

BACK TO THE BOARD: ADVICE FROM NEMCOVA, NEWS FROM CHERRY BLOSSOM AND CHICAGO

CHESSLIFE



B0157EU ATTACKING 1... d5

by Kiril Georgiev

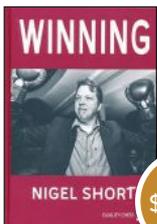


This book considers a gambit treatment of the Slav and the Semi-Slav. White offers the c4-pawn in order to get a space advantage and a long-term initiative. It also covers the Closed Catalan and the modern line 1.d4 d5 2.c4 e6 3.Nc3 Nf6 4.Nf3 Be7 5.g3 O-O 6.Bg2 dxc4 7.Ne5. The author's idea is to throw 1...d5 players off their comfort zone by dragging them into sharp unbalanced positions. If you're fed up with the all mainstream Slav/Meran theory out there, this book will offer you new refreshing approaches for both sides.

\$31.95

B0188QT WINNING

by Nigel Short

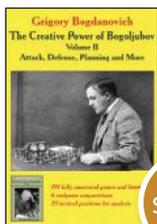


Grandmaster Nigel Short realised that every tournament win has a unique narrative and challenge. In this exceptional chess book, Short discusses eight of his foremost tournament wins, describing the drama with insightful game annotations and entertaining anecdotes. For those wanting to win in chess, this book is the place to start. He was one of the most successful chess players of the 1980s and 1990s and was still in the top 100 well into his 50s. The peak of his career came in 1993, when he challenged for the World Championship in a match against Garry Kasparov.

\$37.95

B0041ER THE CREATIVE POWER OF BOGOLJUBOV - VOL. 2

by Grigory Bogdanovich

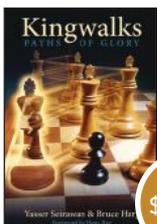


In the second part of his two-volume treatise on Bogoljubov's games, the author provides 191 fully annotated games and fragments as well as 6 endgame compositions and 23 tactical positions for the reader to analyze. As in the first volume, his analysis of Bogoljubov's games is split into instructive themes, making his treatise a fantastic textbook for learning a huge range of winning techniques. The present volume covers the topics of attack, defense, planning, Bogoljubov's contribution to opening theory, and endgame technique.

\$35.95

B0132RE KINGWALKS

by Seirawan & Harper



Marching your king across the board - at times right through or into enemy lines - may be both exhilarating and terrifying. Nothing may be quite as satisfying as a majestic kingwalk across the board which brings you glorious victory. And nothing as tragicomic as a needless journey ending in epic failure. Chessplayers are fascinated by kingwalks, perhaps because of their inherent contradiction and even implausibility. The most important - and vulnerable - chess piece does something other than trying to remain safe. For sheer entertainment as well as instructive value, the kingwalk is transcendent!

\$24.95

B0040ER EIGHT GOOD MEN

by Dorian Rogozenko

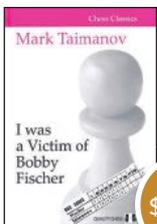


The 2020-2021 FIDE Candidates Tournament held in Ekaterinburg, starring super-grandmasters Ian Nepomniachtchi, Maxime Vachier-Lagrave, Anish Giri, Fabiano Caruana, Ding Liren, Alexander Grischuk, Kirill Alekseenko and Wang Hao, delivered an awesome display of fighting chess. The author provides a comprehensive move-by-move analysis of all 56 games together with an assembled Dream Team of super-class GM guest commentators and covers everything from opening strategy and novelties to middlegame battles and instructive endgames and practical observations. It is illustrated with a selection of official FIDE photographer Lennart Ootes's best shots from both halves of the event.

\$24.95

B0187QT I WAS A VICTIM OF BOBBY FISCHER

by Mark Taimanov

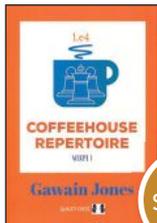


In 1971, Robert James Fischer defeated Mark Taimanov by the sensational score of 6-0 in Vancouver, but the match games were far more competitive and tension-filled than the final score would suggest. Twenty years later Taimanov put pen to paper, reflecting on the experience. Exactly 50 years after the match, this is the first English translation of Taimanov's original Russian text. With fascinating additional archive material and analytical contributions from some of the brightest young stars of the American chess scene today, I was a Victim of Bobby Fischer is the ultimate insight into one of the most famous matches in chess history.

\$34.95

B0189QT COFFEEHOUSE REPERTOIRE - VOL. 1

by Gawain Jones

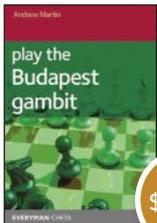


Coffeehouse Repertoire is a 1.e4 player's dream: an arsenal of ideas from a world-class grandmaster to surprise and confound your opponents, combining coffeehouse trickery with complete theoretical soundness. In Volume 1, the author shows how to put pressure on the Sicilian, Caro-Kann, Scandinavian and Alekhine's Defences, using lines which feature a potent combination of surprise value, objective soundness and practical effectiveness.

\$32.95

B0543EM PLAY THE BUDAPEST GAMBIT

by Andrew Martin

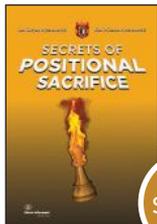


The Budapest Gambit 1 d4 Nf6 2 c4 e5 is an aggressive, dynamic approach for meeting 1 d4 and is a great line for throwing opponents onto their own resources. It is certainly double-edged as Black moves the same piece twice early on and also sacrifices a pawn. The author examines all key variations of the Budapest. There is an emphasis on typical middlegame structures and the important plans and maneuvers are demonstrated in numerous instructive games.

\$29.95

B033SHV SECRETS OF POSITIONAL SACRIFICE

by Nestorovic & Nestorovic



From the author - 64 deeply annotated instructive games covering the 5 areas of positional sacrifices with carefully selected exercises with solutions. Although the book mostly covers the more recent games, we could not help but include the beautiful creations of "old masters", that we consider classical today. When it comes to dividing the book into chapters, there were multiple, interesting possibilities, but we opted for sectioning it based on a subject of sacrifice. Hence, there are five chapters within the book: positional pawn sacrifice, exchange sacrifice, piece sacrifice, queen sacrifice and finally, the unavoidable section dedicated to the classics.

\$39.95

B0133RE LET'S PLAY CHESS

by Bruce Pandolfini



This is my attempt to lure you to the royal game. It's based on the very same lessons I have given to thousands of beginners. Their questions and problems have shaped it. Moreover, some of the best ideas in the book were actually suggested by new players! I have tried to be as direct as possible. To make your journey a smooth one, the fundamentals have been broken down into short, logical statements. Each idea is numbered, ordered, and clearly stated. For the most part, statements are linked in graded sequence with the easier ones preceding the harder. The format is unique and easy to follow. You should feel yourself learning step by step.

\$19.95

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MICHAEL BUSS

Al Lawrence has decided to give up (at least for now) his Faces column. See our note on page 7.



"I wonder if the Stafford Gambit works OTB..."

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Advice on preparing for the return of over-the-board play

BY WGM KATERINA NEMCOVA

12 CLUBS Chess Castle**Alive & Kicking**

Minnesota's "Chess Castle" reinvents itself as over-the-board play returns.

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12-year-old Abhimanyu Mishra is the youngest GM in history!

BY JOHN HARTMANN



WGM KATERINA NEMCOVA (Cover Story) is a chess coach and a Ph.D. candidate in communication at the University of Arizona. Born in the Czech Republic, Nemcova won multiple youth titles before coming to the U.S. and becoming a key member of American Olympiad and World Teams in international play. She is scheduled to return to over-the-board play at the

2021 U.S. Women's Championship.



DENNIS J. McGRATH (Chess Castle) is a retired Minneapolis Star Tribune reporter and editor. He began playing rated chess in his 40s, and coached his daughter Cailin's school team, the Glen Lake Knights, to the Minnesota K-6 state championship, where she tied for second place. McGrath is a member of the Chess Castle of Minnesota.



GM JESSE KRAAI (Cherry Blossom) came back to chess and fought to gain the grandmaster title at a late age after finishing his Ph.D. in philosophy. He then wrote the chess novel *Lisa*. He is currently working with IMs Kostya Kavutskiy and David Pruess at ChessDojo.



ALEX KING (FTX Crypto Cup) is a National Master and two-time Tennessee State Champion. He teaches chess in Memphis and plays piano in his spare time. For more on Alex, check out his appearance (Episode 97) on Ben Johnson's "Perpetual Chess Podcast."



FM KYRON GRIFFITH (Chicago Open) is a data scientist currently residing in San Francisco. He has played hundreds of games at the San Diego Chess Club, the Marshall Chess Club, and the Mechanics' Institute. He was recently awarded the 2020 Swindle of the Year by New in Chess.

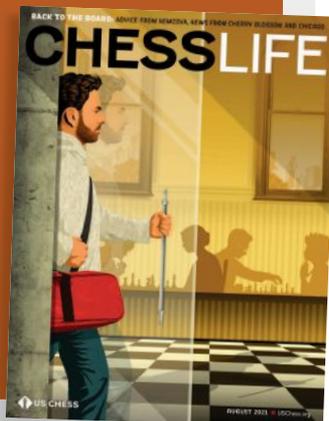


JOHN HARTMANN (Mishra) is the editor of *Chess Life* and *Chess Life Online*. He was named the 2020 Chess Journalist of the Year by the Chess Journalists of America. He is glad to play again at the 2021 U.S. Open.

ON THE COVER

While it's clear that COVID-19 will continue to be with us for some time to come, this month's cover illustration gives a glimpse into what those first steps back towards broad over-the-board play might look like. Check out the silhouettes in the background — see anyone you recognize?

ILLUSTRATION BY
TAYLOR GALLERY



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WONDERING WHERE TO FIND US?

IT USED TO BE THAT YOU COULD READ *CHESS LIFE* ONCE A month to keep up with the world of chess. Today's media landscape has changed, and in our 24-hour, always-on world, US Chess is doing its best to provide members news and information in the formats they prefer. Our internet and social media presence is growing with each passing day, so don't be left behind!



CHESS LIFE ONLINE (CLO) is our news page. Here you'll find the latest information about US Chess events, tournaments both large and small, and features like Wednesday Workouts and our award-winning series of podcasts. uschess.org/news

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USCHESS.ORG This is our front page, and the front door to the world of US Chess. Here you can find your way to your rating, to the latest news articles at CLO, to governance information, and to TLAs. And that's just the start. uschess.org



FACEBOOK All our chess news is shared here as it happens, along with more general updates about our organization and

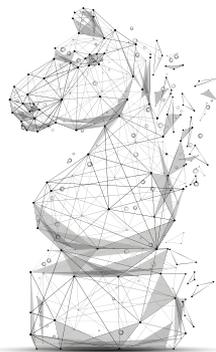
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LINKEDIN We're still building our LinkedIn page, and we'd love to



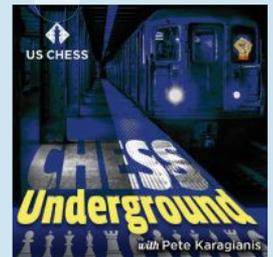
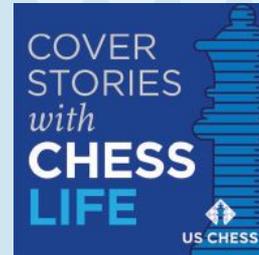
have you swing by and follow us. This is where we plan to share updates on our progress and development as a non-profit, as well as the accomplishments we're most proud of as we go along. linkedin.com/uschess



INSTAGRAM Follow US Chess on Instagram for photos and fun from US Chess events and personalities. instagram.com/us_chess



YOUTUBE Our YouTube presence is one of our new areas of emphasis. We're ramping up our content production with interviews with America's top players, and introducing new series like Jen Shahade's "Class is in Session" recordings and John Hartmann's "Leveling Up" instructive videos. youtube.com/US-ChessFederation



Is it Tuesday? Then it's podcast Tuesday.

Did you know that there's a new podcast every week from US Chess?

You can find links to each podcast at iTunes, Spotify, and Google Podcasts at new.uschess.org/podcasts

PODCASTS
FROM US CHESS

ILLUSTRATION: SHUTTERSTOCK

The Heart and Soul...



Beignets and blitz at the Morning Call

Way Down in New Orleans

Greetings from the city that care forgot. June 19th was a drizzly Saturday morning in New Orleans, but two young masters — Dex Webster (second from right) and Miles Tisserand (far right) — took on all comers at the Morning Call Coffee Stand as part of the US Chess Global Team effort to Checkmate Alzheimer's on The Longest Day. When the day was done, New Orleans area chess players had raised more than \$2000 for the Alzheimer's Association.

Leila D'Aquin
Via email

Beyond our Paygrades

Dear Sir or Madam:

GM Ian Nepomniachtchi's surname is spelled in his native Cyrillic Russian alphabet with the consonant *shch*. Wouldn't it make pronouncing his name less of a tongue twister if the name were romanized as *Nepomniashchi*? I suspect anyone who knows anything about Russian at all will know that *chtch* is a romanization of *shch*. Maybe there are few [US Chess] members who know nothing of the Russian

language. But names like Krushchev and Shcherbatsky, an aircraft designer, as well as probably many other names, romanize the consonant more phonetically.

James S. Morgan
Via email

John Hartmann responds:

Mr. Morgan raises an interesting point, but one that I fear is far beyond my paltry skills or powers. For whatever reason, the "powers that be" have gone with Nepomniachtchi as the preferred spelling. There are arguments for multiple phonetic interpretations; for my part, I'm just glad that my fingers remember how to type his name without me having to think too much.

A Pleasant Surprise

What a treat to see my friend Dave Sherman peering back from the page in the June "My Best Move" column! Every serious chess player in Washington, D.C., knows and likes Dave, and can vouch for his jaw-dropping skill at blitz.

I first met Dave back in 1984, once salvaging a draw as Black in a 50-move Petrov when we played each other in the

"50-in-2" ladder games that ran for years on Friday nights at the old Arlington (Virginia) Chess Club.

The club would attract 50 or more players each week, often followed with late night pizza at a local bar. Those club games spawned dozens of wonderful friendships. Sadly, that was before the internet killed off most face-to-face social chess playing.

And in later years, in the 1990s and early 2000s, Dave would amaze dozens of onlookers at the DuPont Circle outdoor chess tables in downtown Washington, where he would often play (and usually win) blitz games against Class A players — allowing five minutes for his opponents, while giving himself only 60 seconds on his own clock.

People like Dave are the heart and soul of American chess.

Bruce Radford
Via email

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

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ROUND 1

KAPREP	2734	1-0	1967	GILWOLFF
DDTRU	2403	1-1	2204	M_HASSEN
BIRCHSWINNERTONDYER	2306	0-1	2337	SHASHACFC
ZHENYA28	2018	1-0	2779	MAURICIOFLORES

RESULTS
1.5-2.5

ROUND 2

KAPREP	2734	0-0	2204	M_HASSEN
DDTRU	2403	0-0	1967	GILWOLFF
BIRCHSWINNERTONDYER	2306	0-0	2779	MAURICIOFLORES
ZHENYA28	2018	0-0	2337	SHASHACFC

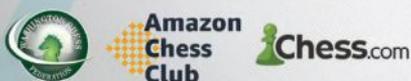
2-2

ROUND 3

KAPREP	2734	0-0	2337	SHASHACFC
DDTRU	2403	0-0	2779	MAURICIOFLORES
BIRCHSWINNERTONDYER	2306	0-0	1967	GILWOLFF
ZHENYA28	2018	0-0	2204	M_HASSEN

ROUND 4

KAPREP	2734	0-0	2779	MAURICIOFLORES
DDTRU	2403	0-0	2337	SHASHACFC
BIRCHSWINNERTONDYER	2306	0-0	2204	M_HASSEN
ZHENYA28	2018	0-0	1967	GILWOLFF



For individual results: use `!results` command in twitch chat or visit: app.playcea.com/games/chess

Building A Corporate Chess Community

The Corporate Esports Association adds chess to its lineup.

BY MARTY SCHNEIDER



THREE TIMES A YEAR, MORE THAN TWO HUNDRED companies from around the world compete in the Corporate Esports Championships, a team-based tournament organized by Corporate Esports Association (CEA). Employees represent their company to

compete against each other in various esports for bragging rights and charity: 100% of the tournament proceeds are donated to the organization of the winner's choice.

Founded in 2012, the CEA fosters engagement, retention, and workplace satisfaction and provides an outlet for co-workers to interact outside of an office context. Historically, CEA spring, summer, and fall championship tournaments were intended for "regular" esports

titles such as Starcraft, League of Legends, or Rocket League. However, with the growing popularity of chess in the corporate world, fostered by local leagues in Seattle, St. Louis, and New York City, chess was added to the esports mix in Spring 2021 and is on the forefront of becoming the most popular CEA game within just two seasons.

The inaugural Corporate Esports Chess Championship was held in partnership with the previously mentioned local corporate leagues in Seattle and New York City, as well as with the Washington Chess Federation. Three dozen teams competed over the course of a seven-week regular season (Team Swiss) and a five-week Top24 Playoff bracket that determined the winner by elimination. Teams' average ratings ranged from 2200+ (including the top teams from Amazon,

IMAGE COURTESY CEA

Facebook, and Microsoft) to early beginner levels, with teams averaging around 1000+.

Matches were conducted in a four-player Scheveningen format (every player on one team played every player on the opposing team), with a 7 minute + 2 second increment time control. Teams earning 8½ or more game points were awarded the match point for the round. In contrast to the recent FIDE World Corporate Chess Championship, all players on a team had to be full-time employees of the company they are playing for — so no Magnus Carlsen available for hire.

The captain of the Boeing chess team, Holly Campos, saw real value in competing with her colleagues. “For the Boeing teams, it was such a great experience for us and could not have happened at a better time,” she said. “In the past, we’ve had pocket Boeing chess groups around the U.S. doing in-person events. Starting this year, I’ve tried to create an official global Boeing chess club and unite everyone online. This tournament provided a great event that really helped bond us as a core team of chess players and led us to start weekly Wednesday meetings to go over the games.”

Jasper Zaportezza led his chess community at Microsoft. Before the CEA, he found it challenging to pull together the community without a league structure. “Before, we never really organized meetups, and it felt like a lot of the elite chess players didn’t want to play with lower-level players, while the beginner players were too intimidated to join. When I began to gather interest and explain that the tournament format would allow beginner players to meet up together and eventually play similar level players across companies, the sign-up sheet grew to over 50+ players.”

Amazon had the largest turnout, fielding 15 teams that comprised more than 700 employees. “Many Amazonians use the Amazon Chess Club (ACC) for casual play and networking opportunities within the

company,” said Florian Helff, president of the Amazon Chess Club. “Playing in such a team competition with people you never met before creates connections that players value not only during the tournament but also take back to their day-jobs.” The ACC not only participates in the CEA tournaments but also offers weekly and quarterly internal tournaments to further create those networking opportunities.

