fit together because they happen in different rooms, and often in different months. When we are in a Vidonyak camp, the engine is off and the computer is closed, because the purpose of those days is to train the brain, not to memorize moves. When he is preparing for a specific opponent, of course the engine is on — that is a different activity with a different goal.

My only firm rule is that opening work should not cannibalize the athletic work. You see many young stars spending six or seven hours a day on engine preparation and then wondering why their calculation disappears in the sixth hour of the game. Very often, it disappears because that part of the game was never trained with the same seriousness. We try to protect the athletic hours very carefully.

Do you work on resilience in your training? Do you work on confidence?

Resilience is central. Several of the 17 skills on my list are resilience skills: defending difficult positions, recovering after a loss, keeping the quality of thinking stable when a game runs very long or when several strong tournaments are played back to back, and not collapsing when a line you prepared for a month simply does not appear on the board. The draw against Caruana in the second half of the Candidates is a good example. A year earlier, Javokhir probably does not hold that position. We had worked on nearly 200 positions of that defensive type.

Confidence I treat somewhat differently. I do not try to inject confidence with words.



Confidence that comes from a pep talk is fragile — it disappears at the first setback. Real confidence has two sources: measurable progress in skills, so the student sees his own development camp by camp; and accumulated experience from having already solved similar problems many times before. When a player has truly done the work, confidence tends to take care of itself. My job is to help make sure that the work gets done.

There seems to be a debate now on the importance of a grounding in the classics — chess culture — in the age of the engine. Where do you stand? And where do your young students stand? Do they resist this, and think that calculation exercises are all that is required? Where does Javokhir specifically stand on this?
I stand strongly on the side of the classics. But perhaps not for the romantic reasons people usually give.

Modern times have brought certain necessary corrections to the way we study the classics. Everything moves faster now, and modern young players are unfortunately often not able to follow long, slow narratives about tournaments of the past or the old-fashioned annotations in older books.

The classics are not important because they are old. They are important because they are the cleanest available examples of human chess ideas — positional, structural, dynamic — uncluttered by machine moves that human beings cannot really understand. When you study Capablanca, you see winning technique in its purest form. When you study Botvinnik, you see long-range planning. When you study Petrosian, you see prophylaxis. These ideas are the vocabulary of strategic thinking. Without them, a young player may calculate like a monster and still not know what he should be calculating about.

Do young players resist this? Sometimes, yes. A teenager today can ask an engine to evaluate any position in half a second, and the temptation becomes: "Why should I study a game from 1935? The engine tells me the truth." That is, in my view, a serious mistake, because the engine gives you the move, but not the reason. The classics teach the reason.

If the book helps dedicated coaches think about their work in a more structured way, helps ambitious players organize their improvement more effectively, and helps parents guide their children in the right way, then it will have been worth writing.

Javokhir is fortunate here, because his chess taste is already classical. His first game against Praggnanandhaa had a Tal-like quality that you cannot acquire simply by solving puzzles — that comes from a player who has absorbed the tradition. This is one of the things that makes me optimistic about his ceiling.

There is another important point: Even the annotations of the very greatest players of the past often do not withstand critical engine analysis. Therefore, one of the trainer's tasks today is to prepare the quintessence of the classical lessons of the old masters and present the player with a clean extract — the essential ideas, without unnecessary historical weight and without analytical inaccuracies.

You told ChessBase India that the world championship can't be the goal; the goal has to be to dominate the chess world and be one of the best players ever. Does Javokhir have that? Who else among the players you work with has that?
Yes; I think Javokhir has it. You can see it in the way he trains. A player who sets "becoming world champion" as his final goal often trains until he feels ready to become champion, and then relaxes. A player who sets "becoming one of the greatest ever" as the goal trains as if he is never ready — because compared to Kasparov, Karpov, or Carlsen, nobody is ever ready. In my view, only the second mindset can produce real domination over a decade. Javokhir seems to have that second mindset, and at 20 years old, that is remarkable.

Among the other players I work with, GM Bibisara Assaubayeva has it with great clarity. I believe she has every chance to become the strongest female player in the

world. Her motivation and her capacity for training are at the level of top male players. GM Nodirbek Yakubboev has this mentality very clearly as well — he goes through the full program without taking shortcuts; he is still far from his ceiling, and I believe he can achieve far more than he already has. I believe both are capable of reaching the very highest goals, provided they train persistently and remain patient.

Vladimir Fedoseev and Anish Giri are in a different phase of their careers, but both still seem to me to have real room to grow if they decide to do the work. That is not about age. It is more about priorities and energy at this particular moment in their lives.

What makes for a good coach? What qualities are important?

I would name four things.

First, love of the profession — love of the process of getting better every day.

Second, knowledge that goes beyond chess — psychology, brain physiology, sports science, principles of skill acquisition, sleep, nutrition, attention. Chess is played by a brain, and the brain is an organ. A coach who does not understand his instrument will find it much harder to tune it properly.

Third, patience combined with intensity. Real change in a player happens over months and years; you must have the patience to accept that. But within each session, within each hour, the coach must still demand the maximum. Patience on the scale of the career, intensity on the scale of the day.

Fourth, a willingness to keep learning. I am still learning. I learned enormously from Fedoseev over more than a thousand hours of conversations during the years we worked together. I am learning from Javokhir and other students now. The day a coach believes he already knows enough is the day he risks becoming less useful.

Finally, you have mentioned that you are working on a book about your training methods. What can you tell us about it?

The book is my attempt to put the system on paper properly for the first time. It has three parts.

The first part lays out the foundations of neurophysiology as they apply to chess training — how the brain actually learns, consolidates skills, manages attention, recovers from load, and how all of this should shape what we do at the board. Without that foundation, everything that follows is only opinion.

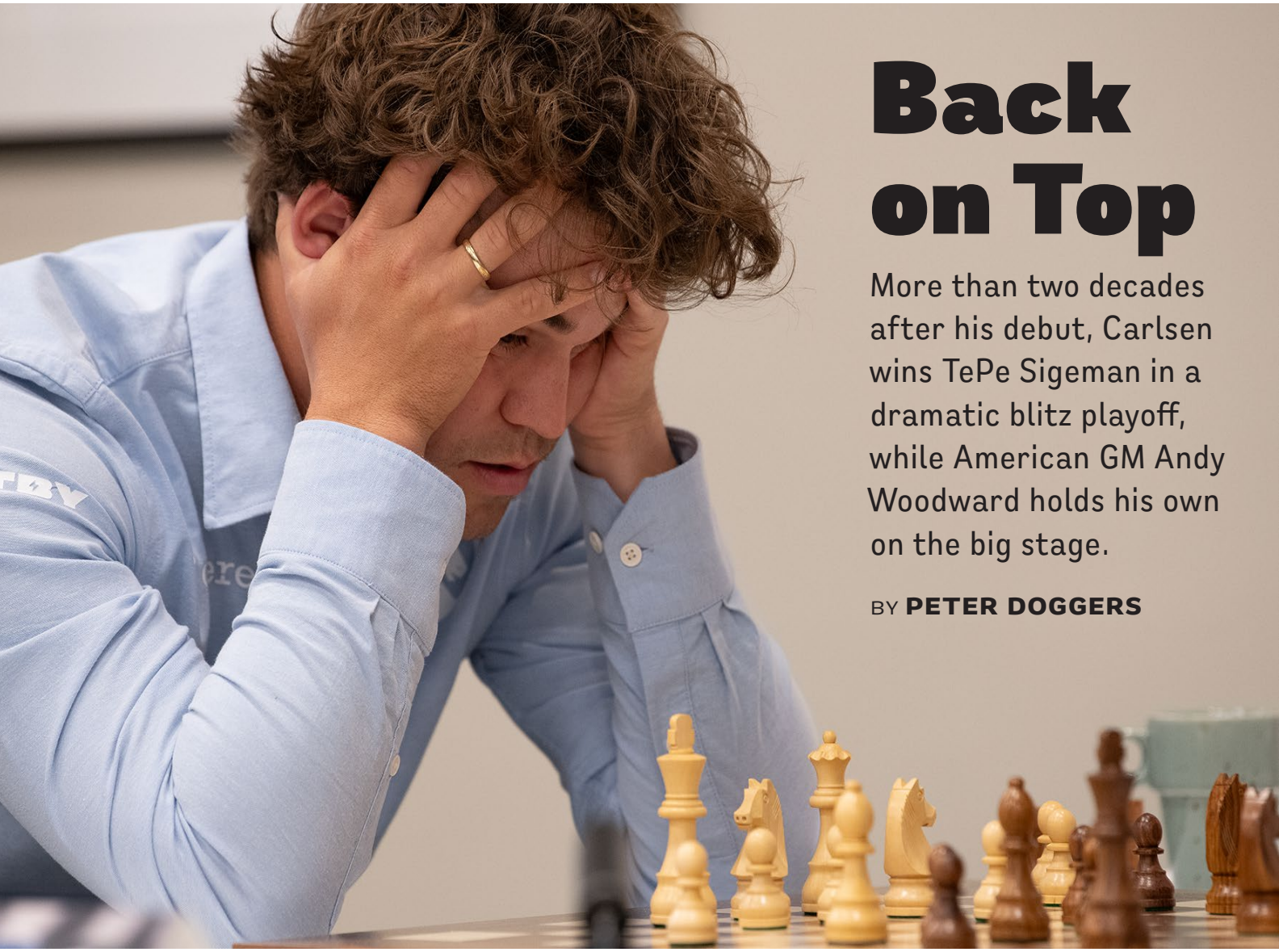
The second part is the practical implementation of these neuroscientific and sports-science principles, together with concrete training material — exercise positions, session structures, and examples of how I diagnose a specific skill and raise it over time. This is where theory becomes a method that a coach can actually use.

The third part is what I think of as my own chapter: advice for coaches, players, and parents, drawn from more than 35 years in the profession. Much of what I want to say there has nothing to do with chess positions as such, but rather with sports psychology, goal-setting, the right mindset, and how to live with this demanding game.

I will not reveal everything. Some specific preparations that Javokhir and I are using for the match with Gukesh will remain private — that belongs to competition, not to the bookshelf. But the method itself is something I would like to share. In my view, chess coaching is still underdeveloped compared with coaching in other sports. If the book helps dedicated coaches think about their work in a more structured way, helps ambitious players organize their improvement more effectively, and helps parents guide their children in the right way, then it will have been worth writing.



Sindarov, Madaminov, and Vidonyak at the Candidates



Back on Top

More than two decades after his debut, Carlsen wins TePe Sigeman in a dramatic blitz playoff, while American GM Andy Woodward holds his own on the big stage.

BY **PETER DOGGERS**

DURING THE OPENING CEREmony of the TePe Sigeman tournament, in the beautifully decorated Malmö town hall, the players each had to pick one of eight chess pawns which had lot numbers written on the bottom. After picking his pawn, Magnus Carlsen unexpectedly asked for the microphone. The pawns, which came from a typical Swedish chess set, brought back memories, he explained.

"Our first luxury chess set had exactly this kind of pawns," he said. "I do think some of them were lost when we were trying to get them from our cabin to the car. Back then, you had to park your car and then walk in the snow carrying everything to your cabin, and I seem to remember that I was responsible for carrying all the chess pieces. Some got lost in the snow, and that was kind of the end of that about 25 years ago, but it's certainly special for me!"

The anecdote, and the smiles that came along with it, kind of predicted the rest of Carlsen's week (May 1-7) in Malmö, Sweden's third-largest city, about a half-hour's drive from the Copenhagen airport. The Norwegian superstar was in an excellent mood throughout the event and even gave a rare interview *after a loss*. It must have helped that it was relatively close to home — his family came along — and that tournament director Johan Berntsen and co-sponsor Johan Sigeman are longtime friends of Carlsen's father.

In 2004, Magnus played as a 13-year-old who had just made GM and finished in third place behind his future second Peter Heine Nielsen and Curt Hansen. He hadn't been back since, but last December, Henrik Carlsen called Berntsen to inquire whether his son could play. The answer was something along the lines of a joyous "Obviously," after which it wasn't difficult to complete the field with several other world-class players — all of them eager to get a chance to face the player who is still by far the highest-rated on the planet but who doesn't play much classical chess anymore.

"When I first heard that he's playing here, I immediately agreed to the organizers," was how GM Nodirbek Abdusattorov put it, adding with a smile: "I'm here only because of Magnus!"

The tournament has quite the history; it was first held in 1993, and names such as Viktor Korchnoi, Judit Polgar, Vasyl Ivanchuk and Jan Timman are among its winners.

ALL PHOTOS: PETER DOGGERS

Since 2017, the main sponsor has been TePe, a producer of oral hygiene products. Consequently, slightly bewildering banners with toothbrushes and toothpicks could be seen inside the playing hall in the Elite Plaza Hotel in central Malmö. TePe's chairman, Joel Eklund, is a strong club player who has peaked at a 2279 FIDE rating. His company enjoyed plenty of international exposure, as Carlsen's participation attracted more media attention than ever before. For the first time since its inception, the tournament had a press officer, and yours truly helped with pictures and post-game video interviews.

From the start, Carlsen knew it wasn't going to be easy. At the opening press conference, he described the rest of the field as "scary," with several young and talented players. Abdusattorov, who had won the London, Wijk aan Zee and Prague tournaments back-to-back-to-back between December and February, was expected to be his main rival, while Carlsen's first clash with GM Yagiz Kaan Erdogmus was highly anticipated as well — the Turkish prodigy had crushed GM Veselin Topalov 5-1 in a match shortly before the tournament and became the first 14-year-old to break 2700. The other participants were Indian GM Arjun Erigaisi (11th in the world), Dutch GM Jorden van Foreest (16th), Swedish GM Nils Grandelius (53rd), American GM Andy Woodward (96th), who made a good impression in his first tournament of "super" caliber, and Chinese GM Zhu Jiner, number four on the world women's list.

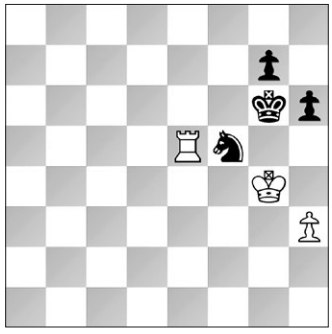
A Rough Start

After four rounds, winning the tournament looked like it would be an even tougher task for Carlsen: He was on only 50 percent, with three rounds to go. Erdogmus was in the lead and had entered the world's top 30 in the live ratings with a 3/4 score. Carlsen had drawn with Erigaisi and Abdusattorov and beaten local hero Grandelius, but lost to van Foreest.

"Actually I didn't think it would happen ever, so it's a big moment," said van Foreest, the winner of the 2021 Tata Steel tournament, after scoring his first classical win against the Norwegian. It came after all the players — except Carlsen, who stayed in another hotel — had been woken up at 1:30 a.m. by a fire alarm and needed to wait on the street for about 20 minutes while the fire department confirmed it was a false alarm. Van Foreest still managed to sleep for another seven hours — enough for the big game.

THE UPSET

GM Jorden van Foreest (2735)
GM Magnus Carlsen (2840)
TePe Sigeman (4), Malmö, 05.04.2026



BLACK TO MOVE

We pick up the game in a position nobody expected Carlsen to lose. Note that Van Foreest had a bit more than two minutes left on the clock and Carlsen almost six, with 30 seconds added per move.

61. ... Nd4?
Black should keep the knight as close to the king as possible: 61. ... h5+! 62. Kf4 Nh6 and Black can hold this even though the h-pawn will drop.

62. Re4 Nb5 63. Rc4!
Van Foreest skillfully prevents the knight from returning to the kingside.

63. ... Kh7 64. Rc6 Nd4 65. Rd6 Nb5 66. Rd7?
The engine plays it the other way around: 66. Rd8! Kg6 67. Rd7 h5+ 68. Kf4 and White wins.

66. ... Nc3?
66. ... Kg6! would have been a draw, but the details are beyond my understanding.

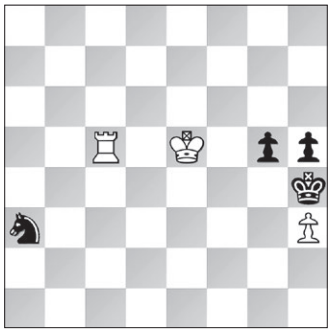
67. Kf5 Ne2 68. Re7 Nd4+ 69. Kf4 Kg6 70. Re4 Nb5 71. Rc4 Kh5 72. Ke5 g5 73. Ke6?
White should have gone for the knight: 73. Kd5! Na3 *(73. ... Na7 74. Rc7 Nb5 75. Rc5 Na3* [or 75. ... Na7 76. Kc4 Kh4 77. Rc7] 76. *Kd4 Kh4* 77. *Kd3 Kxh3* 78. Ra5 also nabs the knight) 74. Rc3 Nb1 (*74. ... Nb5 75. Rc5*) 75. Rb3 Nd2 76. Rd3 Nf1 77. Rf3 Nd2 78. *Rf2 Nb3* 79. Rb2 Nc1 80. Kc4 and the knight is finally getting trapped, with Black's counterplay on the kingside coming too late.

73. ... Na3 74. Rd4 Nb5 75. Rd3 Kh4 76. Ke5 h5 77. Rb3 Na7 78. Rc3 Nb5 79. Rc5 Na3?

31st TePe Sigeman & Co

MALMÖ, MAY 1-7, 2026

			1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	
1	GM Magnus Carlsen	2840	*	½	½	1	0	1	1	1	5/7
2	GM Arjun Erigaisi	2751	½	*	½	½	1	½	1	1	5/7
3	GM Nodirbek Abdusattorov	2780	½	½	*	½	½	½	1	½	4/7
4	GM Yagiz Kaan Erdogmus	2708	0	½	½	*	½	½	1	1	4/7
5	GM Jorden van Foreest	2735	1	0	½	½	*	½	½	½	3½/7
6	GM Andy Woodward	2635	0	½	½	½	½	*	0	1	3/7
7	GM Zhu Jiner	2546	0	0	0	0	½	1	*	½	2/7
8	GM Nils Grandelius	2662	0	0	½	0	½	0	½	*	1½/7



79. … Na7! would have drawn.

80. Kf5! Nb1 81. Rc2 Na3 82. Rb2 g4 83. hxg4 hxg4 84. Kf4 Kh5 85. Ra2?
After 85. Kf5! Kh6 (*85. … Kh4 86. Rg2*) 86. Kf6 White picks up the g-pawn soon and catches the knight as well.

85. … Nc4 86. Rc2 Na3?
With 1:17 on the clock (and just 50 seconds for his opponent), Carlsen collapses. 86. … Nb6 draws here.

87. Rc3 Nb1 88. Rd3, Black resigned.
It's *zugzwang*. If 88. … Kh4 89. Rd1.

A reporter from a local newspaper visited the tournament that day and brought a photographer who took pictures at the start of the round. The reporter asked press officer Ingemar Falk whether he could interview Carlsen after the game; Falk replied that he couldn't promise it. The reporter, who didn't have experience with covering chess, waited for five hours, and when Carlsen resigned his game Falk lowered the expectations even more. To everyone's surprise, Carlsen spent another 10 minutes cheerfully discussing the game with his opponent before speaking to the reporter, still in fairly good spirits.

Carlsen's play remained somewhat shaky in his next two games, even though he won both. He was briefly in a bad position against Zhu and didn't get an advantage until late in the game against Woodward, who collapsed in time trouble.

NOT TODAY, KID

GM Andy Woodward (2635)
GM Magnus Carlsen (2840)
TePe Sigeman (6), Malmö, 05.06.2026



BLACK TO MOVE

"It was very cagey. He made a lot of good moves and I was kind of like more trying to hang on than anything else," Carlsen said about the earlier phase of the game before he went for the following bishop sacrifice:

27. … Bxh3!?
"I couldn't figure everything out, but my thought process at that point was that we have a long, long way to the time control, so we're essentially playing a rapid game now for the next 15 moves or so, and that seemed to suit that," Carlsen explained afterwards. "The objective evaluation I've no clue about, but it felt like I wasn't risking a ton there."

28. b4 Nd7 29. Rxb7
Woodward could have taken the bishop: 29. gxh3 Qxf3 30. Nd4 Qg3+ 31. Kf1 Qxh3+ 32. Kg1 Nb6 33. Bd3 and Black likely has to take the perpetual soon.

29. … Be6 30. Nd4?
Now things go downhill for White. 30. Ba4! Ra8 31. Ra7 would have kept the balance.

30. … Ra8
Carlsen correctly assumed he was winning here.

31. Nxe6 Qxe6 32. Bd3 Ra1+ 33. Kf2 Nf6 34. Ra7 Rh1 35. Ke2 Nh5 36. Qa2 g4
The attack is easy.



Van Foreest got his first win over the former world champ

37. f4 Ra1
Taking on f4 with either the bishop or the knight was winning as well.

38. Qxa1 Bxa1 39. Rxa1 Ng3+ 40. Kd2 Nxe4+ 41. Kc2 f5 42. b5 cxb5 43. Ra8+ Kg7 44. cxb5 Qd5 45. Rc8 Nf2 46. Rc7+ Kg6 47. Bc4 Qd1+ 48. Kb2 d5, White resigned.

With one round to go, Erigaisi was the sole leader with 4½/6, followed by Erdogmus and Carlsen, who would play each other in the final round, on 4. Arjun himself got the white pieces against Woodward, so he had fate in his own hands.

True to his style, the 22-year-old GM from Warangal opened the game aggressively, sacrificing a pawn in a sideline of the Nimzo-Indian while pushing his g- and h-pawns up the board. Due to some inaccuracies later on, this risky concept completely backfired and Woodward ended up in a strategically winning position. However, after a small but consequential slip in the endgame, Erigaisi's king was just in time to reach the corner.

NIMZO-INDIAN DEFENSE (E20)

GM Arjun Erigaisi (2751)
GM Andy Woodward (2635)
TePe Sigeman (7), Malmö, 05.07.2026

1. d4 Nf6 2. c4 e6 3. Nc3 Bb4 4. g3 0-0 5. Bg2 Nc6 6. e4 Bxc3+ 7. bxc3 d6



8. g4!? Na5 9. h4 Nxc4 10. h5
Kudos to Arjun for approaching the game this way while leading the tournament by a half-point!

10. ... Nd7 11. Qd3 b5 12. a4?!
This looks natural but is slightly inaccurate due to Black's strong reply.

12. ... Ba6 13. g5?!
By now, White should certainly have changed plans with 13. Nf3 and gone for castling kingside.

13. ... c5!
The classic approach of countering in the center against a wing attack works well here.

14. axb5 Bxb5 15. Ne2 Rb8 16. Qh3 Na5!
Very strong, and one that was possibly missed by Arjun.

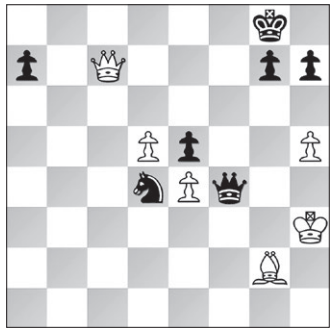
17. Be3 Nb3 18. Ra3 Bxe2 19. Kxe2 cxd4 20. cxd4 Qc7 21. Kf3
What else?

21. ... f5 22. gxf6 *e.p.* Rxf6+ 23. Kg4 e5 24. d5 Nd4 25. Kg3 Nc5 26. Kh2 Nc2?!
With an extra pawn and those beautiful knights, Black is close to winning here. White would have no counterplay after 26. ... h6.

27. Bxc5! dxc5
Perhaps Woodward had missed 27. ... Qxc5 28. Rc3! and suddenly White wins!

28. Rc3 Rxf2 29. Rc1 Nd4 30. Rxc5 Qd6 31. Rc8+ Rxc8 32. Rxc8+ Rf8 33. Qc3 Qf6 34. Rxf8+ Qxf8 35. Qc7 Qf4+ 36. Kh3?
White should have played 36. Kh1, when 36. ... h6 37. d6 gives enough counterplay for a draw.

36. ... Qe3+? 37. Kh2 Qf4+ 38. Kh3?





GM Arjun Erigaisi

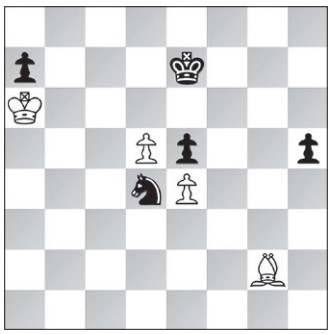

GM Andy Woodward

38. … g5!
Not missing the chance that was already possible at move 36.

39. hxg6 *e.p.* Qh6+!
The point, but Woodward wins some more time on the clock first before taking the pawn with check.

40. Kg3 Qf4+ 41. Kh3 Qh6+ 42. Kg3 Qxg6+ 43. Kh2 Qh6+ 44. Kg1 Qc1+!
Having reached the time control, Woodward took no chances and spent more than 10 minutes calculating this winning move.

45. Qxc1 Ne2+ 46. Kf2 Nxc1 47. Ke3 Kf7 48. Kd2 Nb3+ 49. Kc3 Nd4 50. Kb4 Ke7 51. Ka5 h5 52. Ka6



52. … h4?
But not like this!

It was important to "shoulder" the white king first: 52. … Kd6 53. Kxa7 Kc5 and now Black is just in time, whichever way the white king goes. The best try is 54. Kb7, after which Black needs two more accurate moves. 54. … Nb5! 55. Kc8 Kd6! 56. Kd8 h4 57. Ke8 Nc3 58. Kf7 Nd1 59. Kg6 Nf2. It's an easier win after 54. Ka6 h4 55. Ka5 Ne2 56. Ka4 Ng1 57. Kb3 h3 58. Bh1 Ne2 59. Kc2 h2 60. Kd2 Ng3.