When the regular season ended, the expected teams from Amazon, Microsoft, and Facebook (led by FM Thomas Ulrich) led the field for the five-week elimination bracket.

*“For the Boeing teams, it was such a **great experience** for us and [the tournament] could not have happened at a better time...”*

Also making the cut were teams from corporations that included Coupang, Debevoise & Plimpton LLP (led by WIM Alisa Melekhina), Twitch, IBM, Garmin, and Boeing.

Amazon’s Team A, the Amazon Aardvarks, (GM Mauricio Flores, NM Sankalp Modwal, Shashaank Sivakumar, FM Matt Hassen, and WGM Shrook Wafa) was the tournament favorite after beating the top Facebook team in the semifinals. Microsoft’s Team A (GM Francesco Rambaldi, FM Andrey Terekhov, Martin Roetteler, and Filippos Stamos) was the other finalist. After the initial 16 games, the match was tied at 8-8, sending the match to tiebreaks. An additional four games were played with reduced time controls, with Microsoft pulling off the upset and taking home the title for the spring season.

CEA participants (L to R): GM Mauricio Flores, GM Francesco Rambaldi, and FM Andrey Terekhov.



FACES ACROSS THE BOARD

BY AL LAWRENCE



▶ **AL LAWRENCE HAS DECIDED TO** step away from “Faces.” Fear not; he’s not putting his pen down entirely, but simply paring back his monthly duties.

We at US Chess wanted to take this opportunity to thank Al for all his fine work over the years. He has introduced us to some fascinating chess faces around the country, and we look forward to having Al’s work continue to grace our pages in the years to come! ~ed.

Tournament proceeds generated \$6,000 that were donated to charities of the top three teams’ choices: Microsoft gave \$3,600 to Gavi the Vaccine Alliance, Amazon Aardvarks (second place) gave \$1,800 to Direct Relief, and Facebook - Knights on the Rim (third place) gave \$600 to Doctors Without Borders.

Given the successful first season of chess for the CEA, the CEA — in partnership with US Chess — is already planning to expand operations.

Starting on July 7, the CEA began running their summer season, in which players are matched not only based on their strength but also on their profession in order to maximize networking opportunities. This tournament is open to collegiate players who are looking to start their network of corporate contacts as well.

Two other dates of interest:

JULY 17: the first FREE Streamers’ Workshop with CEA and US Chess.

SEPTEMBER 4: The CEA Fall Corporate Esports Championships seasons begins, with registration closing one week before that.

In parallel, the CEA is also running four Collegiate Esport Championships seasons for the games of chess, League of Legends, Valorant, and Starcraft.

For more information about the CEA, visit www.cea.gg or catch one of the weekly chess broadcasts during the season at www.twitch.tv/cea_chess 📌

Choose Wisely

Playing against the person, the board, or the clock.

BY GM ANDY SOLTIS

A

N AGE-OLD QUESTION ASKS: Should you “play the person or the board?”

That is, should you choose your next move based solely on the position in front of you?

Or should you be influenced by who your opponent is, what their rating is, and how they have played so far in the game?

GM Svetozar Gligoric gave his answer when he titled his best-games collection *I Play Against the Pieces*. GM Viktor Korchnoi said this was “stupid.”

“I don’t play against pieces,” Korchnoi said. “I play against a person who has a mood.” He repeatedly used this information to score a fat plus-score against Gligoric over more than 50 years.

But there’s another way to phrase the question. Should you play according to the person, the board, or the clock?

GM Magnus Carlsen faced this question three years ago, as many American fans know with regret.

A WELL-TIMED OFFER

GM Fabiano Caruana
GM Magnus Carlsen
World Championship (12), New York,
12.26.2018



BLACK TO MOVE

He played **31. ... Ra8** and offered a draw. GM Fabiano Caruana accepted. Their 12 regularly scheduled match games ended in a tie, triggering a four-game rapid playoff.

Carlsen was roundly denounced by his great predecessors, former world champions and GMs Vladimir Kramnik and Garry Kasparov. “It’s just absurd,” Kramnik said. “Something must be wrong with Magnus.” Didn’t he understand that Black is better in that position, Kasparov wondered.

Of course, he did. But he also understood Caruana. “He is a very concrete player,” Carlsen said before the match. That’s GM-speak for saying someone relies more on calculation than intuition.

In a rapid game, the American challenger would not have enough time to out-calculate Carlsen as he had in the past. He would be a heavy underdog.

How heavy? In rapid chess, Caruana was outrated by some 100 rating points. That means Carlsen had about a 64 percent chance of winning in each game.

That adds up. Since there were four playoff games, the likelihood of a Carlsen victory in the mini-match was about 75 percent.

So which are better odds: Playing “the board” in the diagram position? Or being a 75 percent favorite in a playoff?

You know the answer if you remember how it ended. Carlsen won the first three games and retained his title.

Sports fans know that when the format of a competition changes, the skills needed to excel in it also change. As a result, athletes stay in their lanes, literally and figuratively. The “fastest man on earth” will win the 100 meters race at the Olympics. But he wouldn’t even enter the marathon. Those are two very different sports.

We don’t fully notice the differences in various kinds of chess because Carlsen holds the trifecta of titles, the world championships in “classical,” rapid, and blitz.

But there are different skills in each. Hikaru Nakamura has been the king of blitz chess for years. Even when he suffered an agonizing series of losses to Carlsen in classical games, he could win speed games like this.

QUEEN’S GAMBIT DECLINED (D38)

GM Hikaru Nakamura (2787)
GM Magnus Carlsen (2855)
GCT Rapid (5), Leuven, Belgium,
06.17.2016

1. d4 Nf6 2. c4 e6 3. Nf3 d5 4. Nc3 Bb4 5. Qa4+ Nc6 6. e3 O-O 7. Qc2 Re8 8. Bd2 e5 9. dxe5 Nxe5 10. cxd5 Nxf3+ 11. gxf3



11. ... Nxd5?? 12. Nxd5 Qxd5 13. Bxb4 Qxf3 14. Rg1 Bf5 15. Qe2 Qe4 16. Bc3 Bg6 17. Qc4, Black resigned.

The formats of chess competition go beyond the time control. They include the pairing system. GM Alexander Khalifman studied this shortly after he won the FIDE world championship.

“I came to the conclusion that Swiss System chess, round-robin chess, knockout chess, and team chess are different sports!” he said on the *Chess Café* website in 2004.

One move may be objectively best in a

QUIZ FOR AUGUST

▶ SINCE THERE IS A FRIDAY the 13th in this month, it seems like the right time to test your ability to find moves that can end a game in just 13 moves. If that sounds easier than our usual quizzes, you are right. Stronger players will want to see how quickly they can correctly solve all six positions. The task is to find the fastest winning line of play in games that ended in exactly 13 moves. This will usually mean the forced win of a decisive amount of material, such as a rook or minor piece.



PROBLEM 1

Jacob Flynn
James McDonnell



WHITE TO MOVE

PROBLEM 2

Jesus Arroyo Rodriguez
Celia Gillis Onieva



WHITE TO MOVE

PROBLEM 3

FM Danila Belousov
GM Alexander Galkin



BLACK TO MOVE

PROBLEM 4

Bernard Ferrandi
GM Alexandr Fier



BLACK TO MOVE

PROBLEM 5

GM Tigran L. Petrosian
Aram Grigoryan



WHITE TO MOVE

PROBLEM 6

Martin Fournier
Magnus Hjaltason



WHITE TO MOVE

round-robin tournament, he said, but second-best in a Swiss Open, where you need more wins. And it could be a poor move in a team event because of its effect on your teammates, Khailfman said. They may conclude you are going to lose, so they'll take unneeded risks in their own games.

There have been players who seemed to play the objectively best move regardless of whether they were playing blitz, in an Olympiad team championship, or a Candidates match. GM Bobby Fischer comes to mind.

But Fischer confessed he was influenced by another factor in one of his most famous games.

PIRC DEFENSE, AUSTRIAN ATTACK (B09)

GM Bobby Fischer
GM Pal Benko
US Championship (10), New York,
12.30.1963

1. e4 g6 2. d4 Bg7 3. Nc3 d6 4. f4 Nf6 5. Nf3 O-O 6. Bd3 Bg4 7. h3 Bxf3 8. Qxf3 Nc6 9. Be3 e5 10. dxe5 dxe5 11. f5 gxf5 12. Qxf5 Nd4



"If there had been two brilliancy prizes in this tournament I would have accepted the challenge," Fischer wrote in *Chess Life* after this game. He said he would have played 13. Qxe5 and sacrificed his queen, 13. ... Ng4 14. Qxg7+! Kxg7 15. hxg4.

His readers understood the reference to a brilliancy prize. Seven rounds earlier Fischer had crushed GM Robert Byrne with Black in 21 moves. Why, Fischer wondered, should he take risks against Benko when he already played the game that was certain to be called the best of the tournament?

But when he annotated this game in *My 60 Memorable Games*, Fischer said denied this had anything to do with his decision. "I

was tempted to accept the dare," he wrote, but 15. ... Nc6 "is hard to crack." That is, he played "the board."

Instead, he chose 13. Qf2 and finished the game with one of the prettiest moves of all time — 13. ... Ne8 14. O-O Nd6 15. Qg3 Kh8 16. Qg4 c6 17. Qh5 Qe8 18. Bxd4 exd4 19. Rf6!! Kg8 20. e5 h6 21. Ne2, Black resigned.

The more that chess evolves, the number of factors in choosing a move increase. Does that change the nature of chess itself?

Players with long memories may recall when, more than a decade ago, Vladimir Kramnik said anything less than 40 moves in two and a half hours wasn't really chess.

Today Kramnik is whistling a different tune. He suggested that we make a few "minor changes" to spiff up the game. For example, allow pawns to move backward or sideways. Or permit players to capture their own pieces. "This is simply an improvement on regular chess," Kramnik said. ♠

You can read archival copies of "Chess to Enjoy" on uschess.org. Click on "Chess Life Magazine," and then "Digital Archives."



Shankland Wins Prague Masters

In his first over-the-board event in 16 months, GM Sam Shankland returned to the 2700 club with a dominant tournament victory at the Prague Masters (June 13-20, 2021).

With his +3 score (5½/7), good for a performance rating of 2900, Shankland took top honors by a half-point over GM Jan-Krzysztof Duda, whom he defeated in Round 2. That win, exhibiting superior opening preparation and excellent technique, earned Shankland the GM Lubosh Kavalek Best Game Award.

SICILIAN NAJDORF (B90)

GM Sam Shankland (2691)

GM Jan-Krzysztof Duda (2729)

3rd Prague Masters (2), Prague, Czech Republic, 06.15.2021

1. e4 c5 2. Nf3 d6 3. d4 cxd4 4. Nxd4 Nf6 5. Nc3 a6 6. f3 e5 7. Nb3 Be6 8. Be3 Be7 9. Qd2 0-0 10. 0-0-0 Nbd7 11. g4 b5 12. g5 b4 13. Ne2 Ne8 14. f4 a5 15. f5 a4 16. fxe6

axb3 17. cxb3!

Shankland's move has supplanted the older 17. exf7+ as theory's top choice. Duda has experience here with White: 17. ... Rxf7 18. Kb1 bxc2+ 19. Qxc2 Bxg5 20. Bxg5 Qxg5 21. Ng3 Kh8 was seen in Duda - Wojtaszek, Germany 2017.

17. ... fxe6 18. Bh3

18. Kb1 Rxa2 is messy but equalish.

18. ... Nc7?

A move that scores terribly for Black, but perhaps because (in contrast to Stockfish) Leela thinks it playable, Duda gives it a whirl.

Well-known to theory is 18. ... Rxa2 19. Bxe6+ Kh8 20. Ng3 Nc7 21. Bc4 Qa8 22. Rhf1, which gave White a slight edge in Saric - Wojtaszek, Wijk aan Zee 2015.

19. Kb1! d5 20. exd5 exd5 21. Bg2 Ra5 22. a4 Kh8

The first new move of the game, but it doesn't overturn the evaluation. The white king is safe, while the black king is not, and the central pawns don't make up for that fact.

23. Rhe1 Ra6 24. h4 Rd6 25. Bg1 h6 26. Qxb4 d4 27. Nc1 Nd5 28. Qb5 Nf4 29. Bc6 hxg5 30. hxg5 Nb8 31. Be4 Nd7 32. g6! Rb6

White's point is that 32. ... Nxc6 can't be played due to 33. Bxd4 exd4 34. Qh5+ and Black must shed material to survive.

33. Qc4 Nxc6 34. Nd3 Nf4 35. Bc6 Bh4 36. Rxe5! Nxe5 37. Nxe5 Qf6 38. Bxd4 Rbb8 39. Nd7, Black resigned.

Speaking to Brian Jerauld exclusively for *Chess Life Online*, Shankland attributed his success to the analytical work he had done during the pandemic-enforced layoff. "I played pretty well [in Prague], I think. I don't think I played well enough [to justify a performance rating of] 2900, but I think that just came from some of the other guys playing worse than I would expect from them. Maybe... they weren't doing the same things as me and got rusty."

Dominguez Second in 34th Leon Masters



GM Leinier Dominguez was defeated by GM Boris Gelfand in the finals of the 34th Leon (Spain) Masters (June 30-July 4, 2021), held online at *Chess.com* for the second consecutive year due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The winner of last year's Masters, Dominguez had to defeat Women's World Champion GM Ju Wenjun in the first rapid semi-final to advance. There he met Gelfand, who overcame GM Jaime Santos to punch his ticket to the finals.

Despite this nifty win in the first rapid

game, Dominguez eventually fell to Gelfand in blitz tie-breaks.

SICILIAN DEFENSE, RICHTER-RAUZER VARIATION (B67)

GM Leinier Dominguez (2758)

GM Boris Gelfand (2675)

34th Leon GM (2.1), *Chess.com*,
07.04.2021

1. e4 c5 2. Nf3 d6 3. d4 cxd4 4. Nxd4 Nf6
5. Nc3 Nc6 6. Bg5 Bd7 7. Qd2 a6 8. 0-0-0
e6 9. Kb1 Nxd4 10. Qxd4 h6 11. Bc1 Rc8
12. f4 Qc7 13. Qe3 Bc6 14. Bd3 Be7 15.
Rhe1 b5 16. a3 Rb8 17. Qg3 Bf8 18. b3 a5
19. Bb2 b4 20. axb4 axb4



21. Nd5 Bxd5 22. exd5 Nxd5 23. Bg6 Nc3+
24. Bxc3 bxc3 25. Rxe6+ Be7 26. Rde1
0-0 27. Rxe7 Qa5 28. Bxf7+ Rxf7 29. Re8+
Rxe8 30. Rxe8+ Rf8 31. Re7 Rf7 32. Re8+
Rf8 33. Qe3 Rxe8 34. Qxe8+ Kh7 35. Qe4+
Kh8 36. Qc6 Qb4 37. Qc4 Qb6 38. Qxc3
Qg1+ 39. Kb2 Qxg2 40. h3 Qe4 41. Qc8+
Kh7 42. Qc4 Qe7 43. b4 d5 44. Qd4 Qb7
45. Qc5 Qf7 46. Qd4 Qb7 47. Qd3+ Kh8 48.
b5 d4 49. Qc4 Qb6 50. Qc6 Qa5 51. Kb3
Qa1 52. b6 Qa6 53. Qe8+ Kh7 54. Qe4+
Kh8 55. Qxd4 Qb5+ 56. Qb4 Qd5+ 57. Kb2
Qb7 58. Qc5 Qa6 59. c4 Qb7 60. Kb3 Qh1
61. Kb4 Qb1+ 62. Ka5 Qa1+ 63. Kb5 Qb1+
64. Ka6 Qa2+ 65. Kb7, Black resigned.

Guo Takes Edmondson Cup at National Open

15-year-old IM Arthur Guo had the best tournament result of his young career at the 2021 National Open (Las Vegas, June 16-20, 2021), tying for first place in the Open with a score of 7/9. With his superior tiebreaks he was the one to hoist the Edmondson Cup.

Guo shared top honors with four others: GMs Lazaro Bruzon Batista, Emilio Cordova, and Illia Nyzhnyk, along with IM Andrew Hong. Finishing a half-point behind them was a six-player score group of GM Benjamin



Gledura, IMs Nikolas Theodorou and Justin Wang, and FMs Joshua Posthuma, Aleksey Sorokin, and Sean Vibbert.

Chess Life will have full coverage of this tournament in our September issue; for now, we present a tasty attacking game from GM Melik Khachiyian.

SICILIAN DEFENSE (B40)

GM Melik Khachiyian (2481)

Nico Chasin (2276)

National Open (8), Las Vegas,
06.20.2021

1. e4 c5 2. Nf3 e6 3. Nc3 Nc6 4. Bb5 Qc7
5. 0-0 Nge7 6. d4 cxd4 7. Nxd4 a6 8. Nxc6
Nxc6 9. Bd3 Bc5 10. Kh1 b5 11. f4 d6 12. e5
d5 13. f5 b4 14. Na4 Bd4 15. Bf4 Bd7 16. a3
bxa3 17. Rxa3 Bxe5 18. Bxe5 Nxe5 19. Rc3
Qd6 20. Nc5 h5 21. fxe6 fxe6 22. Qe1 h4



White has a great advantage, but how should he make use of all his piece activity? 23. Qe3 should win cleanly, with both Nc5-b7 and Qe3-g5 in the air. But Khachiyian found a much more memorable solution.

23. Qxe5!!

Removing Black's one good defender.

23. ... Qxe5

Just about forced. Black will get mated after something like 23. ... Qe7 24. Bg6+ Kd8 25. Nb7, mate. Now Khachiyian's remaining pieces pour into the black position.

24. Bg6+ Kd8 25. Nb7+ Ke7 26. Rf7+ Ke8

27. Rcf3

Faced with the threat of 28. Rxc7 mate, Black has to take drastic steps to stay alive.

27. ... Qe1+ 28. Rf1 Rh6 29. Nd6+ Kd8 30. Rxe1 Kc7 31. Rxe6

This transposes into a better endgame for White. Even stronger was 31. Rxd7+ Kxd7 32. Nf7 when Black has to give back the Exchange, leaving White squarely in the driver's seat.

31. ... Kc6 32. Ree7 Rxc6 33. Rxd7 Rxd6

34. Rc7+ Kb6 35. Rxc7 Re8 36. h3 d4

Maybe going active with 36. ... Re2 would be an improvement.

37. Rc4 Re4 38. Kh2 a5 39. Rg5 Rc6?

It's hard to see why Chasin would go into an ending two pawns down. Now Khachiyian mops things up.

40. Rxc6+ Kxc6 41. Rxa5 Re2 42. Ra8 Kd5

43. Rd8+ Kc4 44. Rc8+ Kd5 45. b3 Re1 46.

c3 dxc3 47. Rxc3, Black resigned.

Philadelphia Calling...

The World Open (July 1-5, 2021) is one of the highlights of the summer calendar, drawing players to Philadelphia from around the globe. The World Open is preceded by two warmup events, the Philadelphia International and Open, both of which proved popular this year.