53. Kxa7 Kd6 54. Kb6
Now the white king can race back to help, as it will take the black knight four moves to get from d4 to f2.

54. … Nc2 55. Kb5 Ne3 56. Bf3 h3 57. Kb4 Nc2+
It's also a draw after 57. … h2 58. Kc3 Nd1+ 59. Kd2 Nf2 60. Ke2 h1=Q 61. Bxh1 — as long as Black doesn't take the bishop!

58. Kc3 Nd4 59. Bh1 Ne2+ 60. Kd2 Nd4, draw.
"It feels really great," Woodward said when I asked him about participating in such a stellar field for the first time. The American GM, who turned 16 on the day of the second round in Malmö, won the Tata Steel Challengers group in Wijk aan Zee earlier this year. He shared an interesting detail about his preparation for TePe Sigeman: He had mostly focused on sharpening his calculation with exercises from books, and his mother, who accompanied him in Sweden, had helped him with that. Woodward also noted the support he had received from the Kasparov Chess Foundation, adding: "At the moment, I have been trying to experiment with lots of people and ideas, and it's been working pretty well I think."

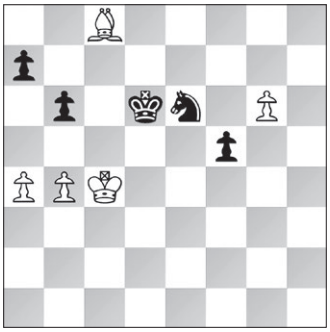
Two Showdowns

The last round also saw the first classical game between Carlsen and Erdogmus. After beating him at the World Rapid Championship in late December, Carlsen had called Erdogmus "the best 14-year-old that the world has ever seen," and the clash of the generations was potentially historic. Some of us remembered the first (and only) time Carlsen faced Garry Kasparov at the board, at a rapid tournament in Reykjavik in 2004, noticing that Carlsen was in the veteran role this time.

Both players were clearly eager to play this game, and Erdogmus seemed very much up to the task. He defended brilliantly for a long time, but Carlsen continued to put pressure on the board and on the clock. "Eventually we got down to a point where he had only one way to draw and he didn't find it, which is what often happens," Carlsen said afterward.

THE CLASH

GM Magnus Carlsen (2840)
GM Yagiz Kaan Erdogmus (2708)
TePe Sigeman (7), Malmö, 05.07.2026



BLACK TO MOVE

50. ... Ke7?
In fact, Black had two moves that would still have drawn the game: 50. ... Ng7 and 50. ... f4.

51. Kb5! f4 52. Ka6
Here Erdogmus realized what he had done. He played his remaining moves shaking his head, bitterly disappointed. This is understandable, having come so close to a draw against the best player in the world. After the closing ceremony, the Turkish boy was all smiles again as he took on everyone who wanted to try their luck against him in blitz.

52. ... f3 53. Kxa7 b5 54. g7 Nxg7 55. axb5 f2 56. Bh3 Ne6 57. b6 Nd4 58. b7 Nc6+ 59. Ka8, Black resigned.

Woodward could have truly played spoiler if he had won his last game; Carlsen's victory would have given him first place with 5/7 right away. But Erigaisi's escape gave him five points as well.

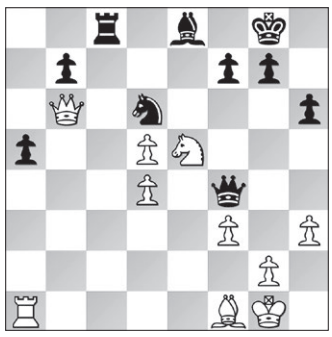
A half-hour after the last round, Erigaisi and Carlsen had to contest a blitz playoff. If the day hadn't seen enough drama yet, there was more to come: After a smooth win in the first game as Black, Carlsen surprisingly got outplayed with the white pieces next, bringing about a sudden-death



situation — the next decisive game wins. Drawing the black pieces for the first game, Carlsen decided matters in his favor after all, and first place went to the player who is still always the favorite in any tournament he plays in.

FOR FIRST PLACE

GM Arjun Erigaisi (2776)
GM Magnus Carlsen (2869)
TePe Sigeman playoff, Malmö, 05.07.2026



WHITE TO MOVE

The time control for this sudden-death game was 2½ minutes for White and three minutes for Black with a two-second increment per move. In this equal position, Arjun erred.

31. Rxa5? Qe3+ 32. Kh2 Qf4+
Black has a winning attack after 32. ... Rc1 33. Qxd6 Rxf1.

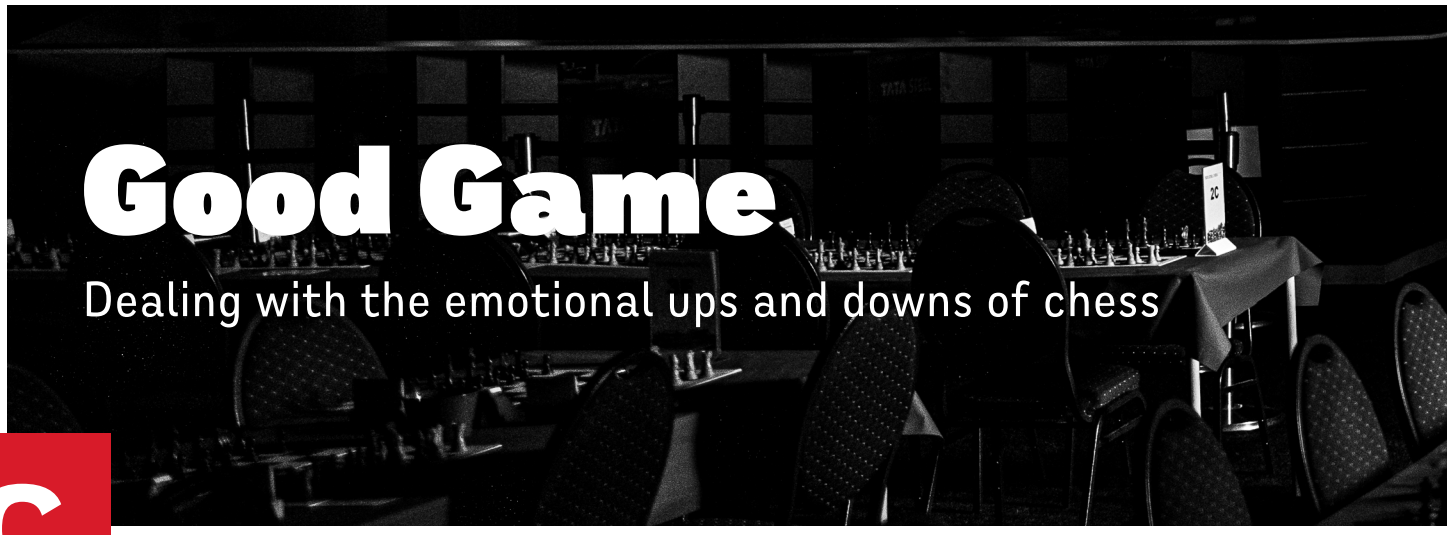
33. Kg1 Nf5? 34. Ra1?
It's suddenly back to 0.00 in engine terms after 34. d6!.

34. ... Qe3+ 35. Kh2 Nxd4!
Winning because the e5-knight hangs, but there's another nasty threat.

36. Ng4 Nxf3+!, White resigned.

I believe Carlsen's success in Malmö was partly due to the fact that he was enjoying himself so much, and in our final interview he acknowledged that: "I loved it. Except for the game against Zhu Jiner, when I had a really tough day, I would say I enjoyed more or less everything about it. Great atmosphere. It was fun to play, and really exciting in the end as well. So, it was a fantastic experience."

This author can only echo those words: TePe Sigeman is a relatively small but lovely event with a group of organizers who are among the friendliest people you'll find in the chess world. Let's hope that Carlsen is willing to defend his title next year — he'll surely be more than welcome to do so. Obviously.



Good Game

Dealing with the emotional ups and downs of chess

CHESS HAS A HOLD ON ALL OF us, but sometimes it can feel like a chokehold.

It's a tough game: There's no feeling like winning, but there's also no feeling like resigning, or making a losing blunder, with other players, your friends, maybe even the entire internet watching.

No one likes losing, and they shouldn't: The wins wouldn't mean much if the losses didn't mean anything. But the emotional bumps and bruises of chess hurt more at some times than others.

An obsession with the game itself can lead to an obsession with results and ratings, and that can leave players vulnerable when they run into a losing streak or a last-round disaster (both of which happen to us all). The effects can do more than just make a player unpleasant to be around for a while after a bad loss; it can lead to dangerous behavior and it can turn chess into just another thing in life to be nervous about.

Nate Shuman, who uses the mindfulness techniques he learned as a young player to help others (see page 36), says he's had 6-year-old clients who need help keeping it together in the anxiety of tournament competition.

Chess Life editor John Hartmann says a player at his local club in Omaha, Nebraska, told him that he had come to recognize how much thinking about ratings, and the gap between him and the top players at the club, was getting in his head and affecting his play.

Melinda Matthews, US Chess' Safe Play manager, says children and adults alike can lose perspective when the rough times come. She says children who have lashed out at opponents after a loss cite their fear of what their parents and/or coaches will think. She also related a case in which a player admitted to not taking their medicine because they thought it hurt their play. "The fact that they chose to lapse back into mental illness for a few rating points shows how compelling ratings and results can be," she said.

What can players do before, during, and after a round to help them play without the fear, dread and obsession that can overcome the love of the game?

GM Paul van der Sterren, who wrote the book *Mindful Chess*, shares his insights on using mindfulness to play in the moment; national master Nate Shuman details how he burned out before he even hit his teens and now helps kids with the techniques he used to get out from under; two sports psychologists who specialize in chess (one a former champion herself) explain the hold that ratings and results can have on players — what to watch for and what to keep in mind. And pearls of wisdom from coaches are sprinkled throughout the next few pages.

To the extent that the player at Hartmann's club was able to relax and play the person and the position, not the rating, his moves and enjoyment improved. His results followed suit, though that wasn't the point.

"Chess psychology" is generally thought of as a way to play better and win more games; this month, we're looking at psychology and mindset as a way not to play better but to enjoy the game more, to put it in perspective and to make each game as rich an experience as we all know chess can be.

– Rick Massimo



John Urschel faces off with Rachael Li at the Saint Louis Chess Club in 2017

PHOTO: COURTESY SLCC / LENNART OOTES



The Benefits of An Empty Mind

BY **GM PAUL VAN DER STERREN**



A grandmaster explains about rekindling the enjoyment of chess.

What is it that we want from a game of chess?

It is a question rarely asked and almost never (truthfully) answered. It was certainly never asked of me during my years as a professional player, and when I finally put it to myself, I soon stopped playing chess and started writing about it instead. But let's not get ahead of ourselves.

Perhaps the question is never asked because the answer seems so obvious. Chess is a fascinating game. Delving into it can be a richly rewarding experience. Isn't that sufficient reason for wanting to play chess? Of course it is! So what's the problem?

The problem is that many players at some point become disillusioned with chess. They find their stress levels are getting too high, the rewards for their efforts are too low and that in general the fun has gone out of it. Stress has replaced enjoyment. Why does this happen, and is there something we can do about it?

It's perfectly natural to encounter this problem. The balance between stress and enjoyment in chess is a peculiar one, because from the moment chess really starts to fascinate you, you want to exert yourself — you need to exert yourself! The beauty of chess reveals itself gradually with every step we take further into its depths. To discover the miracle of the underlying logic, the complexity and simplicity, the richness of the game — that journey holds endless fascination for us chessplayers. But the fuel needed to make this journey is mental exertion. Only by putting effort into it can chess be the truly rewarding experience it is meant to be.

Unfortunately, exerting ourselves gets us into trouble when we cross the line into overexertion. This is dangerous territory. The problem is further compounded by the inescapable fact that chess is essentially a competitive game. The aim of the game is to win, to beat the opponent. The stronger the opponent, the more effort will be required. The positive of this is that a strong opponent may force us to discover new levels of strength in ourselves; the negative is the danger of reaching intolerably high stress levels.

If we were all computers, this wouldn't be a problem: We would simply increase the power to the maximum and always perform at our very best. Winning or losing would be irrelevant. But a human chessplayer has to deal with emotions as well as with logic, deep calculation and planning. These emotional responses to the game provide both a further incentive to exert ourselves and a nasty trap.

Everybody loves to win; nobody likes losing, but winning and losing, satisfaction and disappointment, happiness and unhappiness, sunshine and rain, inevitably alternate in human life. There is no escaping the rainy days. Unfortunately, the average human mind is not equipped to handle the rainy days with the same composure as the sunny days. And when our enjoyment of chess becomes increasingly dependent on the sunny days, i.e., on winning, and losing becomes an unendurable ordeal, we have fallen into the trap. This will happen to the great majority of chessplayers, whatever their level, at some point in their lives.

Getting stuck in the morass of disenchantment after what may well have been a period of many years of enjoyment of the game

PHOTO: COURTESY HANNEKE VAN PARREREN (VAN DER STERREN), LENNART OOTES (BANNER)

(and your own prowess in it) is nothing to be ashamed of. Needless to say, though, when this happens you will want to go back to the sunny days, back to enjoying the game again.

So, what can you do? Having gone through a long career with many ups and downs myself, in which I have had to dig myself out of more holes than I care to admit, it has become clear to me that all the tricks and methods I have used over the years have one common denominator: Empty your mind.

A lot of advice can be given on things you should change or do better (and coaches and psychologists have plenty of tips for you to do that), but in most cases you are probably not doing anything wrong at all. What has gone wrong is that you have filled up your mind to bursting point. And that's a clear signal for letting it all go. Empty your mind, whatever is in it.

The next question is of course: how to do this? In my book *Mindful Chess* (New in Chess, 2024) I have written extensively about my own experience with Insight Meditation and the benefits this may provide for a chessplayer. The basic technique here is to handle everything that goes on in your mind with the mental tools of "observing, noting and letting go."

Although this may work to perfection for some, I am a bit hesitant here about recommending this practice to a general audience without offering the broader context in which this technique has its roots. However (and this is key!), the way of trying to empty your mind that works for you, can only be found by you anyway. All that I or anybody else can do is to give you some general advice, but whether this will work depends entirely on your own particular character and on the particular hole you have dug yourself in. You're the only one who can do it. So work it out for yourself.

In my own experience with emptying my mind, the techniques vary from very simple things (taking a short walk before a game, sitting on a bench in a park, listening to the birds, reading a book) to huge operations such as moving house and long meditation retreats. Or facing a major health scare. Or falling in love. All these ways of emptying my mind (sometimes involuntarily!) helped me to completely forget whatever it was that had clogged it up. Afterward, I was almost always able to look at things with a fresh mind, the result being that I started to enjoy chess again, often to my own surprise. Invariably, my level of play would also improve, in some cases even amazingly so, for I can safely say that I have had my best results immediately after — perhaps even as a direct result of — my worst ones.

> ***Play with confidence. The kids who end up playing games for first place are, for obvious reasons, kids I have a ton of confidence in. So I try to transmit the confidence I have in them to the kid. Kids seem to like this!***
>
> *– Matan Prilleltensky*

My peak period was in 1993, when I first won a Zonal Tournament, then the Dutch Championship, and then came second in the Interzonal, thus qualifying for the Candidates matches of 1994. This success story came directly after my worst-ever period, in 1992, when I practically started losing rating points the moment I sat down at a chessboard. I don't remember now what it was that made me empty my mind back then — it's not important anyway — but it worked to perfection.

Looking back over my career, I think it was the return of the enjoyment that always came first after a bad period. That was the real reward for whatever it was that had made me empty my mind. The return of the good results followed automatically. The enjoyment made the improvement happen.

Of course, it never lasted very long. After a while my mind would clog up again and, in a parallel movement, the tank of enjoyment would gradually empty as well. But that's what time does; it's a natural process. You shouldn't put the blame on yourself, for it has nothing to do with you. No state of bliss can ever be permanent.

But once you have cracked the secret, you will always be able to do it again. When you have truly felt the liberating effect of an empty mind, if only for a nanosecond (it is an experience outside of time anyway), it will automatically become part of your mental makeup. That moment when you honestly admit to yourself "Yes, I really am down and out now," and you can truly accept that this is reality and there are no two ways about it — it's such a powerful encounter with what the author Eckhart Tolle calls "the power of now," that the healing will



GM Alex Shabalov is consoled at the 2022 U.S. Senior Championship.

PHOTO: COURTESY SLCC / LENNART OOTES

start instantly, whether you want to or not. You simply don't have anything to do with it.

We have thus arrived at the next and final level of our discussion, the spiritual one. First, we were talking psychology: Houston, we have a problem. How do we solve it? This is useful and necessary, but essentially it is no more than a technical discussion of psychology. But to see that a problem is not only a problem, but also a chance to get in touch with something deeper than the mere question of winning or losing, constitutes an existential insight.

Just for fun, I asked AI about this and it informed me that "winning brings happiness, but losing brings wisdom. This shift in focus allows a person to view loss as a necessary part of growth rather than a failure." Though as artificial as it gets, this is very intelligent of AI and well put indeed.

But ultimately, this isn't about words. Trying to talk rationally about a subject like this is like trying to hold running water in your hand: The essence of the running water is the movement, while water in your hand lies still. Likewise, words will always convey the reality of whatever they try to express, but with the essence of that reality taken out of it. So, with the firm disclaimer that what I have talked about here can never be talked about, I have talked about it anyway. Make of it what you will.

> ***"It is essential for players to get a good night's sleep, practice mindfulness, stay hydrated, and keep sugar levels in check during tournaments. Stretching, breathing exercises, and short moments of meditation are also extremely helpful tools for managing anxiety and stress.***
>
> ***For young players especially, the emotional environment created by adults matters enormously. Parents and coaches should try to maintain a balanced approach to winning and losing — not becoming overly excited after victories or overly upset after defeats. Children are very sensitive to adult reactions. When a child loses a painful game, it is important to talk calmly with them, help them process the experience, and remind them that their value is not defined by a single result. When children feel emotionally supported, they recover faster, maintain confidence, and ultimately play better chess.***
>
> ***One phrase I often share with students is: "Chess is a journey of learning, resilience, and personal growth."***
>
> *— WIM Beatriz Marinello*

Conclusion

Enjoying your chess is key. So make sure you do enjoy it! Everything else is of lesser importance. When the enjoyment is gone, emptying your mind is a sure way of bringing it back. You'll be surprised! And if you find you really can't enjoy chess anymore, no matter how adept you have become at emptying your mind, then perhaps your time has come to say goodbye. There is no disgrace in quitting. That's what I did when my time as an active player was up and I have never regretted it.

On the contrary, the paradoxical truth is that quitting chess has brought the enjoyment back to me with a vengeance. Now that I am no longer a player, but "only" a follower, a fan, an occasional teacher and a writer about chess, I am enjoying the game as much and possibly more than when I was an active player.

Once chess has taken root in your brain, it will take care of itself. You can trust it to find its own way. Just be who you are, sit back, relax, and enjoy the ride.



IM Nazi Paikidze is overwhelmed on the way to her 2016 U.S. Women's title.

PHOTOO: COURTESY SLCC / LENNART OOTES



Passing It On

BY **RICK MASSIMO** AND **JOHN HARTMANN**

A former youth champion is teaching young players what he learned about staying in love with the game.

Nate Shuman started playing chess at the Dalton School, in New York, and soon he was on a track familiar to any observer of scholastic chess: trips to national and world championships, a speedy climb of the rating ladder. By age 8, he was nearly a master.

At age 13, he was still nearly a master. Not only had his play plateaued, but his attitude toward the game had changed. The "performance stress" cut into his enjoyment of the game, and so did his tendency to fade in the late rounds of the big tournaments.

Working with a sports psychologist changed everything, Shuman says. "I just got immersed in the world of biofeedback, mindfulness meditation, breathing, and it changed my life."

He made it to national master, but more importantly his enjoyment of the game came back. "A big part of my journey was finding and loving and chess again, and just being joyful and going into these weekends … to just go and enjoy chess."

Shuman is a sophomore at Harvard now, and even before he left high school he founded Mindmates, an organization that teaches the same kind of mindfulness and psychological tools Shuman learned to young chessplayers and athletes in other sports.

"You see a lot of professional athletes doing this work," Shuman says, "and I really saw a gap there, and my work really was there to spread the word and spread what worked so well for me with other youth."

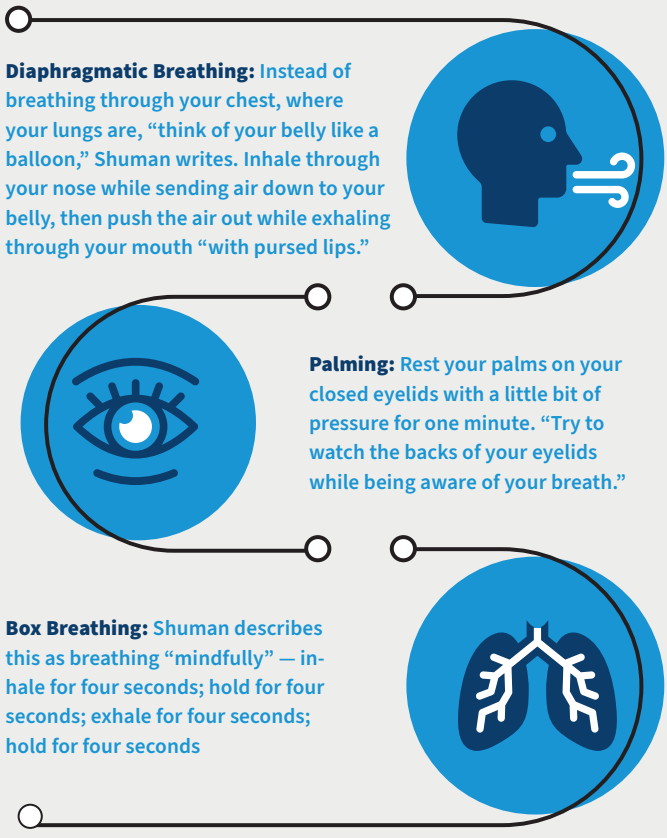
Shuman is preparing a Mindmates-related scorebook with visualizations and exercises for before, during, and after a game or tournament, and he says it's work that needs doing: He's encountered 6-year-olds who were already anxious about winning and losing.

He says he frequently works with kids on separating the consequences of losing from the playing of the game. "I heard a lot of kids be, like, 'I would really worry about the consequences of losing, if my parents would get upset, or if I would let my team down or coach down,' and that would kind of their mind would wander there during the games, rather than actually the game at hand."

PHOTO: COURTESY SUBJECT

Shuman's Three Pre-Game Techniques

Some of the exercises Shuman recommends in his notation book should be done before or after a game or tournament: Reminding yourself what your goal is, why you want it, and what smaller goals will help you along the way. Some are done afterward: Monitoring your feelings, listing what you're proud of from the game. But a few of his techniques can be accomplished at the board.



Diaphragmatic Breathing: Instead of breathing through your chest, where your lungs are, "think of your belly like a balloon," Shuman writes. Inhale through your nose while sending air down to your belly, then push the air out while exhaling through your mouth "with pursed lips."

Palming: Rest your palms on your closed eyelids with a little bit of pressure for one minute. "Try to watch the backs of your eyelids while being aware of your breath."

Box Breathing: Shuman describes this as breathing "mindfully" — inhale for four seconds; hold for four seconds; exhale for four seconds; hold for four seconds

Shuman also found that eating well before a tournament helped him physically, and that also had emotional benefits. Keeping to a pregame routine — he would throw a football with his dad, sometimes even if it meant showing up at the board a few minutes late — also helped with decision-making and with calming his mind.

How It Works

Shuman says calming the mind with mindfulness meditation can include positive visualization, which can improve mindset going into a game or tournament. In a paper he's co-authored with professor Andrew Newburg, he's found that mindfulness can help in "quieting down the amygdala, which, by quieting down, doesn't allow it to kind of react and impair the decision-making parts of the brain."

It's difficult to have positive visualizations of victory without negative visualizations of defeat, Shuman acknowledges. "That's why this is not easy. ... There's a lot to say for envisioning the worst, or preparing for the worst, and seeing how that makes you feel," Shuman says. "But when it comes game time, being able to quiet those thoughts is important. ... It's easier said than done. It also takes a lot of practice, especially if you're struggling with performance anxiety. ... It's just like going to the gym, right? As we train our brains, they grow, and that only comes from consistent practice."

In the end — and this is at the bottom of the later pages of Shuman's scorebook — the key is to repeat to yourself, "No matter what happens, I love and approve of myself completely." Acknowledging that "defeat is certainly possible" was reassuring to him, and can give players the resiliency they need to deal with the ups and downs of chess while the game is still going, and afterward.

> ***The 15-30 minutes leading up to the first move is one of the most stressful times for a chessplayer. Nervousness calms down a lot once the moves begin. I advocate taking a page from golf and developing a "pre-shot routine."***
>
> ***About 30 minutes before each game, I would study openings. Even if they didn't come up, it made me feel more prepared. This is more about having the body and mind feel like they're ready for what's about to take place. Then about 15 minutes before the game, I would close my eyes for five minutes. Finally, I would take a quick walk in the remaining time. The truth is, it doesn't matter too much what routine you pick. The trick is to normalize the situation and get your body used to the stress. Essentially, you trick your brain into thinking this next chess game, or this next downhill five-foot putt to win the match, is totally normal. Which it isn't, but nobody chooses chess or golf seeking equanimity.***
>
> — FM Mike Klein



Chess Life **editor John Hartmann grimaces when he realizes he's already lost in this New Orleans blitz game.**



GM Jianchao Zhou

PHOTOS: JAMES CULLEN FOR US CHESS (NAKAMURA), DAVID LLADA FOR US CHESS (ZHOU)

> *I often tell students [about] a final round large prize U2200 game where a draw tied for first and a win got clear first. One player was a teenager. The other was an adult who clearly needed the prize money.*
>
> *Before the game even started, the adult's hand was shaking during the handshake. It was obvious to me the teenager would win at that point. The adult's voice cracked when he offered the draw. The kid played on and won.*
>
> *Many chess games are lost emotionally before they are lost on the board. Chess is difficult enough without added pressure. I try to teach students to focus on the moves, not the off-the-board consequences. This isn't boxing; when you lose, you won't go home with a broken nose. And there are easier ways to earn money.*
>
> — Brian Karen



What Really Counts

BY **RICK MASSIMO**

How easy it is to be a slave to your rating, and how to break free

Psychologists and statisticians alike agree that ratings are extremely accurate for their real purpose — a broad estimate, similar to a batting average, that can separate classes of players and generalize broadly. But they also caution against obsessing on them. Granted, that may be hard to avoid when your rating is stuck on something98 or you're trying to nail down a title, but it's far too easy to let your rating stand in for your chess identity.

Benjamin Portheault, a London-based performance coach for chessplayers, agrees: "This a really important sociological classification, whether you want it or not. People will not say, 'I have a rating,' 'I have 2000.' They will say 'I am 2000,' 'I am a class A player,' 'a FIDE master,' and so on."

Scottish GM Jonathan Rowson writes, "From personal experience I can attest that it is not unusual for chess players to walk through a door in order of rating."

Even Mark Glickman, chair of the US Chess Ratings Committee, agrees that the people who really understand how a rating system works are among the first people to caution against staking your identity and your enjoyment of the game on these numbers.

"If you want to be able to, for example, section tournaments and make sure players of similar ability are in the same section, that's a reasonable use of ratings," Glickman says. "Any kind of psychological aspect — you know, treating it like a measure of worth — is not really what it was intended to do."

PHOTO: LENNART OOTES

Keeping perspective

How soon after an event do you start looking to see how your rating has changed? How well do you remember the names of your past year's worth of opponents, and how well do you remember their ratings?

Arpad Elo is of course considered the father of the rating system; he took it over from Kenneth Harkness in 1960. But even he warned against taking the numbers to heart.

Writing in ChessBase, Elmer Dumlao Sangalang, a family friend who corresponded with Elo often, said the professor at times "thought that what he had created with the rating system was some kind of Frankensteinian monster when he saw the young players so preoccupied with their ratings. They reminded him of racetrack habitués who go to the races and spend their time poring over the tout sheets at the betting windows — and never see a race.

"He was bothered by the inordinate importance being ascribed to the sporting aspect of chess. He regretted that his system contributed greatly to the prevailing opinion that regards chess as first and foremost a sport."

In his book *The Moves You Make,* Rowson, who also holds a Ph.D. in education, writes that while players know intellectually that ratings are merely an estimate, they still stick in one's consciousness. "[A] chess rating says nothing of our style of play, how acute our understanding of particular positions can be, nor quite how dangerous we can be on any given day," Rowson writes. "Even so, we are typically self-conscious about ratings, because they are such a clear marker of our relative status in a world that we care about."

That can be helpful to the extent that it fosters healthy ambition, Rowson thinks: "The young child learning the moves is no less worthy of love and respect than the world champion, but it is no bad thing that she is motivated to play less like herself and more like Magnus."

But two chessplayers won't talk long before the question "What's your rating?" comes up. And when the answer comes, "you don't make a moral judgment," Rowson writes, "but some kind of domain-specific pecking order is firmly established."

It's all about group identity, Portheault says. "There is this deep yearning … and this rating is really this validation that you belong to a group of such-and-such skill. So losing the rating creates massive anxiety, because people really feel as if they are losing like a part of themselves."

WIM Denise Bouah, a three-time South African women's champion, chess coach and counseling psychologist specializing in sports psychology, says that keeping an eye on one's rating is "a natural way to see things. I mean, what else do you measure your progress by? But it's not something that you should get fixated on, because I think you can lose the joy of playing chess very easily."

They both emphasize that your rating is the result of — well, your results, and that your results are the thing you can't control.

Portheault points out that unless passing a rating milestone gains you a title, it probably won't gratify you any more than any of the others you've already surpassed: "Something external can't give us lasting satisfaction, because otherwise, all the stuff we wanted in the past, and that we got — they would have gotten us lasting satisfaction, and they didn't."

All that said, it's easy to tell someone not to worry about their rating and "just play chess," but Bouah and Portheault, as players themselves, know that's not practical.

"That's not really good advice, right?," Portheault says. "It's like saying, "Have you tried not worrying instead of worrying?"" He advises instead to "dive into" your rating fear: "Where is this coming from? Why do you play chess? … People can only answer for themselves. Once people can see the big direction of what they want to achieve and what they want out of chess, then they can overcome the bumps on the road and the rating losses and such."

"Rating will sort itself out at the end," Bouah says. "I tell chessplayers a lot that if you're going to focus on the result, you're going to skip on the things that you're supposed to do to actually get the win. You should have a healthy perspective on where you are with your chess — why you are at that level. Because otherwise the comparisons will drive you mad."



Headache or heartache for GM Ian Nepomniachtchi?

PHOTO: DAVID LLADA

Playing It Out

The position from last month's exercise – how'd you fare?

BY **GM ALEXANDER CHERNIN**
INTRODUCTION BY **JOHN HARTMANN**

IN LAST MONTH'S INTERVIEW, GM Alexander Chernin spoke of the concept of playing mode, which he learned from the legendary trainer IM Mark Dvoretsky. A student in playing mode plays out a prepared position against a coach who already knows its ins and outs.

This was an important part of American GM Andy Woodward's training sessions with Chernin, as was mutual playing mode, in which two students play out the position with the coach watching. Mutual playing mode is much like a standard training game, but with a twist: When one side makes a serious mistake in mutual playing mode, play stops, the coach gives a short explanation and — importantly — the players change colors.

Last month we presented a position from Smagin – Monin (USSR, 1986) for you to try mutual playing mode with a friend or against the computer. While you might get more from what follows if you did so, fear not: Chernin's analysis will teach you something even if you're just replaying it for fun.

Chernin had Woodward and GM Ihor Samunenkov play this out in mutual playing mode last year. Here he provides his full analysis of the position (which goes beyond the game continuation), then explains how the two players handled it.

Take it away, GM Chernin!

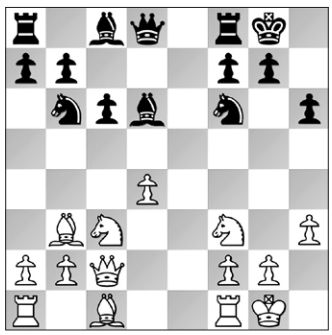
QUEEN'S GAMBIT DECLINED, SEMI-SLAV DEFENSE (D46)

GM Sergey Smagin (2495)
Nikolay Monin (2375)
USSR, 1986
Annotations by GM Alexander Chernin

1. d4 d5 2. c4 e6 3. Nc3 c6 4. Nf3 Nf6 5. e3 Nbd7 6. Qc2 Bd6 7. Be2 0-0 8. 0-0 dxc4 9. Bxc4 e5 10. h3 exd4 11. exd4 Nb6 12. Bb3 h6!?

The game started from this position, and each player had 75 minutes for the game. The training goals for this particular game included attacking and defensive skills aligned with finding only moves, use of the technique of elimination in analysis, and rational time usage.

First, my full analysis.



Black wants to play ... Nf6-d5 with comfort, not allowing White to play Bc1-g5, but now Monin has to survive a hurricane.

13. Bxh6! gxh6 14. Qg6+ Kh8 15. Qxh6+ Nh7

The only move. White wins after 15. ... Kg8? 16. Ne5.

16. Ne4!

Black is let off the hook after 16. Bc2?! f5 17. Nh4 Qf6! (or *17. ... Rg8 18. Ng6+ Rxg6 19. Qxg6 Qf6*) 18. Ng6+ Kg8, when Black is better.

16. ... Be7

Not 16. ... f6? 17. Nxd6 (White won when this position came up in the 2023 internet game Duda – Hambleton after *17. Nh4 Nd5 18. Bxd5 cxd5 19. Ng6+ Kg8 20. Nxd6 Qxd6 21. Rfe1 Be6 22. Re3 Rf7 23. Rae1 Bd7 24. Rg3 Rg7 25. Ne7+*, and here Black resigned) 17. ... Qxd6 18. Bc2 Rf7 (or *18. ... Qc7 19. Bxh7*) 19. Ne5 Rg7 20. Bxh7 Rxh7 21. Nf7+ Kg8 22. Qxh7+ Kxh7 23. Nxd6 with a winning position.

17. Nf6!

One wants to believe that Black consciously went into this ...

17. ... Bf5

The only move, or "box," as they used to say in the heyday of the Informant. Mate is coming up after 17. ... Bxf6 18. Bc2.

18. Nh5!

Not 18. Nh4? Qxd4!.

18. ... Bf6



The only move again. White wins after 18. ... Rg8? 19. Ne5! Bg6 20. Qxg6!.

Now White is at an important crossroads.

19. Ng5!

Other moves, such as 19. Rfe1 or 19. Rad1, don't work after 19. ... Rg8! with the idea of 20. Bxf7 Qf8.

19. Ng5 is a good move, as we will see, but the greatest dangers await Black after 19. Nh4.

White is winning after (a) 19. ... Bd3?! 20. Rad1! Bxd4? (better is *20. ... Be4*, although

White is still clearly better) 21. Nf3! Bxb2 22. Rfe1 c5 23. Rd2 Bc3 24. Rc1 or (b) 19. ... Bg6? 20. Qxg6! Rg8 21. Bxf7!.

After (c) 19. ... Be4! one of the rooks should go to e1. Let's look at (c1) 20. Rae1 first.



POSITION AFTER 20. Rae1

Black's best is 20. ... Rg8! (if *20. ... Bd3?! 21. Re3! Bxd4 22. Rd1!* with a significant advantage). Now 21. Bxf7 Qf8! (*21. ... Bxh4?! 22. Bxg8 Qg5 23. Qxg5 Nxg5 24. Bb3 Rf8* [24. ... Nd5 25. Bxd5 Bxd5 26. Nf4 leaves White well ahead] *25. f4!? Bxe1 26. Rxe1 Bg6 27. fxg5 Bxh5 28. Re7* is better for White) 22. Qxf8 Rgxf8 23. Rxe4 (*23. Nxf6 Nxf6 24. Bg6 Bd5* is also unclear) 23. ... Bxh4 when we reach an unclear position in which the pawns are a match for the knight.

White could also play (c2) 20. Rfe1.



POSITION AFTER 20. Rfe1

Here Black has 20. ... Rg8! 21. Bxf7 (not *21. Nxf6?! Qxf6 22. Qxf6+ Nxf6 23. Bxf7 Rg7* when Black is slightly better, and even worse is *21. Rxe4?? Bg5!* winning) and now:

(c2a) White wins after 21. ... Bg5? 22. Qe6 Bxh4 23. Rxe4! (but not *23. Bxg8?* which allows *23. ... Bxf2+! 24. Kh1 Bxg2+ 25. Kxg2 Qg5+* and an unclear position)

(c2b) Black's best is 21. ... Bxh4!. Now comes 22. Bxg8 (*22. Rxe4?!* allows *22. ... Qg5* [not 22. ... Bg5? 23. Qe6] *23. Qxg5 Nxg5 24. Rxh4 Nf3+* when Black is a little better) and Black can draw with 22. ... Bxf2+! (White wins after *22. ... Qxd4? 23. Qf4! Rxg8 24. Rxe4 Bxf2+ 25. Kh2! Qxb2?* [better is 25. ... Qd5 though White is still on top after 26. Nf6!] *26. Rb1!*) 23. Kxf2 (not *23. Kf1?! Bd3+* when Black has hopes for more) 23. ... Qxd4+ 24. Qe3 Qxb2+ 25. Qe2 Qd4+ 26. Qe3.

(c2c) It's also unclear after 21. ... Qf8! 22. Qxf8 Rgxf8 23. Nxf6 Nxf6 24. Bg6 Bd5 25. Re7.

Back to 19. Ng5.

19. ... Bxd4

Another only move.

20. Nxh7!

White has good compensation after 20. h4!?, while 20. Nxf7+!? Rxf7 21. Bxf7 Qg5! is arguably equal. Capturing the knight is more concrete.

20. ... Bxh7 21. Rad1!

21. Rfd1 leads to the same thing.

21. ... Rg8!

Nothing else works:

(a) 21. ... f5? was played in our source game, which finished with 22. Rfe1! Qf6 23. Nxf6 Bxf6 24. Re6 Bg7 25. Qh5 a5 26. Rdd6 Rac8 27. Re7 a4 28. Rh6, Black resigned.

(b) 21. ... Qh4? is met by 22. Rxd4! Qxd4 23. Rd1 Qe5 24. f4! Qe3+ 25. Kh2 with mate coming;



GM Andy Woodward



GM Ihor Samunenkov

PHOTOS: LENNART OOTES

(c) 21. … c5? is similar, i.e., 22. Rxd4! Qxd4 23. Rd1 Qe5 24. f4! Qe3+ 25. Kh2.

22. Bc2!
22. Bxf7? allows 22. … Qg5! with equality.

22. … Rg6 23. Bxg6 fxg6 24. Nf4!
If 24. Rfe1 Bxf2+ 25. Kxf2 Qf8+ 26. Qxf8+ Rxf8+ 27. Kg3 gxh5 is equal.

24. … Qf6!
24. … g5? is met by 25. Ng6+!? (*25. Nh5* is also strong) 25. … Kg8 26. Rfe1! Qf6 27. Rxd4 with an excellent position.

25. Rxd4!
25. Rfe1 g5! is equal, as is 25. Nxg6+ Kg8! 26. Ne7+ Kh8!.

25. … Qxd4 26. Re1!
With the idea Re1-e7.

26. … Qg7!
26. … Nd5? fails to 27. Nxg6+ Kg8 28. Re5! (*28. Ne7+!* might be stronger yet) 28. … Nf6! 29. Rg5! or even the messy 29. g4!?.

27. Qg5



The moment of greatest danger! A move is needed!

27. … Nd7!!
Black loses after 27. … Nd5? 28. Nxd5 cxd5 29. Re7 Qf8 30. Qh4, while 27. … Rf8? is met with 28. Re7 Rf7 (*28. … Qf6 29. Qh6*) 29. Re8+! Rf8 30. Rxf8+! Qxf8 31. Ne6!! Qf5 32. Qd8+ Bg8 33. Qd4+! and mate in two.

28. Re7 Qf6 29. Qh6 Nf8 30. Rc7!?
The position is equal after 30. Rxb7 Rd8.

30. … Re8!
It's even after 30. … Kg8, but White wins after 30. … Rd8? 31. Ne6!.

31. g4!? Kg8!
31. … Re1+? would give White the point after 32. Kg2 Kg8 33. Nh5 Qd4 34. Rg7+ Kh8 35. Rf7 Qe4+ 36. Rf3 Ne6 37. Nf6.

32. Nh5 Qd4!
White's position is excellent after 32. … Re1+? 33. Kg2.

33. Rg7+ Kh8 34. Rf7 gxh5 35. Rxf8+
With a repetition.

So How Did They Do?

Play is practically forced from 13. Bxh6! through 18. … Bf6, with one reasonable alternative in 17. g4!?, preventing Black from bringing the bishop to f5. (This move is interesting in terms of intuition and attack, but we were not working on this theme at this session.) When such a deviation appears on the board, I let the students play on for a couple of moves before hitting pause and discussing the situation. Here I might ask "Why not play the more forcing 17. Nf6!" before inserting this move on the board and continuing the game.

After 18. … Bf6 White has two main forcing variations: 19. Nh4!? and 19. Ng5!. The first move was taken by GM Ihor Samunenkov against Woodward in Budapest last August. After 19. Nh4 Be4! White chose 20. Rae1 and both players navigated the tactics successfully: 20. … Rg8! 21. Bxf7 Qf8! 22. Qxf8 Rgxf8 23. Nxf6 Nf6 24. Bg6 Bd5 with an unclear position. Here we stopped play.

Then Andy got to take White after 19. Ng5!. Play continued 19. … Bxd4 20. Nxh7! (here *20. h4!?* is also interesting as an intuitive attacking move) 20. … Bxh7 21. Rad1! Rg8! 22. Bc2! Rg6 23. Bxg6 fxg6 24. Nf4! Qf6! and now Woodward initially played 25. Rfe1 when 25. … g5 is equal. I inserted (without changing colors) 25. Rxd4 and the game continued down the main line given above: 25. … Qxd4 26. Re1! Qg7! 27. Qg5 Nd7!! 28. Re7 Qf6 29. Qh6 Nf8.

This ended the main part of the training exercise, but I offered to defend Black's position after 30. Rc7 — an attempt for White to play on without risk — against both students (sequestered in separate rooms) in simultaneous play. Both Andy and Ihor found the best moves through 35. Rxf8.

I have used this position with national teams in past training, and I have to say that Andy and Ihor outshone them.



GM Sergey Smagin, World Open 1989

PHOTO: US CHESS ARCHIVES

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Follow the games round by round with expert commentary by Grandmasters Yasser Seirawan, Cristian Chirila and Woman Grandmaster Katerina Nemcova.

It is the mission of the Saint Louis Chess Club, an educational organization, to maintain a formal program of instruction to teach the game of chess and to promote and support its educational program through community outreach and local and national partnerships to increase the awareness of the educational value of chess.

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The Magic Man

Any position could turn dynamic if Alekhine was at the board.

BY **BRUCE PANDOLFINI**

TWO-TIME WORLD CHAMPION Alexander Alekhine (1927-35 and 1937-46) was a great teacher. His writings are replete with ideas that still permeate theoretical chess today. He could grapple ingeniously in any type of situation, but seemed to prefer complicated positions, with uncertain promise, over clearer, slightly better ones.

His ability to infuse life into positions seemed extraordinary. Consider this game against the outstanding endgame composer Nikolai Grigoriev played in Moscow in 1920.

RUY LOPEZ, COZIO DEFENSE (C60)

Nikolai Grigoriev
Alexander Alekhine
Moscow, 1920

1. e4 e5 2. Nf3 Nc6 3. Bb5 Nge7 4. d4 exd4 5. Nxd4 g6 6. Bg5 Bg7 7. c3



Now ensure that the position above is set up on your chessboard. As you play through the remaining moves in this game, use a piece of paper to cover the article, exposing Black's next move only after trying to guess it. If you guess correctly, give yourself the par score. Sometimes points are also awarded for second-best moves, and there may even be bonus points — or deductions — for other moves and variations. Note that ** means that Black's move is on the next line.**

7. Par Score 5 h6
Black puts the question to the bishop. You may accept ***full credit*** for 7. ... Nxd4, when 8. cxd4 is followed by 8. ... c6.

8. Bh4
White keeps the pin, hoping to entice 8. ... g5, but 8. Be3 was a safer retreat. **

8. Par Score 5 0-0
Alekhine opts to castle, preparing to be active. Accept ***full credit*** for 8. ... Nxd4, with the idea of 9. cxd4 c6, when the queen might come to b6.

9. 0-0
Grigoriev gets ready for dynamic operations as well. **

9. Par Score 5 Nxd4
Accept ***full credit*** for 9. ... g5.

10. cxd4**

10. Par Score 5 c6
As per Alekhine's plan, though you may accept ***full credit*** for either 10. ... g5 or 10. ... d5.

11. Bc4**

11. Par Score 5 g5
This feels necessary, to unpin the knight.

12. Bg3**

12. Par Score 5 d5
A typical central counter. If otherwise 12. ... Qb6, then 13. Bd6 gives Black agita (***1 bonus point*** if you caught that).

13. exd5**

13. Par Score 5 Nxd5
You may accept ***full credit*** for 13. ... cxd5, which is as good as the text.

14. Be5
Reasonably, White tries to neutralize the g7-bishop. **

14. Par Score 5 Be6
Accept ***full credit*** for 14. ... Nb6, hoping to trade off some of the attackers.

15. Nd2
White develops and defends c4. Black has a minimal edge. **

15. Par Score 5 f6
Alekhine avoids trades and keeps the position a bit more complex. It's still essentially an even game.

16. Bg3**

16. Par Score 5 Qb6
Alekhine aggressively aims at the two weak pawns, on b2 and d4. You may accept ***full credit*** for the steadier 16. ... Re8 or 16. ... Bf7.

17. Re1
White seizes the e-file with a gain of time. The simpler 17. Nb3 was OK. **

17. Par Score 5 Rfe8
Black also looks for e-file activity. But 17. ... Bf7 was just as good (***full credit***).

18. Ne4
White might have played the prosaic 18. Nb3. The game move is good, though it invites complications. **

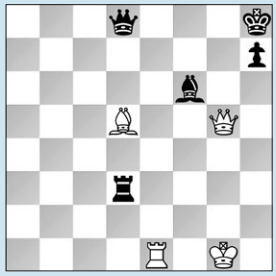
18. Par Score 6 f5

ABCS OF CHESS

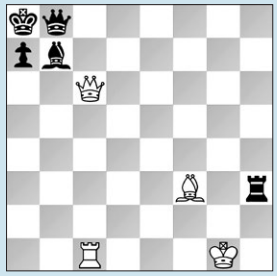
THESE PROBLEMS ARE all related to key positions in this month's game. In each case, White is to move. The answers can be found in Solutions on page 63.

JUNE EXERCISE: There may be openings you don't like to play against, uncomfortable middlegames, or other positions you steer from. A way to overcome these perplexities is to go right into the heart of them. Set up situations where you've had trouble and practice playing against them, either with a study partner or against software. Over time, you will begin to feel less stressed in these settings. Practice for real.

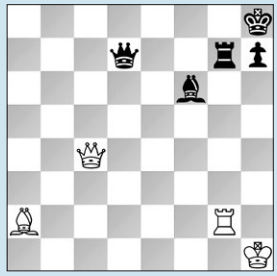
PROBLEM 1
Mating net



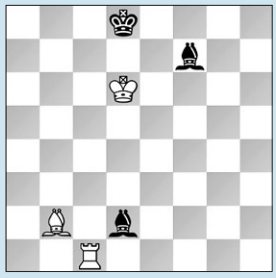
PROBLEM 2
Mating net



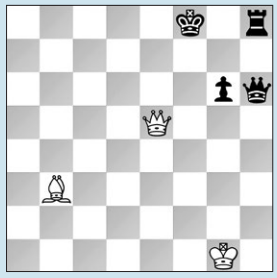
PROBLEM 3
Mating net



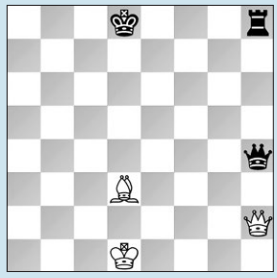
PROBLEM 4
Mating net



PROBLEM 5
Mating net



PROBLEM 6
Mating net



Alekhine goes for the bait. You may accept ***full credit*** for the safer 18. ... Bf7.

19. Nc5
Black now gets the advantage. As various analysts have shown, the right move was 19. Nd6, when 19. ... f4 20. Qh5 is strong. Add ***1 bonus point*** for considering this line. **

19. Par Score 5 Bf7
This withdrawal strengthens the Black kingside position.

20. Bd6
White avoids the oncoming ... f5-f4. **

20. Par Score 5 Qxb2
A pawn is a pawn, and so Alekhine cashes in. You may accept ***full credit*** for 20. ... Rxe1+.

21. Bxd5**

21. Par Score 4 Bxd5
White has traded off the imperious knight, but Black is still dominant.

22. Rb1
Grigoriev tries to get counterplay, but it's not going to be enough. **

22. Par Score 5 Qxd4
White could now swap queens, settling for a losing endgame two pawns down, but decides to fight on.

23. Rxb7
Capturing on b7 with the knight was a twinge better. The vulnerable back rank now undoes Grigoriev. **

23. Par Score 7 Qg4
Decisive. It's another classic example of Alekhine shifting from the queenside to the kingside.

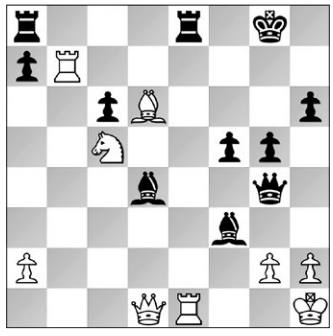
24. f3
After 24. Bg3, Black traps the bishop by 24. ... Qxd1 25. Rxd1 f4; meanwhile, 24. g3 loses to 24. ... Rxe1+ 25. Qxe1 Qf3 26. Kf1 Bc3, winning the white queen (***1 bonus point*** for seeing all this). **

24. Par Score 6 Bd4+
Get ready for another Alekhine finishing move.

25. Kh1
Defending by 25. Kf1 keeps the game going, but it's equally hopeless. **

25. Par Score 7 Bxf3
This does the trick: If 26. gxf3 Rxe1+ 27. Qxe1 Qxf3 mate, or if 26. Rxe8+ Rxe8 27. gxf3 Re1+ 28. Qxe1 Qxf3 mate. Perhaps White was hoping for the blunderful 25. ... Rxe1+ 26. Qxe1 Bxf3?? 27. Qe6+, but that didn't happen.

26. White resigned.



POSITION AFTER 25. ... Bxf3

SOLITAIRE CHESS SCORING:

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

Hidden Gems

There is beauty in blitz, but you have to mine for it.