The Philadelphia International (June 26-30) drew 96 players across two sections. There was a three-way tie for first in the Premier section, with GMs Vladimir Belous and Hans Niemann sharing top honors with IM Andrew Hong. The Expert section was won by Saif Shawkat.

The Philadelphia Open (June 25-27) drew 257 players across five sections. The Major section was won by FM Arvind Jayaraman. Other winners included Aadit Bhatia and Avery Hood (U2100); Lucas Bernui (U1800); Anushka Ayyappan, Aaryan Mummidi, and Daniel Babakhan (U1500); and Adam Hinton (U1200).

Breaking: this year's World Open was won on tiebreaks by GM Hans Niemann in an Armageddon playoff against GM John Burke. We will have a full report next month. ♠

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

ALIVE & KICKING

Players do battle at a Wednesday Knighter at the new Chess Castle.



Minnesota's "Chess Castle" reinvents itself as over-the-board play returns.

TEXT AND PHOTOS BY **DENNIS J. McGRATH**

W

ALKING INTO THE CHESS CASTLE OF MINNESOTA FOR THE FIRST TIME SINCE IT REOPENED this year brings mixed emotions. The first reaction is that the Castle's new home — a small, featureless, windowless, antiseptic basement room — is a huge, emotional letdown.

It has none of the character of the previous site, where tables full of boards and pieces, chess posters, and tournament wallcharts declared unequivocally that you were in a thriving chess club.

The new site lacks that character. In fact, it has no character whatsoever. The Castle doesn't even have exclusive control over the space. It's an unadorned conference room, shared with other tenants, that could be used for essentially anything.

On the other hand, to step into the Castle again is proof positive that it has survived the pandemic — looking quite a bit worse from the ordeal, yes — but alive and kicking. And rebounding.

And what a joy it is to see a roomful of players once again hunched over boards, engaging in chess in its purest form, where a “mouse slip” is really a flat-out blunder.

Best of all is seeing all the new faces in the new Castle. The club’s regulars are trickling back slowly but surely as the pandemic recedes in Minnesota. But newcomers — many of them inspired by the Netflix series “The Queen’s Gambit” and the online chess boom — are fairly overrunning the club.

It’s not just an impression. It’s a quantifiable surge. Consider that in February through May 2019, before the pandemic, 26 unrated or provisionally-rated players competed in events at the old Castle. During the same months in 2021 at the new Castle, there were 36 players brand new to rated chess.

Tyler Short is one of them. The 23-year-old had played chess for a few years when he was a school kid, including a few rated scholastic tournaments, and then fell away from the game. But during the pandemic, he kept hearing about “The Queen’s Gambit,” including from his mom, and he discovered GM Hikaru Nakamura’s popular Twitch channel.

“When chess started becoming a big deal again, I thought: ‘Man, I really miss chess...’ The rekindling of my passion to play chess came about because of ‘The Queen’s Gambit’” and the attendant surge in interest in the game, he said.

Short showed up at the Chess Castle in May, played in seven rated events that month, and is sure he’s in it for the long haul. “It’s nice to meet people who have the same passion for chess that I rediscovered in myself,” he said.

“We’ve got a lot of people from ‘The Queen’s Gambit’ and people who’ve been playing online, including a lot of really good players who weren’t playing over the board,” said Castle President Dane Zagar. “We had a brand-new player come in who was [provisionally-rated]

and he beat one of our 2300 [rated] masters.”

This budding optimism stands in stark contrast to the turmoil surrounding the Chess Castle’s closure last year. That long, sad saga of the club’s demise in the face of the pandemic was detailed in an article in *Chess Life’s* January edition (“My Chess Club Succumbed to COVID-19”). In nutshell, the club was forced to shut down in March 2020 under a far-reaching state edict. It reopened in July and then closed again in September as players stayed away and the club’s financial reserves dwindled. Disagreement among the club’s board members over whether to soldier on in a wonderful but pricey space or to shut down, give up the lease, and eventually try to regroup elsewhere led to resignations and a sense of foreboding that the September shutdown and the abandonment of the lease could be a death knell, not just a hiatus.

Fortunately, on February 1, 2021, the Castle came back to life. The new location is in an office building near the Mall of America in the Minneapolis suburb of Bloomington. The Castle rents a tiny office — not much bigger than a cubicle, and just large enough to store some chess sets, clocks, and other tournament essentials. The lease gives the club access to a conference room that is shared by all tenants. The Castle reserves the space every Monday, Wednesday, and Thursday night for recurring tournaments, and as needed for weekend events.

Compared to the old Castle, the only good thing about the new site



Right: GMs Wesley So and Andrew Tang enjoy a bout of bughouse at the previous Chess Castle location. (Photo by Patrick Tang) Below: Dane Zagar explains clock settings to newcomer Nathaniel Pesklo.



is the rent. It's about \$1,400 a month cheaper than at the previous site in Minneapolis. As a result, the Castle's bank account is steadily being replenished as over-the-board play picks up.

But because it's a shared space, all the things that made the old Castle so inviting and such a delight to play in are absent now. The chess posters from around the world, the Minnesota Chess Hall of Fame plaques, the wallcharts from recent events, the bookcases sagging under the weight of tomes on openings, tactics, endgames, and strategy — they all remain in a storage locker.

Zagar acknowledges that the new space is “less of a home-style feel ... a more clinical atmosphere.”

Like other Castle regulars, Norm Myrin and Kevin Landman miss the old site.

“Nothing could actually beat that Northeast [Minneapolis] site. It was incomparable,” said Myrin, the tournament director for the Wednesday Knighter.

“It was a real club and had a club atmosphere,” Landman agreed. “When you had new people come in, they got that impression right away.”

Another disappointment is that because of crowd limits due to COVID-19 and the smaller space, the club's most popular event, the Thursday Knighter, has been diluted. Previously, the Thursday Knighter featured two sections that together drew 30 to 40 players most nights. Now, those sections have been separated into two nights — the Open on Wednesday and the Premier on Thursday.

When the club reopened in February, Landman held off returning. “I didn't come that first month. I figured I'd let them work things out. Then [by the beginning of March] I thought: ‘Okay, I can't wait any longer.’”

Landman is encouraged by all the new faces he's seeing. “It shows there's a newfound interest that could really help rejuvenate the situation,” he said of the newcomers.

The interest among newbies in over-the-board chess was evident the very first night that the Castle reopened. Five of the 12 players in that tournament were either unrated or provisionally-rated.

Nathaniel Pesklo was among the unrateds who were chomping at the bit for over-the-board chess. He became an active chess player in college, helping start a campus chess club and playing online. But he had never played in a rated tournament. During the pandemic he dove into online chess, including streaming his own games, but he was eager to play over the board.

Two weeks after the Castle reopened, Pesklo came through the door, bought a US Chess membership and an annual Castle membership, and played in his first rated tournament. Through May, he had played in 11 tournaments at the club.

Pesklo is in his 20s, just like his college friend Sawyer Mies, who also was unrated when he walked into the Castle this spring. On a recent Saturday, Pesklo and Mies, along with Short, were playing in a Castle Exerciser Quad, and each one spoke passionately about over-the-board play.

“I feel like playing against other people and the longer time controls gives you more time to think,” Mies said. “Over-the-board games I definitely enjoy more. And I like analyzing afterwards with my opponent.”

Pesklo said he is learning more from his OTB games than from online play. “When I'm playing online it's easy to get distracted. I'm streaming or I'll open another tab [on the browser]. I have a hard time maintaining laser focus.”

This new crop of young players transitioning from the internet to chess clubs offers hope for a long-lasting boost for OTB play.

As for the Castle's future, and whether it will someday unpack all its chess treasures that are still in storage, it's hard to say. For



Top: Perry Zentner takes on Jay Chaudhary. Middle: Sawyer Mies and Tyler Short analyze after a game. Bottom: Four Castle regulars — Steven Heinisch and Steven Juntunen foreground, Michael Heinisch and David Bleskacheck in the back — are back in action.

now, it's locked into a year-long lease at the new site. The room can be configured to handle up to 36 players, Zagar says, and larger conference rooms are available in the building for bigger events.

“Maybe we stay at this [site] for a while,” he said, adding that the decision will be up to the board and club members. “We've got a location that's not going to break the bank and allows us to save up funds.”

Meanwhile, though the new Castle site is a pale shadow of the previous club, the good news is that it is offering a robust schedule of rated events — three nights a week and virtually every weekend.

Castle regular David Bleskachek has played in every round of the Wednesday Knighter (through May) since the club reopened. As he awaited the pairings for a recent round, he listened as other players compared the new Castle site to the previous one.

Asked to weigh in, Bleskachek zeroed in on what mattered most. “I love being back at the board again,” he said. ♠

2021 US Chess Awards



GM Irina Krush



GM Wesley So



Lauren Goodkind



FM Alex Dunne



IA Ken Ballou



Allen Priest



Mike Nietman



THE US CHESS FEDERATION IS PLEASED TO ANNOUNCE THE 2021 ANNUAL AWARD RECIPIENTS. Congratulations to all of these individuals and organizations who are advancing our mission to “empower people, enrich lives, and enhance communities through chess.”

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Mike Nietman (WI)
IA Ken Ballou (MA) (posthumously)

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GM Wesley So (MN)

WOMAN PLAYER OF THE YEAR

GM Irina Krush (NY)

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U.S. Team in FIDE Olympiad for People with Disabilities: Coach Lior Lapid (CO)

KOLTANOWSKI GOLD

St. Louis Chess Club (MO)
John D. Rockefeller V (MD)

KOLTANOWSKI SILVER

David H. Raymond (FL)

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Nominating Committee:
Chair David Grimaud (SC)

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Toms River Chess Club (NJ)

CHESS COLLEGE OF THE YEAR

UC Berkeley (NCA)

ACCESSIBILITY AND SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES PERSON OF THE YEAR

Joan DuBois (TN)

TOURNAMENT DIRECTOR OF THE YEAR

Joseph Yun (OH) (posthumously)

TOURNAMENT DIRECTOR LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT

IA Franc Guadalupe (TX)

SCHOLASTIC SERVICE (INDIVIDUAL)

Danny Rohde (NY)

SCHOLASTIC SERVICE (ORGANIZATION)

Internet Chess Club (PA)

DAN HEISMAN AWARD FOR EXCELLENCE IN CHESS INSTRUCTION

Bruce Pandolfini (NY)

Seeing the Future at the 2021 Cherry Blossom

BY GM JESSE KRAAI



I CAME TO THE 2021 CHERRY BLOSSOM with three questions for the future of over-the-board chess. (1) Will there be more money? (2) Will chess be faster? (3) Will the level of play be higher? I also expected I would discover shifts in the culture of the game that I couldn't anticipate.

But before I go getting all philosophical about the future of our beloved game, let's talk about the tournament itself, and the fight for first place.

There were a surprising number of in-



QUESTIONS

ternational players who have been trapped in the U.S. during the lockdown, most of them affiliated with college programs. With nothing to do but pace in their cages and do tactics, these lions were hungry. And the winners all came from the same circus: IM Nikolas Theodorou, who plays for the Saint Louis University super team, shared first place with GMs Illia Nyzhnyk and John Burke, both of whom play for crosstown rival Webster University.

There are many players, of all levels, who spend an incredible amount of time studying openings — whether on *chessable.com* or with traditional books. But Theodorou has got all that covered. He just plays the





King's Indian for Black and White. It's a simple and effective lifestyle where you put yourself in a mate or die situation. With his first-place finish, Theodorou achieved his second GM norm.

Here is his game from Round 4:

KING'S INDIAN ATTACK (BY TRANSPOSITION) (C00)

IM Nikolas Theodorou (2554)

GM Carlos Antonio Hevia Alejano (2467)

8th Cherry Blossom Classic (4),

Dulles, VA, 05.29.2021

1. Nf3 d5 2. g3 e6 3. Bg2 Nf6 4. 0-0 Be7
5. d3 0-0 6. Nbd2 c5 7. e4 Nc6 8. Re1 Qc7
9. e5 Nd7 10. Qe2 b5 11. Nf1 Bb7 12. Bf4
Rfc8 13. h4 Qd8 14. N1h2 a5 15. h5 h6 16.
Qd2 a4



ANSWERED



The kind of situation that Theodorou seeks in all his games: He has to find a way to mate before his opponent crashes through on the queenside. What should he play?

17. a3

This is a mystical move with a long heritage. A move like 17. a3 is controversial because we tell our children not to move pawns on

Top left: A battle-weary GM Jesse Kraai. Center: FM Justin Paul meets Evan Park. Bottom left: WIM Svitlana Demchenko takes on WGM Jennifer Yu in Round 8. Bottom right: IM Nikolas Theodorou. Kraai and Theodorou photos by Paul Swaney, others by Dommalapati.

the weak side of the board. In his recent book, *Bobby Fischer and his World*, IM John Donaldson was proud to discover this same idea in an earlier game of Fischer's (Fischer - Myagmarsuren, 1967). I'm going to admit that the move is beyond me. But it's the kind of deep sauce that you can use again and again in a structural opening like the King's Indian. (See page 19 for the game. ~ed.)

17. ... b4 18. g4 bxa3 19. bxa3 Nf8?

Here, as in the above-mentioned Fischer game, Black doesn't seize the initiative quickly enough on the queenside. Better was 19.

... c4 and if 20. d4 c3!

20. g5 hxg5 21. Bxg5 Nh7 22. Bxe7 Nxe7 23. Nh4!

Working to prevent Black from bringing resources to his king.

23. ... Nc6 24. N2f3 Nd4 25. Nxd4?

This allows the black queen to come to the king's aid.

25. ... Qxh4 26. Nb5 Bc6 27. Nd6 Rc7 28. f4 Qxh5 29. Re3 Nf8?

Black had to try 29. ... f6! with counterplay.

This defensive resource was one Fischer spent gobs of time trying to stop!

30. Rf1!

Who let the dogs out?

30. ... Ng6 31. f5! exf5 32. Rh3 Qg4 33. Nxf5 Re8 34. Rg3 Qh5 35. Rg5 Qh7

The best move, but wow... talk about a square with no scope!

36. Qd1 Kf8 37. Rh5 Qg8 38. d4 Re6 39. Qd2 f6 40. Qa5 Qf7 41. Rh7 cxd4 42. Rxd7 Qxg7 43. Nxd7 Rce7 44. Nxe6+ Rxe6 45. Rxf6+, Black resigned.

Nyzhnyk also played to avoid theoretical battles. And with his tie for first, he is now within shouting distance of the "2700 club." (That's when they *have* to call you a Super-GM.) Here is his last round battle against the very strong GM Jianchao Zhou:

ENGLISH OPENING, SYMMETRICAL VARIATION (A30)

GM Illia Nyzhnyk (2679)
GM Jianchao Zhou (2615)
8th Cherry Blossom Classic (9),
Dulles, VA, 05.31.2021

1. c4 Nf6 2. Nf3 g3 3. b3 Bg7 4. Bb2 c5 5. g3 Nc6 6. Bg2 0-0 7. 0-0 Re8 8. d3 e5 9. Nc3 d6 10. a3

This is creeper chess. Is White threatening b3-b4? If he is, Black should probably play ... a5.

10. ... a6 11. Nd2 Rb8 12. b4! cxb4 13. axb4 Nxb4 14. Qb3 a5 15. Ba3 Be6 16. Bxb4 axb4 17. Qxb4 d5 18. cxd5 Nxd5 19. Nxd5 Bxd5 20. Bxd5 Qxd5 21. Ra5! Qd4 22. Qb3



Top: GM Illia Nyzhnyk continued his winning ways in Dulles. Bottom: GM Jianchou Zhou makes his move.





Above: Reigning U.S. Junior Champion GM John Burke tied for first place with a final score of 7/9.

These positions are a little hard to judge from a distance. But now that we have arrived, we can see that Black has big problems. Not only is the b-pawn weak, but White will be dancing all over the light squares. In round three Zhou beat me (see page 21 *~ed.*) with in a similar knight versus bishop late middlegame, where I also misjudged how dangerous the position would be for me.

22. ... Rec8 23. Ne4 Qd7 24. Rb5 h6 25. Rb1 Rc7 26. Nc5 Qc6 27. Nxb7 e4?



Humans aren't the only ones who misjudge positions. Leela fails to see the flaws of this move until you play it! So what's the problem?

28. Rb6!

The queen lacks a good square to run to.

28. ... Qc2

For example, if 28. ... Qd7 29. Nc5! hitting the queen and the e4-pawn. The computer gives 29. ... Rxb6 30. Qxb6 Rxc5 (if 30. ... Qe7 31. Nxe4) 31. Qxc5 exd3 32. exd3 Qxd3 as Black's best path but this is hard to play over-the-board. If instead 28. ... Qc3 29. Qxc3 Bxc3 30. dxe4 White is just up two pawns.

29. Nc5 Rxb6

Not 29. ... Qxb3? 30. Rxb8+ Qxb8 31. Rxb8+ Kh7 32. Nxe4.

30. Qxc2 Rxc5 31. Qd1 Rxb1 32. Qxb1 exd3 33. Qxd3

It's not trivial, especially not against a motivated grandmaster, but White has a decisive advantage.

33. ... Re5 34. f4 Re8 35. e4 Bf6 36. e5 Bg7 37. Kg2 h5 38. Kf3 Re6 39. Qd8+ Kh7 40. Ke4 Bh6 41. h3 Ra6 42. Qd7 Kg7 43. g4 hxg4 44. hxg4 Ra1 45. g5 Re1+ 46. Kf3 Bxg5 47. fxg5 Kg8 48. Qd8+ Kg7 49. Qd2 Rf1+ 50. Ke4 Rf5 51. Qd6 Kg8 52. Qf6, Black resigned.

John Burke belongs to a very talented generation of young American players, along with names like GMs Awonder Liang, Nicolas Checa, and Brandon Jacobsen. Right now some of these "young guns" are at a crossroads, and when I talk to them, they don't seem to have the confidence in their game to quit school and go for it. I'm not sure what John's plans are, but I do know that he is con-

sistently showing up and doing damage. Here is his round eight game against Brandon:

RUY LOPEZ, NEO MOLLER VARIATION (C78)

GM John Burke (2522)

GM Brandon Jacobson (2491)

8th Cherry Blossom Classic (8), Dulles, VA, 05.31.2021

1. e4 e5 2. Nf3 Nc6 3. Bb5 a6 4. Ba4 Nf6 5. 0-0 Bc5 6. c3 b5 7. Bb3 d6 8. Re1 h6 9. a4 Bb7 10. d4 Bb6 11. Be3 0-0 12. d5 Na7 13. axb5 Bxe3

A new move, and a good one. It seems like White's king will end up exposed.

Previously seen was the inferior 13. ... Nxb5 14. c4 Na7 15. Nfd2 Bxe3 16. Rxe3 c5 17. Bc2 Nc8 18. Nb3 Ne7 19. Na5 Bc8 20. Nd2 and White won in 27 moves in Matsenko - Matvienko, Moscow 2008.