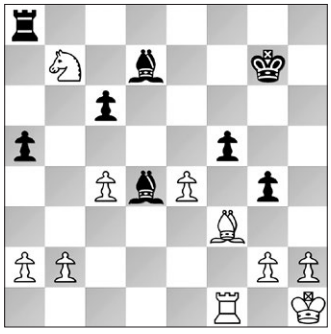
BY **GM JOEL BENJAMIN**

THE CHESS WORLD IS TILTING towards blitz, with *Chess.com*'s Titled Tuesday dominating the landscape. The finishes are increasingly tragicomic after the abolishment of increment: I saw a recent Tuesday event decided when the GM with a rook and a pawn flagged a second before his opponent, who had just a lone rook. Under the circumstances, our chances of witnessing endgame excellence have really dwindled.

Yet remarkable possibilities do crop up in the morass of games. You just have to be something of a chess detective to find them. First up: Wesley So wins when his opponent misses an extraordinary way to stop his murderous passed pawns.

TAKE MY ROOK, PLEASE

GM Edgar Mamedov (2478)
GM Wesley So (2753)
Titled Tuesday (10), *Chess.com*, 03.17.2026

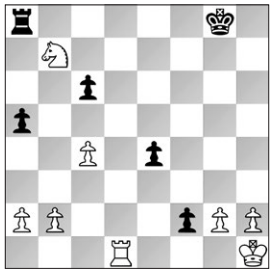


WHITE TO MOVE

The bishop pair affords Black excellent activity, but White is up two pawns and would have balanced chances after the simple retreat 29. Be2. Perhaps wanting more, White entered a minefield:

29. Rd1?! gxf3 30. Rxd4 f2 31. Rxd7+ Kg8 32. Rd1 fxe4 33. Nc5?? e3 34. Ne4 e2 35. Nxf2 exd1=Q+ 36. Nxd1 Re8, White resigned.

Thanks to the back-rank weakness, White loses his knight.But instead of 33. Nc5??, Mamedov had an artistic escape:

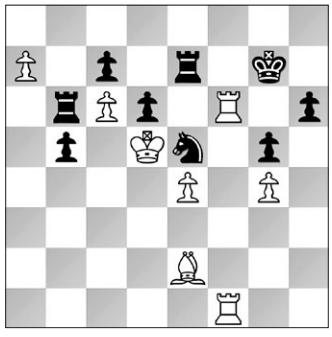


POSITION AFTER 32. ... fxe4

White holds after 33. g3! e3 34. Kg2 e2 35. Rd8+! Rxd8 36. Kxf2!. The passed pawns have been neutralized, and Black can't win because he will run out of pawns.

DOMINATION STATION

GM Sam Sevian
GM Aleksandar Indjic
Titled Tuesday (10), *Chess.com*, 03.17.2026

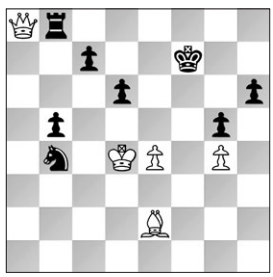


BLACK TO MOVE

A highly aesthetic study-like theme hid under the surface of our next example.

Here Black played **51. ... Ra6** — quite properly — and exhibited sufficient technique to win after **52. Re6 Rxe6 53. Kxe6 Rxa7 54. Bxb5 Ra5 55. Rb1 Ra8 56. Be2 Re8+ 57. Kd5 Rf8 58. Rb7 Rf7 59. Bd1 Re7 60. Ra7 Nd3 61. Ba4 Nf2 62. Kc4 Nxe4 63. Kb5 Nc3+ 64. Kb4 Nxa4 65. Kxa4 Kf6 66. Kb5 Ke5 67. Ra4 d5 68. Kc5 Re8 69. Ra7 Rc8 70. Ra1 d4 71. Re1+ Kf4 72. Kxd4 Kxg4 73. Re7 h5 74. Ke5 h4 75. Ke6 h3 76. Kd7 Rh8 77. Re1 h2 78. Rh1 Kg3 79. Kxc7 Kg2, White resigned**.

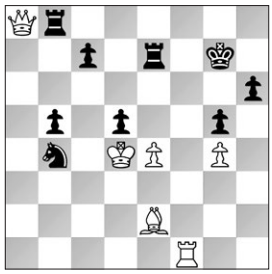
From the diagram at the bottom of the previous column, the other winning move, 51. ... Nxc6!?, would produce some amazing variations. 52. a8=Q? Re5 mate is a non-starter; 52. Re6 Nb4+ 53. Kd4 c5+ 54. Kc3 Rxa7 would win prosaically. So White would do better with 52. Rf7+ Rxf7 53. Rxf7+ Kxf7 54. a8=Q Nb4+ 55. Kd4 and now comes the stunning move 55. ... Rb8!!.



POSITION AFTER 55. ... Rb8!!

I assume this theme has appeared in problems and studies, but I can't recall a real-life application. White's queen is thoroughly dominated, as a host of dark-square retreats fail to a knight fork, either 55. ... Nc6+ or 55. ... Nc2+.

But wait — there's more. An attempted improvement fails to another version of the same theme: 53. a8=Q Nb4+ 54. Ke6 d5+ 55. Ke5 Re7+ 56. Kd4 Rb8!!.



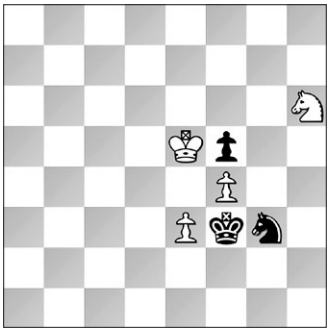
POSITION AFTER 56. ... Rb8!!

White has to accept a lost endgame after 57. Qxb8 Nc6+.

Next, we move on to a 10-minute tournament, but once you pass the century mark, there is hardly a second to spare for reflection.

KNIGHT GAME ~= KING GAME

GM Daniil Dubov (2682)
GM Murali Karthikeyan (2601)
Play-In 3 (3), *Chess.com*, 03.23.2026



BLACK TO MOVE

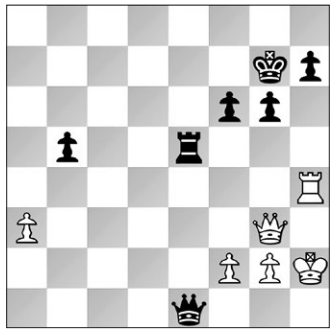
This one is less aesthetic than our first two examples, but also perhaps more educational. Black blitzed out **106. ... Kxe3?? 107. Nxf5+** and resigned. But a draw is to be had with the proper knight placement. There is an interesting dual solution:

106. ... Ne4 107. Nxf5 Nc5! puts the knight in just the right spot: 108. Kd4 Ne6+ 109. Kd3 Nxf4+ eliminates the pawns. It also works to play 106. ... Ne2 107. Nxf5 Nc1! This time the check comes on e2, again preventing White from consolidating his two-pawn advantage.

Later, Karthikeyan came up short again in a surprisingly multi-layered endgame:

ONE FOR THE TABLEBASE

GM Murali Karthikeyan (2591)
GM Andrew Hong (2540)
Play-In 3 (8), *Chess.com*, 03.23.2026



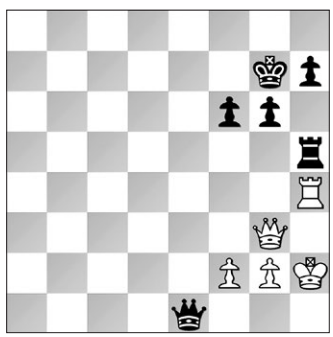
WHITE TO MOVE

White has punted away a winning position but could still hold the fort with 41. Qd3 or 41. Qh3.

41. a4?
It's natural to want to trade pawns, but Black will have an opportunity when the White rook leaves the h-file.

41. ... bxa4 42. Rxa4
Even here 42. Qf3 might save the game, but that obviously wasn't the point of the last move.

42. ... Rh5+ 43. Rh4

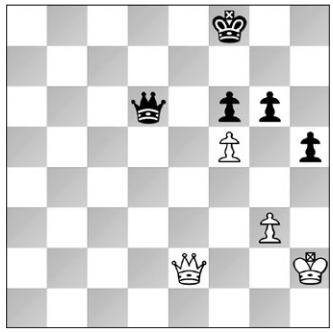


If you had only a few seconds to choose, you too might have been tempted by ...

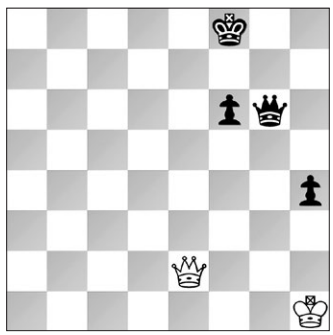
43. ... Qe5?
The simple 43. ... Rxh4+ 44. Qxh4 g5 would present White the depressing choice between losing the f2-pawn and allowing a queen trade after 45. Qg3 Qe5.

44. Rxh5 Qxh5+
Black does not get his desired pawn ending because 44. ... Qxg3+ 45. Kxg3 gxh5 46. Kh4 Kg6 47. f4 is a dead draw. Now we enter a new phase of play.

45. Kg1 Qd1+ 46. Kh2 Qh5+ 47. Kg1 Qd1+ 48. Kh2 Qd7 49. f4 h5 50. Qe3 Kf7 51. g3 Qe7 52. Qd3 Kg7 53. Qc4 Qd6 54. Qe2 Kf8 55. f5?



55. ... h4! 56. fxg6 Qxg3+ 57. Kh1 Qh3+ 58. Kg1 Qg3+ 59. Kh1 Qxg6?



Who wouldn't snap off this pawn *a tempo*? Amazingly, this is an error allowing White to draw. Correct was the subtle 59. ... Qh3+ 60. Kg1 Qf5!, when Black achieves the right piece coordination: 61. Qc4 (*61. Kh2 Kg7,* or *61. Qe1 Qxg6+ 62. Kh2 Qg4*) 61. ... Qxg6+ 62. Kh1 Qg5 wins, as we shall see later.

60. Qc4?
This move is quite plausible, but 60. Qf2! would draw per the tablebase. After 60. ... Qg5 White must avoid the facile 61. Kh2 Kg7 62. Kh3 Kg6, when capturing the h-pawn loses in the pawn ending. Instead, cutting off the king with 61. Qa7! keeps the draw in hand.

60. ... Qg5 61. Qc8+
Activating Black's king just makes the winning task easier. Resistance was available from 61. Qc7, though accuracy keeps the advantage: 61. ... Qd5+ 62. Kg1 Qf7 63. Qf4 Qg8+! (forcing the king out of the corner) 64. Kf2 Qg5 65. Qc7 Qg4! 66. Qh7 Qg3+ 67. Ke2 Ke8 and the pawns will ultimately triumph.

61. ... Kg7 62. Qd7+ Kh6 63. Qe8 Qd5+ 64. Kh2
Black would win in typical fashion after 64. Kg1 h3! 65. Qh8+ Kg5 66. Qxh3 Qc5+ 67. Kg2 Qc2+ 68. Kg1 Qc1+ 69. Kg2 Qd2+ 70. Kg1 Qe1+ 71. Kg2 Qe2+ and a queen trade cannot be averted.

64. ... Qe5+, White resigned. ⮉

The Ones You Don't Expect

A new book examines the power of quiet moves.

BY **IM JOHN WATSON**

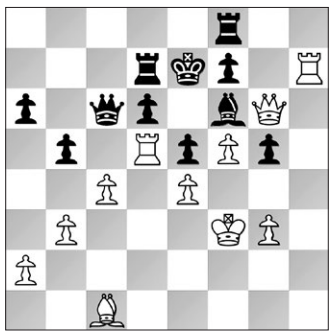
It's not often that one finds a chess book about a subject with which all experienced players are familiar, and yet about which no previous book has been written. And yet that's apparently the case with Boguslaw Boder and Jacek Bielczyk's *The Magic and Beauty of Quiet Chess Moves: Mastering the Art of Subtlety*, published last year by Thinkers Publishing.

As the authors point out, the topic of quiet moves, if touched upon in a book at all, is usually a chapter, or a subsection of a chapter; only occasionally do we see an article on the subject with a few examples. Their book extends for more than 300 pages, divided into four chapters. In the entertaining first chapter, called "A Classic Quiet Move," they describe the "perfect quiet move" as "an unobtrusive move that simultaneously activates the player's pieces and constrains the activity of the opponent's pieces. Such a move may not appear to contribute to the game, but completely changes the game's trajectory, and the commentators tend to delight in them."

The authors present 24 annotated positions where an imaginative quiet move is aesthetically pleasing and/or surprising. These are for the most part older and well known, and include some very famous examples (such as Sämisch – Nimzowitsch, Copenhagen 1923, the "Immortal Zugzwang Game"). The emphasis is on pleasing tactical themes like this one:

ONE SMALL STEP

Vitaly Chekhover
Valery Pavlenko
Odesa, 1949



WHITE TO MOVE

1. Kg4!! bxc4
In the game, 1. ... Kd8 2 Qxf6+ was hopeless.

2. Qxf6+! Kxf6 3. Bxg5 mate.

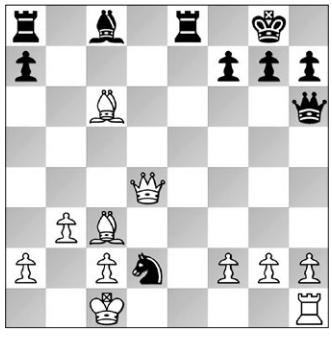
In the second chapter, the authors categorize quiet moves according to type, then annotate a number of examples of each category (105 positions in total). This makes for easy reading. The categories include "Quiet moves in prophylaxis," "Zugzwang as a combat method," "A quiet move with a plan," and a number of types according to their function; e.g., "A quiet move — improve the worst positioned piece" and "A quiet move — conquering the open lines." It's impossible to classify all types of quiet moves, obviously, but this is a nice overview. You can try to solve these positions first, or simply enjoy them for their variety and beauty.

The third and fourth chapters are both called "Find a Quiet Move!" and consist of raw positions which are presented as exercises. These are the most interesting from my point of view, because they can serve as unique instructional material for chess teachers as well as motivated players. The exercises from Chapter 3 are recommended for students from 1800 to 2100; those from Chapter 4, for students from 2100 to 2600, but players of any strength can benefit from both. One can find nearly unlimited tactical exercises on the internet and in books, and most young players learn tactics from them. But in my experience, students who are brilliant at quickly solving such exercises can still be relatively weak at handling over-the-board tactics. In part, that's because in a real game no one alerts you when there's an available tactic, and also because players get so used to looking at the most forcing moves in every situation. This book won't replace tactical exercises, but would be a very healthy supplement that pushes students to expand the range of the types of candidate moves that they consider.

Turning to examples, Chapter 3 exercises involve clearheaded logic, but require fairly simple technique. Here's a typical sample:

WHEN ALL ELSE FAILS

IM Yochanan Afek (2362)
IM Kamran Shirazi (2403)
Saint Quentin, 1999



WHITE TO MOVE

White is aggressively placed, but Black is a rook ahead. Once you realize that direct captures are not going to do the trick thanks to knight discoveries, Afek's simple **1. Kb2!** might catch your eye. At best, Black gets a lost endgame.

Some exercises are pretty conventional-looking tactical puzzles, but they involve being open to possibilities you might not consider, especially under time constraints:

STEPPING OUT

IM Andrei Lukin (2485)
IM Alexander Lisenko (2295)
Daugavpils, 1983



WHITE TO MOVE

The e7- and d8-squares are covered. What to do?

19. Kh2!
Threatening simply 20. Rb1!, since 20. ... Qxb1 wouldn't be check.

19. ... h6
If 19. ... c5 20. Rb1 Qc7 21. Rb7! Be7 22. Rb8+! Kd7 23. Qxe7+ Kc6 24. Rxg8.

20. Rb1, Black resigned.
Black's best defense would be 20. ... Qc8 21. Rb7! hxg5 22. Qxf7+ Kd8, but White still wins with 23. Ra7! Rh8 24. Qf6+ Ke8 25. Qxg6+ Kd8 26. Qf6+ Ke8 27. Qxh8.

Chapter 4 exercises feature quiet moves which range from ordinary to inspired, but often the biggest challenge is to work out the real-world tactics which are needed to justify the idea. It's amazing that White found his way through this mess:

A QUIET ATTACK

GM Gor Lysyj (2576)
GM Jaan Ehlvest (2610)
Moscow, 2007



WHITE TO MOVE

30. Be2!!
The exclaims are for White's overall plan, as well as the courage to sacrifice two pawns. Objectively, 30. Bd1 was a more solid way to keep a modest advantage, but White wouldn't have the incredible opportunity which follows.

30. ... bxa4 31. Bd3! axb3
It's hard to resist this, but 31. ... a3! was better. If White tries the idea in the game with 32. Rg8+ Kh7 33. Nf2 a2!, then 34. Ng4?? fails to 34. ... a1=Q. Nevertheless, White retains a slight edge after 32. Ra2.

32. Rg8+ Kh7 33. Nf2!
Brilliantly calculated.

33. ... Ra7 34. Ng4!



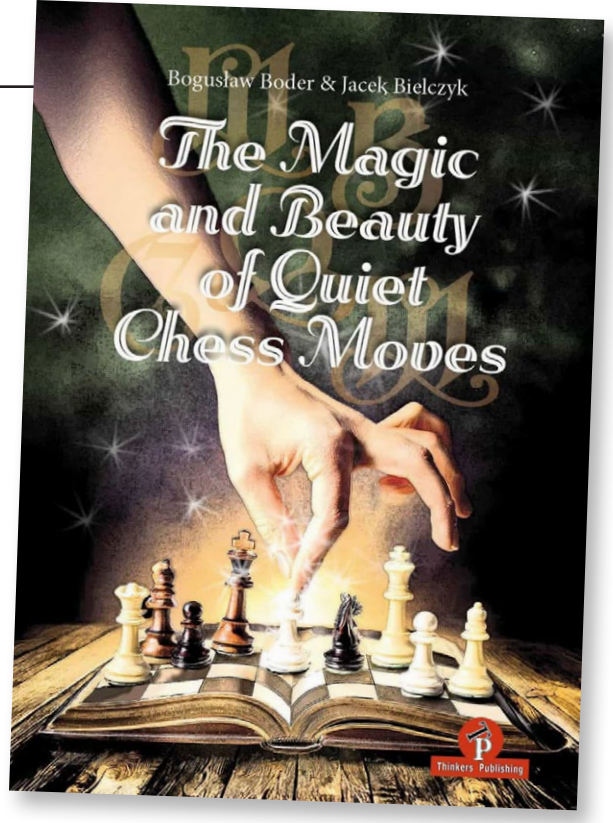
Threatening 35. Ngf6+ with mate coming.

34. ... Bc8
If 34. ... Kxg8 35. Ngf6+ Kh8 36. Rg8 mate.

35. Rg3!
The point of the whole combination, getting ready to swing to h3 to attack the h6-pawn.

35. ... Rae7 36. Nxh6! Nf6
It's a quick mate after 36. ... Kxh6 37. Rh3 Ng7 38. Nxg7+ Kg6 39. Nxf5+ Rg7 40. Rxf8.

37. R8g5! Ne4
If 37. ... Kxh6 38. Nxf6.



38. Bxe4 Kxh6
The fanciest answer to 38. ... fxe4 is 39. Ng8! b2 40. Ngf6+ Kh6 41. Rg1, for example, 41. ... a5 42. Ng7!.

39. Nf6!, Black resigned.
Mate follows.

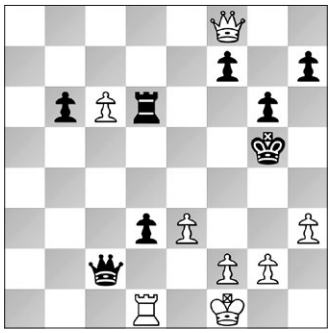
Imagine using that as a student exercise! You could assign a certain amount of time for the initial position, make the first few moves and reset the clock, stopping every few moves thereafter to present a new challenge.

The authors use an odd mix of actual games and studies. I don't think the latter (often attributed to anonymous composers) are as useful as the games. True, they begin with a surprising quiet moves (as the majority of studies do), but the solutions are dependent upon precise placement of every piece, so in many cases you would be unlikely to run across the same theme again in a lifetime of play. Fortunately, there are 710 exercises in Chapters 3 and 4, and the majority are game excerpts.

Reading through the examples, I couldn't help being reminded of the following game, which the authors didn't use but I think qualifies for a high place in the "Classic Quiet Move" chapter:

WITH CHECK, EVEN

GM Denis Khismatullin (2653)
GM Pavel Eljanov (2727)
Jerusalem, 2015



WHITE TO MOVE

Black seems to have plenty of play. What should White do now? Khismatullin found the following inspired sequence.

44. Kg1!!
White gives up a rook with a loss of time!

44. ... Qxd1+?
How can this be bad? The alternative 44. ... Qxc6 45. Qxf7 Rf6 46. Qe7 Kh6 47. Rxd3 will also fail, but the computer finds the ridiculous defense 44. ... Rd5!! and now for some reason White can't weave a mating net: 45. Kh2 Kf6! (*45. ... Qxd1?? 46. c7*) 46. e4 Rc5! 47. Qd6+ Kg7 48. Rxd3 Rxc6 49. Qe5+ Rf6 50. Rf3 Qc6.

45. Kh2 Rxc6
White wins after both 45. ... d2 46. Qxd6 f5 47. f4+ Kh5 48. c7 and 45. ... Rd5 46. c7 Qc2 47. c8=Q Qxc8 48. Qxc8 d2 49. f4+.

46. Qe7+ Kh6 47. Qf8+ Kg5 48. Qxf7!
Threatening 49. Qf4+. Black tries to defend, but it's hopeless now:

48. ... Rf6 49. f4+ Kh6 50. Qxf6 Qe2 51. Qf8+ Kh5 52. Qg7 h6 53. Qe5+ Kh4 54. Qf6+ Kh5 55. f5! gxf5 56. Qxf5+ Kh4 57. Qg6, Black resigned.

I strongly believe that the best chess exercise books and programs order their positions as randomly as possible, so that the student isn't aware whether the first move (or indeed the solution as a whole) is positional or tactical, restrained or forcing, elementary or advanced. That isn't always realistic, but books or programs which even partially match these characteristics are more likely to improve the student's skills in a practical way.

Boder and Bielczyk's work isn't perfect in this respect (the reader will be looking initially for quiet moves, after all), yet it refreshingly departs from the usual brute-force solutions and consistently places exercises with widely different types of solutions next to each other.

Along with its originality and aesthetic appeal, I can recommend *The Magic and Beauty of Quiet Chess Moves* as an instructive work which can broaden and improve your over-the-board decision-making abilities. ♦

Boder, Boguslaw, and Jacek Bielczyk. The Magic and Beauty of Quiet Chess Moves: Mastering the Art of Subtlety. *Thinkers Publishing, 2025. Hardcover, 304 pp.; ISBN 978-9083488288. $44.95.*

(Tatev; continued from page 19)

impossible, as the rook on d1 will be left hanging, and 16. a3 Bxa3 17. bxa3 Qxa3+ and now comes either 18. Kc2 Qa2+ 19. Kc1 Bd7 headed to a4 with unstoppable checkmate threats on c2 or d1 (*20. Be3 Ba4 21. Nf4 Qa1+ 22. Kd2 Qxd1 mate*) *or* 18. Kb1 18. ... Ne3! with checkmate to follow: 19. Qxe3 Bf5+ 20. Qd3 Bxd3 mate.

Seeing that the king cannot castle long, White can switch gears and try to castle kingside, but 15. g3 also runs into problems. After 15. ... Qb5! Black will use his initiative and pose some problems on the queenside, while also clearing the e8-square for the rook: 16. b3 Re8 and already, White is stuck, as the natural 17. Bg2 loses tactically to 17. ... Nxg3 18. hxg3 Bxg3.

15. ... Qa4+ 16. Kc1 b5
Now that the white king is going to be on the queenside, Black wastes no time launching an attack.

17. Nf4 c5 18. Bd3
After 18. Nxd5 Black is thrilled to open the c-file with 18. ... cxd4 19. Bd3 Be6 20. Nf4 Bxf4 21. Bxf4 dxc3, winning.

Of course not 18. dxc5?? Bxf4.

18. ... cxd4 19. Bc2 Qa6 20. cxd4 Bd7
Black continues his development, with ... Ra8-c8 to follow.

21. Kb1 Rac8 22. Bd3



22. ... Rc4
Another thematic Exchange sacrifice! My November 2025 column includes several examples of sacrificing an Exchange on an outpost this way. Here, White really shouldn't capture the rook, as the d3-bishop is the best defensive piece in the position.

23. Ne2
If 23. Bxc4 Black can recapture either way:

(a) 23. ... dxc4 24. Re1 b4 followed by ... c4-c3, blasting the position open. For example, if we pass the move to Black with something like 25. h3, we can see the idea: 25. ... c3 26. bxc3 bxc3 and already White's position is falling apart. The d2-bishop is overworked, the b-file is open and the black queen could invade on d3.

(b) 23. ... bxc4 is also quite good and leaves Black with great attacking prospects. Black is again threatening ... c4-c3, taking advantage of the fact of the fact that the d2-bishop is defending the f4-knight. Play can go 24. Nxd5 Rb8 with the threat of 25. ... Qb5, with a double attack on b2 and d5. Now comes 25. Bc3 Qb5 26. Ne3 Nxe3 27. Qxe3 Bf5+ 28. Kc1 Qa4, and just when it seemed that the white king was out of the woods, new threats appear after 29. Kd2 Re8, when Black is winning.)