14. bxa6 Bxf2+ 15. Kxf2 Bc8 16. c4 c6



17. c5!

BONUS GAME

KING'S INDIAN ATTACK (BY TRANSPOSITION) (C00)

GM Bobby Fischer

Lhamsuren Myagmarsuren

Interzonal (3), Sousse, 10.18.1967

1. e4 e6 2. d3 d5 3. Nd2 Nf6 4. g3 c5 5. Bg2 Nc6 6. Ngf3 Be7 7. 0-0 0-0 8. e5 Nd7 9. Re1 b5 10. Nf1 b4 11. h4 a5 12. Bf4 a4 13. a3 bxa3 14. bxa3 Na5 15. Ne3 Ba6 16. Bh3 d4 17. Nf1 Nb6 18. Ng5 Nd5 19. Bd2 Bxg5 20. Bxg5 Qd7 21. Qh5 Rfc8 22. Nd2 Nc3 23. Bf6 Qe8 24. Ne4 g6 25. Qg5 Nxe4 26. Rxe4 c4 27. h5 cxd3 28. Rh4 Ra7 29. Bg2 dxc2 30. Qh6 Qf8 31. Qxh7+, Black resigned.



Opposite page: Top left: Nico Chasin. Top right: GM Vladimir Belous. Center: WIM Rochelle Wu takes White against Joshua Altman. Bottom left: GM Magesh Panchanatham. Bottom right: WGM Jennifer Yu. This page: GM Jianchao Zhou vs. GM Jesse Kraai.

Burke blocks the black queen's entrance to the a7-g1 diagonal. On first glance I would take the black pieces, but John is about to build a house with petite tactics.

17. ... cxd5 18. Bxd5 Rb8 19. Nc3 Qc7!

Surprisingly Black is worse after 19. ... Rxb2+ 20. Kg1 Nxd5 21. Nxd5 Rb8 22. Qc2! and White's activity gives him all the chances.

20. Na4 dxc5 21. Qc1 Bxa6 22. Nxc5 Bb5 23. b4 Nc8 24. Bb3 Bc6 25. Qc3 Nd6

Things are pretty unclear after 25. ... Bxe4 26. Nxe5 Bd5.

26. Kg1 Rfe8 27. Ra6 Bb7 28. Ra5 Qe7 29. Nd2 Ba8 30. Qa1 Qd8 31. Rd1 Qc8 32. Nf3



32. ... Nb7?

A slip in a complex position. Black had two main improvements:

(a) 32. ... Ndx4 33. Ra7 (33. Nxe4 transposes to the 32. ... Nfx4 line) 33. ... Rf8 34. Nxe5 Nxc5 35. Bxf7+ Rxf7 36. Nxf7 is unclear. (b) 32. ... Nfx4 33. Nxe4 Nxe4 (33. ... Bxe4?! 34. Rxd6 Rxb4 35. Nd2 gives White an advantage) 34. Nxe5 Ng5! and let's call it a fragile equality.

33. Ra7!

Jacobson's pieces are a jumbled mess and now Burke just turns up the pressure, move by move.

33. ... Qc7 34. Kh1!

Stepping off the a7-g1 diagonal, and avoiding all the tactics.

34. ... Rbc8 35. Qa6 Ng4 36. Rf1 Nxc5 37. bxc5 Qxc5 38. Bxf7+ Kh8 39. Bxe8 Bxe4 40. Bd7 Rd8 41. Bxg4 Bd3 42. Qb7, Black resigned.

Now, back to our questions:

Was there more prize money than pre-lock-down? Nope.

Was the time control faster? Nope.

Was the level of player higher? Absolutely.

I don't have a specific number yet, and it will certainly take some time to measure how much the level of play has actually risen. But here is my anecdotal evidence, confirmed in my conversations with other titled players: it used to be that a 2000 level player would drop pieces if you gave them

I knew there would be some kind of shift in the culture of the game, but its specific shape surprised me.

enough opportunities. That no longer seems to be the case. And stronger tactics seems to be true down the line. I have students in the Chess.com 1500 range and they are dropping pieces far less frequently than they used to. Puzzle Rush and the competitive surge of the 2020 chess boom are having their effect. It's not the most welcoming environment for us old guys.

The 2021 Cherry Blossom definitely felt like a different planet. We were required to wear masks. A playing hall of masked aliens not only looked and felt weird, but also sucked out all of the usual comradery and foolishness that usually goes along with a tournament. The vibe was a-social. When you can't see your opponent's face it feels much like an online game, like you are playing an anonymous opponent. And there were no spectators allowed.

I knew there would be some kind of shift in the culture of the game, but its specific shape surprised me. This is what I noticed: even if we can soon stop wearing masks, I believe the trend will be away from the traditional social interactions of an over-the-board tournament and toward an online presentation.

BONUS GAME

QUEEN'S INDIAN DEFENSE (E12)

GM Jianchao Zhou (2615)

GM Jesse Kraai (2429)

8th Cherry Blossom Classic (3),

Dulles, VA, 05.28.2021

1. d4 Nf6 2. c4 e6 3. Nf3 b6 4. a3 d5 5. cxd5 exd5 6. Nc3 Bb7 7. Bg5 Be7 8. e3 0-0 9. Bd3 h6 10. Bf4 Nbd7 11. h3 Ne4 12. 0-0 c5 13. Qe2 cxd4 14. Nxd4 Bg5 15. Bxg5 Qxg5 16. Rac1 Ndc5 17. b4 Nxd3 18. Qxd3 a5 19. Rfd1 axb4 20. axb4 Rfd8 21. Qb5 Qf6 22. Nxe4 dxe4 23. Ra1 Rac8 24. Ra7 Bd5 25. Rd7 Bc4 26. Rxd8+ Qxd8 27. Qe5 Qe8 28. Qd6 Bd3 29. Qxb6 Qa4 30. Re1 g6 31. h4 h5 32. b5 Qb4 33. Ra1 Qb2 34. Qa5 Rb8 35. Qa7 Rxb5 36. Nxb5 Qxb5 37. Qa8+ Kg7 38. Qd8 Qe5 39. Ra8 Kh6 40. Qd4, Black resigned.



Tournament organizer Anand Dommalapati amazingly had not just the top boards, but *all the boards* of the Open section available for chess24.com and other sites to stream. And on those various websites, you had massive numbers of people following their favorite players. The chat rooms were talking even if we weren't.

The online world is usurping our older forms of face-to-face interaction, in the chess world and beyond. Whether and how we adjust remains to be seen. ♡

2021 CHERRY BLOSSOM CLASSIC AT A GLANCE

MAY 27-31 | DULLES, VIRGINIA

OPEN: 1st-3rd: GM John Burke, GM Illia Nyzhnyk, IM Nikolas Theodorou, 7/9; 4th-6th: GM Nicolas Checa, GM Brandon Jacobson, GM Titas Stremavicius, 6½/9. **U2300:** 1st-2nd: WFM Ellen Wang, Daniel Lowinger, 6/7. **U2000:** 1st: Kent Slate, 6½/7. **U1700:** 1st: Aleks Fetlyaev, 6½/7. **U1400:** 1st: Andrew Jing, 6/7. **BLITZ:** Open: GM Vladimir Belous, GM Joshua Ruiz Castillo, GM Nicolas Checa, 7/9; Amateur: Sritej Sai Sattaru, 7/8.

THE CRYPTO

Magnus Carlsen wins the FTX Crypto Cup, his second straight victory in the Meltwater Champions Chess Tour.

BY ALEX KING

Carlsen was magnanimous in victory as he spoke to Kaja Snare in a post-Armageddon interview.



BIG MONEY is coming to chess. The financial sector, long a career destination for chess players of all levels, has recently shown a more direct interest in chess sponsorship, especially in the ongoing Meltwater Champions Chess Tour (MCCT). The sponsors for this series of online tournaments, organized by GM Magnus Carlsen's company Play Magnus Group (PMG), include Swiss bank Julius Baer, Canadian precious-metal investment company Goldmoney, and FTX, a financial exchange headquartered in the Caribbean that specializes in the growing market of virtual cryptocurrency.

The FTX Crypto Cup, held from May 23-31, was the third and final "Major" tournament of the MCCT. It was won by Carlsen himself — his second straight first-place finish in a MCCT event. Like the other events in the series, the Crypto Cup was an online rapid tournament played on *chess24.com*, which also provided live coverage and commentary. The prize fund was a record-breaking \$220,000 (an increase from \$200,000 in previous MCCT "Majors"), plus an innovative twist: bonus prizes paid in the popular cryptocurrency bitcoin, one of FTX's main trading assets.

The 16-player starting lineup included the top-10 players in the

PHOTO: YOUTUBE

GAMBIT

world by rating, making it the strongest event in the MCCT yet, and one of the strongest online tournaments ever. American GMs Wesley So and Hikaru Nakamura were making their sixth MCCT appearances, as was GM Levon Aronian, who has announced plans to relocate from his native Armenia to St. Louis and represent the U.S. Other players to watch were top U.S. player GM Fabiano Caruana and GM Ian Nepomniachtchi, who this November will follow in Caruana's footsteps and face Carlsen in a match for the World Championship.

THE PRELIMS

The tournament began with a round-robin preliminary stage, with the top eight finishers qualifying for a subsequent knockout bracket as well as receiving points in the overall MCCT standings, which determine qualification for the Tour Finals in September. The surprise winner of the prelims was Caruana, who was not only making his first MCCT appearance but, he claimed, playing his first games of online chess in eight months. He finished a point ahead of the field with 10/15, delivering several wins in a calm and controlled positional style:

IN GOOD FORM

GM Fabiano Caruana (2820)
GM Anish Giri (2780)
 FTX Crypto Cup Prelim (10),
chess24.com, 05.24.2021



WHITE TO MOVE

27. Nb3 Qf6 28. Nc5

White's pieces are perfectly centralized and his d-pawn is dangerously mobile.

28. ... Rd8 29. Qe4!

Eyeing the back rank.

29. ... g6 30. g4!

Prophylaxis against the freeing ... Bd7-f5.

30. ... Kh7 31. Re7 Bc8 32. Rc7!

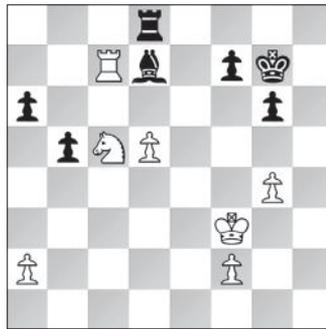
The black's rook is stuck defending the bishop, while his queen defends the f7-pawn.

32. ... Kg8 33. Kg2 h5 34. Qf3!

Trading off Black's queen, which was preventing d5-d6.

34. ... Kg7 35. Ne4 Qxf3+ 36. Kxf3 hxg4+

37. hxg4 Bd7 38. Nc5!



38. ... Bxg4+

Essentially forced. If the bishop retreats then it will be lost anyway: 38. ... Bc8 39. d6 followed by 40. d7.

39. Kxg4 Rxd5

Black would gladly trade all four of his pawns for White's remaining two, but there is no way for him to force this.

40. f4 Kh6

Opting for passive defense. The active alternative 40. ... Rd2 runs into 41. Ne6+! Kg8 (41. ... Kf6 42. Ng5! is the same.) 42. Rc8+ Kh7 43. Ng5+ Kg7 44. Rc7 Rxa2 45. Rxf7+ Kg8 46. Rb7 and White's f-pawn remains dangerous.

41. Kf3 f5 42. Ke3 Rd6 43. Ra7 Rc6 44. Kd4 Rd6+ 45. Ke5, Black resigned.

Giri gave up in view of 45. ... Rc6 46. Kd5 followed by 47. Rxa6.

Carlsen, the winner of the prelims in all five previous MCCT events, had to scramble just to finish in the top half, only guaranteeing his qualification for the knockout stage with a clutch last-round win against GM Teimour Radjabov. Of particular interest was his second-round encounter with Nepomniachtchi, the first tournament game between the two players since the Russian GM won the Candidates tournament in April to be-



come Carlsen's next World Championship challenger. Nepomniachtchi, who also just barely qualified for the knockout stage, blundered a tactic in the middlegame but fought hard to come back in the endgame:

GRIT

GM Magnus Carlsen (2847)
GM Ian Nepomniachtchi (2792)
FTX Crypto Cup Prelim (2),
chess24.com, 05.23.2021



Black to move

21. ... Qd5?

A blunder due to White's reply. Instead 21. ... Rf7! would be unclear, e.g. 22. Nd6+ Nxd6 23. exd6 Qf3! 24. Qxf3 Rxf3 25. Rxf3 with equality.

22. Nd6+!

A textbook shot.

22. ... Ke7

Necessary as 22. ... Nxd6 runs into 23. Qg6+! and the Black queen is hanging.

23. Nxc8+ Rxc8 24. Qxd5 exd5 25. Rxd5

White is up a clear Exchange and should win without too much trouble, but Nepomniachtchi puts up a staunch defense.

25. ... Ke6 26. Rd3 g5 27. a4 bxa4 28. Rg4 Rc6 29. Rxa4 h5 30. Rda3?

Better was 30. Rh3! destabilizing Black's kingside pawns.

30. ... g4!



Suddenly Black has kingside counterplay with ... h5-h4 and ... g4-g3.

31. Kc1 Kxe5 32. Rxa6 h4!

Black can afford to trade his rook in order to make further kingside progress.

33. Rxc6 dxc6 34. Kd1 h3 35. Ke2?!

A better try was 35. Ra8! but the win is still far from clear.

35. ... g3! 36. Kf3

After 36. hxg3 h2 37. Ra1 Nxf3+ the h-pawn will cost White his rook.

36. ... gxh2 37. Ra1 Nd4+ 38. Kg3 Nxc2

Black has eliminated enough of White's pawns that the draw is in sight.

39. Rc1 Nb4 40. Kxh2 Kd4 41. b3 c5 42. Kxh3 Nc6 43. Rc4+ Kd5 44. Kg2 Ne5 45. Rc1 c4 46. bxc4+ Nxc4 47. Rxc4 Kxc4, draw.

An impressive save by Nepomniachtchi.

THE QUARTERFINALS

After that shaky start, Carlsen faced another tough challenge in the knockout quarterfinals: Nakamura, who he had faced in the finals of the previous MCCT event (the New in Chess Classic in April-May). As in that match, both sets of four rapid (G/15 plus a 10-second increment) games were split 2-2. The first set was particularly bloody, with White winning every game, including this demolition by Carlsen in the second game:

GIUOCO PIANO (C54)

GM Magnus Carlsen (2847)
GM Hikaru Nakamura (2736)
FTX Crypto Cup KO (1.12),
chess24.com, 05.26.2021

1. e4 e5 2. Nf3 Nc6 3. Bc4 Bc5 4. 0-0 Nf6 5. d3 0-0 6. h3 h6 7. c3 d6 8. Re1 a5 9. d4 Bb6 10. Be3 exd4 11. cxd4 d5 12. exd5 Ne7 13. Nc3 Nxd5 14. Qd2 c6 15. Bxh6!

A dangerous idea, though objectively unclear.

15. ... gxh6 16. Qxh6 Bf5?

After this White's attack becomes decisive. Black had to play 16. ... Nh7! 17. Bd3 f5! followed by absorbing more pressure with ... Rf8-f6 or ... Qd8-f6.

17. Re5! Bg6 18. Rg5 Nh7 19. Rg4 Re8 20. Nxd5 cxd5 21. Bd3

The ratio of attackers to defenders on the kingside is not a good sign for Nakamura.

21. ... Nf8 22. Ne5 Re6 23. Bf5 Rd6 24. Nxf6

Carlsen simply clears out all the entire kingside, after which Black's king is completely bare.

24. ... fxe6 25. Bxe6 Rxe6 26. Rxe6+ Nxe6 27. Qxe6+ Kh8



28. Qh5+ Kg8 29. Qg4+ Kh7 30. Re1!

Calmly bringing the last piece into the attack.

Meltwater CHAMPIONS CHESS TOUR FTX Crypto Cup		STANDINGS AFTER PRELIMS Presented by Julius Bär	
1. Fabiano Caruana	10	9. Levon Aronian	8
2. Anish Giri	9	10. Shakhriyar Mamedyarov	7.5
3. Hikaru Nakamura	9	11. Alireza Firouzja	7
4. Maxime Vachier-Lagrave	9	12. Peter Svidler	7
5. Wesley So	9	13. Ding Liren	7
6. Magnus Carlsen	8.5	14. Daniil Dubov	6
7. Teimour Radjabov	8.5	15. Alexander Grischuk	5
8. Ian Nepomniachtchi	8	16. Alan Pichot	1.5

30. ... Rc8 31. Re6, Black resigned.

There is no good defense to White's numerous threats, e.g. 32. Rg6 or 32. Qf5+ with mate soon to follow.

Carlsen finally prevailed in the blitz (G/5+3) tiebreaks to win the match and advance to the semifinals. Radjabov eliminated GM Anish Giri in a match where all but one of the games were drawn. (Although Giri has long had a reputation for having a drawish style, lately Radjabov's high draw rate has also become the target of increased attention after he was listed in last place on GM David Smerdon's "Fighting Chess Index", which purports to measure the "combativeness" of the top 50 players in the world by rating.)

On the other side of the bracket, So, the only player to go undefeated in the prelims, made short work of GM Maxime Vachier-Lagrave, winning the first set 3-1 and securing the second set at 2-1 after surviving this last-ditch comeback effort in the second game:

BUCKLE UP

GM Maxime Vachier-Lagrave (2760)

GM Wesley So (2770)

FTX Crypto Cup KO (1.22),

chess24.com, 05.27.2021



WHITE TO MOVE

26. e4!?

A desperate attempt to generate kingside counterplay.

26. ... Nxb4?

Justifying White's idea. Instead the prophylactic 26. ... h6! would stop White's attack before it even starts.

27. Qg5! g6 28. Nf6+ Kg7 29. Qe5

White could force an immediate draw with 29. Nh5+!? Kg8 30. Nf6+ but given the match situation Vachier-Lagrave is obliged to try for more.

29. ... Ra8 30. Nxd5+ Kg8 31. cxb4 Qd8!



32. Nf6+ Kg7 33. Ne8+ Kf8 34. Nc7?

Again avoiding a repetition, but now White's attack evaporates and he is left with no compensation for the Exchange.

34. ... Rc8 35. Nb5 Ra6 36. d5 Kg8 37. Nc3 Qd6 38. Qd4 e5

Black has fully consolidated and now pivots to patiently converting his extra material.

39. Qd2 Qxb4 40. Rb1 Qc5 41. h4 Qd4 42. Qe1 h5 43. Kh2 Qc5 44. Qd2 Qd4 45. Qe1 Rca8 46. Nb5 Qc5 47. Nc3 Rb6 48. Rc1 Qe7 49. g3 Qc5 50. Nd1 Rc8 51. Nc3 Rb3 52. Rc2 Rcb8 53. Qd2 Qd4 54. Qe1 Rb2 55. Qc1 Rxc2 56. Qxc2 Rb3, White resigned.

Meanwhile Caruana's strong run ended at the hands of Nepomniachtchi, who eliminated him in blitz tiebreaks to leave So as the only American to reach the semifinals.

THE SEMIFINALS

Carlsen's opponent in the semifinals was Radjabov, and despite Carlsen drawing

first blood in the third game of first set, the resourceful Azeri GM bounced back in the next game to draw the first set 2-2. Starting over from scratch, Carlsen immediately retook the lead with a win in the first game of the second set, followed by holding two draws and putting Radjabov in a must-win situation in the fourth game:

OWEN'S DEFENSE (B00)

GM Magnus Carlsen (2847)

GM Teimour Radjabov (2765)

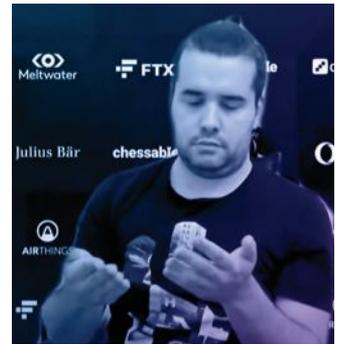
FTX Crypto Cup KO (2.24)

chess24.com, 05.29.2021

1. e4 b6 2. d4 Bb7 3. Bd3 e6 4. Nf3 d6 5. O-O Nd7 6. a4 a6 7. Re1 Ngf6 8. Nbd2 Be7 9. Nf1 O-O 10. Ng3 e5 11. c3 Re8 12. Bd2 Bf8 13. b4 g6 14. Qc1 Bg7 15. a5 b5 16. Bh6 Bh8 17. d5!

Although the game started as an Owen's Defense, it has morphed into something resembling the Breyer variation of the Ruy Lopez. With his last move Carlsen prevents





Black from playing ... e5xd4 to open the long diagonal for his h8–bishop.

17. ... c5 18. h3

Staying solid, but even stronger was 18. dxc6! e.p. Bxc6 19. c4!.

18. ... c4

Preventing the opening of the queenside, but now Black's position will remain passive — an unfortunate situation for a must-win game.

19. Bc2 Nf8 20. Qd2 Bc8 21. Nh2 Bg7 22. Rf1 Bxh6 23. Qxh6 Kh8 24. Qd2 N6d7 25. f4!

Opening up the position while almost all of Black's pieces are undeveloped or significantly restricted.

25. ... exf4 26. Rxf4 Ne5 27. Nf3 Nfd7 28. Rf1 Nxf3+ 29. R4xf3 Ne5 30. Rf6!

Carlsen allows his rook to be trapped in order to destroy Black's kingside.

30. ... Bf5?

It was better to continue passively with 30. ... Qe7

31. exf5 Qxf6 32. fxg6 Qh4 33. Nf5 Qh5 34. g7+!

Not allowing Black to fix his pawn structure with ... h7xg6.

34. ... Kg8 35. Nxd6 Red8 36. Nf5 f6 37. d6 Ra7 38. Qd5+ Rf7 39. Bd1!, Black resigned.

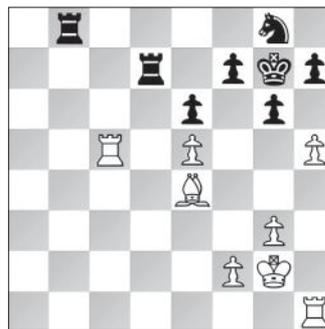
Radjabov resigned in view of further material losses after 39. ... Qg5 40. h4 Qc1 41. Bh5.

But the real story of the semifinals was the other matchup between So and Nepomniachtchi. Their first set started with three draws, and a draw in the fourth game looked likely as well until an incident truly without precedent in top-level chess: Nepomniachtchi's playing room, in a house in the Russian countryside, was suddenly invaded by a

swarm of mosquitoes. The timeline of events is tracked in the following notes:

THE MOSQUITO IMMORTAL

GM Ian Nepomniachtchi (2792)
GM Wesley So (2770)
FTX Crypto Cup KO (2.14),
chess24.com, 05.28.2021



WHITE TO MOVE

32. Rhc1!?
Slightly risky.

32. ... gxh5!
White will have to work a bit to retrieve this pawn.

33. Rh1

Here Nepomniachtchi could first be seen on camera swatting at a mosquito.

33. ... Rb4 34. Bc2 Kh6 35. Bd1 h4 36. Be2?!

36. Bc2 would prepare to trade off Black's knight if it comes to f5 or g6.

36. ... Ne7 37. Rxh4+ Rxh4 38. gxh4 Ng6!
Eyeing both the h4- and e5-pawns. By now Nepomniachtchi's mosquito-swatting had become more frantic, averaging once every five seconds.

39. Kg3 Rd4 40. Rc4 Rxc4 41. Bxc4 Nxe5 42. Bb3

Here Nepomniachtchi left his seat and was off-camera for about a minute, perhaps to close a window. But mosquitoes continued to appear intermittently, and Nepomniachtchi could also be seen scratching a few bites.

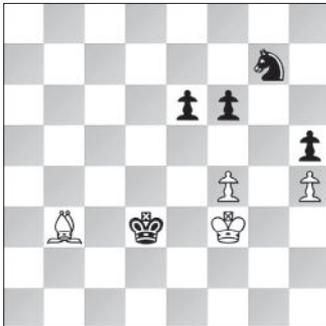
42. ... Kg7 43. f4 Nc6 44. Bc2 h6 45. Bb1 Ne7 46. Kg4 Nd5 47. Kg3 Kf8 48. Kg4? Nf6+?

Both players missed the immediate win 48. ... f5+! 49. Kf3 Nb4! trapping White's bishop, after which Black invades with his king.



PHOTOS: YOUTUBE (TOP), PLAY MAGNUS / CHESS24 (BOTTOM)

49. Kf3 Ke7 50. Bc2 Nh5 51. Kg4 Ng7 52. Bb1 f6 53. Ba2 Kd6 54. Kf3 h5 55. Kg3 Kc5 56. Bb3 Kd4 57. Kf3 Kd3



58. Ba4?

The last chance to hold was 58. Ba2! Nf5 59. Kf2 Ke4 60. Bxe6 Kxf4 and even after the h4-pawn falls the ending is a theoretical draw, since Black's pawns are disconnected and coordinate poorly with his knight.

58. ... Nf5 59. Bb5+ Kd4 60. Be8 Nxe4+ 61. Kg3

After 61. Kf2 Nf5 62. Bxe6 Ke4 Black's connected pawns are much more coordinated than in the previous note, and easily overpower the bishop.

61. ... Nf5+ 62. Kf3 Ng7

Solidifying Black's position. At this point Nepomniachtchi took the desperate measure of turning off his floor lamp, thinking it might be attracting the insects.

63. Bf7 Kd5 64. Bg6 f5!

The bishop is now trapped behind enemy lines.

65. Bf7 Kd6 66. Kg3 Ke7 67. Bg6 Kf6 68. Bh7

Here, realizing that his situation was hopeless, Nepomniachtchi turned his floor lamp back on after all.

68. ... Ne8!, White resigned.

The bishop is eliminated after 69. Bg8 Nc7! 70. Kh4 Kg7.

This bizarre episode, which Nepomniachtchi later compared to a "shamanic ritual," left him needing to win the second set in order to force tiebreaks, but as in the quarterfinals, So secured the second set early with 2-1. The matchup for the finals was determined: Carlsen versus So.

THE FINALS

Carlsen and So had already faced off in the finals of two previous MCCT events — the



Skilling Open in November and the Opera Euro Rapid in February — with So winning both times. The two players were also in first and second place in the overall MCCT standings, making this an exciting, but not-too-surprising matchup.

In both the first and second rapid sets, Carlsen took the lead by winning the first game, only to fumble and allow a comeback win by So. After the first set Carlsen revealed that he was feeling sick, and So also mentioned that he had been having trouble sleeping. Everything rested on the outcome of the tiebreaks, and here it turned out to be Carlsen who would need a comeback win after an awful blunder in the first blitz game:

AUTO-PILOT

GM Magnus Carlsen (2847)
GM Wesley So (2770)
FTX Crypto Cup KO (3.31),
chess24.com, 05.31.2021



WHITE TO MOVE

26. Nxc5 Nxc5 27. Qxc5??

Carlsen played this automatically, but immediately realized his mistake. Instead 27. Rc3! Nd7 28. Rc7! would safely win the piece back due to Black's vulnerable back rank.

27. ... Rc6!

White's back rank is weak as well!

28. Rbc3

28. Qxc6 is impossible due to 28. ... Qxc6 29. Rxc6 Ra1+.

28. ... Rxc5 29. Rxc5

Resignation would be reasonable here, but Carlsen continues playing out of shock and inertia.

29. ... h5 30. b5 Ra5 31. h3 g6 32. Rb1 Kg7 33. h4 Qb8 34. g3 Qxe5 35. Rcc1 Ra2 36. b6 Qf5 37. Rf1 Rxf2 38. b7 Rxf1+ 39. Rxf1 Qe5, White resigned.

After this devastating accident, Carlsen composed himself and showed his class, smoothly winning the second blitz game as Black:

SICILIAN DEFENSE, MOSCOW VARIATION (B51)

GM Wesley So (2770)
GM Magnus Carlsen (2847)
FTX Crypto Cup KO (3.32),
chess24.com, 05.31.2021

1. e4 c5 2. Nf3 d6 3. Bb5+ Nd7 4. 0-0 Ngf6 5. Re1 a6 6. Bf1 b6 7. c4 Bb7 8. Nc3 Ne5 9. Nxe5?!

This unbalancing move is just what Carlsen needs to create chances to outplay his opponent. White should have remained solid with something like 9. d3!?

9. ... dxe5 10. d3 e6 11. a3 Be7 12. b4 0-0 13. Rb1 Nd7 14. Be3 Qc7 15. Rb2 cxb4 16. axb4 a5 17. bxa5 bxa5 18. Nb5 Qd8 19. Qc2 Bc6 20. Ra1 h6 21. Na7 Qc7 22.



Nb5 Qc8 23. h3?!

White should keep Black occupied with 23. Bd2!? Bd8 24. Be3 preventing ... Nd7-c5.

23. ... Nc5 24. Rba2



24. ... a4!

Confidently taking control.

25. Qc3

After 25. Bxc5 Bxc5 26. Rxa4 Rxa4 27. Qxa4 f5! Black launches a dangerous kingside attack.

25. ... Nb3 26. Na7 Qd7 27. Nxc6 Qxc6 28. Rb1 Nd4 29. f4

Black has huge compensation for the pawn after 29. Bxd4 exd4 30. Qxd4 Bc5 31. Qc3 Qd7.

29. ... f6 30. Bxd4 exd4 31. Qc2 a3

Now Black simply has a crushing position with even material.

32. c5 Qxc5 33. Qxc5 Bxc5 34. Be2 Rfb8

35. Rc1 Rb2! 36. Bg4

Not 36. Rxb2 axb2 37. Rb1 Ra1, which forces promotion.

36. ... f5!, White resigned.

So threw in the towel as he simply has two pieces hanging.

This triggered the first and only Armageddon

tiebreak of the tournament, which was also the first Armageddon game in the finals of a MCCT event. So chose black, with four minutes (without increment) and draw odds against Magnus with five minutes and the White pieces. Afterward Carlsen commented that he didn't mind playing white in this situation, since "if neither of us are playing our best, then having the extra minute is nice." Indeed, he took control early, and, despite a nervy late-stage hiccup, drove the point home:

GIUOCO PIANO (C54)

GM Magnus Carlsen (2847)

GM Wesley So (2770)

FTX Crypto Cup KO (3.33), chess24.com, 05.31.2021

1. e4 e5 2. Nf3 Nc6 3. Bc4 Nf6 4. d3 Bc5 5. 0-0 h6 6. c3 0-0 7. b4 Bb6 8. a4 a6 9. Nbd2 d6 10. Re1 Ne7 11. d4 exd4 12. cxd4 d5?!

A typical operation to break up White's central majority, but here So overlooked Carlsen's strong reply:

13. e5!

Black cannot afford to allow 14. exf6 shattering his kingside structure, so he must retreat and allow White to maintain his strong center. Here So could be seen shaking his head in frustration and muttering to himself.

13. ... Nh5 14. Bf1 Nf4 15. Nb3 Neg6 16. a5!

White's space advantage will encompass the entire board.

Did you miss Alex King's coverage of the New in Chess Classic? Check out our July issue in the Chess Life "Digital Archives."

16. ... Ba7 17. Bxf4!

Carlsen is not worried about losing dark-square influence, since Black will soon be compelled to trade off his own dark-squared bishop.

17. ... Nxf4 18. Qd2 Ng6 19. Nc5!

So cannot leave this strong piece here forever, but capturing it will further open the queenside.

19. ... f6?

Making things worse by weakening the kingside light squares.

20. Bd3! f5 21. Bc2 Re8 22. g3 Bxc5 23. bxc5

Now the b7-pawn is a permanent target.

23. ... Be6 24. Rab1 Rb8 25. Re3 Ne7 26. Reb3 Qc8 27. Nh4 Rf8

Black's pieces are hopelessly passive, and White can improve his position at his leisure. In addition, Carlsen was still ahead thirty seconds on the clock.

28. Ng2 Bd7 29. h4 Ba4 30. R3b2 Bxc2 31. Qxc2?



Carlsen pre-moved this, but in fact it is a mistake that lets Black back in the game. Correct was 31. Rxc2! so that 31. ... f4 can be safely met with 32. Nxf4.

31. ... Nc6?

With only a minute left on the clock, So misses a chance to throw a wrench in the works.

He probably wasn't sure about 31. ... f4! 32. Nxf4? (Better is 32. gxf4 but 32. ... Qg4! still gives Black reasonable practical chances.) 32. ... Rxf4! 33. gxf4 but in fact this works quite well for Black: 33. ... Qg4+ 34. Kf1 Rf8! and White has completely lost control of the position.

32. Qc3 g5

Too little, too late. Now 32. ... f4 33. Nxf4 Rxf4 34. gxf4 Qg4+ can be met with 35. Qg3! repelling Black's attack.



33. hxg5 hxg5 34. f4!
Stifling Black's counterplay.

34. ... Kg7 35. Kf2 Rh8 36. fxd5 Rh2 37. Qf3 Nxd4 38. Qxd5 Nc6 39. e6 Qd8 40. Qd7+ Qxd7 41. exd7 Rd8 42. Rd2 Ne5 43. Rxb7 Kg6 44. Rxc7, Black resigned.

Carlsen displayed extreme, almost violent emotions after each tiebreak game — slamming the table with his hand after blundering in the first blitz game, then yelling and gesticulating in celebration after coming back to win the second blitz game, and again yelling and pumping his fist several

times after winning the final Armageddon game. In a post-tournament interview, he admitted that “nothing came easy,” but So himself insisted with his usual humility that Carlsen had played the best chess and was the deserved winner of the tournament.

Carlsen's victory in the FTX Crypto Cup comes on the heels of his win in the aforementioned New In Chess Classic, and further cements his position as leader of the MCCT standings, with 271 points. However, he no longer needs to rely on these standings, as winning this final “Major” event guarantees him a spot in the Tour Finals in November, which Radjabov and Giri

have also secured. His prize for first place was \$60,000 plus 0.6 bitcoin, worth about \$22,000 at the time. Carlsen described himself as “moderately interested” in bitcoin in general, and revealed that he already owned some bitcoin prior to receiving this bonus prize.

As runner-up, So received \$40,000 plus 0.4 bitcoin (worth a little under \$15,000 at the time). So is almost guaranteed to qualify for the Tour Finals by overall MCCT standings, especially since those standings are self-reinforcing, with half of the invites for each successive MCCT event going to the top eight players in the standings. Also very likely to qualify for the Finals from the MCCT standings is Nepomniachtchi, who beat Radjabov in the consolation match for third place to take home \$25,000 plus 0.25 bitcoin.

NEXT UP

The subsequent MCCT “Regular” event, the Goldmoney Asian Rapid, took place from June 26-July 4, and the Tour Finals will take place from September 25-October 3 at the San Francisco headquarters of Norwegian media company Meltwater, the main Tour sponsor. FTX has also announced that it will return as a sponsor of PMG's coverage of the World Championship match between Carlsen and Nepomniachtchi, which will take place from November 24-December 16 in Dubai. ♠

Meltwater CHAMPIONS CHESS TOUR FTX Crypto Cup					chess24				
FINALS RESULTS					FINALS RESULTS				
FINALS DAY 1					3RD PLACE DAY 1				
Wesley So	G1	G2	G3	G4	Teimour Radjabov	G1	G2	G3	G4
	0	½	1	½	½	½	½	½	½
Magnus Carlsen	1	½	0	½	½	½	½	½	½
	2					2			
FINALS DAY 2					3RD PLACE DAY 2				
Wesley So	G1	G2	G3	G4	Teimour Radjabov	G1	G2	G3	G4
	0	1	½	½	0	1	0	½	½
Magnus Carlsen	1	0	½	½	1	0	1	½	½
	2					2.5			
	B1	B2	A		B1	B2	A		
	1	0	0		-	-	-		
	0	1	1		-	-	-		
	1					2			

PHOTOS: YOUTUBE (TOP), PLAYMAGNUS / CHESS24 (BOTTOM)

Does it feel strange
to move pieces
instead of a mouse?
Read on.



BACK TO THE

Advice on preparing
for the return of
over-the-board play

BY **WGM KATERINA NEMCOVA**

OVER-THE-BOARD (OTB) CHESS TOURNAMENTS are back! I think I speak for everyone when I say that I'm thrilled to finally return to tournaments, to make moves with real pieces on a real chessboard, and to meet far-flung chess friends once more.

After the long layoff required by COVID-19 protocols, I couldn't wait to visit the 2021 Las Vegas International Chess Festival (June 16-20, 2021) and breathe in the chess atmosphere again. It was amazing to see all these people carrying their chess sets around the hotel, analyzing their games at Starbucks, and focusing intently on their games in the playing hall. There was a palpable sense of relief and joy among the players, and for me, the Festival marked the renewal of OTB chess in America.

What changed during the pandemic that will impact OTB tournaments? First, great numbers of new players have entered the



BOARD!

chess world due to “The Queen’s Gambit” and the Twitch chess boom. Online chess platforms like *lichess.org* and *Chess.com* reported skyrocketing membership numbers during the pandemic. Viewers flocked to chess content on YouTube and Twitch. The result is that post-COVID tournaments will now include two major groups of chess players: experienced US Chess tournament players and ambitious newcomers.

Whether you are new to OTB chess or returning to the board from the sanctuary of online play, it is valuable to consider some major differences between the online and physical chess environments.

Key differences between online and OTB chess

Online chess platforms simplify the chess experience for their users. While this is useful when learning chess, or comfortable when multitasking — who didn’t play chess while attending a Zoom call?! —

those simplifications are not available when competing during OTB chess events, and this lack of guardrails may bring some challenges.

First, online platforms allow you to drag your piece to explore your options. As long as you don’t submit (or sometimes confirm) your move, you can launch multiple exploratory missions with other pieces. In OTB chess, this is not possible. The touch-move rule requires players to make a move with the first piece they touch, so long as the move is legal.