23. ... Ne7
Black wants to trade the light-squared bishops, with 24. ... Bf5, clearing the c2-square for the rook after he doubles on the c-file.

24. g4 Rfc8 25. h4 b4!
Now the light-squared bishop will get in from the other side!

26. b3 Bb5! 27. bxc4 Bxc4 28. Bc2
Black wins after 28. Bxc4 Qxc4 29. Rc1 Qd3+ 30. Kb2 Qxd2+.

28. ... Bd3 29. Bc3
If 29. Rc1 Rxc2 30. Rxc2 Qa4 and mate next.

29. ... bxc3 30. Nc1 Rb8+, White resigned.
Checkmate is unstoppable after 31. Nb3 Qa3 32. Bxd3 Rxb3+ 33. axb3 Qxb3+ 34. Kc1 Bf4+.

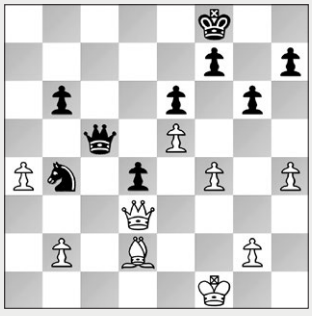
Next month, we will explore some of the most instructive moments from the 2026 Women's Candidates Tournament. ♦

Practical TASKS

BY **IM ROBERT SHLYAKHTENKO** AND **MATAN PRILLELTENSKY**

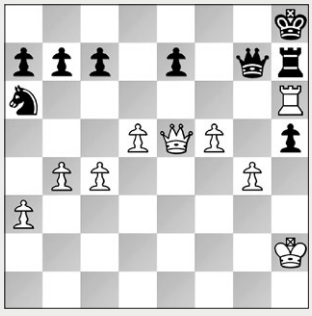
Ray Cheng's *Practical Chess Exercises* is one of the most underrated books for amateur players, and with his blessing trainers Matan Prilleltensky and IM Robert Shlyakhtenko are bringing his concept to *Chess Life*. (Look for a book from them with these kinds of problems in the near future.) No hints, no one to tell you you're winning. Just find the best move, whether it's a shot, a defense, or a finesse. Just like at the board. Solutions are on page 63.

POSITION 1.



WHITE TO MOVE

POSITION 2.



WHITE TO MOVE

POSITION 3.



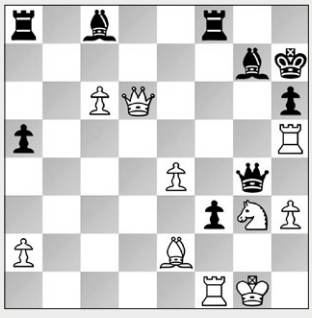
WHITE TO MOVE

POSITION 4.



BLACK TO MOVE

POSITION 5.



BLACK TO MOVE

POSITION 6.



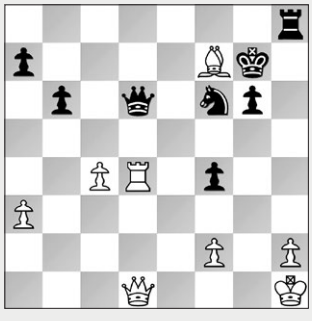
BLACK TO MOVE

POSITION 7.



BLACK TO MOVE

POSITION 8.



BLACK TO MOVE

POSITION 9.



WHITE TO MOVE

TOURNAMENT LIFE ANNOUNCEMENTS

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]*. You will find the event's unique five-digit TLA ID at the end of each TLA.

Nationals

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

2026 National Open

JUNE 10-14, 2026 — NV **TLA# 52540**

Site: Westgate Las Vegas Resort & Casino **Address:** 3000 Paradise Road, Las Vegas, NV 89109 **Overall Prize Fund:** $125,000 **GP Pts:** 200 **FIDE:** Y **Accessible:** Y **Residency:** N **Org:** Vegas Chess Festival • vegaschess@gmail.com • 702-930-9550 •*vegaschessfestival.com*

NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP EVENT • GRAND PRIX

2026 US Senior Open Championship!

JUNE 19-21, 2026 — IL **TLA# 56208**

Site: Crowne Plaza Chicago O'Hare Hotel and Conference Center **Address:** 5440 N. River Road, Rosemont, IL 60018 **Overall Prize Fund:** $13,100 **GP Pts:** 120 **FIDE:** Y **Accessible:** Y **Residency:** N **Org:** Caveman Chess, LLC • contact@cavemanchess.com • 224-985-5244 • *cavemanchess.com*

NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP EVENT • GRAND PRIX • ENHANCED GRAND PRIX

2026 US Junior Open Championship!

JUNE 19-21, 2026 — IL **TLA# 56187**

Site: Crowne Plaza Chicago O'Hare Hotel and Conference Center **Address:** 5440 N. River Road, Rosemont, IL 60018 **Overall Prize Fund:** $12,000 **GP Pts:** 150 **FIDE:** Y **Accessible:** N **Residency:** N **Org:** Caveman Chess, LLC • contact@cavemanchess.com • 224-985-5244 • *cavemanchess.com*

NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP EVENT

2026 US Blind Open Championship!

JUNE 20-21, 2026 — IL **TLA# 56198**

Site: Crowne Plaza Chicago O'Hare Hotel and Conference Center **Address:** 5440 N. River Road, Rosemont, IL 60018 **Overall Prize Fund:** $5,000 **GP Pts:** n/a **FIDE:** Y **Accessible:** Y **Residency:** N **Org:** Caveman Chess, LLC • contact@cavemanchess.com • 224-985-5244 • *cavemanchess.com*

NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP EVENT • GRAND PRIX

2026 U.S. G/30 & G/60 National Championship

SEPTEMBER 11-13, 2026 — LA **TLA# 55780**

Site: Lavin Bernick Center, Tulane University **Address:** 29 McAlister Drive, New Orleans, LA 70118 **Overall Prize Fund:** $6,000 **GP Pts:** 20 **FIDE:** N **Accessible:** Y **Residency:** N **Org:** Downriver Chess & Tulane Chess • info@downriverchess.com • *downriverchess.com*

Grand Prix

The Grand Prix point totals reflect all rated event information as of May 15, 2026, for the 2026 Grand Prix. These standings are updated regularly, but should be considered unofficial. Visit ratings.uschess.org/grand-prix/standings for up-to-date information.

2026 US CHESS GRAND PRIX STANDINGS

	Name	State/Ctry	Pts
1.	GM JIANCHAO ZHOU	MA	210.00
2.	GM JOSE GABRIEL CARDOSO	FOR	64.00
3.	GM FRANCESCO SONIS	MO	64.00
4.	EMMANUEL CARTER	NC	54.00
5.	GM MARK HEIMANN	CA	48.00
6.	GM HARSHA BHARATHAKOTI	MO	45.00
7.	JASHITH KARTHI	CA	45.00
8.	GM ALEXANDER IVANOV	MA	38.00
9.	GM NIKOLA MITKOV	FL	37.00
10.	GM NICK DE FIRMIAN	CA	36.00

2026 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 2026. For information visit new.uschess.org/us-chess-grand-prix-program

GRAND PRIX • ENHANCED GRAND PRIX • JUNIOR GRAND PRIX

15th Annual Hartford Open

JUNE 5-7, 2026 — CT **TLA# 55518**

Site: Sheraton Hotel **Address:** 1 Bradley Airport (visible at airport entrance), Windsor Locks CT 06096 **Overall Prize Fund:** $10,000 **GP Pts:** 60 **FIDE:** Y **Accessible:** Y **Residency:** N **Org:** Continental Chess • *director@chess.us* • *chesstour.com*

GRAND PRIX • ENHANCED GRAND PRIX • JUNIOR GRAND PRIX

19th Continental Chess Cleveland Open

JUNE 5-7, 2026 — OH **TLA# 55596**

Site: Wyndham Independence Cleveland Hotel **Address:** 6200 Quarry Ln, Independence, OH 44131 **Overall Prize Fund:** $15,000 **GP Pts:** 120 **FIDE:** Y **Accessible:** Y **Residency:** N **Org:** Continental Chess • *director@chess.us* • *chesstour.com*

GRAND PRIX

2026 Rea Hayes: Chattanooga

JUNE 6, 2026 — TN **TLA# 55943**

Site: New Hope Presbyterian Church **Address:** 7608 Shallowford Rd., Chattanooga, TN 37421 **Overall Prize Fund:** $1,000 **GP Pts:** 6 **FIDE:** N **Accessible:** N **Residency:** N **Org:** Travis Deere • tldeere@gmail.com • 4237856582 • *chattanoogachess.org*

GRAND PRIX

Blundercheck's Chess Riot at Oozlefinch!

JUNE 8, 2026 — VA **TLA# 56708**

Site: Oozlefinch Beers & Blending **Address:** 81 Patch Road, Fort Monroe, VA 23651 **Overall Prize Fund:** n/a **GP Pts:** 1 **FIDE:** N **Accessible:** Y **Residency:** N **Org:** Blundercheck! Chess Riots • BenjaminBlundercheck@gmail.com • 7579475122 • *BenjaminBlundercheck.com*

GRAND PRIX • ENHANCED GRAND PRIX

CFCC 2026 Sunshine Open & Scholastic

JUNE 19-21, 2026 — FL **TLA# 55907**

Site: Delta Hotels Marriott Orlando Celebration **Address:** 2900 Parkway Boulevard, Kissimmee, FL 34747 **Overall Prize Fund:** $9,000 **GP Pts:** 40 **FIDE:** Y **Accessible:** Y **Residency:** N **Org:** Central Florida Chess Club (CFCC) • *storchnoi@gmail.com* • (407) 312-6237 • *centralflchess.org/cfcc-2026-sunshine-open-and-scholastic-weekend-tournament*

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

30th annual New York State Open and Senior Amateur

JUNE 19-21, 2026 — NY **TLA# 54808**

Site: Tiki Resort **Address:** 2 Canada St., Lake George, NY 12845 **Overall Prize Fund:** $3,300 **GP Pts:** 20 **FIDE:** N **Accessible:** Y **Residency:** N **Org:** Continental Chess • *director@chess.us* • *chesstour.com*

GRAND PRIX

2026 Caveman Medior (Not JR Not SR) Open!

JUNE 19-21, 2026 — IL **TLA# 56226**

Site: Crowne Plaza Chicago O'Hare Hotel and Conference Center **Address:** 5440 N. River Road, Rosemont, IL 60018 **Overall Prize Fund:** $10,000 **GP Pts:** 100 **FIDE:** Y **Accessible:** Y **Residency:** N **Org:** Caveman Chess, LLC • contact@cavemanchess.com • 224-985-5244 • *cavemanchess.com*

GRAND PRIX • ENHANCED GRAND PRIX

2026 Chicago Summer Open

JUNE 19-21, 2026 — IL **TLA# 55511**

Site: Hyatt Regency Schaumburg **Address:** 1800 E Golf Rd, Schaumburg, IL 60173 **Overall Prize Fund:** $10,000 **GP Pts:** 50 **FIDE:** Y **Accessible:** N **Residency:** N **Org:** Wilson's Chess & King Registration • bill@kingregistration.com • *kingregistration.com/event/Chisummeropen26*

GRAND PRIX • ENHANCED GRAND PRIX

CFCC 2026 Sunshine Open Saturday Night Open Blitz

JUNE 20, 2026 — FL **TLA# 55908**

Site: Delta Hotels Marriott Orlando Celebration **Address:** 2900 Parkway Boulevard, Kissimmee, FL 34747 **Overall Prize Fund:** $500 **GP Pts:** 10 **FIDE:** N **Accessible:** Y **Residency:** N **Org:** Central Florida Chess Club (CFCC) • *storchnoi@gmail.com* • (407) 312-6237 • *centralflchess.org/cfcc-2026-sunshine-open-and-scholastic-weekend-tournament*

GRAND PRIX

California Blitz Cup

JUNE 20, 2026 — CA **TLA# 56570**

Site: Glendale Elks Lodge #1289 **Address:** 120 E Colorado St, Glendale, CA 91205 **Overall Prize Fund:** $10,000 **GP Pts:** 60 **FIDE:** N **Accessible:** Y **Residency:** N **Org:** GC CLUB • *contact.gcclub@gmail.com* • *kingregistration.com/event/CBC*

GRAND PRIX • ENHANCED GRAND PRIX

2nd Annual Dragon Knight Chess Summer Solstice Grand Prix

JUNE 21, 2026 — NC **TLA# 56588**

Site: Dragon Knight Chess Center **Address:** 2000 Bearcat Way, Suite 104, Morrisville, NC 27560 **Overall Prize Fund:** $1,228 **GP Pts:** 10 **FIDE:** N **Accessible:** Y **Residency:** N **Org:** Dragon Knight Chess • *jon@dragonknightchess.com* • (919) 422-2535 • *dragonknightchess.com*

GRAND PRIX • ENHANCED GRAND PRIX

World Open Game/50 Championship

JUNE 25, 2026 — DC **TLA# 55312**

Site: Omni Shoreham Hotel **Address:** 2500 Calvert St. NW, Washington, DC 20008 **Overall Prize Fund:** $2,200 **GP Pts:** 10 **FIDE:** N **Accessible:** Y **Residency:** N **Org:** Continental Chess • *director@chess.us* • *chesstour.com*

GRAND PRIX • ENHANCED GRAND PRIX • JUNIOR GRAND PRIX

4th annual DC International (in cooperation with the DC Chess Association)

JUNE 25-29, 2026 — DC **TLA# 53620**

Site: Omni Shoreham Hotel **Address:** 2500 Calvert St. NW, Washington, DC 20008 **Overall Prize Fund:** $20,000 **GP Pts:** 200 **FIDE:** Y **Accessible:** Y **Residency:** N **Org:** Continental Chess • *director@chess.us* • *chesstour.com*

HERITAGE EVENT • GRAND PRIX

49th Annual Green Bay Open

JUNE 27-28, 2026 — WI **TLA# 55807**

Site: Oneida Casino Hotel **Address:** 2040 Airport Drive, Green Bay, WI 54313 **Overall Prize Fund:** $3,200 **GP Pts:** 15 **FIDE:** N **Accessible:** Y **Residency:** N **Org:** Luke A Ludwig • *lukealudwig@aol.com* • 9204659859 • *greenbaychess.net*

GRAND PRIX • ENHANCED GRAND PRIX

Dragon Knight Chess Log Cabin Day Grand Prix

JUNE 28, 2026 — NC **TLA# 56589**

Site: Dragon Knight Chess Center **Address:** 2000 Bearcat Way, Suite 104, Morrisville, NC 27560 **Overall Prize Fund:** $1,228 **GP Pts:** 10 **FIDE:** N **Accessible:** Y **Residency:** N **Org:** Dragon Knight Chess • *jon@dragonknightchess.com* • (919) 422-2535 • *dragonknightchess.com*

GRAND PRIX • ENHANCED GRAND PRIX • JUNIOR GRAND PRIX

15th annual World Open Women's Championship

JUNE 29-30, 2026 — DC **TLA# 55310**

Site: Omni Shoreham Hotel **Address:** 2500 Calvert St. NW, Washington, DC 20008 **Overall Prize Fund:** $2,000 **GP Pts:** 30 **FIDE:** Y **Accessible:** Y **Residency:** N **Org:** Continental Chess • *director@chess.us* • *chesstour.com*

GRAND PRIX • ENHANCED GRAND PRIX

15th annual World Open Game/7 Blitz Championship

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.

JULY 1, 2026 — DC TLA# 55315
Site: Omni Shoreham Hotel **Address:** 2500 Calvert St. NW, Washington, DC 20008 **Overall Prize Fund:** $1,500 **GP Pts:** 20 **FIDE:** N **Accessible:** Y **Residency: N Org:** Continental Chess • *director@chess.us* • *chesstour.com*

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

54th Annual World Open (Open through Under 1400 Sections)

JULY 1-5, 2026 — DC TLA# 53565
Site: Omni Shoreham Hotel **Address:** 2500 Calvert St. NW, Washington, DC 20008 **Overall Prize Fund:** $208,000 **GP Pts:** 300 **FIDE:** Y **Accessible:** Y **Residency: N Org:** Continental Chess • *director@chess.us* • *chesstour.com*

GRAND PRIX

2026 Super Summer Swiss

JULY 2-5, 2026 — TN TLA# 56642
Site: Memphis Chess Club **Address:** 195 Madison Ave Suite 101, Memphis, TN 38103 **Overall Prize Fund:** $6,420 **GP Pts:** 15 **FIDE:** N **Accessible:** Y **Residency: N Org:** Memphis Chess Club • *info@memphischessclub.com* • 9015013257 • *memphischessclub.com/tournaments*

GRAND PRIX • ENHANCED GRAND PRIX

2026 Naroditsky Memorial - Rapid

JULY 3, 2026 — NC TLA# 55926
Site: Charlotte Marriott City Center **Address:** 100 W Trade Street, Charlotte, NC 28202 **Overall Prize Fund:** $20,000 **GP Pts:** 200 **FIDE:** Y **Accessible:** Y **Residency: N Org:** Charlotte Chess Center • *events@charlottechesscenter.org* • *charlottechesscenter.org/events*

HERITAGE EVENT • GRAND PRIX

28th Annual Sacramento Chess Championship

JULY 3-5, 2026 — CA-N TLA# 55950
Site: Holiday Inn Express & Suites **Address:** 2224 Auburn Boulevard, Sacramento, CA 95821 **Overall Prize Fund:** $12,500 **GP Pts:** 40 **FIDE:** Y **Accessible:** Y **Residency: N Org:** John McCumiskey • *sactochess@sbcglobal.net* • 916-524-9479 • *sacramentochessclub.org*

HERITAGE EVENT • GRAND PRIX • ENHANCED GRAND PRIX

34th Annual World Open G/10 Championship

JULY 4, 2026 — DC TLA# 55318
Site: Omni Shoreham Hotel **Address:** 2500 Calvert St. NW, Washington, DC 20008 **Overall Prize Fund:** $2,200 **GP Pts:** 20 **FIDE:** N **Accessible:** Y **Residency: N Org:** Continental Chess • *director@chess.us* • *chesstour.com*

GRAND PRIX • ENHANCED GRAND PRIX

Dragon Knight Chess Barn Day Grand Prix

JULY 12, 2026 — NC TLA# 56591
Site: Dragon Knight Chess Center **Address:** 2000 Bearcat Way, Suite 104, Morrisville, NC 27560 **Overall Prize Fund:** $1,228 **GP Pts:** 10 **FIDE:** N **Accessible:** Y **Residency:** N **Org:** Dragon Knight Chess • *jon@dragonknightchess.com* • (919) 422-2535 • *dragonknightchess.com*

HERITAGE EVENT • GRAND PRIX • ENHANCED GRAND PRIX

37th Annual World Open Blitz Championship

JULY 5, 2026 — DC TLA# 55320
Site: Omni Shoreham Hotel **Address:** 2500 Calvert St. NW, Washington, DC 20008 **Overall Prize Fund:** $3,000 **GP Pts:** 30 **FIDE:** N **Accessible:** Y **Residency: N Org:** Continental Chess • *director@chess.us* • *chesstour.com*

GRAND PRIX

The 4th Annual DMV Open

JULY 10-12, 2026 — VA TLA# 56509
Site: SpringHill Suites by Marriott Dulles Airport **Address:** 22595 Shaw Road, Sterling, VA 20166 **Overall Prize Fund:** $3,500 **GP Pts:** 30 **FIDE:** Y **Accessible:** Y **Residency: N Org:** DMV Chess • *inpersonevents@dmvchess.com* • *dmvchess.com*

GRAND PRIX • ENHANCED GRAND PRIX

Dragon Knight Chess Build a Scarecrow Day Grand Prix

JULY 5, 2026 — NC TLA# 56590
Site: Dragon Knight Chess Center **Address:** 2000 Bearcat Way, Suite 104, Morrisville, NC 27560 **Overall Prize Fund:** $1,228 **GP Pts:** 10 **FIDE:** N **Accessible:** Y **Residency:** N **Org:** Dragon Knight Chess • *jon@dragonknightchess.com* • (919) 422-2535 • *dragonknightchess.com*

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

19th annual Chicago Class Championships

JULY 17-19, 2026 — IL TLA# 55299
Site: Westin Chicago North Shore Hotel **Address:** 601 N Milwaukee Avenue, Wheeling IL 60090 **Overall Prize Fund:** $30,000 **GP Pts:** 150 **FIDE:** Y **Accessible:** Y **Residency: N Org:** Continental Chess • *director@chess.us* • *chesstour.com*

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

34th annual Southern Open

JULY 17-19, 2026 — FL TLA# 55402
Site: Holiday Inn Resort Kissimmee By The Parks **Address:** 3011 Maingate Lane, Kissimmee, FL 34747 **Overall Prize Fund:** $20,000 **GP Pts:** 150 **FIDE:** Y **Accessible:** Y **Residency: N Org:** Continental Chess • *director@chess.us* • *chesstour.com*

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

27th annual Pittsburgh Open

JULY 17-19, 2026 — PA TLA# 55352
Site: Courtyard Marriott University Center Hotel **Address:** 100 Lytton Ave, Pittsburgh, PA 15213 **Overall Prize Fund:** $13,000 **GP Pts:** 80 **FIDE:** Y **Accessible:** Y **Residency: N Org:** Continental Chess • *director@chess.us* • *chesstour.com*

GRAND PRIX • ENHANCED GRAND PRIX

11th annual Chicago Class Blitz Championship

JULY 18, 2026 — IL TLA# 55307
Site: Westin Chicago North Shore Hotel **Address:** 601 N Milwaukee Avenue, Wheeling IL 60090 **Overall Prize Fund:** $500 **GP Pts:** 10 **FIDE:** N **Accessible:** Y **Residency: N Org:** Continental Chess • *director@chess.us* • *chesstour.com*

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

31st Annual Bradley Open

JULY 24-26, 2026 — CT TLA# 55353
Site: Sheraton Hartford Hotel at Bradley Airport **Address:** 1 Bradley Airport, Windsor Locks CT 06096 **Overall Prize Fund:** $15,000 **GP Pts:** 120 **FIDE:** Y **Accessible:** Y **Residency: N Org:** Continental Chess • *director@chess.us* • *chesstour.com*

GRAND PRIX

13th Annual Washington International

JULY 25-29, 2026 — MD TLA# 54236
Site: Rockville Hilton **Address:** 1750 Rockville Pike, Rockville, MD 20852 **Overall Prize Fund:** $51,000 **GP Pts:** 150 **FIDE:** Y **Accessible:** N **Residency: N Org:** Michael W Regan• *mregan@stsci.edu* • 4104195130 • *mdchess.com*

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

31st annual Pacific Coast Open

JULY 31-AUG. 2, 2026 — CA-S TLA# 55399
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* • *chesstour.com*

GRAND PRIX

3rd Annual Benjamin Franklin Open

JULY 31-AUG. 2, 2026 — NJ TLA# 56530
Site: Hilton Garden Inn Mount Holly/Westampton **Address:** 111 Hancock Lane, Westampton, NJ 08060 **Overall Prize Fund:** $3,500 **GP Pts:** 30 **FIDE:** Y **Accessible:** Y **Residency: N Org:** DMV Chess • *josh@dmvchess.com* • *dmvchess.com*

58th annual Atlantic Open

August 21-23 or 22-23, 2026 - Omni Shoreham Hotel, Washington, DC

A Heritage Event With $30,000 GUARANTEED PRIZES!

5-round 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. Red Line Woodley Park/Zoo Metro: 1 block.

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 **8/18,** $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 $20 less.

Re-entry $70 (no Major to Major).

Cannot play below Online Regular Rating - 100 points. Aug. official ratings used; unofficial or Online Regular USCF ratings usually used if otherwise unrated. **Players scoring 8 or more in 2026 World Open** U2200 or below must play in higher section than World Open.

USCF membership required. See chessevents.us. No mail entries.

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: $169-169-169-169, use link at chessevents.us or call 202-234-0700, reserve by 8/6. Hotel parking is valet only: $45/day; see chessevents.us for offsite parking..

Enter online: Chessaction.com. $15 service charge for refunds.

Email: director@chess.us. (see also: **chessevents.us,** chesstour.com). **Blitz** Sat 9:30 pm, enter Sat by 9:10.