Second, online platforms aid decision-making in a way that OTB does not. You received a check? Not a problem — your king is highlighted. You have no idea what your opponent just played because you were watching your favorite TV show? No worries — your opponent’s last move is highlighted. In contrast, you must pay attention to your opponent’s moves in OTB chess. Tournament boards don’t light up with each move played, and your opponents are not required to let

you know what move they made.

Third, online platforms automatically resolve disputes for you. Illegal moves are automatically disabled, including those that can be easily missed during OTB chess games. Some examples include incorrect *en passant* captures, moves that place one's king in check, and attempted castlings that either involve already-moved pieces or push a king through "checked squares." The minimal knowledge of rules needed for online play may result in an increased number of illegal moves over-the-board.

Online platforms also automatically end games when there is a checkmate, stalemate, or a three-move repetition. This is not the case in OTB chess — you need to recognize these instances and act accordingly. Some less scrupulous opponents might try to use your uncertainty about these terminal states to their advantage. Perhaps they may try to trick you into accepting a "checkmate" that is in fact anything but! As always, I recommend that players "trust but verify" and double-check your options before resigning a game.

Finally, online platforms don't require the use of clocks and notation. In OTB chess, you often need to play with longer time control than are standard online, and you must remember to manually hit the clock after each move. Players also need to learn using scoresheets for settling rules disputes and for future game review.

Most of these differences between online and OTB chess are minor; new and online-native players should adjust to them easily. Still, new tournament players should keep them in mind as they get ready for their first steps in rated play.

The human experience

Another major element of OTB play is what I call the "human experience." In an over-the-board tournament, a player is not paired

FOR FANS OF TWITCH STREAMERS

GOOD NEWS: What's better than emotes? Real-life expressions! Tournament players can't always hide their emotions, so if you like emotes, be on watch for all kinds of expressions at a tournament.

When people play a killer move or blunder a queen, the looks on their faces can be pretty revealing.

BAD NEWS: It's okay to observe a game for a few minutes, but don't camp out near someone else's game. It can be distracting or uncomfortable for the player(s) and it is frowned upon. And don't follow your favorite players away from the board. That's really creepy.

FACT-CHECK: Chess players may look serious during a chess game, but once that game is finished, they're the same cool people you see on streams or meet in chat. Be prepared to make new friends!



against "Lifelesspigeon03," a faceless, genderless avatar somewhere in the world. They're paired against a real, live, flesh-and-blood person who will physically oppose them for an entire game. At the board a player will be able to see their opponent's eye-movements, read their chess focus, and even sense their emotions. Practicing a poker face is crucial.

It's worth remembering that chess players strictly limit their speech in serious tournament play. Experienced chess players don't say "check" or "checkmate," and they also don't try to gently trick their opponents with phrases like, "Oh no, my queen!" (That's reserved for IM Eric Rosen's fans in the online world.) The only times it is appropriate to speak during a game are when offering a draw, when adjusting a piece on the board by saying "adjust," and when discussing minor rules issues with your opponent, such as an illegal move. For anything more serious, it is recommended to get an arbiter to help resolve the issue.

Players who favor OTB chess due to fear of mouse-slips or cheating in the online environment will welcome better control over their games. Super-GMs such as Magnus Carlsen and Boris Gelfand suffered mouse-slips when playing online, but in OTB play, it's regular, run-of-the-mill blunders that will keep you up nights.

It's much harder to use a computer engine in a physical tournament hall, and punishments are quite tough. While players (especially billionaires!) who admit to cheating online may have their accounts reinstated, sanctions for US Chess members who are found guilty of cheating can be more severe. Per US Chess rules, penalties "include, but are not limited to, suspension of membership, suspension or loss of Tournament Director or Certified Coach status or being permanently barred from future membership or participation in tournaments sanctioned by US Chess." People may still try to cheat, but it will be much harder in the physical world to hide one's misdeeds.

Moving from two to three dimensions

Effective training in any discipline requires practice in realistic scenarios. Compared to soldiers who train in extreme weather conditions, high-stress environments, and full battle gear to prepare themselves, chess players have it pretty easy. However, the fact remains that most of us spent the last year playing and training on two-dimensional (2D) online platforms, so our playing conditions were not fully reflective of what we'll encounter at a three-dimensional (3D) board.

Key differences between 2D and 3D include visualization, elements of solving tactics online and over-the-board, and the relaxed approach to chess that some experience online.

Chess vision

The way we see the board differs online and in-person. On a 2D screen, we see the chessboard from a specific angle, we lack spatial depth, and the pieces are always visible, never blocked by those in front of them.

For me, 3D chess provides a significantly better learning experience, allowing me to better comprehend chess information. When I need to solve puzzles and remember my opening preparation, I find it easier to do so when using a 3D board. This is also the reason I carry a chess set to every tournament I play.

Here the reader may wonder if this is merely personal preference at work, or if younger players, who cut their teeth on 2D screens, might feel otherwise. So I searched the academic literature, hoping to discover clear evidence regarding the difference of cognitive processing in two and three dimensions.

PHOTO: SLCC / LENNART OOTES (NEMCOVA)

KATERINA'S SEVEN TIPS FOR EFFECTIVE PREPARATION FOR OTB TOURNAMENTS

-1-

Make your online chess experience similar to the OTB game.

When playing online games, use the touch-move rule, diminish reliance on specific guard-rail features (e.g., highlighted legal move options), and consider disabling these features in your settings. It's also worth considering replacing fancy set themes and piece designs for traditional "Staunton" ones.

-2-

Train using a tournament size chess board.

You used to have one? Let's find it. You've never owned one? Well, it's time to make your first purchase! When training with a physical board and set, immerse yourself in the 3D environment. Chess skills and pattern recognition rely on knowledge of relationships among pieces. Focus on understanding a position in terms of how pieces cooperate and their potential.

-3-

Play longer controls online.

Compared to online tournaments that feature bullet and blitz time control, most OTB tournaments adopt much longer time controls. Get used to these long and challenging

battles. You may also wish to play the online game on a physical chessboard to increase proximity to your OTB experience.

-4-

Plan some practice OTB games to get used to the human experience.

Whether it's a friendly battle with a friend, or a game at your local club — get to it! We've all been isolated for so long that facing another human being can be a challenge in itself. Now imagine that you're paired in a tournament game with a wild seven-year old, a determined Beth Harmon, or a fearsome grandmother! If you simply do not have an option for a practice in-person game, one possible trick is to find a picture of a fictitious opponent (via Google, in *Chess Life*) and have it handy when you play online. This might trick your brain into thinking you're playing that fictitious opponent, helping prepare you for your OTB experience.

-5-

Expect inaccurate US Chess ratings.

Unrated and lower rated players may have improved tremendously over the past year, while their regular ratings remained unchanged. I see this among my students, some of whom are rated below 1000 in the US Chess system while clocking in at 1500+ online.



Katerina Nemcova,
Kazakhstan 2019

The inverse may also be true: while some players will be underrated, there are also those players whose strength may have slipped. You should always treat every opponent as dangerous, but be extra aware in those first games back at the board!

-6-

Expect better performance compared to your online games.

Being in the tournament hall can provide a heightened sense of seriousness or importance, causing players to be more focused on their performances. Even more, having a group of serious players in one place can create a collectively unique and motivating environment — a kind of positive peer pressure — that pushes players to do their best. Your performance may also benefit from fewer distractions compared to your home setting; i.e. no kids running around and no multitasking! Finally, some people derive more enjoyment from playing with

actual chess pieces. Even if you are not an old-fashioned player like me, you may enjoy manually capturing your opponent's pieces or simply pushing your pieces around the board.

-7-

Look forward to it!

No matter the results of your first (or first post-COVID) tournament, you're going to have a blast. Chess tournaments are amazing events where you can meet friends both new and old, cognitively challenge yourself, travel, have new experiences, and simply soak in a communal love for the game.

I hope these tips were helpful in preparing you for the return of over-the-board play, and I hope you enjoy becoming part of this wonderful, quirky, vibrant chess community. Be kind to yourself and to others — we're all taking steps back into a post-COVID world together — and remember that, as leadership expert and author Robin Sharma says, "All change is hard at first, messy in the middle and gorgeous at the end." You are going to do great!

I was surprised to discover that the research does not conclusively support my belief in the priority of 3D processing. An interesting study, *Young children's transfer of learning from a touchscreen device* (Huber et al., 2015), assessed children's (4-6 years old) ability to master a puzzle called "Tower of Hanoi" via a computer screen (2D) or its physical format (3D). The results did not favor 3D learning and the authors concluded that the nature of the display formats had no bearing on children's performance.

While children's learning may function differently from that of adults, other studies are similar in their findings. Put et al. (2014) tested professional soccer assistant referees and their accuracy in offside judgment in 3D and 2D video-simulations, and the researchers reported overall mixed or absent benefits of 3D information. In light of studies like these and others, I cannot definitively state that studying with a board and pieces will dramatically improve your game, but anecdotal evidence suggests that breaking out your set to practice before an OTB event can be beneficial. Perhaps this is an area where readers can report their experiences in a Letter to the Editor?

Solving tactics online

Some players may wonder why they should purchase tactic books when online platforms provide an unlimited amount of training material. Without denying the usefulness of tactics trainers, I personally believe there are benefits to solving puzzles from a book that cannot be replicated online.

Online platforms encourage a gambling approach to solving chess tactics. Players throw out the first move that comes to mind and move on. When a puzzle is solved incorrectly, they shrug and hope to do better on the next puzzle. This may lead to a short-term boost, but long-term, such laxity in solving is detrimental to one's chess. Players who wish to elevate their tactical skills need to fully hone their calculative skills, checking all possible moves and rejoinders in the game tree. You have to train yourself to calculate to the ends

FOR FANS OF "THE QUEEN'S GAMBIT"

GOOD NEWS: OTB chess is as cool as it looks in the TV show! You're going to feel the tension in the room. People really do stare at their opponent to detect their state of mind. And you will enjoy your glorious wins!

BAD NEWS: Do not expect your opponents to clap after you win a game. They may be willing to go and analyze the game afterwards — and you should ask to do so if they don't immediately offer — but don't expect any ego-boosting behavior.

FACT-CHECK: At some point, gentlemen, you're likely to play your best and still lose to a female chess player. Remember, it happened to Borgov, too, so don't act untoward.



I personally believe there are benefits to solving puzzles from a book...

of the key lines to make sure you find the solution and not just click your way move-by-move through the tactics trainer.

Websites like *Chess.com*, *chesstempo.com*, and *lichess.org* use algorithms to harvest tactics problems from games. These computer-generated puzzles differ from those in found in good tactics books. Instead of a human hand-picking relevant puzzles, the algorithm's heuristics select situations where one move provides a significant numeric advantage per the engine (usually Stockfish). This leads to situations where practical answers are deemed incorrect; for example, the mate-in-five is marked wrong when there is a mate-in-three available, or winning a rook is wrong because you can win a queen in a more complicated way. Well-written tactics books have clear, human answers.

Finally, I have noticed that some tactics found on training websites have strange or incomplete answers. Computer-generated solutions do not always test your calculation with the most challenging variations, and sometimes they end variations too early. It might be trivial for the computer to win a bishop and knight versus king ending, but can you do it? Here the "drills" feature on your favorite playing site might come in handy.

Many young players today have gotten strong by doing thousands of puzzles on tactics trainers, so there must be some value to it — who can argue with success? Online tactics trainers are useful for warming up and for learning basic patterns. But there are limits to this utility, and for more serious calculative work, good books are still key, especially if done with a set and board. While solving tactics from books may be time-consuming and expensive, I believe it is worth the effort if players wish to prepare well for OTB play.

A relaxed approach to chess practice

I don't know a single player who takes their online losses or rating as seriously as their offline losses or rating. When this is the case, it is easy to approach games differently — to gamble more or less, to play faster and rely on intuition, and to multitask when playing chess. Such laxity in concentration and lack of care may lead to bad habits.

It's easy to become increasingly lazy when calculating variations online, to lose focus on a longer time-control game, and to generally slide out of what I would call a "professional approach" to chess. This phenomenon can be separated into two main categories. *Psychological fidelity* involves the mental side of training, and it refers to how closely a training situation simulates the mental processes experienced in the field (here, rated chess). *Physical fidelity* involves a consideration of the extent to which training conditions, such as equipment, tasks, and surroundings, mirror those in performance situations.

Online platforms are obviously not evil. They provide many benefits to players in terms of available resources and opportunities to practice at any hour. However, they may also inculcate poor habits in players that could lead to frustrating results. Therefore, I think it is crucial to be mindful about such harms and to consciously work to avoid them. One way to do this is to mix in work on a physical chess board for effective training. ♠

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RE-OPENING CHICAGO

Swiercz Wins 2021 Chicago Open.

BY FM KYRON GRIFFITH

AS THE COUNTRY SLOWLY OPENS ITS DOORS AND sheds its masks, we are beginning to catch glimpses of life returning to normal. Over-the-board (OTB) chess had, by necessity, all but been replaced by online chess during the past year, but as experienced players know, playing online is just not the same thing. The 30th edition of the Chicago Open, held over Memori-

al Day weekend, represented the return of CCA events, a circuit of tournaments well-known by many tournament players.

While OTB events were sporadically running across the country during the COVID-19 pandemic, almost all were small-scale. Here 559 players made the trip to Wheeling, Illinois, competing in seven sections. If not for the spaced-out boards, the mandatory masks, the two person limits in the elevator (we took the stairs a lot), and the

lack of water in the playing hall, it would have felt like the Chicago Open of old.

One thing to watch as the return to OTB play picks up pace is the number of underrated players who have improved dramatically during lockdown. In Chicago, there were a number of players who gained 100, 200, even 300 rating points in the event! This effect may be even more prominent in the class sections. In the four-day schedule of the U1900 section, for example, no fewer than the top eight seeds all lost or drew their first round! One wonders if the Chicago Open specifically drew a crowd of players who had been training and were thirsty to return to the board.

This year's Open was won convincingly by the top seed, GM Dariusz Swiercz, with a score of 7/9. Swiercz, who currently resides in nearby Missouri, scored five wins and four draws against an impressive lineup of opponents, including four IMs and four GMs. While the field at the top was not as strong as in previous years, there was perhaps even more fighting chess in every round this year as players were excited to be back in action.

As is typical for these events, the standings were close until the final rounds. There was a three-way tie at the top of the leaderboard after seven rounds, with Swiercz, GM Olexandr Bortnyk, and IM Robby Kevlishvili all at 5½ points. Swiercz was the only one of the three to win his eighth-round game, and so a quick draw in the final round against GM Awonder Liang sealed the victory for him.

The tournament winner selected his round three win as his favorite game. As we will see, this is one of a few games in the Open section featuring a positional exchange sacrifice. Fighting chess was alive and well in the Windy City!

SICILIAN DEFENCE, KALASHNIKOV VARIATION (B32)

IM Sam Schmakel (2490)
GM Dariusz Swiercz (2733)
Chicago Open (3), 05.28.2021

1. e4 c5 2. Nf3 Nc6 3. d4 cxd4 4. Nxd4 e5 5. Nb5 d6 6. N1c3 a6 7. Na3 Be6 8. Nc4 Rb8 9. Be3!?

A bit of a counterintuitive move. White will typically maneuver the c4-knight to e3 and solidify control over the central light squares. Perhaps Schmakel had a specific idea in mind since natural moves for Black lead to an edge for White. Black is able to play ... b7-b5 and drive the white knight to the unfavorable d2-square, but at the same time the b5-pawn becomes a potential liability.

9. ... b5 10. Nd2 Nf6 11. a4! b4 12. Nd5 Nxd5 13. exd5 Bxd5 14. Bxa6

White has traded his e4-pawn for Black's a6-pawn, ensuring that the white a-pawn will always remain a threat.

14. ... Be7

Black cannot touch the g2-pawn as after 14. ... Bxg2 15. Rg1 Bd5 16. Nc4 Be6 17. Bb5 Black is busted.

15. Nb3 Be6 16. a5!?

A better version of the same idea is found after 16. Bb5 Qc7 17. Qf3 Rc8 18. a5 when Black remains under significant pressure.

16. ... 0-0 17. 0-0 d5 18. Bb6



18. ... Rxb6!

Black doesn't need to be asked twice. In one fell swoop, he eliminates the dangerous a-pawn, gains the bishop pair, and enjoys long term prospects in the center. And only at the cost of one point of material!

19. axb6 Qxb6 20. Be2 e4 21. Ra6 Qc7 22. Qa1 Bf6 23. Ra8 Nd4 24. Rxf8+ Kxf8 25. Nxd4 Bxd4 26. Qa8+ Ke7 27. Qa4 Qc5 28. Qb3 g6 29. Kh1 Bxf2 30. c3 d4 31. cxd4 Bxb3 32. dxc5 Bxc5 33. g4 Be6



The grandmaster has liquidated into an endgame with close to equal material, but by this point both players likely knew it was hopeless for White. Black will soon play ... f7-f5, and the f- and e-pawns will be impossible to stop.

34. Bc4 f5 35. Bxe6 Kxe6 36. gxf5+ gxf5 37. Kg2 Bd4 38. b3 Ke5 39. Kg3 Bc3 40. Rd1 f4+ 41. Kg2 Bd4 42. h3 h6 43. Rc1 Bc3 44. Rd1 h5 45. Rd8 f3+ 46. Kf2 Bd4+ 47. Ke1 e3 48. Re8+ Kf4, White resigned.

FM Justus Williams had a strong showing. He would have scored an IM norm, but he missed out on it due to a technicality (a lack of foreigners in the field). In round two, Williams upset GM Awonder Liang in style while playing on the board next to your author.

SICILIAN DEFENSE, MOSCOW VARIATION (B51)

GM Awonder Liang (2679)
FM Justus Williams (2439)
Chicago Open (2), 05.31.2021

1. e4 c5 2. Nf3 d6 3. Bb5+

The Moscow variation is one of dozens of venomous sidelines that Sicilian players must know like the back of their hand. Williams' choice has long been considered the most testing try for Black.

3. ... Nd7 4. d4 cxd4 5. Qxd4 e6!?

Quite a rare move. Typically Black will continue with 5. ... a6 and force White to commit with the bishop before deciding how to develop.

6. Bg5 Qc7 7. Nc3 a6 8. Bxd7+ Bxd7 9. 0-0-0 Rc8 10. Kb1 e5 11. Qd3 Be6 12. Nd2 h6 13. Bh4 b5

GM Awonder Liang finished tied for fifth place with 6/9 points.





Sean Hennessy is absolutely stoked to meet GM Hans Niemann!



Black has gotten his queenside play rolling quickly, but at the cost of his kingside development.

14. f4!?

White decides that he needs to strike while the black king is still a few moves away from castling.

14. ... exf4 15. Nd5 Bxd5 16. exd5 Be7 17. Rde1 Kf8!

Black's best move, and by a large margin. The position remains dynamically equal, but it is White who needs to prove compensation for the pawn.