GRAND PRIX • ENHANCED GRAND PRIX

12th Annual Pacific Coast Open Blitz Championship

AUGUST 1, 2026 — CA-S **TLA# 55401**

Site: Hilton Orange County Airport Hotel **Address:** 18800 Macarthur Blvd, Irvine CA 92612 **Overall Prize Fund:** $500 **GP Pts:** 10 **FIDE:** N **Accessible:** Y **Residency:** N **Org:** Continental Chess • *director@chess.us* • *chesstour.com*

GRAND PRIX

5th Annual Beltway Open

AUGUST 7-9, 2026 — VA **TLA# 56544**

Site: Hampton Inn and Suites Dulles **Address:** 22700 Holiday Park Drive, Sterling, VA 20166 **Overall Prize Fund:** $3,500 **GP Pts:** 30 **FIDE:** Y **Accessible:** Y **Residency:** N **Org:** DMV Chess • *inpersonevents@dmvchess.com* • *dmvchess.com*

GRAND PRIX

Brennan's Rapid Open 2026

AUGUST 8, 2026 — MO **TLA# 55388**

Site: Saint Louis Chess Club **Address:** 4663 Maryland Avenue, St. Louis MO 63108 **Overall Prize Fund:** $1,000 **GP Pts:** 10 **FIDE:** N **Accessible:** Y **Residency:** N **Org:** Saint Louis Chess Club • *tournaments@saintlouischessclub.org* • 3143612437 • *saintlouischessclub.org*

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

56th annual Continental Open

AUGUST 13-16, 2026 — MA **TLA# 55944**

Site: Hilton Boston/Woburn Hotel **Address:** 2 Forbes Road, Woburn, MA 01801 **Overall Prize Fund:** $30,000 **GP Pts:** 150 **FIDE:** Y **Accessible:** Y **Residency:** N **Org:** Continental Chess • *director@chess.us* • *chesstour.com*

GRAND PRIX

13th Annual Potomac Open

AUGUST 14-16, 2026 — MD **TLA# 56612**

Site: Rockville Hilton **Address:** 1750 Rockville Pike, Rockville, MD 20852 **Overall Prize Fund:** see online TLA **GP Pts:** 30 **FIDE:** Y **Accessible:** N **Residency:** N **Org:** Michael Regan • *mregan@stsci.edu* • 4104195130 • *mdchess.com*

GRAND PRIX • ENHANCED GRAND PRIX • JUNIOR GRAND PRIX

16th annual Central California Open

AUGUST 14-16, 2026 — CA **TLA# 55857**

Site: Doubletree Hotel **Address:** 2233 Cesar Chavez, Fresno, CA 93721 **Overall Prize Fund:** $10,000 **GP Pts:** 100 **FIDE:** Y **Accessible:** Y **Residency:** N **Org:** Continental Chess • *director@chess.us* • *chesstour.com*

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

58th annual Atlantic Open

AUGUST 21-23, 2026 — DC **TLA# 55858**

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* • *chesstour.com*

GRAND PRIX • ENHANCED GRAND PRIX • JUNIOR GRAND PRIX

21st annual Indianapolis Open

AUGUST 21-23, 2026 — IN **TLA# 55946**

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* • *chesstour.com*

HERITAGE EVENT • GRAND PRIX

71st Iowa Open

AUGUST 28-30, 2026 — IA **TLA# 56055**

Site: The Graduate Hotel **Address:** 210 S Dubuque St, Iowa City, IA 52240 **Overall Prize Fund:** $2,750 **GP Pts:** 10 **FIDE:** Y **Accessible:** Y **Residency:** N **Org:** Eric Golf Vigil • *evigil@gmail.com* • 3196213116 • *iowa-chess.org/Tournaments*

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

2026 Illinois Open

SEPTEMBER 3-7, 2026 — IL **TLA# 55517**

Site: DoubleTree by Hilton Lisle-Naperville **Address:** 3003 Corporate W Dr, Lisle, IL 60532 **Overall Prize Fund:** $15,000 **GP Pts:** 80 **FIDE:** Y **Accessible:** N **Residency:** N **Org:** Wilson's Chess & King Registration • *bill@kingregistration.com* • *kingregistration.com/event/ILopen26*

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

2026 Peter P Lahde TN Open and State Championship

SEPTEMBER 4-7, 2026 — TN **TLA# 56592**

Site: Memphis Downtown Holiday Inn AND Memphis Chess Club **Address:** 160 Union Ave, and 195 Madison Avenue, respectively, Memphis, TN 38103 **Overall Prize Fund:** $10,001 **GP Pts:** 80 **FIDE:** N **Accessible:** Y **Residency:** N **Org:** Memphis Chess Club • *info@memphischessclub.com* • 9015013257 • *memphischessclub.com/tournaments*

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

148th annual New York State Championship– America's oldest annual tournament!

SEPTEMBER 4-7, 2026 — NY **TLA# 55860**

Site: Albany Marriott Hotel **Address:** 189 Wolf Road, Albany, NY 12205 **Overall Prize Fund:** $18,000 **GP Pts:** 80 **FIDE:** Y **Accessible:** N **Residency:** N **Org:** Continental Chess • *director@chess.us* • *chesstour.com*

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

2026 Harvey Lerman Florida State Championship

SEPTEMBER 5-7, 2026 — FL **TLA# 53516**

Site: Hilton Melbourne at Rialto Place **Address:** 200 Rialto Place, Melbourne, FL 32901 **Overall Prize Fund:** $16,000 **GP Pts:** 60 **FIDE:** Y **Accessible:** Y **Residency:** N **Org:** Space Coast Chess Foundation, Inc. • *andrerea2@yahoo.com* • 412-418-1591 • *spacecoastchessfoundation.org/event/floridastatechampionship*

GRAND PRIX

Sacramento Chess Club Weekend Swiss #26

SEPTEMBER 12-13, 2026 — CA-N **TLA# 55953**

Site: Holiday Inn Express & Suites **Address:** 2224 Auburn Boulevard, Sacramento, CA 95821 **Overall Prize Fund:** $4,800 b/60 **GP Pts:** 20 **FIDE:** N **Accessible:** Y **Residency:** N **Org:** John McCumiskey • *sactochess@sbcglobal.net* • 916-524-9479 • *sacramentochessclub.org*

GRAND PRIX

2026 Sacramento Senior Championship

SEPTEMBER 12-13, 2026 — CA-N **TLA# 55952**

Site: Holiday Inn Express & Suites **Address:** 2224 Auburn Boulevard, Sacramento, CA 95821 **Overall Prize Fund:** $3,300 b/40 **GP Pts:** 10 **FIDE:** N **Accessible:** Y **Residency:** N **Org:** John McCumiskey • *sactochess@sbcglobal.net* • 916-524-9479 • *sacramentochessclub.org*

GRAND PRIX

Beckstead Family Classic 2026

SEPTEMBER 18-20, 2026 — MO **TLA# 55384**

Site: Saint Louis Chess Club **Address:** 4663 Maryland Avenue, St. Louis MO 63108 **Overall Prize Fund:** $1,000 **GP Pts:** 10 **FIDE:** N **Accessible:** Y **Residency:** N **Org:** Saint Louis Chess Club • *tournaments@saintlouischessclub.org* • 3143612437 • *saintlouischessclub.org*

GRAND PRIX

Catherine McLaughlin Rapid Open 2026

SEPTEMBER 26, 2026 — MO **TLA# 55387**

Site: Saint Louis Chess Club **Address:** 4663 Maryland Avenue, St. Louis MO 63108 **Overall Prize Fund:** $1,000 **GP Pts:** 10 **FIDE:** N **Accessible:** Y **Residency:** N **Org:** Saint Louis Chess Club • *tournaments@saintlouischessclub.org* • 3143612437 • *saintlouischessclub.org*

GRAND PRIX

Thanksgiving Open 2026

NOVEMBER 13-15, 2026 — MO **TLA# 55381**

Site: Saint Louis Chess Club **Address:** 4663 Maryland Avenue, St. Louis MO 63108 **Overall Prize Fund:** $10,000 **GP Pts:** 120 **FIDE:** Y **Accessible:** Y **Residency:** N **Org:** Saint Louis Chess Club • *tournaments@saintlouischessclub.org* • 3143612437 • *saintlouischessclub.org*

19th annual Chicago Class

July 17-19 or 18-19, 2026 - Westin Chicago North Shore Hotel

$30,000 GUARANTEED PRIZES!

5 rounds, 40/80, SD/30; d30 (2-day option, rounds 1-2 G/60, d10), Westin Chicago North Shore Hotel, 601 N Milwaukee Ave, Wheeling IL 60090. Free parking.

In 7 sections. Unrateds allowed, but not in Master or Expert. No residence requirements. See peakrating.us.

Master (2100/up): $3000-1500-800-500, clear win or 1st on tiebreak $100 bonus, top USCF U2400 $1200-600. 150 Grand Prix Points (enhanced). FIDE rated. GMs free, $130 from prize.

Expert (1900-2199): $2000-1000-600-400. FIDE rated.

A (1700-1999): $2000-1000-600-400. FIDE rated.

B (1500-1799): $2000-1000-600-400.

C (1300-1599): $1700-900-500-300.

D (Under 1400): $1400-700-500-300.

E (Under 1200): $800-400-300-200.

Unrated prize limits: $100 E, $200 D, $300 C, $400 B, $500 A.

Cannot play below USCF Online Regular rating - 100 points. Players scoring 8 or more in 2026 World Open U2200 or below must play in higher section than World Open

Mixed Doubles: Best male+female 2-player combined score among all sections $1000-600-400-300. Must average under 2200, different sections OK, register (no extra fee) by 2 pm Sat.

Top 6 sections entry fee: $148 at chessaction.com by 7/14, all $170 at site, or online until 1 hour before round 1.

Class E Section entry fee: all $30 less than top 6 sections entry fee.

Re-entry (except Master): $60.

All: No checks, credit cards OK. Online entry fee $5 less to ICA members; join/renew at il-chess.org.

Special 1 year USCF dues with magazine, online at chessaction.com: see chessevents.us. **USCF membership required.**

3-day schedule: Reg. to Fri 6 pm, rds. Fri 7, Sat 11 & 5, Sun 10 & 3:30.

2-day schedule: Reg. to Sat 10 am, rds. Sat 11, 2 & 5; Sun. 10 & 3:30.

Half point byes OK all, limit 2, must commit before rd 2.

No mail entries. **Bring clocks, sets, boards** if possible-none supplied.

Hotel rates: $135-135, use link at chessevents.us or 847-777-6500, reserve by 6/26 or rates may increase.

July official ratings used; unofficial or Online Regular uschess.org ratings usually used if otherwise unrated.

Enter online: chessaction.com. Refunds, $15 service charge.

Email: director@chess.us (see also www.chesstour.com).

Entries posted at chessaction.com (click "entry list" after entering).

Blitz Sat 9:30 pm, enter Sat by 9:10 pm.

GRAND PRIX

2026 Saint Louis Chess Club Championship
DECEMBER 18-20, 2026 — MO **TLA# 55385**
Site: Saint Louis Chess Club **Address:** 4663 Maryland Avenue, St. Louis MO 63108 **Overall Prize Fund:** $5,000 **GP Pts:** 40 **FIDE:** N **Accessible:** Y **Residency:** N **Org:** Saint Louis Chess Club • *tournaments@saintlouischessclub.org* • 3143612437 • *saintlouischessclub.org*

Regional

ALABAMA

JUNE 6, 2026 — TN **TLA# 55943**
2026 Rea Hayes: Chattanooga
See Grand Prix.

JULY 2-5, 2026 — TN **TLA# 56642**
2026 Super Summer Swiss
See Grand Prix.

JULY 17-19, 2026 — FL **TLA# 55402**
34th annual Southern Open
See Grand Prix or *chessevents.us.*

SEPTEMBER 4-7, 2026 — TN **TLA# 56592**
2026 Peter P Lahde TN Open and State Championship
See Grand Prix.

NOVEMBER 13-15, 2026 — MO **TLA# 55381**
Thanksgiving Open 2026
See Grand Prix.

ALASKA

NOVEMBER 13-15, 2026 — MO **TLA# 55381**
Thanksgiving Open 2026
See Grand Prix.

ARIZONA

JUNE 10-14, 2026 — NV **TLA# 52540**
2026 National Open
See Nationals.

JUNE 10-11, 2026 — NV **TLA# 53257**
2026 U.S. Women's Open
See Nationals.

JUNE 13, 2026 — NV **TLA# 52998**
Walter Browne Memorial National Open Blitz Championship
See Grand Prix.

JULY 3-5, 2026 — CA-N **TLA# 55950**
28th Annual Sacramento Chess Championship
See Grand Prix.

JULY 31-AUG. 2, 2026 — CA **TLA# 55399**
31st annual Pacific Coast Open
See Grand Prix or *chessevents.us.*

SEPTEMBER 12-13, 2026 — CA-N **TLA# 55953**
Sacramento Chess Club Weekend Swiss #26
See Grand Prix.

SEPTEMBER 12-13, 2026 — CA-N **TLA# 55952**
2026 Sacramento Senior Championship
See Grand Prix.

NOVEMBER 13-15, 2026 — MO **TLA# 55381**
Thanksgiving Open 2026
See Grand Prix.

ARKANSAS

JULY 2-5, 2026 — TN **TLA# 56642**
2026 Super Summer Swiss
See Grand Prix.

SEPTEMBER 4-7, 2026 — TN **TLA# 56592**
2026 Peter P Lahde TN Open and State Championship
See Grand Prix.

NOVEMBER 13-15, 2026 — MO **TLA# 55381**
Thanksgiving Open 2026
See Grand Prix.

CALIFORNIA

JUNE 10-14, 2026 — NV **TLA# 52540**
2026 National Open
See Nationals.

JUNE 10-11, 2026 — NV **TLA# 53257**
2026 U.S. Women's Open
See Nationals.

JUNE 13, 2026 — NV **TLA# 52998**
Walter Browne Memorial National Open Blitz Championship
See Grand Prix.

JUNE 26-28, 2026 — DC **TLA# 53577**
54th Annual World Open, Under 1200 And Under 1000 Sections
See District of Columbia or *chessevents.us.*

JULY 1-5, 2026 — DC **TLA# 53565**
54th Annual World Open (Open through Under 1400 Sections)
See Grand Prix or *chessevents.us.*

JULY 3-5, 2026 — CA-N **TLA# 55950**
28th Annual Sacramento Chess Championship
See Grand Prix.

JULY 25-29, 2026 — MD **TLA# 54236**
13th Annual Washington International
See Grand Prix.

JULY 31-AUG. 2, 2026 — CA **TLA# 55399**
31st annual Pacific Coast Open
See Grand Prix or *chessevents.us.*

AUGUST 1, 2026 — CA-S **TLA# 55401**
12th Annual Pacific Coast Open Blitz Championship
See Grand Prix or *chessevents.us.*

AUGUST 14-16, 2026 — CA **TLA# 55857**
16th annual Central California Open
See Grand Prix or *chessevents.us.*

SEPTEMBER 12-13, 2026 — CA-N **TLA# 55953**
Sacramento Chess Club Weekend Swiss #26
See Grand Prix.

SEPTEMBER 12-13, 2026 — CA-N **TLA# 55952**
2026 Sacramento Senior Championship
See Grand Prix.

NOVEMBER 13-15, 2026 — MO **TLA# 55381**
Thanksgiving Open 2026
See Grand Prix.

COLORADO

JUNE 10-11, 2026 — NV **TLA# 53257**
2026 U.S. Women's Open
See Nationals.

NOVEMBER 13-15, 2026 — MO **TLA# 55381**
Thanksgiving Open 2026
See Grand Prix.

CONNECTICUT

JUNE 5-7, 2026 — CT **TLA# 55518**
15th Annual Hartford Open
See Grand Prix or *chessevents.us.*

JUNE 19-21, 2026 — NY **TLA# 54808**
30th annual New York State Open and Senior Amateur
See Grand Prix or *chessevents.us.*

JUNE 26-28, 2026 — DC **TLA# 53577**
54th Annual World Open, Under 1200 And Under 1000 Sections
See District of Columbia or *chessevents.us.*

JULY 1-5, 2026 — DC **TLA# 53565**
54th Annual World Open (Open through Under 1400 Sections)
See Grand Prix or *chessevents.us.*

JULY 24-26, 2026 — CT **TLA# 55353**
31st Annual Bradley Open
See Grand Prix or *chessevents.us.*

JULY 31-AUG. 2, 2026 — NJ **TLA# 56530**
3rd Annual Benjamin Franklin Open
See Grand Prix.

AUGUST 13-16, 2026 — MA **TLA# 55944**
56th annual Continental Open
See Grand Prix or *chessevents.us.*

NOVEMBER 13-15, 2026 — MO **TLA# 55381**
Thanksgiving Open 2026
See Grand Prix.

DELAWARE

JUNE 26-28, 2026 — DC **TLA# 53577**
54th Annual World Open, Under 1200 And Under 1000 Sections
See District of Columbia or *chessevents.us.*

JULY 1-5, 2026 — DC **TLA# 53565**
54th Annual World Open (Open through Under 1400 Sections)
See Grand Prix or *chessevents.us.*

JULY 10-12, 2026 — VA **TLA# 56509**
The 4th Annual DMV Open
See Grand Prix.

JULY 25-29, 2026 — MD **TLA# 54236**
13th Annual Washington International
See Grand Prix.

JULY 31-AUG. 2, 2026 — NJ **TLA# 56530**
3rd Annual Benjamin Franklin Open
See Grand Prix.

AUGUST 1, 2026 — NJ **TLA# 56531**
3rd Annual Benjamin Franklin Scholastic Championship
See New Jersey.

AUGUST 7-9, 2026 — VA **TLA# 56544**
5th Annual Beltway Open
See Grand Prix.

NOVEMBER 13-15, 2026 — MO **TLA# 55381**
Thanksgiving Open 2026
See Grand Prix.

DIST. OF COLUMBIA

JUNE 25, 2026 — DC **TLA# 55312**
World Open Game/50 Championship
See Grand Prix or *chessevents.us.*

JUNE 25-29, 2026 — DC **TLA# 53620**
4th annual DC International (in cooperation with the DC Chess Association)
See Grand Prix or *chessevents.us.*

JUNIOR GRAND PRIX

JUNE 26-28, 2026 — DC **TLA# 53577**
54th Annual World Open, Under 1200 And Under 1000 Sections
Site: Omni Shoreham Hotel **Address:** 2500 Calvert St. NW, Washington, DC 20008 **Overall Prize Fund:** $17,000 **GP Pts:** n/a **FIDE:** N **Accessible:** Y **Residency:** N **Org:** Continental Chess • *director@chess.us* • *chesstour.com*

JUNIOR GRAND PRIX

JUNE 29-30, 2026 — DC **TLA# 55308**
18th annual World Open Under 13 Championship
Site: Omni Shoreham Hotel **Address:** 2500 Calvert St. NW, Washington, DC 20008 **Overall Prize Fund:** n/a **GP Pts:** n/a **FIDE:** N **Accessible:** Y **Residency:** N **Org:** Continental Chess • *director@chess.us* • *chesstour.com*

JUNIOR GRAND PRIX

JUNE 29-30, 2026 — DC **TLA# 55309**
5th annual World Open Amateur Championship
Site: Omni Shoreham Hotel **Address:** 2500 Calvert St. NW, Washington, DC 20008 **Overall Prize Fund:** $3,000 **GP Pts:** n/a **FIDE:** Y **Accessible:** Y **Residency:** N **Org:** Continental Chess • *director@chess.us* • *chesstour.com*

JUNE 29-30, 2026 — DC **TLA# 55310**
15th annual World Open Women's Championship
See Grand Prix or *chessevents.us.*

JUNE 29-30, 2026 — DC **TLA# 55311**
16th annual World Open Senior Amateur
Site: Omni Shoreham Hotel **Address:** 2500 Calvert St. NW, Washington, DC 20008 **Overall Prize Fund:** $1,000 **GP Pts:** n/a **FIDE:** Y **Accessible:** Y **Residency:** N **Org:** Continental Chess • *director@chess.us* • *chesstour.com*

JUNE 30, 2026 — DC **TLA# 55313**
13th annual World Open Action!
Site: Omni Shoreham Hotel **Address:** 2500 Calvert St. NW, Washington, DC 20008 **Overall Prize Fund:** see online TLA **GP Pts:** n/a **FIDE:** N **Accessible:** Y **Residency:** N **Org:** Continental Chess • *director@chess.us* • *chesstour.com*

JULY 1, 2026 — DC **TLA# 55315**
15th annual World Open Game/7 Blitz Championship
See Grand Prix or *chessevents.us.*

JULY 1-5, 2026 — DC **TLA# 53565**
54th Annual World Open (Open through Under 1400 Sections)
See Grand Prix or *chessevents.us.*

JULY 4, 2026 — DC **TLA# 55318**
34th Annual World Open G/10 Championship
See Grand Prix or *chessevents.us.*

JULY 5, 2026 — DC **TLA# 55320**
37th Annual World Open Blitz Championship
See Grand Prix or *chessevents.us.*

JULY 11, 2026 — VA **TLA# 56510**
The 4th Annual DMV Open Scholastic Championship
See Virginia.

JULY 19, 2026 — VA **TLA# 56511**
2nd Annual Capital-Region Scholastic Championship
See Virginia.

JULY 19, 2026 — VA **TLA# 56512**
The Mid-Summer Action Tournament
See Virginia.

JULY 25, 2026 — VA **TLA# 56548**
DMV Summer Scholastic - Saturday
See Virginia.

JULY 25-26, 2026 — VA **TLA# 56547**
DMV Summer Open Game-45 Tournament
See Virginia.

JULY 26, 2026 — VA **TLA# 56550**
DMV Summer Scholastic - Sunday
See Virginia.

JULY 31-AUG. 2, 2026 — NJ **TLA# 56530**
3rd Annual Benjamin Franklin Open
See Grand Prix.

AUGUST 1, 2026 — NJ TLA# 56531
3rd Annual Benjamin Franklin Scholastic Championship
See New Jersey.

AUGUST 2, 2026 — MD TLA# 56528
Rockville Mid-Summer Action Tournament
See Maryland.

AUGUST 2, 2026 — MD TLA# 56529
The Montgomery County Scholastic Challenge
See Maryland.

AUGUST 7-9, 2026 — VA TLA# 56544
5th Annual Beltway Open
See Grand Prix.

AUGUST 8, 2026 — VA TLA# 56546
5th Annual Beltway Open Scholastic Championship
See Virginia.

AUGUST 21-23, 2026 — DC TLA# 55858
58th annual Atlantic Open
See Grand Prix or *chessevents.us.*

NOVEMBER 13-15, 2026 — MO TLA# 55381
Thanksgiving Open 2026
See Grand Prix.

FLORIDA

JUNE 19-21, 2026 — FL TLA# 55907
CFCC 2026 Sunshine Open & Scholastic
See Grand Prix.

JUNE 20, 2026 — FL TLA# 55908
CFCC 2026 Sunshine Open Saturday Night Open Blitz
See Grand Prix.

JUNE 25-29, 2026 — DC TLA# 53620
4th annual DC International (in cooperation with the DC Chess Association)
See Grand Prix or *chessevents.us.*

JUNE 26-28, 2026 — DC TLA# 53577
54th Annual World Open, Under 1200 And Under 1000 Sections
See District of Columbia or *chessevents.us.*

JULY 1-5, 2026 — DC TLA# 53565
54th Annual World Open (Open through Under 1400 Sections)
See Grand Prix or *chessevents.us.*

JULY 17-19, 2026 — FL TLA# 55402
34th annual Southern Open
See Grand Prix.

JULY 25-29, 2026 — MD TLA# 54236
13th Annual Washington International
See Grand Prix.

SEPTEMBER 5-7, 2026 — FL TLA# 53516
2026 Harvey Lerman Florida State Championship
See Grand Prix.

NOVEMBER 13-15, 2026 — MO TLA# 55381
Thanksgiving Open 2026
See Grand Prix.

GEORGIA

JUNE 6, 2026 — TN TLA# 55943
2026 Rea Hayes: Chattanooga
See Grand Prix.

JUNE 25-29, 2026 — DC TLA# 53620
4th annual DC International (in cooperation with the DC Chess Association)
See Grand Prix or *chessevents.us.*

JUNE 26-28, 2026 — DC TLA# 53577
54th Annual World Open, Under 1200 And Under 1000 Sections
See District of Columbia or *chessevents.us.*

JULY 1-5, 2026 — DC TLA# 53565
54th Annual World Open (Open through Under 1400 Sections)
See Grand Prix or *chessevents.us.*

JULY 2-5, 2026 — TN TLA# 56642
2026 Super Summer Swiss
See Grand Prix.

JULY 17-19, 2026 — FL TLA# 55402
34th annual Southern Open
See Grand Prix or *chessevents.us.*

JULY 25-29, 2026 — MD TLA# 54236
13th Annual Washington International
See Grand Prix.

SEPTEMBER 4-7, 2026 — TN TLA# 56592
2026 Peter P Lahde TN Open and State Championship
See Grand Prix.

NOVEMBER 13-15, 2026 — MO TLA# 55381
Thanksgiving Open 2026
See Grand Prix.

HAWAII

NOVEMBER 13-15, 2026 — MO TLA# 55381
Thanksgiving Open 2026
See Grand Prix.

IDAHO

JULY 3-5, 2026 — CA-N TLA# 55950
28th Annual Sacramento Chess Championship
See Grand Prix.

SEPTEMBER 12-13, 2026 — CA-N TLA# 55953
Sacramento Chess Club Weekend Swiss #26
See Grand Prix.

SEPTEMBER 12-13, 2026 — CA-N TLA# 55952
2026 Sacramento Senior Championship
See Grand Prix.

NOVEMBER 13-15, 2026 — MO TLA# 55381
Thanksgiving Open 2026
See Grand Prix.

ILLINOIS

JUNE 19, 2026 — IL TLA# 56270
2026 Friday Fun Open
Site: Crowne Plaza Chicago O'Hare Hotel and Conference Center **Address:** 5440 N. River Road, Rosemont, IL 60018 **Overall Prize Fund:** n/a **GP Pts:** n/a **FIDE:** N **Accessible:** Y **Residency:** N **Org:** Caveman Chess, LLC • contact@cavemanchess.com • 224-985-5244 • *cavemanchess.com*

JUNE 19-21, 2026 — IL TLA# 55511
2026 Chicago Summer Open
See Grand Prix.

JUNE 20, 2026 — IL TLA# 56266
2026 Senior Open & Caveman Medior Quick!
Site: Crowne Plaza Chicago O'Hare Hotel and Conference Center **Address:** 5440 N. River Road, Rosemont, IL 60018 **Overall Prize Fund:** $1,000 **GP Pts:** n/a **FIDE:** N **Accessible:** Y **Residency:** N **Org:** Caveman Chess, LLC • contact@cavemanchess.com • 224-985-5244 • *cavemanchess.com*

JUNE 20, 2026 — IL TLA# 56267
2026 US Junior Open Blitz!
Site: Crowne Plaza Chicago O'Hare Hotel and Conference Center **Address:** 5440 N. River Road, Rosemont, IL 60018 **Overall Prize Fund:** n/a **GP Pts:** n/a **FIDE:** N **Accessible:** Y **Residency:** N **Org:** Caveman Chess, LLC • contact@cavemanchess.com • 224-985-5244 • *cavemanchess.com*

JUNE 20, 2026 — IL TLA# 56272
2026 Caveman Beginner's Open #1
Site: Crowne Plaza Chicago O'Hare Hotel and Conference Center **Address:** 5440 N. River Road, Rosemont, IL 60018 **Overall Prize Fund:** n/a **GP Pts:** n/a **FIDE:** N **Accessible:** Y **Residency:** N **Org:** Caveman Chess, LLC • contact@cavemanchess.com • 224-985-5244 • *cavemanchess.com*

JUNE 21, 2026 — IL TLA# 56273
2026 Caveman Beginner's Open #2
Site: Crowne Plaza Chicago O'Hare Hotel and Conference Center **Address:** 5440 N. River Road, Rosemont, IL 60018 **Overall Prize Fund:** n/a **GP Pts:** n/a **FIDE:** N **Accessible:** Y **Residency:** N **Org:** Caveman Chess, LLC • contact@cavemanchess.com • 224-985-5244 • *cavemanchess.com*

JUNE 26-28, 2026 — DC TLA# 53577
54th Annual World Open, Under 1200 And Under 1000 Sections
See District of Columbia or *chessevents.us.*

JULY 1-5, 2026 — DC TLA# 53565
54th Annual World Open (Open through Under 1400 Sections)
See Grand Prix or *chessevents.us.*

JULY 2-5, 2026 — TN TLA# 56642
2026 Super Summer Swiss
See Grand Prix.

JULY 17-19, 2026 — IL TLA# 55299
19th annual Chicago Class Championships
See Grand Prix or *chessevents.us.*

JULY 18, 2026 — IL TLA# 55307
11th annual Chicago Class Blitz Championship
See Grand Prix or *chessevents.us.*

JULY 25-29, 2026 — MD TLA# 54236
13th Annual Washington International
See Grand Prix.

AUGUST 8, 2026 — IL TLA# 56134
Southern Illinois Summer Open 2026
Site: Salem Community Activities Center **Address:** 416 E Oglesby St. Salem, IL 62881 **Overall Prize Fund:** $360 **GP Pts:** n/a **FIDE:** N **Accessible:** N **Residency:** N **Org:** Carl Purcell • carlalanpurcell@gmail.com • 6182678145

AUGUST 21-23, 2026 — IN TLA# 55946
21st annual Indianapolis Open
See Grand Prix or *chessevents.us.*

SEPTEMBER 3-7, 2026 — IL TLA# 55517
2026 Illinois Open
See Grand Prix.

SEPTEMBER 4-7, 2026 — TN TLA# 56592
2026 Peter P Lahde TN Open and State Championship
See Grand Prix.

NOVEMBER 13-15, 2026 — MO TLA# 55381
Thanksgiving Open 2026
See Grand Prix.

INDIANA

JUNE 19-21, 2026 — IL TLA# 55511
2026 Chicago Summer Open
See Grand Prix.

JULY 17-19, 2026 — IL TLA# 55299
19th annual Chicago Class Championships
See Grand Prix or *chessevents.us.*

AUGUST 21-23, 2026 — IN TLA# 55946
21st annual Indianapolis Open
See Grand Prix or *chessevents.us.*

SEPTEMBER 3-7, 2026 — IL TLA# 55517
2026 Illinois Open
See Grand Prix.

SEPTEMBER 4-7, 2026 — TN TLA# 56592
2026 Peter P Lahde TN Open and State Championship
See Grand Prix.

NOVEMBER 13-15, 2026 — MO TLA# 55381
Thanksgiving Open 2026
See Grand Prix.

IOWA

JUNE 19-21, 2026 — IL TLA# 55511
2026 Chicago Summer Open
See Grand Prix.

SEPTEMBER 3-7, 2026 — IL TLA# 55517
2026 Illinois Open
See Grand Prix.

AUGUST 28-30, 2026 — IA TLA# 56055
71st Iowa Open
See Grand Prix.

NOVEMBER 13-15, 2026 — MO TLA# 55381
Thanksgiving Open 2026
See Grand Prix.

KANSAS

NOVEMBER 13-15, 2026 — MO TLA# 55381
Thanksgiving Open 2026
See Grand Prix.

KENTUCKY

JULY 2-5, 2026 — TN TLA# 56642
2026 Super Summer Swiss
See Grand Prix.

AUGUST 21-23, 2026 — IN TLA# 55946
21st annual Indianapolis Open
See Grand Prix or *chessevents.us.*

SEPTEMBER 4-7, 2026 — TN TLA# 56592
2026 Peter P Lahde TN Open and State Championship
See Grand Prix.

NOVEMBER 13-15, 2026 — MO TLA# 55381
Thanksgiving Open 2026
See Grand Prix.

LOUISIANA

SEPTEMBER 4-7, 2026 — TN TLA# 56592
2026 Peter P Lahde TN Open and State Championship
See Grand Prix.

NOVEMBER 13-15, 2026 — MO TLA# 55381
Thanksgiving Open 2026
See Grand Prix.

MAINE

JULY 31-AUG. 2, 2026 — NJ TLA# 56530
3rd Annual Benjamin Franklin Open
See Grand Prix.

NOVEMBER 13-15, 2026 — MO TLA# 55381
Thanksgiving Open 2026
See Grand Prix.

MARYLAND

JUNE 25, 2026 — DC TLA# 55312
World Open Game/50 Championship
See Grand Prix or *chessevents.us.*

JUNE 25-29, 2026 — DC TLA# 53620
4th annual DC International (in cooperation with the DC Chess Association)
See Grand Prix or *chessevents.us.*

JUNE 26-28, 2026 — DC TLA# 53577
54th Annual World Open, Under 1200 And Under 1000 Sections
See District of Columbia or *chessevents.us.*

JUNE 29-30, 2026 — DC TLA# 55308
18th annual World Open Under 13 Championship
See District of Columbia or *chessevents.us.*

NOVEMBER 13-15, 2026 — MO TLA# 55381
Thanksgiving Open 2026
See Grand Prix.

JUNE 29-30, 2026 — DC TLA# 55309
5th annual World Open Amateur Championship
See District of Columbia or *chessevents.us.*

JUNE 29-30, 2026 — DC TLA# 55310
15th annual World Open Women's Championship
See Grand Prix or *chessevents.us.*

JUNE 29-30, 2026 — DC TLA# 55311
16th annual World Open Senior Amateur
See District of Columbia or *chessevents.us.*

JUNE 30, 2026 — DC TLA# 55313
13th annual World Open Action!
See District of Columbia or *chessevents.us.*

JULY 1, 2026 — DC TLA# 55315
15th annual World Open Game/7 Blitz Championship
See Grand Prix or *chessevents.us.*

JULY 1-5, 2026 — DC TLA# 53565
54th Annual World Open (Open through Under 1400 Sections)
See Grand Prix or *chessevents.us.*

JULY 4, 2026 — DC TLA# 55318
34th Annual World Open G/10 Championship
See Grand Prix or *chessevents.us.*

JULY 5, 2026 — DC TLA# 55320
37th Annual World Open Blitz Championship
See Grand Prix or *chessevents.us.*

JULY 10-12, 2026 — VA TLA# 56509
The 4th Annual DMV Open
See Grand Prix.

JULY 11, 2026 — VA TLA# 56510
The 4th Annual DMV Open Scholastic Championship
See Virginia.

JULY 19, 2026 — VA TLA# 56511
2nd Annual Capital-Region Scholastic Championship
See Virginia.

JULY 19, 2026 — VA TLA# 56512
The Mid-Summer Action Tournament
See Virginia.

JULY 25, 2026 — VA TLA# 56548
DMV Summer Scholastic - Saturday
See Virginia.

JULY 25-26, 2026 — VA TLA# 56547
DMV Summer Open Game-45 Tournament
See Virginia.

JULY 26, 2026 — VA TLA# 56550
DMV Summer Scholastic - Sunday
See Virginia.

JULY 25-29, 2026 — MD TLA# 54236
13th Annual Washington International
See Grand Prix.

JULY 31-AUG. 2, 2026 — NJ TLA# 56530
3rd Annual Benjamin Franklin Open
See Grand Prix.

AUGUST 1, 2026 — NJ TLA# 56531
3rd Annual Benjamin Franklin Scholastic Championship
See New Jersey.

AUGUST 2, 2026 — MD TLA# 56528
Rockville Mid-Summer Action Tournament
Site: Hilton Garden Inn Rockville-Gaithersburg **Address:** 14975 Shady Grove Rd, Rockville, Maryland 20850 **Overall Prize Fund:** $150 **GP Pts:** n/a **FIDE:** N **Accessible:** Y **Residency: N Org:** DMV Chess • *inpersonevents@dmvchess.com* • 7036090499 • *dmvchess.com*

AUGUST 2, 2026 — MD TLA# 56529
The Montgomery County Scholastic Challenge
Site: Hilton Garden Inn Rockville-Gaithersburg **Address:** 14975 Shady Grove Rd, Rockville, Maryland 20850 **Overall Prize Fund:** n/a **GP Pts:** n/a **FIDE:** N **Accessible:** Y **Residency: N Org:** DMV Chess • *inpersonevents@dmvchess.com* • *dmvchess.com*

AUGUST 7-9, 2026 — VA TLA# 56544
5th Annual Beltway Open
See Grand Prix.

AUGUST 8, 2026 — VA TLA# 56546
5th Annual Beltway Open Scholastic Championship
See Virginia.

AUGUST 21-23, 2026 — DC TLA# 55858
58th annual Atlantic Open
See Grand Prix or *chessevents.us.*

NOVEMBER 13-15, 2026 — MO TLA# 55381
Thanksgiving Open 2026
See Grand Prix.

MASSACHUSETTS

JUNE 5-7, 2026 — CT TLA# 55518
15th Annual Hartford Open
See Grand Prix or *chessevents.us.*

JUNE 19-21, 2026 — NY TLA# 54808
30th annual New York State Open and Senior Amateur
See Grand Prix or *chessevents.us.*

JUNE 25-29, 2026 — DC TLA# 53620
4th annual DC International (in cooperation with the DC Chess Association)
See Grand Prix or *chessevents.us.*

JULY 1-5, 2026 — DC TLA# 53565
54th Annual World Open (Open through Under 1400 Sections)
See Grand Prix or *chessevents.us.*

JULY 24-26, 2026 — CT TLA# 55353
31st Annual Bradley Open
See Grand Prix or *chessevents.us.*

JULY 25-29, 2026 — MD TLA# 54236
13th Annual Washington International
See Grand Prix.

AUGUST 13-16, 2026 — MA TLA# 55944
56th annual Continental Open
See Grand Prix or *chessevents.us.*

NOVEMBER 13-15, 2026 — MO TLA# 55381
Thanksgiving Open 2026
See Grand Prix.

MICHIGAN

JUNE 5-7, 2026 — OH TLA# 55596
19th Continental Chess Cleveland Open
See Grand Prix or *chessevents.us.*

JUNE 19-21, 2026 — IL TLA# 55511
2026 Chicago Summer Open
See Grand Prix.

JULY 1-5, 2026 — DC TLA# 53565
54th Annual World Open (Open through Under 1400 Sections)
See Grand Prix or *chessevents.us.*

JULY 25-29, 2026 — MD TLA# 54236
13th Annual Washington International
See Grand Prix.

SEPTEMBER 3-7, 2026 — IL TLA# 55517
2026 Illinois Open
See Grand Prix.

NOVEMBER 13-15, 2026 — MO TLA# 55381
Thanksgiving Open 2026
See Grand Prix.

MINNESOTA

NOVEMBER 13-15, 2026 — MO TLA# 55381
Thanksgiving Open 2026
See Grand Prix.

MISSISSIPPI

STATE CHAMPIONSHIP EVENT

JUNE 27, 2026 — MS TLA# 56067
2026 Mississippi G/60 Championship
Site: Jackson Preparatory School **Address:** 3100 Lakeland Dr, Flowood, MS 39232 **Overall Prize Fund:** n/a **GP Pts:** n/a **FIDE:** N **Accessible:** N **Residency: N Org:** Mississippi Chess Association • *douglas@pobox.com* • 601-260-6087 • *mcachess.org*

JULY 2-5, 2026 — TN TLA# 56642
2026 Super Summer Swiss
See Grand Prix.

SEPTEMBER 4-7, 2026 — TN TLA# 56592
2026 Peter P Lahde TN Open and State Championship
See Grand Prix.

NOVEMBER 13-15, 2026 — MO TLA# 55381
Thanksgiving Open 2026
See Grand Prix.

MISSOURI

JULY 1-5, 2026 — DC TLA# 53565
54th Annual World Open (Open through Under 1400 Sections)
See Grand Prix or *chessevents.us.*

JULY 2-5, 2026 — TN TLA# 56642
2026 Super Summer Swiss
See Grand Prix.

SEPTEMBER 4-7, 2026 — TN TLA# 56592
2026 Peter P Lahde TN Open and State Championship
See Grand Prix.

NOVEMBER 13-15, 2026 — MO TLA# 55381
Thanksgiving Open 2026
See Grand Prix.

DECEMBER 18-20, 2026 — MO TLA# 55385
2026 Saint Louis Chess Club Championship
See Grand Prix.

MONTANA

NOVEMBER 13-15, 2026 — MO TLA# 55381
Thanksgiving Open 2026
See Grand Prix.

NEBRASKA

NOVEMBER 13-15, 2026 — MO TLA# 55381
Thanksgiving Open 2026
See Grand Prix.

NEVADA

JUNE 10-14, 2026 — NV TLA# 52540
2026 National Open
See Nationals.

JUNE 13, 2026 — NV TLA# 52998
Walter Browne Memorial National Open Blitz Championship
See Grand Prix.

JULY 3-5, 2026 — CA-N TLA# 55950
28th Annual Sacramento Chess Championship
See Grand Prix.

JULY 31-AUG. 2, 2026 — CA TLA# 55399
31st annual Pacific Coast Open
See Grand Prix or *chessevents.us.*

AUGUST 14-16, 2026 — CA TLA# 55857
16th annual Central California Open
See Grand Prix or *chessevents.us.*

SEPTEMBER 12-13, 2026 — CA-N TLA# 55953
Sacramento Chess Club Weekend Swiss #26
See Grand Prix.

SEPTEMBER 12-13, 2026 — CA-N TLA# 55952
2026 Sacramento Senior Championship
See Grand Prix.

NOVEMBER 13-15, 2026 — MO TLA# 55381
Thanksgiving Open 2026
See Grand Prix.

NEW HAMPSHIRE

NOVEMBER 13-15, 2026 — MO TLA# 55381
Thanksgiving Open 2026
See Grand Prix.

NEW JERSEY

JUNE 5-7, 2026 — CT TLA# 55518
15th Annual Hartford Open
See Grand Prix or *chessevents.us.*

JUNE 19-21, 2026 — NY TLA# 54808
30th annual New York State Open and Senior Amateur
See Grand Prix or *chessevents.us.*

JUNE 25, 2026 — DC TLA# 55312
World Open Game/50 Championship
See Grand Prix or *chessevents.us.*

JUNE 25-29, 2026 — DC TLA# 53620
4th annual DC International (in cooperation with the DC Chess Association)
See Grand Prix or *chessevents.us.*

JUNE 26-28, 2026 — DC TLA# 53577
54th Annual World Open, Under 1200 And Under 1000 Sections
See District of Columbia or *chessevents.us.*

JUNE 27, 2026 — NJ TLA# 54717
Hamilton Chess Club Quads
Site: Edward McManimon building **Address:** 320 Scully Ave., Hamilton, NJ 08610 **Overall Prize Fund:** $25/quad **GP Pts:** n/a **FIDE:** N **Accessible:** Y **Residency: N Org:** Edward J Sytnik • *edmendou@aol.com* • 6093512437 • *hamiltonchessclub.com*

JUNE 29-30, 2026 — DC TLA# 55308
18th annual World Open Under 13 Championship
See District of Columbia or *chessevents.us.*

JUNE 29-30, 2026 — DC TLA# 55309
5th annual World Open Amateur Championship
See District of Columbia or *chessevents.us.*

JUNE 29-30, 2026 — DC TLA# 55310
15th annual World Open Women's Championship
See Grand Prix or *chessevents.us.*

JUNE 29-30, 2026 — DC TLA# 55311
16th annual World Open Senior Amateur
See District of Columbia or *chessevents.us.*

JUNE 30, 2026 — DC TLA# 55313
13th annual World Open Action!
See District of Columbia or *chessevents.us.*

JULY 1, 2026 — DC TLA# 55315
15th annual World Open Game/7 Blitz Championship
See Grand Prix or *chessevents.us.*

JULY 1-5, 2026 — DC TLA# 53565
54th Annual World Open (Open through Under 1400 Sections)
See Grand Prix or *chessevents.us.*

JULY 4, 2026 — DC TLA# 55318
34th Annual World Open G/10 Championship
See Grand Prix or *chessevents.us.*

JULY 5, 2026 — DC TLA# 55320
37th Annual World Open Blitz Championship
See Grand Prix or *chessevents.us.*

JULY 10-12, 2026 — VA TLA# 56509
The 4th Annual DMV Open
See Grand Prix.

JULY 25-29, 2026 — MD TLA# 54236
13th Annual Washington International
See Grand Prix.

AUGUST 1, 2026 — NJ TLA# 56531
3rd Annual Benjamin Franklin Scholastic Championship
Site: Hilton Garden Inn Mount Holly/Westampton **Address:** 111 Hancock Lane, Westampton, NJ 08060 **Overall Prize Fund:** n/a **GP Pts:** n/a **FIDE:** N **Accessible:** Y **Residency:** N **Org:** DMV Chess • *inperson-events@dmvchess.com • dmvchess.com*

AUGUST 7-9, 2026 — VA TLA# 56544
5th Annual Beltway Open
See Grand Prix.

AUGUST 13-16, 2026 — MA TLA# 55944
56th annual Continental Open
See Grand Prix or *chessevents.us.*

AUGUST 14-16, 2026 — MD TLA# 56612
13th Annual Potomac Open
See Grand Prix.

AUGUST 21-23, 2026 — DC TLA# 55858
58th annual Atlantic Open
See Grand Prix or *chessevents.us.*

NOVEMBER 13-15, 2026 — MO TLA# 55381
Thanksgiving Open 2026
See Grand Prix.

NEW MEXICO

NOVEMBER 13-15, 2026 — MO TLA# 55381
Thanksgiving Open 2026
See Grand Prix.

NEW YORK

MONTHLY ON SATURDAYS — NY TLA# 56202
Buffalo Chess Association Open Swiss
Site: Buffalo Chess Association **Address:** 6043 Transit Rd, #101b, East Amherst, NY 14051 **Overall Prize Fund:** $200+ **GP Pts:** n/a **FIDE:** N **Accessible:** Y **Residency: N Org:** Buffalo Chess Associaton • *thebuffalochessassociation@gmail.com* • **(716)243-2719** • *buffalochessassociation.com*

JUNE 5-7, 2026 — CT TLA# 55518
15th Annual Hartford Open
See Grand Prix or *chessevents.us.*

JUNE 19-21, 2026 — NY TLA# 54808
30th annual New York State Open and Senior Amateur
See Grand Prix or *chessevents.us.*

JUNE 25, 2026 — DC TLA# 55312
World Open Game/50 Championship
See Grand Prix or *chessevents.us.*

JUNE 25-29, 2026 — DC TLA# 53620
4th annual DC International (in cooperation with the DC Chess Association)
See Grand Prix or *chessevents.us.*

JUNE 26-28, 2026 — DC TLA# 53577
54th Annual World Open, Under 1200 And Under 1000 Sections
See District of Columbia or *chessevents.us.*

JUNE 29-30, 2026 — DC TLA# 55308
18th annual World Open Under 13 Championship
See District of Columbia or *chessevents.us.*

JUNE 29-30, 2026 — DC TLA# 55309
5th annual World Open Amateur Championship
See District of Columbia or *chessevents.us.*

JUNE 29-30, 2026 — DC TLA# 55310
15th annual World Open Women's Championship
See Grand Prix or *chessevents.us.*

JUNE 29-30, 2026 — DC TLA# 55311
16th annual World Open Senior Amateur
See District of Columbia or *chessevents.us..*

JUNE 30, 2026 — DC TLA# 55313
13th annual World Open Action!
See District of Columbia or *chessevents.us.*

JULY 1, 2026 — DC TLA# 55315
15th annual World Open Game/7 Blitz Championship
See Grand Prix or *chessevents.us.*

JULY 1-5, 2026 — DC TLA# 53565
54th Annual World Open (Open through Under 1400 Sections)
See Grand Prix or *chessevents.us.*

JULY 4, 2026 — DC TLA# 55318
34th Annual World Open G/10 Championship
See Grand Prix or *chessevents.us.*

JULY 5, 2026 — DC TLA# 55320
37th Annual World Open Blitz Championship
See Grand Prix or *chessevents.us.*

JULY 10-12, 2026 — VA TLA# 56509
The 4th Annual DMV Open
See Grand Prix.

JULY 17-19, 2026 — PA TLA# 55352
27th annual Pittsburgh Open
See Grand Prix or *chessevents.us.*

JULY 24-26, 2026 — CT TLA# 55353
31st Annual Bradley Open
See Grand Prix or *chessevents.us.*

JULY 25-29, 2026 — MD TLA# 54236
13th Annual Washington International
See Grand Prix.

JULY 31-AUG. 2, 2026 — NJ TLA# 56530
3rd Annual Benjamin Franklin Open
See Grand Prix.

AUGUST 1, 2026 — NJ TLA# 56531
3rd Annual Benjamin Franklin Scholastic Championship
See New Jersey.

AUGUST 7-9, 2026 — VA TLA# 56544
5th Annual Beltway Open
See Grand Prix.

AUGUST 13-16, 2026 — MA TLA# 55944
56th annual Continental Open
See Grand Prix or *chessevents.us.*

AUGUST 21-23, 2026 — DC TLA# 55858
58th annual Atlantic Open
See Grand Prix or *chessevents.us.*

SEPTEMBER 4-7, 2026 — NY TLA# 55860
148th annual New York State Championship– America's oldest annual tournament!
See Grand Prix or *chessevents.us.*

NOVEMBER 13-15, 2026 — MO TLA# 55381
Thanksgiving Open 2026
See Grand Prix.

NORTH CAROLINA

JUNE 21, 2026 — NC TLA# 56588
2nd Annual Dragon Knight Chess Summer Solstice Grand Prix
See Grand Prix.

56th annual CONTINENTAL OPEN

August 13-16, 14-16 or 15-16, 2026 - $30,000 Guaranteed prizes!

7 rounds at *NEW LOCATION:* Hilton Boston/Woburn Hotel, Massachusetts!

Hilton Boston/Woburn,2 Forbes Road, Woburn, MA 01801 (about 11½ miles from downtown Boston). Free parking.

7 sections. 150 Grand Prix Points.

Top 5 sections: August 13-16 or 14-16, 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 15-16, 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 USCF Online Regular rating minus 100 points. August Official ratings used, USCF unofficial or Online Regular ratings usually used if otherwise unrated. Players scoring 8 or more in 2026 World Open U2200 or below must play in higher section than World Open. See chessevents.us for more rules.

Top 6 sections entry fee: $158 online by 8/11, $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 $40 less than top 6 sections fee. U1100 re-entry $60. No checks, credit cards OK.

USCF membership required. See chessevents.us for special rates.

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. **No 4-Day or 3-Day Schedules in U1300 or U1100 Sections.**

Half-point byes OK all rds (limit 2, must commit before rd 3). Bring set, board, clock if possible- **none supplied.**

Hotel rates: $169-169-169-169, use link at chessevents.us or call 781-932-0999, reserve by 7/23.

Enter online: Chessaction.com. No mail entry. Refunds, $15 service charge.

Email: director@chess.us (also see chesstour.com, chessevents.us).

Blitz: Sat 9:30 pm, enter by 9:10 pm.

JUNE 25, 2026 — DC TLA# 55312
World Open Game/50 Championship
See Grand Prix or *chessevents.us.*

JUNE 25-29, 2026 — DC TLA# 53620
4th annual DC International (in cooperation with the DC Chess Association)
See Grand Prix or *chessevents.us.*

JUNE 26-28, 2026 — DC TLA# 53577
54th Annual World Open, Under 1200 And Under 1000 Sections
See District of Columbia or *chessevents.us.*

JUNE 28, 2026 — NC TLA# 56589
Dragon Knight Chess Log Cabin Day Grand Prix
See Grand Prix.

JUNE 29-30, 2026 — DC TLA# 55309
5th annual World Open Amateur Championship
See District of Columbia or *chessevents.us.*

JUNE 29-30, 2026 — DC TLA# 55310
15th annual World Open Women's Championship
See Grand Prix or *chessevents.us.*

JULY 1-5, 2026 — DC TLA# 53565
54th Annual World Open (Open through Under 1400 Sections)
See Grand Prix or *chessevents.us.*

JULY 5, 2026 — NC TLA# 56590
Dragon Knight Chess Build a Scarecrow Day Grand Prix
See Grand Prix.

JULY 10-12, 2026 — VA TLA# 56509
The 4th Annual DMV Open
See Grand Prix.

JULY 12, 2026 — NC TLA# 56591
Dragon Knight Chess Barn Day Grand Prix
See Grand Prix.