There will not be time to castle since 17. ... Nf6 18. Bxf6 gxf6 is positional suicide.

18. Bf2 Bf6 19. g3 Ne7 20. Ne4 Nxd5 21. Nxf6 Nxf6 22. Bd4 Qc4 23. Qd2 f3 24. b3 Qc6 25. Qd3 d5



26. Rhf1?!

Natural, but incorrect. Now Black's knight comes to the e4-square and will tie down nearly all of White's pieces. The best move was eliminating the knight with 26. Bxf6.

26. ... Ne4 27. Rxf3 f6! 28. h4 Kf7 29. g4 Rhe8 30. Ref1 Re6

White is not only a pawn down, but also has been completely stymied by the black knight on e4, the dark square pawn blockade, and the pressure on the c2-square. Now White blunders material here, but the situation was already dire, and Williams finished the game off in fine style.

31. Rf5? Ng3 32. g5

Liang may have missed 32. Qxg3 Qxc2+ 33. Ka1 Re2! when he is reduced to spite checks before getting mated.

32. ... Nxf5 33. Qxf5 Re4 34. c3 Qe6 35. gxf6 Re1+ 36. Kb2 Rxf1 37. Qxf1 gxf6 38. Qf4 h5 39. Ka3 a5 40. Qf2 Rg8 41. b4 axb4+ 42. Kxb4 Qc6 43. Be5 Ra8, White resigned.

Winning a stacked tournament always requires a fair bit of luck, as any strong (and honest!) player will tell you. In Round 4, Swiercz escaped from a bleak position to take the full point in a topsy-turvy ending.

QUEEN'S GAMBIT DECLINED, SEMI-TARRASCH VARIATION (D41)

GM Dariusz Swiercz (2733)
GM Christopher Repka (2579)
Chicago Open (4), 05.29.2021

1. c4 Nf6 2. Nf3 e6 3. d4 d5 4. Nc3 c5 5. cxd5 Nxd5 6. e4 Nxc3 7. bxc3 cxd4 8. cxd4 Bb4+ 9. Bd2 Bxd2+ 10. Qxd2 0-0 11. Bc4 Nd7 12. 0-0 b6 13. Rfe1 Bb7 14. Rad1 Rc8 15. Bb3



This position has been reached well over 300 times according to my database. White has a slight edge due to the extra space and mobility of the central pawns. White will typically

PHOTOS: SEAN HENNESSY (NIEMANN), JOHN HARTMANN (SWIERCZ)

try to engineer a d4–d5 push to blow open the center of the board. It won't be easy, though — the black position is ultra-solid.

15. ... h6 16. Re3 Qf6 17. Qe2 Qf4 18. d5 Nc5 19. Nd4 Nxb3 20. axb3 Rfd8 21. g3 Qe5 22. f4 Qd6



23. f5!? e5

After the game continuation, the somewhat closed position tends to favor the knight over the bishop, although here the knight is slightly lacking in active outposts. White also secures himself protected passer on the d-file, although Black controls the c-file in exchange.

This essentially forces Repka to lock the center. Black is not advised to take either pawn: 23. ... exf5 24. Nxf5 leaves White with a tremendous knight, and 23. ... exd5? 24. e5! is completely winning for White.

24. Nf3 Rc7 25. g4 Rdc8 26. h4 Rc2 27. Rd2 Rc1+ 28. Kg2 f6 29. Qf2 Ba6 30. Ra2?! White begins drifting a bit. Correct is the

GM Dariusz Swiercz rode his luck to a fine tournament victory with a score of 7/9.



immediate 30. g5! and while the engine gives an equal evaluation, it seems that it is Black who is under pressure and needs to prove the draw.

30. ... Bb5 31. Re1 R1c3 32. Re3 Qb4 33. Rxc3 Rxc3 34. Rc2 Rxb3 35. Nd2 Rd3 36. g5



Swiercz is in dire straits, down a pawn with nothing to show for it. In fact the white king seems to be just as unsafe as the black one!

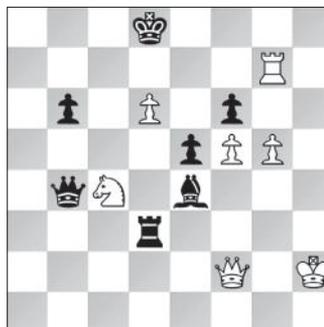
36. ... Ba4?

Better was 36. ... hxg5 37. hxg5 fxg5!, ensuring the king a safe haven on f6 in case of rook checks.

37. Rc8+ Kf7 38. Nc4 Ke7 39. d6+ Kd7 40. Rc7+ Kd8 41. Rxa7 Bc6? 42. Rxc7?

Now 42. Qa2, either here or on move 44, wins easily.

42. ... Bxe4+ 43. Kh2 hxg5 44. hxg5?, Black resigned.



After 44. hxg5? Black resigned (or maybe ran out of time). The computer gives a 0.00 evaluation, but Repka would have had to find an inhuman defense to hold the position: 44. ... Rd4 45. gxf6! (not 45. Qh4?? Rd2+ when mate can't be avoided) 45. ... Bd5!! and incredibly, the position is a draw by force after 46. Nxe5 Rd2 47. Rd7+ Ke8 (47. ... Kc8 48. Rc7+ Kb8?? 49. Nd7+ Ka8 50. Nxb6+ Kb8 51. Nd7+ Ka8 52. Ra7 mate) 48. Re7+ Kd8 (48. ... Kf8?? 49. Ng6+ Kg8 50. Rg7 mate).

Round 5 showcased a fighting game between veteran grandmaster, GM Alexander Shabalov, and America's newest grandmaster, GM Hans Niemann.

YOUTH TRIUMPHS

GM Alexander Shabalov (2631)

GM Hans Niemann (2641)

Chicago Open (5), 05.29.2021



WHITE TO MOVE

In this position, White has achieved a powerful knight on d5, but Black's pieces are well placed and the protected passer on d4 represents a constant threat.

45. Kd3?

The fair result here is a draw after something like 45. Nf6 Rd8 46. Nd5 Rd7 (and not 46. ... Rh8 47. Nc7 when White is breaking in).

45. ... Rxd5!

Niemann understands that this endgame presents no risk for him. White's rook is boxed out and only Black's pawns will be mobile. The resulting endgame is tough to defend for Shabalov, and even tougher considering the players are likely low on time by this point. The game ends rather quickly in Niemann's favor:

46. cxd5 Bxd5 47. Kc2 b5 48. Rf2 Kb6 49. Rh2 c4 50. axb5 Be4+ 51. Kc1 c3 52. Rf2 d3 53. Rxf7 d2+ 54. Kd1 Bd5, White resigned.

Caleb Denby, the well-known streamer from the Saint Louis Chess Club, was in sole first in the U2300 section going into the final round. At 5½/6, Denby was followed by three players with 5/6: Harry Le, Nicholas Ladan, and Max Zinski. Le and Ladan drew in the last round, which meant that Denby only needed a draw against Zinski to clinch clear first. He overachieved, defeating Zinski to win the U2300 title by a full point at 6½/7.

BACK TO THE BOARD IN CHICAGO

A Queen's Gambit-inspired return to the game

BY DANIEL LONA



RENEWING A LONG-FORGOTTEN PASSION IS RARE. But when you do, it's magical.

It had been 27 years since I regularly played chess. My father taught me the basics at age five. By age 12, I joined the chess club at my junior high school. That's where I fell in love with the game. Devouring dozens of chess books, I led my school to a regional championship.

Soon after, my competitive career ended. When I arrived at high school, the chess club was unorganized and non-competitive. With other pursuits demanding my time, and no outlets for chess, I stopped playing. That is, until many years later when a little Netflix series hit the screen.

Playing After Three Decades

While it may be cliché, watching "The Queen's Gambit" reignited my love for chess. The show reminded me of the game's beautiful complexity, the thrill of tournaments, and even the elegance of its regal pieces.

Getting back into chess was thrilling — and a happy culture shock. I said goodbye to lengthy board set-ups with *Modern Chess Openings*. Now I used Chessable to study opening lines in about one-tenth of the time. Discovering chess streamers like Levy Rozman or Anna Rudolf gave me a sense of connection that I never had. It became clear that chess in 2021 is far more dynamic than what I experienced as a kid, magnifying my love for it.

Preparing for an Adult Tournament Career

With my passion revived, I spent about three hours per day studying and playing. (Fortunately, I have a very supportive wife.) After a few months, I craved a mission beyond simply improving my online rating. For me, that meant the ultimate test: over-the-board tournaments.

I launched my amateur career by registering for the Chicago Open, playing in the U1500 section. My preparation was simple. I cycled between four categories: openings, tactics, strategy, and endgame. For openings, I studied courses like Bryan Tillis's *Master the French*

Defense and IM Yuriy Krykun's *The Dynamic Italian*. For strategy, I worked with books and a physical set to hone my board vision.

As for playing, the pandemic restricted me to only online games. But I followed chess instructor Dan Heisman's advice to play at least two slow games per week in a G/45+45 time control. It's also possible a few of my evenings devolved into binges of late-night blitz.

The Chicago Open

Despite five months of study, I arrived at the Chicago Open nervous and tense. Competing in an over-the-board tournament and playing online are two different beasts.

I suspected the competition would be more skilled, and it was. I also had to get acclimated longer time controls, using a physical board and pieces, and the effects of the noisy players around me. Despite these challenges, surrounding myself with hundreds of chess players gave me a sense of belonging I hadn't felt in years.

As for my performance? Well, let's think of it as a learning experience. The tough competition made me a better player and highlighted where I need to improve. This was only my first step on a long journey back.

Chess Community

Lofty rating goals aside, the Chicago Open cemented my desire to compete. I loved the thrill of live competition, high-caliber opponents, and a vibrant community. Indeed, my favorite part of the tournament was the post-game evaluations in the skittles room. The atmosphere radiated a collective love for chess as we debated, calculated, and looked for better moves from our games.

Maybe all of this is obvious to anyone who's competed. But for someone who'd been away from it for so long, the camaraderie was worth the price of admission alone.

Looking back, I never expected a passion from my teen years would return at age 40. Or that it would come back with such intensity. I'm just grateful it did. Bringing chess into my life again feels like coming home.

Access to the top boards remains limited even as the COVID-19 pandemic eases.



CARO-KANN DEFENSE, TWO KNIGHTS VARIATION (B11)

Max Zinski (2201)

Caleb Denby (2228)

Chicago Open u2300 (7), 05.31.2021

1. e4 c6 2. Nc3 d5 3. Nf3 Nf6 4. e5 Ne4 5. Nxe4 dxe4 6. Ng5 Qd5 7. d4 exd3 e.p. 8. Bxd3 Qxe5+ 9. Be3 Nd7



After a rare variation of the Two Knights Caro-Kann, the players have reached a highly combative position. Black has snatched a pawn in the center, but White has a substantial lead in development and easy play.

Greed does not pay off after 9. ... Qxb2?! 10. 0-0 when White's development gives him a huge advantage.

10. Qe2!?

The simple 10. 0-0 followed by Rf1-e1 was also good.

10. ... Nf6 11. f4 Qa5+ 12. Bd2 Qc5 13. Bc4 e6 14. 0-0-0 Be7 15. a3!?

An interesting idea, with the idea of playing Bd2-b4.

15. ... Nd5 16. f5 Bxg5 17. Bxg5 0-0 18. Bxd5

Perhaps not an outright blunder, but I feel that White's position goes from pleasant to "tough to play" after this transformation.

18. ... exd5 19. f6 Bf5!

Black correctly assesses that f6xg7 is never scary for him, and that counterplay in the center will be far more important.

20. Rhe1 d4 21. fxg7?

Now White is in a lot of trouble, but the tide was already turning rapidly.

21. ... Rfe8! 22. Qxe8+ Rxe8 23. Rxe8+ Kxg7 24. Rd2

Black is better in this position due to the attacking prospects of his queen and light-squared bishop.



24. ... d3! 25. Be3 Qc4 26. Re5 Bg6 27. Rc5 Qe4?! 28. Rxd3 Qxg2 29. Rd1 Qxh2 30. Bd4+ Kf8 31. Be5 Qf2 32. Bd6+ Kg7 33. Rc3 Qe2 34. Bc5 a6 35. b3 h5 36. Bd4+ f6 37. Rd2 Qe1+ 38. Rd1 Qe4 39. Rc4 Qf3 40. Rc3 Qf4+ 41. Be3 Qg4 42. Rg1 Qe4 43. Kb2 h4 44. Ba7 Qe5 45. Rh1



In this position Black has all the winning chances; in fact, he has a winning shot here which he finds a move later. Now Denby finishes off the game with a rare endgame pawn storm, lethally compromising the safety of the white king.

45. ... Bf5?! 46. Rxh4 Bxc2!

Black spots it on the second attempt.

47. Bd4 Qg5 48. Rh1 Qd5 49. Rg1+ Bg6 50. Be3 a5!

Now the game gets very messy, with the evaluation swinging back and forth. With



Caleb Denby did Saint Louis proud by winning first place in the u2300 section.

both players undoubtedly in time pressure, Denby pulls the win out after a long struggle.

51. a4 b5! 52. axb5 cxb5 53. Rc7+ Kf8 54. Bh6+ Ke8 55. Re1+ Be4 56. Rcc1 Qd4+ 57. Ka2 f5 58. Be3 Qd3 59. Kb2 b4 60. Rc8+ Kf7 61. Rc7+ Ke6 62. Bf4 Qd4+ 63. Kc1 Qa1+ 64. Kd2 Qb2+ 65. Ke3 Qxb3+ 66. Kd2 a4 67. Rg1 Qb2+ 68. Ke3 Qb3+ 69. Kd2 Kd5 70. Rg6 Qb2+ 71. Ke1 Bd3 72. Rd6+ Ke4 73. Bd2 Qe5 74. Bf4 Kxf4+ 75. Kd2, and White resigned.

The Chicago Open has historically kicked off a summer packed with large chess events, both run by CCA and other organizations, and this year is no different. The 2021 "summer of chess" began with the National Open, part of the Las Vegas International Chess Festival, kicking off on June 16. Check out the September issue of *Chess Life* for a scheduled report by JJ Lang.

This was followed by the Philadelphia International beginning June 25, the World Open starting on July 1, and the U.S. Class Championships on July 23. The culmination is the 121st U.S. Open in Cherry Hill, New Jersey, which started on July 31 and will run through August 8. As always, US Chess will have full coverage of all the events, including the five invitationals and news from the Delegates Meetings. ♠

2021 CHICAGO OPEN

AT A GLANCE

MAY 27-31 | WHEELING, ILLINOIS

OPEN: 1st: GMs Dariusz Swiercz, 7/9. 2nd-4th: GM Olexandr Bortnyk, GM Christopher Repka, IM Robby Kevlishvili, 6½/9. 5th-8th: GM Emilio Cordova, GM Awonder Liang, GM Hans Niemann, IM Praveen Balakrishnan, 6/9. **U2300:** 1st: Caleb Denby, 6½/7. **U2100:** 1st: Kameron Tolliver, 6½/7. **U1900:** 1st-2nd: Danilo Quizol Bucal, Stephen Jennings, 6/7. **U1700:** 1st-3rd: Theodore Epstein, Mohammad Khan, Aaron Marian, 6/7. **U1500:** 1st: Louisa Zhang, 6½/7. **U1200:** 1st: Nathan Melnikov, 7/7. **BLITZ:** Open: FM Aydin Turgut; U1900: Alex Kong.

MAGNIFICENT

12-year-old **Abhimanyu Mishra** is the youngest GM in history!

BY **JOHN HARTMANN**

ANNOTATIONS BY

IM JOHN WATSON

SHATTERING A 19-YEAR-OLD record previously held by GM Sergey Karjakin, Abhimanyu Mishra became the youngest grandmaster in history on June 30, 2021.

As we reported last month (*Chess Life* 07/2021, p.11; see also our October 2020 cover story), Mishra has been in Hungary since April, racing to break Karjakin's record. Having touched the 2500 rating barrier, and with two norms in hand, all that remained was the third and final norm.

At age 12 years, four months, and 25 days, Mishra earned his title at the Vezzerkepzo GM Mix tournament in Budapest, Hungary, defeating 15-year-old GM Leon Luke Mendonca to get to a score of 7/9 and take the final step on his long journey. With Karjakin having earned his title at age 12 years and seven months, Mishra bettered the previous mark by approximately 66 days.

Next up for Mishra is a wild-card entry to the FIDE World Cup (July 12-August 8; Sochi, Russia), where he is paired in Round 1 with GM Baadur Jobava. If he manages to defeat the dancing GM — see Jobava's Twitch channel for his slick moves — Mishra would meet American GM Sam Shankland in Round 2.

Chess Life will have full coverage of this tremendous accomplishment in a future issue; for now, here is the key game where Mishra completed his quest. It illustrates both his fearlessness and tenacity.

GRÜNFELD DEFENSE (D92)

GM Leon Luke Mendonca (2549)

IM Abhimanyu Mishra (2485)

Vezzerkepzo GM Mix (9), Budapest, 06.30.2021

1. d4 Nf6 2. c4 g6 3. Nc3 d5 4. Bf4 Bg7 5.

e3 0–0 6. Rc1 c5 7. dxc5 Be6 8. Nf3 Nc6 9. Be2 Qa5 10. Ng5 Nd8!

Remarkable preparation. This is an original move in a well-known position, and it forces White to think on his own. The continuation 10. ... Rad8 11. Nxe6 fxe6 12. Qa4 is an old main line that is okay for Black but gives him almost no winning chances.

11. Bg3!?

White spent a long time on this move, which isn't particularly ambitious. After the game, Mishra mentioned his preparation of 11. Nxe6 Nxe6 12. cxd5 Nxf4 13. exf4 Qxc5 with compensation. Black's rooks can centralize and ... Ne8–d6 is a thematic idea.

11. ... dxc4 12. Nxe6 Nxe6 13. Qa4 Qxc5

Also fine is 13. ... Qxa4 14. Nxa4 Ne4 with equality.

14. Bxc4 Qb6

White has the bishop pair, but Black is activating his rooks a bit faster. This move covers the e6-square and hits the b2-square.

15. Qb3

Safe. More interesting is 15. 0–0 Qxb2!? (15. ... Rfc8 is solid) 16. Bxe6 fxe6 17. Be5, when 17. ... Qb6 18. Rb1 Qc5 19. Bd4 might follow.

15. ... Qxb3 16. Bxb3

Black has enough play after 16. axb3 Rfc8 17. Ke2 a6.

16. ... Nc5 17. Ke2

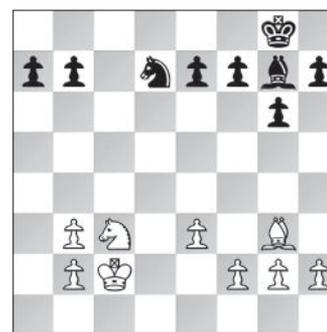
A natural move is 17. Bc2, covering the d3-square, but then 17. ... Nh5! has the idea 18. 0–0? (18. Bb1 Nxc3 19. hxc3 Rfc8 20. Ke2 is roughly equal) 18. ... Nxc3 19. hxc3 Bxc3! 20. bxc3 Rac8 with a clear advantage for Black.