JULY 17-19, 2026 — FL TLA# 55402
34th annual Southern Open
See Grand Prix.

AUGUST 7-9, 2026 — VA TLA# 56544
5th Annual Beltway Open
See Grand Prix.

AUGUST 14-16, 2026 — MD TLA# 56612
13th Annual Potomac Open
See Grand Prix.

NOVEMBER 13-15, 2026 — MO TLA# 55381
Thanksgiving Open 2026
See Grand Prix.

NORTH DAKOTA

NOVEMBER 13-15, 2026 — MO TLA# 55381
Thanksgiving Open 2026
See Grand Prix.

OHIO

JUNE 5-7, 2026 — OH TLA# 55596
19th Continental Chess Cleveland Open
See Grand Prix or *chessevents.us.*

JUNE 26-28, 2026 — DC TLA# 53577
54th Annual World Open, Under 1200 And Under 1000 Sections
See District of Columbia or *chessevents.us.*

JULY 1-5, 2026 — DC TLA# 53565
54th Annual World Open (Open through Under 1400 Sections)
See Grand Prix or *chessevents.us.*

JULY 17-19, 2026 — PA TLA# 55352
27th annual Pittsburgh Open
See Grand Prix or *chessevents.us.*

JULY 25-29, 2026 — MD TLA# 54236
13th Annual Washington International
See Grand Prix.

AUGUST 21-23, 2026 — IN TLA# 55946
21st annual Indianapolis Open
See Grand Prix or *chessevents.us.*

NOVEMBER 13-15, 2026 — MO TLA# 55381
Thanksgiving Open 2026
See Grand Prix.

OKLAHOMA

NOVEMBER 13-15, 2026 — MO TLA# 55381
Thanksgiving Open 2026
See Grand Prix.

OREGON

JUNE 10-14, 2026 — NV TLA# 52540
2026 National Open
See Nationals.

JULY 3-5, 2026 — CA-N TLA# 55950
28th Annual Sacramento Chess Championship
See Grand Prix.

SEPTEMBER 12-13, 2026 — CA-N TLA# 55953
Sacramento Chess Club Weekend Swiss #26
See Grand Prix.

SEPTEMBER 12-13, 2026 — CA-N TLA# 55952
2026 Sacramento Senior Championship
See Grand Prix.

NOVEMBER 13-15, 2026 — MO TLA# 55381
Thanksgiving Open 2026
See Grand Prix.

PENNSYLVANIA

JUNE 5-7, 2026 — OH TLA# 55596
19th Continental Chess Cleveland Open
See Grand Prix or *chessevents.us.*

JUNE 25-29, 2026 — DC TLA# 53620
4th annual DC International (in cooperation with the DC Chess Association)
See Grand Prix or *chessevents.us.*

JUNE 26-28, 2026 — DC TLA# 53577
54th Annual World Open, Under 1200 And Under 1000 Sections
See District of Columbia or *chessevents.us.*

JUNE 29-30, 2026 — DC TLA# 55310
15th annual World Open Women's Championship
See Grand Prix or *chessevents.us.*

JULY 1-5, 2026 — DC TLA# 53565
54th Annual World Open (Open through Under 1400 Sections)
See Grand Prix or *chessevents.us.*

JULY 10-12, 2026 — VA TLA# 56509
The 4th Annual DMV Open
See Grand Prix.

JULY 17-19, 2026 — PA TLA# 55352
27th annual Pittsburgh Open
See Grand Prix or *chessevents.us.*

JULY 25-29, 2026 — MD TLA# 54236
13th Annual Washington International
See Grand Prix.

JULY 31-AUG. 2, 2026 — NJ TLA# 56530
3rd Annual Benjamin Franklin Open
See Grand Prix.

AUGUST 1, 2026 — NJ TLA# 56531
3rd Annual Benjamin Franklin Scholastic Championship
See New Jersey.

AUGUST 7-9, 2026 — VA TLA# 56544
5th Annual Beltway Open
See Grand Prix.

AUGUST 21-23, 2026 — DC TLA# 55858
58th annual Atlantic Open
See Grand Prix or *chessevents.us.*

SEPTEMBER 4-7, 2026 — NY TLA# 55860
148th annual New York State Championship– America's oldest annual tournament!
See Grand Prix or *chessevents.us.*

NOVEMBER 13-15, 2026 — MO TLA# 55381
Thanksgiving Open 2026
See Grand Prix.

PUERTO RICO

NOVEMBER 13-15, 2026 — MO TLA# 55381
Thanksgiving Open 2026
See Grand Prix.

RHODE ISLAND

NOVEMBER 13-15, 2026 — MO TLA# 55381
Thanksgiving Open 2026
See Grand Prix.

SOUTH CAROLINA

NOVEMBER 13-15, 2026 — MO TLA# 55381
Thanksgiving Open 2026
See Grand Prix.

SOUTH DAKOTA

NOVEMBER 13-15, 2026 — MO TLA# 55381
Thanksgiving Open 2026
See Grand Prix.

TENNESSEE

JUNE 6, 2026 — TN TLA# 55943
2026 Rea Hayes: Chattanooga
See Grand Prix.

JULY 1-5, 2026 — DC TLA# 53565
54th Annual World Open (Open through Under 1400 Sections)
See Grand Prix or *chessevents.us.*

NOVEMBER 13-15, 2026 — MO TLA# 55381
Thanksgiving Open 2026
See Grand Prix.

TEXAS

JUNE 10-14, 2026 — NV TLA# 52540
2026 National Open
See Nationals.

JUNE 26-28, 2026 — DC TLA# 53577
54th Annual World Open, Under 1200 And Under 1000 Sections
See District of Columbia or *chessevents.us.*

JULY 1-5, 2026 — DC TLA# 53565
54th Annual World Open (Open through Under 1400 Sections)
See Grand Prix or *chessevents.us.*

JULY 25-29, 2026 — MD TLA# 54236
13th Annual Washington International
See Grand Prix.

NOVEMBER 13-15, 2026 — MO TLA# 55381
Thanksgiving Open 2026
See Grand Prix.

UTAH

JUNE 10-14, 2026 — NV TLA# 52540
2026 National Open
See Nationals.

JUNE 10-11, 2026 — NV TLA# 53257
2026 U.S. Women's Open
See Nationals.

JUNE 13, 2026 — NV TLA# 52998
Walter Browne Memorial National Open Blitz Championship
See Grand Prix.

NOVEMBER 13-15, 2026 — MO TLA# 55381
Thanksgiving Open 2026
See Grand Prix.

VERMONT

JUNE 19-21, 2026 — NY TLA# 54808
30th annual New York State Open and Senior Amateur
See Grand Prix or *chessevents.us.*

NOVEMBER 13-15, 2026 — MO TLA# 55381
Thanksgiving Open 2026
See Grand Prix.

VIRGINIA

JUNE 8, 2026 — VA TLA# 56708
Blundercheck's Chess Riot at Oozlefinch!
See Grand Prix.

JUNE 25, 2026 — DC TLA# 55312
World Open Game/50 Championship
See Grand Prix or *chessevents.us.*

JUNE 25-29, 2026 — DC TLA# 53620
4th annual DC International (in cooperation with the DC Chess Association)
See Grand Prix or *chessevents.us.*

JUNE 26-28, 2026 — DC TLA# 53577
54th Annual World Open, Under 1200 And Under 1000 Sections
See District of Columbia or *chessevents.us.*

JUNE 29-30, 2026 — DC TLA# 55308
18th annual World Open Under 13 Championship
See District of Columbia or *chessevents.us.*

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5th annual World Open Amateur Championship
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JUNE 29-30, 2026 — DC TLA# 55310
15th annual World Open Women's Championship
See Grand Prix or *chessevents.us.*

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JUNE 30, 2026 — DC TLA# 55313
13th annual World Open Action!
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JULY 1, 2026 — DC TLA# 55315
15th annual World Open Game/7 Blitz Championship
See Grand Prix or *chessevents.us.*

JULY 1-5, 2026 — DC TLA# 53565
54th Annual World Open (Open through Under 1400 Sections)
See Grand Prix or *chessevents.us.*

JULY 4, 2026 — DC TLA# 55318
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See Grand Prix or *chessevents.us.*

JULY 5, 2026 — DC TLA# 55320
37th Annual World Open Blitz Championship
See Grand Prix or *chessevents.us.*

JULY 11, 2026 — VA TLA# 56510
The 4th Annual DMV Open Scholastic Championship
Site: SpringHill Suites by Marriott Dulles Airport **Address:** 22595 Shaw Road, Sterling, VA 20166 **Overall Prize Fund:** n/a **GP Pts:** n/a **FIDE:** N **Accessible:** Y **Residency: N Org:** DMV Chess • *inpersonevents@dmvchess.com • dmvchess.com*

JULY 19, 2026 — VA TLA# 56511
2nd Annual Capital-Region Scholastic Championship
Site: Hampton Inn and Suites Dulles **Address:** 22700 Holiday Park Drive, Sterling, VA 20166 **Overall Prize Fund:** n/a **GP Pts:** n/a **FIDE:** N **Accessible:** Y **Residency: N Org:** DMV Chess • *inpersonevents@dmvchess.com • dmvchess.com*

JULY 19, 2026 — VA TLA# 56512
The Mid-Summer Action Tournament
Site: Hampton Inn and Suites Dulles **Address:** 22700 Holiday Park Drive, Sterling, VA 20166 **Overall Prize Fund:** n/a **GP Pts:** n/a **FIDE:** N **Accessible:** Y **Residency: N Org:** DMV Chess • *inpersonevents@dmvchess.com • dmvchess.com*

JULY 25, 2026 — VA TLA# 56548
DMV Summer Scholastic - Saturday
Site: SpringHill Suites by Marriott Dulles Airport **Address:** 22595 Shaw Road, Sterling, VA 20166 **Overall Prize Fund:** n/a **GP Pts:** n/a **FIDE:** N **Accessible:** Y **Residency: N Org:** DMV Chess • *inpersonevents@dmvchess.com • dmvchess.com*

JULY 25-26, 2026 — VA TLA# 56547
DMV Summer Open Game-45 Tournament
Site: SpringHill Suites by Marriott Dulles Airport **Address:** 22595 Shaw Road, Sterling, VA 20166 **Overall Prize Fund:** n/a **GP Pts:** n/a **FIDE:** N **Accessible:** Y **Residency: N Org:** DMV Chess • *inpersonevents@dmvchess.com • dmvchess.com*

JULY 26, 2026 — VA TLA# 56550
DMV Summer Scholastic - Sunday
Site: SpringHill Suites by Marriott Dulles Airport **Address:** 22595 Shaw Road, Sterling, VA 20166 **Overall Prize Fund:** n/a **GP Pts:** n/a **FIDE:** N **Accessible:** Y **Residency: N Org:** DMV Chess • *inpersonevents@dmvchess.com • dmvchess.com*

JULY 31-AUG. 2, 2026 — NJ TLA# 56530
3rd Annual Benjamin Franklin Open
See Grand Prix.

AUGUST 2, 2026 — MD TLA# 56528
Rockville Mid-Summer Action Tournament
See Maryland.

AUGUST 2, 2026 — MD TLA# 56529
The Montgomery County Scholastic Challenge
See Maryland.

AUGUST 7-9, 2026 — VA TLA# 56544
5th Annual Beltway Open
See Grand Prix.

AUGUST 8, 2026 — VA TLA# 56546
5th Annual Beltway Open Scholastic Championship
Site: Hampton Inn and Suites Dulles **Address:** 22700 Holiday Park Drive, Sterling, VA 20166 **Overall Prize Fund:** n/a **GP Pts:** n/a **FIDE:** N **Accessible:** Y **Residency: N Org:** DMV Chess • *inpersonevents@dmvchess.com • dmvchess.com*

AUGUST 14-16, 2026 — MD TLA# 56612
13th Annual Potomac Open
See Grand Prix.

AUGUST 21-23, 2026 — DC TLA# 55858
58th annual Atlantic Open
See Grand Prix or *chessevents.us.*

NOVEMBER 13-15, 2026 — MO TLA# 55381
Thanksgiving Open 2026
See Grand Prix.

WASHINGTON

JUNE 10-14, 2026 — NV TLA# 52540
2026 National Open
See Nationals.

JULY 3-5, 2026 — CA-N TLA# 55950
28th Annual Sacramento Chess Championship
See Grand Prix.

JULY 31-AUG. 2, 2026 — CA TLA# 55399
31st annual Pacific Coast Open
See Grand Prix or *chessevents.us.*

SEPTEMBER 12-13, 2026 — CA-N TLA# 55952
2026 Sacramento Senior Championship
See Grand Prix.

NOVEMBER 13-15, 2026 — MO TLA# 55381
Thanksgiving Open 2026
See Grand Prix.

WEST VIRGINIA

JULY 10-12, 2026 — VA TLA# 56509
The 4th Annual DMV Open
See Grand Prix.

JULY 19, 2026 — VA TLA# 56511
2nd Annual Capital-Region Scholastic Championship
See Virginia.

JULY 25-26, 2026 — VA TLA# 56547
DMV Summer Open Game-45 Tournament
See Virginia.

JULY 31-AUG. 2, 2026 — NJ TLA# 56530
3rd Annual Benjamin Franklin Open
See Grand Prix.

AUGUST 7-9, 2026 — VA TLA# 56544
5th Annual Beltway Open
See Grand Prix.

AUGUST 8, 2026 — VA TLA# 56546
5th Annual Beltway Open Scholastic Championship
See Virginia.

NOVEMBER 13-15, 2026 — MO TLA# 55381
Thanksgiving Open 2026
See Grand Prix.

WISCONSIN

JUNE 19-21, 2026 — IL TLA# 55511
2026 Chicago Summer Open
See Grand Prix.

JUNE 27-28, 2026 — WI TLA# 55807
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2026 Illinois Open
See Grand Prix.

NOVEMBER 13-15, 2026 — MO TLA# 55381
Thanksgiving Open 2026
See Grand Prix.

WYOMING

NOVEMBER 13-15, 2026 — MO TLA# 55381
Thanksgiving Open 2026
See Grand Prix

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PAGE 9 TACTICAL TESTS

TACTIC 1. Remove the guard: **16. ... Rxc1 17. Qxc1 Bxe2, White resigned.** Abdullaev – Mikhailovsky, *Chess.com*, 05.05.2026. **TACTIC 2.** **33. ... Ng4+ 34. Bxg4 Qg2 mate.** Pacher – Erdos, Hungarian Team Ch (7), 05.08.2026. **TACTIC 3.** **39. Kg1 Rxh3 40. Kg2** traps the rook. Putnam – Aradhya, *Chess.com*, 05.12.2026. **TACTIC 4.** Mate in two! **13. Nb4+ axb4 14. Bg2 mate.** Bok – Tancsa, Austrian Team Ch (7), 05.16.2026. **TACTIC 5.** **28. Qh8+** Oh no my queen! **28. ... Bxh8 29. Rxh8 mate.** Aravindh – Galperin, *Chess.com*, 05.12.2026. **TACTIC 6.** **39. Rc7! Rf5 40. c5+** Now Black has to give up material to avoid mate: **40. ... Rxc5 41. bxc5+ Ka5 42. Bxh7, Black resigned.** Fossheim – Krbacevic, Norwegian Club Team Ch (6), 05.16.2026. **TACTIC 7.** Black can win the queen with some precise preparatory moves: **33. ... Qg4+! 34. Kf1** 34. Kh1 Nh4 leads to a quick mate. **34. ... Qh3+ 35. Ke2 Nxd4+! 36. cxd4 Qxb3** and Black won in a few moves. Salemgareev – Sharon, *Chess.com*, 05.12.2026. **TACTIC 8.** **21. ... Qf6!** In the game, Black played 21. ... Rc3 and eventually won, though White was still hanging on after 22. Nh4. **22. Kg2 Rc3!** Only now! White has no good moves. Izafatava – Silwal, *Chess.com*, 05.07.2026 (analysis). **TACTIC 9.** White threatens a nasty discovered check. In the game, Black played 29. ... Qxf8 with an equal position, which White ended up winning. They could have turned the tables with **29. ... Qe7! 30. Rbd1 Ne8!** Winning the knight. Lacasa Diaz – Castells, Barcelona, 04.25.2026 (analysis). **TACTIC 10.** After **30. Qa2+ Kg7** White played 31. Nh3? with equality; Black later won. **31. Re2!** grabs the e-file and the e6-square: **31. ... Qd7** 31. ... Qxe2 32. Qf7+ Kh8 33. Qh7 mate; 31. ... hxg5 32. Rxe7+; 31. ... Qc7 32. Rxe8 Rxe8 33. Ne6+. **32. Ne6+ Rxe6 33. Rxe6** and White wins. Owezdurdiyeva – Salimova, Grand Prix Bucharest, 05.10.2026 (analysis). **TACTIC 11.** It's obvious once you see it: **22. ... Bh6!! 23. Bxd7** If 23. Bxh6 Qe1 mate; the game went 23. b8=Q Be3+ 24. Kf1 Rxb8, White resigned, and 23. f4 Bxf4 24. Bxd7 Nxd7 25. b8=Q is similar. **23. ... Nxd7** Not 23. ... Bxd2 24. Be6!. **24. b8=Q Be3+! 25. Bxe3 Qxe3+ 26. Kg3 Qe5+ 27. f4** 27. Kf2 Qe1 is mate. **27. ... Qe3+ 28. Kh2 Qxf4+** and Black is winning. Sieciechowicz – Kengurov, *Chess.com*, 05.12.2026 (analysis). **TACTIC 12.** Sometimes the best moves are quiet: **33. ... g5! 34. Nh5 Qg6!** White can't save both pieces. **35. Ng3 Qxd6, White resigned.** Pasti – Plat, Grand Prix PlusCity Rapid, Austria, 05.14.2026.

PAGE 17 CHESS TO ENJOY

PROBLEM 1. **29. ... Re3!.** Black wins after 30. Qh2 Rxe2! 31. Rxe2 Qd1+ or 30. Qf2 Rh3+! 31. Kg1 Rh1+! 32. Kxh1 Qxf2.

PROBLEM 2. Fastest is **38. ... Rc3+ 39 Kf2 Rc4!** (if *40 Nxa6 Rc2* and queens).

PROBLEM 3. **28. Qb4** threatened 29. Qxb7 mate as well as 29. Nh4, winning a piece. Black resigned after 28. … b5 29. Nh4 a5 30. Qxb5+.

PROBLEM 4. Fastest is **46. ... Qe7** (or *46. … b5+ 47. axb5 Qe7*). The game went **47. Rd1 Qb4+ 48. Kd3 Qxb3+ 49. Ke2 Rh2+ 50. Ke1 Rh1+ 51. Kf2 Qb2+ 52. Qe2 Rh2+, White resigned.**

PROBLEM 5. Fastest is **37. ... Bd3.** White resigned after 38. Rcc1 Rxb3! 39. axb3 a2 in view of 40. … Bb1 41. Rxb1 axb1=Q 42. Rxb1 c2 43. Rc1 Ba3.

PROBLEM 6. 19. Bxf5 is a good sacrifice but **19. Nb5! cxb5 20. Rc7** was faster, e.g. 20. … Qa6 21. Bxf5! exf5 22. Qxf5 Bc8 23. Rfc1 and mates.

PAGE 45 ABCS OF CHESS

PROBLEM 1. White mates in 2: **1. Re8+ Qxe8 2. Qxf6 mate.** **PROBLEM 2.** White mates in 2: **1. Qxb7+ Qxb7 2. Rc8 mate.** **PROBLEM 3.** White mates in 2: **1. Qg8+ Rxg8 2. Rxg8 mate**. **PROBLEM 4.** White mates in 2: **1. Bf6+ Ke8 2. Rc8 mate**. **PROBLEM 5.** White mates in 2: **1. Qf6+ Ke8 2. Ba4 mate.** **PROBLEM 6.** White mates in 2: **1. Qd6+ Ke8** (if *1. … Kc8*, then *2. Ba6 mate*) **2. Bg6 mate.**

PAGE 51 PRACTICAL TASKS

PROBLEM 1. **35. Bxb4! Qxb4 36. Qa3! Qxa3 37. bxa3.** White will win the d-pawn (Black's king is too far) and then create a passed a-pawn, with an easy win. **37. ... f6 38. Ke2 Ke7 39. Kd3 fxe5 40. fxe5 Kd7 41. g4 h6 42. Kxd4 Kc6 43. Kc4 Kb7 44. Kb5 Kc7 45. a5 bxa5 46. a4 Kb7 47. Kxa5 Kc6 48. Kb4 Kd5** Or 48. ... Kb6 49. a5+ Ka6 50. Kc5, **49. Kb5 Kxe5 50. a5** and Black soon resigned. Steiner – Gonzalez Valenzuela, Marcel Duchamp Cup, Montevideo, 2024. **PROBLEM 2.** **37. f6!** Setting up deadly threats on the eighth rank. The game continued **37. ... exf6** If 37. ... Qxh6 38. fxe7+ wins. **38. Rxf6 hxg4+ 39. Kg1** There's no good defense to the threat of Qe5-e8+ followed by bringing the rook to f8. After **39. ... Rh3 40. Qe8+ Kh7 41. Rf7** White went on to win easily. Izafatava – Posuniak, Polish 2nd League 2025. **PROBLEM 3.** White missed the win here! **22. Nf5** exploits the pin on the e-file and overloads the g7-pawn. After **22. ... Qf8 23. Nxh6+** White is a pawn up and still attacking. Papler – Kekic, HIT Open (5), Slovenia 2024 (analysis). **PROBLEM 4.** Objectively White is totally winning, but Black has one more gamble to try, and it worked very well! **21. ... Nxh7 22. Qxd4?** Missing the hidden point of Black's last move! White is totally winning after 22. Bxd4!. **22. ... Ng5!** White loses material, since his pieces are tied to protecting each other. Black was doing more than fine after **23. Qxe5 Nxf3+ 24. gxf3 Rxe5,** and the game eventually ended in a draw. Skettos – Swiatkowski, Isle of Wight Masters, Ryde, 2026. **PROBLEM 5.** **28. ... fxe2** In the game, Black let White off the hook with 28. ... Bd4+?? and White converted: 29. Kh2 Qg7 30. Rxf3 Rxf3 31. Bxf3 Ra7 32. e5 Bg1+ 33. Kg2 Rf7 34. Be4+ Kg8 35. Bd5 Be3 36. Qd8+, Black resigned. **29. hxg4** We suspect Black reached this position in her calculations and missed … **29. ... Rxf1+! 30. Nxf1 e1=Q!**, winning. Wites – Nguyen Doan, Polanica Zdroj, 2025 (analysis). **PROBLEM 6.** White's last move was 11. Qd1-e2, gumming up his pieces. All Black has to do is develop. **11. ... 0-0 12. Rb1 e5 13. h3 Be6** Simple chess. Black has already fulfilled all the goals of the opening, while White is still struggling to untangle. **14. b3 Rfd8 15. Qf3 Rac8 16. Bd2 Rc2 17. Bd3 Rxa2 18. Ne2 Bxf2+! 19. Kd1? Bxb3+ 20. Kc1 Rc8+ 21. Bc3 Be3+, White resigned.** What is particularly pleasing about this game is that Black did not have to find some brilliant combination or fantastic resource to win the game — simple, logical play was enough to seal the deal. O'Connell – O'Hanlon, Sligo Championship, 2024. **PROBLEM 7.** White's last move was 14. Bc1-a3?, which was the wrong structural decision. With 14. b5! his pawn structure would remain intact and he could continue his light-square strategy. Now Black transforms the structure: **14. ... axb4 15. Bxb4** and now the most accurate continuation would have been **15. ... c5! 16. Bd2 Ra3!** (*16. ... Ra7* is also good), and after **17. Bc1 Ra7 18. a4 b6** followed by ... Bc8-b7-c6 and ... Qd8-a8, White will be hard-pressed to defend his a-pawn. Agrasot – Saralegui, Marcel Duchamp Cup, Montevideo, 2024 (analysis). **PROBLEM 8.** **38. ... Qe5!** By far the clearest. Black is winning in the long run after 38. ... Qxa3 39. Bd5 Qh3 40. Qg1 Qf5!, but it's nowhere near as convincing. **39. Bd5 Ng4!** The idea! Now the white queen is overloaded. **40. Rd2** Black also wins after 40. Qxg4 Qxd4 because White runs out of checks after either 41. Qd7+ Kh6 42. Qh3+ Kg5 43. Qg2+ Kf6 or 41. ... Kf6 42. Qe6+ Kg5. **40. ... f3!** with unstoppable mate. Morales Quezada – Hernandez Bermudez, Monterrey, 2025. **PROBLEM 9.** **16. a5!** Cracks open Black's queenside. **16. ... cxb4** 16. ... bxa5 17. bxc5 dxc5 18. Rc1 shows another point of White's idea. **17. Bxb6** and now b4 is a goner, d6 is weak, and the c-file will be a big problem. White is positionally winning and converted well: **17. ... Bh3 18. Rxb4 Bxg2 19. Kxg2 Qd7 20. Rc4 Rfc8 21. Qb3 Rxc4 22. dxc4 Rb8 23. c5 Nc8 24. c6 Qe7 25. Qc4 Ra8 26. Rb1 f5 27. Bf2 Bh6 28. c7 exf4 29. Nxf4 Bxf4 30. gxf4 fxe4 31. Rb8 e3 32. Rxa8 Qd7 33. Qxa6 Qg4+ 34. Bg3 Kg7 35. Rxc8 Qf5 36. Rg8+ Kh6 37. c8=Q Qxd5+ 38. Kg1 Qd1+ 39. Qf1 e2 40. Qch3 mate.** Morriss – Kelbas, Sligo Open, 2026.

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