17. ... Nxb3 18. axb3 Rfd8 19. Rhd1

Not a very promising position for a must-win game! But Mishra has a considerable time advantage and just plugs away.

19. ... Ne8 20. Rxd8 Rxd8 21. Rd1 Rxd1 22.

Kxd1 Nf6 23. Kc2 Nd7



White's doubled b-pawns are a theoretical weakness. They shouldn't really be a problem, but at least constitute an imbalance of sorts.

24. b4 f5 25. Nb5! a6 26. Nc7 Kf7 27. b5 a5!

Objectively no better than ... a6xb5, but it avoids simplification.

28. Nd5 Nc5 29. Bc7 a4 30. f3 Ke6 31. Nc3?

White had very little time here. The move 31. Nb6! was the easiest way to cut Black's king off from the center and target the a4-pawn, perhaps with the idea Bg3–e1–b4.

31. ... Bxc3!

A smart transformation, after which Black has most of the winning chances.

32. Kxc3 Kd5 33. Bd8 e5 34. Be7 Nb3

Here 34. ... e4!? was worth a try, intending ... Nc5–d3 in most cases.

35. h3!?

Now 35. Kb4 Nd2 36. Kxa4 Nc4! prevents Ka5–b6. White would need to find 37. Bg5! Nxb2+ 38. Ka5 Nc4+ 39. Kb4, when he is holding.

35. ... e4! 36. fxe4+ fxe4!?

Better was 36. ... Kxe4! when I suspect Black feared 37. Kb4, but 37. ... Nd2 38. Kxa4 (38. Bg5!) 38. ... Nc4 is strong, cutting off the threat of Ka5–b6. Then 39. Bg5 Nxe3 40. Bxe3 Kxe3 41. Ka5 f4 42. Kb6 Kf2 43. Kxb7 Kxg2

44. b6 f3 45. Kc6 f2 46. b7 f1=Q 47. b8=Q Qc4+ 48. Kd7 Kxh3 is doubtless drawn with perfect play, but could be torturous for White in extreme time pressure.

37. Kb4 Nd2 38. Bf6 h5!?

A little crazy, but wonderfully brave. This game is Black's last chance to secure the title in this tournament — he had to win to get the norm — so he takes a big risk. I wonder if he already had an inkling about the tactical idea towards the end of the game. Instead, 38. ... Nc4 39. Bd4 leaves Black with no serious winning try, e.g., 39. ... Nd2 40. Bc3 (40. Kxa4 Kc4) 40. ... Nf1 41. Bd4.

39. Kxa4! Kc4 40. Ka5

Now the problem of Ka5-b6 and winning the b-pawn is extremely intimidating, and it looks like a simple win for White.

40. ... Nb3+ 41. Kb6 Nc5 42. Bd4

Or 42. Be7 Na4+ 43. Kxb7 Kxb5 44. b3.

42. ... Nb3 43. Bf6 Kb4 44. Kxb7?

With no time left, White doesn't realize that interpolating 44. h4! first would make it easier to defend all of his kingside pawns after taking on b7. Black doesn't have anything to do.

44. ... Kxb5 45. Kc7

Suddenly there's no obvious winning path, e.g., 45. h4 Na1! 46. Bg5 Kc4.

45. ... Kc4 46. Kd6 Kd3(?)

Still going for broke! 46. ... Na1 is objectively better, but only drawn.

47. Bg5

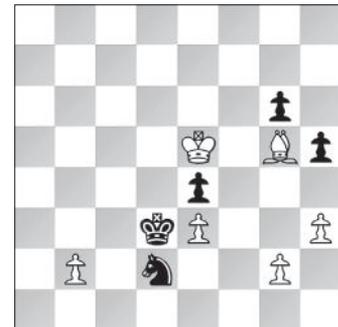
Now Ke5-f6 is a huge threat.

47. ... Nd2!

Setting one final trap.

48. Ke5??

In huge time pressure Mendonca missed that 48. b4! wins, for example, 48. ... Kc4 (48. ... Nc4+ 49. Ke6 Nxe3 50. b5 Nc4 51. Kf6 e3 52. Bxe3 Kxe3 53. Kxg6 Kf2 54. Kxh5 Kxg2 55. Kg4 and the knight can't stop both pawns) 49. Ke5 Kxb4 50. Kf6 Kc4 51. Kxg6 Kd3 52. Kxh5, etc. Of course 48. Ke6 will also do the trick.



48. ... Nf3+!!

Now 38. ... h5 looks like a move of genius.

49. gxf3??

With seconds per move, White grabs the knight. Here 49. Kf4! Nxe3 50. Kxg5 Kxe3 51. b4 should draw, although I'm sure Mishra would have kept trying after 51. ... Kf2 52. b5 e3 53. b6 e2 54. b7 e1=Q 55. b8=Q.

49. ... exf3 50. Bh4 g5!

I imagine that this was what White missed.

51. Bf2

Black also wins after 51. Be1 Ke2 52. Ke4 g4! 53. hxg4 hxg4.

51. ... Ke2 52. b4

No better is 52. Bg1 Kf1!.

52. ... Kxf2 53. b5 Kxe3 54. b6 f2 55. b7 f1=Q, White resigned.

Mendonca gave up in view of 55. ... f1=Q 56. b8=Q Qf4+. What a crazy way to become the youngest GM ever! ♠

MISHRA!



That's GM Mishra if you please.

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WEDNESDAY	9/8/21	1:00 PM	DAY 1
THURSDAY	9/9/21	1:00 PM	DAY 2
FRIDAY	9/10/21	1:00 PM	DAY 3

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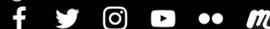
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The Superb Sultan Khan

One of the greatest natural talents in chess history

BY BRUCE PANDOLFINI



MIR SULTAN KHAN (1903-1966), who was born and died in the Punjab, was one of the most naturally talented chess players of all time. With an international chess career lasting about five years, from 1929-1933, he won the British Championship three times and in retrospect was ranked among the world's top 10 players. Even Capablanca admired his chessic gifts. In this month's game played at the Prague 1931 Olympiad against Hermanis Mattison (Black), we see his steadiness in executing a plan. Step-by-step, he winds up with an irresistible attack and a winning position.

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 White's move is on the next line.

QUEEN'S INDIAN DEFENSE (A46)

Mir Sultan Khan
Hermanis Matison
Prague Olympiad, 1931

1. d4 Nf6 2. Nf3 e6 3. e3 b6



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 White's next move only after trying to guess it. If

4. Bd3 Par Score 5
This supports the advance of the e-pawn while preparing castling. Accept **full credit** for either 4. Nbd2 or 4. c4.

4. ... Bb7
Black completes the queenside fianchetto and guards e4, momentarily preventing the advance of the white e-pawn. **

5. Nbd2 Par Score 5
White renews the threat to advance the e-pawn. The text avoids the ills of 5. Nc3, which could be answered by the pinning 5. ... Bb4.

5. ... d5
With this move, Black secures control of the e4-square. White has a slight edge in this position. **

6. Ne5 Par Score 5
The knight now occupies a strong central square. If necessary, White is prepared to back up this knight by advancing the f-pawn.

6. ... Bd6
Black clears the home rank, making kingside castling possible, with the possibility of capturing the e5-knight. **

7. f4 Par Score 5
White secures his advanced knight. If it is taken, White will probably take back with the f-pawn.

7. ... 0-0
Having castled, Black is now ready for counteraction in the center and just off it. **

8. Qf3 Par Score 5
Sultan Khan continues to develop with a certain kingside attacking plan in mind. But you may accept **full credit** for 8. 0-0.

8. ... Nfd7
By virtue of this retreat, Black clears the f-pawn for movement. Its main drawback is that it tactically weakens the h7- and h5-squares. A better try was probably 8. ... c5. **

9. Qh3 Par Score 6
Mate is now threatened on h7.

9. ... f5
Black stops the mate and reinforces control over e4. **

10. Ndf3 Par Score 6
Now that e3-e4 is not feasible, White overprotects his e5-knight. Accept **full credit** for the sharper 10. g4.

10. ... Nf6
Having advanced his f-pawn, Black brings the knight back to guard the weakened kingside squares. **

11. Bd2 Par Score 5
An unpromising development, but White wants to unblock the home rank. Sultan Khan hopes to soon connect his rooks.

11. ... Ba6
Black aims to trade off his queen-bishop, whose mobility is obstructed by pawns. **

12. Rg1 Par Score 6
White prepares to open the g-file by preparing the advance of the g-pawn, with promising possibilities against the black king.

12. ... Bxd3
This follows through on the plan, but it does not significantly improve Black's chances. **

13. cxd3 Par Score 5
Sultan Khan is not concerned about the doubled pawns. In fact, the newly arrived d3-pawn guards a key port of entry, the square e4.

13. ... Qe8
Black aims to get the queen out, possibly to h5, hoping to trade off queens. **

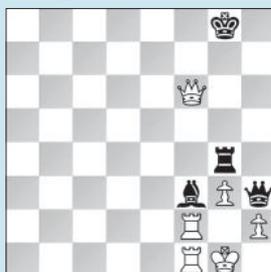
14. Ke2 Par Score 6
Accept **full credit** for queenside castling, 14.

ABCS OF CHESS

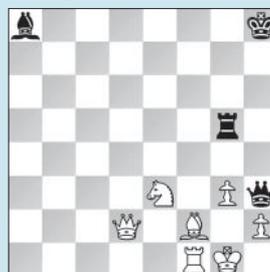
▶ **THESE PROBLEMS ARE ALL** related to key positions in this month's game. In each case, **BLACK IS TO MOVE**. The answers can be found in Solutions on page 59.

AUGUST EXERCISE: A good way to be more efficient at the chessboard is to divide your thinking. On your turn, you should try to be definite and concrete. You must cope with your opponent's threats while your clock is running. Don't waste time searching for possibilities. On your opponent's turn, you can get more wide-ranging. You can pose all kinds of strategic questions to elicit information. You can look for weaknesses and targets. You can mull over your own potential problems and try to avoid them, eventually forming a plan. Be organized. Get specific on your move and general on your opponent's.

PROBLEM 1
Mating Net



PROBLEM 2
Mating Net



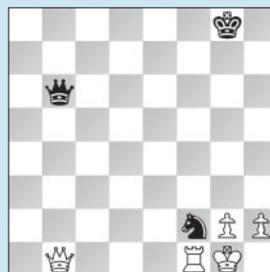
PROBLEM 3
Mating Net



PROBLEM 4
Mating Net



PROBLEM 5
Mating Net



PROBLEM 6
Mating Net



0-0-0. But the text does guard the d3-pawn, so White may have felt his king was both safe and useful on e2.

14. ... Nbd7
The last minor piece finally gets out. **

15. Qh4 Par Score 5
White's last move is not necessary, though it does avoid complications stemming from a subsequent advance of the g-pawn. Accept **full credit** for 15. Rac1.

15. ... c5
Naturally, this advance gives Black some central counterchances. **

16. Bc3 Par Score 5
Slow. Better was to go active with 16. g4.

16. ... cxd4
Black might have tried 16. ... c4, aiming to soften e4 and possibly open the position for counterplay. After all, the white king is in the center. **

17. Bxd4 Par Score 5
After this recapture, White does have a clear edge.

17. ... Nc5
Black opens an attack diagonal for his queen, but here the activity is insufficient. **

18. g4 Par Score 6
This pawn push has been coming for a long time.

18. ... Bxe5
Black eliminates a knight, but it can be replaced by another. If you examined 18. ... Rc8, add 1 bonus point if you saw 19. gxf5 exf5 20. Rxd7+! **

19. Nxe5 Par Score 5
White still has an imposing knight.

19. ... fxd4 **

20. Nxd4 Par Score 5
This simple recapture poses problems for Black.

20. ... Nxd4 **

21. Rxd4 Par Score 5
Suddenly, mate is threatened.

21. ... g6
If instead 21. ... Rf7, White forges ahead with either 22. Qh6 or 22. Rag1, both of which quickly win. **

22. Rag1 Par Score 5
There doesn't seem to be a viable defense. For instance, if 22. ... Qf7, 23. Qh6 threatens a winning sac on g6. So . . .

22. ... Black resigned. ♠



TOTAL YOUR SCORE TO DETERMINE YOUR APPROXIMATE RATING BELOW:

Total Score	Approx. Rating
95+	2400+
81-9	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

Key Roads, Less Traveled

Two new books treating uncommon themes

BY IM JOHN WATSON

T

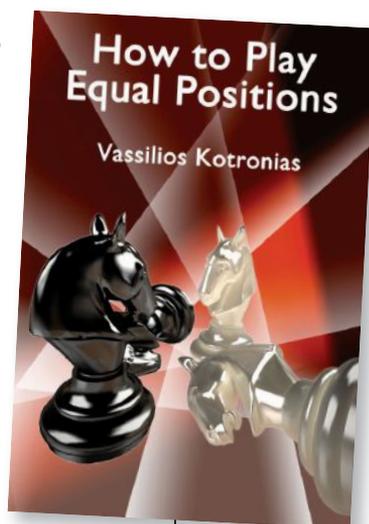
HIS MONTH I'LL TAKE A LOOK AT two books dealing with issues that don't often arise in conventional instructive books. The first, GM Vassilios Kotronias' *How to Play Equal Positions*, is primarily a positional strategy book that, as the title suggests, focuses on how to grind out wins in equal positions.

By equality, Kotronias means that "neither side has strategic or material advantage" and both sides lack "a clear plan to improve." He is particularly interested in how to maximize winning chances when situations of this type arise. His discussion of "positions of semi-drawish flavour" strikes home with me, both because it deals with a weakness that I have personally experienced and because it identifies something that differentiates successful players on all levels. Kotronias writes:

I refer to positions mainly characterised by symmetrical features or positions where a great deal of simplifications has already taken place or is about to take place. I have to confess to the readers that this issue is one of the greatest headaches for ambitious or simply higher rated players in both open and closed events. It has tortured yours truly many a time in his chess career. I always believed that the drawing margin is much bigger in chess than in other sports where all three results are possible and as such, it doesn't favour players who have great hunger to win and a great desire to work hard for it. While this opinion doesn't lack a logical background, I have to admit that my fears most of the time were rather excessive for two reasons:

1. I mistakenly trusted that my opponents would find all the best moves in positions heading towards a draw.
2. My technique was not up to the task when my chances appeared, or simply I was not smart enough to lure my opponents into making errors. (145)

NOTE: we have left the grammar and spelling of Kotronias' text untouched, providing readers a sense of the tone and style of the work. ~ed.



Sound familiar? It certainly applies to many of my own games over the years. And it's hard not to think of Magnus Carlsen's numerous wins in "harmless" positions when Kotronias says: "In the past few years there has been some sort of revolution as regards to the above problem, with many players around the world refining their technical ability to cope successfully with the task." (ibid.) Using several high-level examples with detailed analysis, Kotronias tries to establish a way of approaching such positions that takes into account practical elements such as the clock. "The main issue," he writes, "is how to walk the narrow path of keeping some chances alive without sinking into inferiority, and although there is a psychological factor in the equation, knowledge and precision play a significant role."

Kotronias discusses both short-term and long-term planning and how they apply in practice. He emphasizes that in many, if not most, equal positions, no plan is the best plan (in contrast to the old advice that "a bad plan is better than no plan"). In his examples, he articulates a "move-by-move" approach for such positions, designed not to change their fundamental nature, but to create the most problems for the opponent.

If playing move-by-move is to be recommended, a reader might wonder when to worry about the evaluation of a position or form a plan. Since broad evaluation is too time-consuming to constantly attend to, particularly in quick time controls, Kotronias constructs a list of cases (69-70) in which "one should, as a minimum, pause and evaluate the position:

1. We're suddenly out of book, in unknown territory ...
2. The pawn structure has been just fixed and apparently isn't going to change for several moves to come — a fixed structure is often a good basis for making concrete evaluations as it's a stable element that has concrete requirements.
3. Specific exchanges took place, or the pawn structure changed without necessarily becoming static ...
4. Both sides have just completed development ...
5. A sacrifice or a material imbalance occurred ...
6. An attacking or defensive effort came to an end ...
7. Massive simplification [leads] to an ending ..."

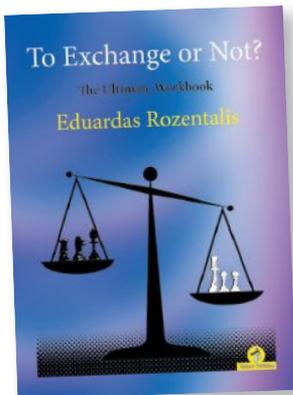
Kotronias talks a lot about developing a feeling for what kind of three distinct equal “situations” one is in. The first type is “situations without a clear plan, or no plan at all.” The second is “Plain-Plan situations,” when we know what our plan is and how to anticipate that of our opponent. Here one can save a lot of time by not calculating deeply or looking at lengthy tactical sequences that are unlikely to bear fruit. Finally, there are “Complex-Plan situations,” which require intense thought about both positional and tactical considerations; we need to reserve our clock time to use for these situations.

For Kotronias, how one approaches a position depends upon probabilistic considerations. He discourages searching for tactical solutions in many equal positions by pointing out how unlikely it is that there will be one. Regarding “Plain-plan” equalities, for example, Kotronias says, “For every 100 organised attacks ... 85-90 of the responses should be of a purely defensive (tolerant) character, and only the rest 10-15, of the counterattacking type.” With planless equalities, “For every 100 attacks ... only 20 of them will trigger an energetic response of the same type.” At various points, he criticizes the idea that “attack is the best defense” on the grounds that it is not likely to apply in most cases. Although this sounds rather abstract, he puts it in a solid context by means of examples.

A closely-related issue is chess greed and what Kotronias calls “maximalism.” He writes, “I wouldn't rule out completely chess maximalism as a viable strategy, but to go for it you must be prepared to invest a huge amount of time in your games and forget about being practical. ... you shouldn't fear to bear the consequences of your actions.”

As you can tell from the above, this book contains a lot of rather abstract and philosophical observations. The essence of the book is contained in the exemplary games, however, which are lengthy, dense, and require dedicated effort to understand. For this reason, I would recommend the book mainly to players 1800 and above. If you're willing to put the work in, you'll pick up valuable ideas that you won't find elsewhere.

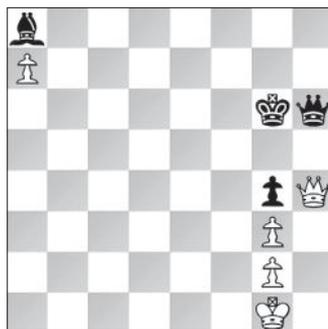
GM Eduardas Rozentalis' *To Exchange or Not? The Ultimate Workbook* is a set of exercises designed to hone the reader's skill at deciding when it's advantageous to exchange pieces. Most of us could use considerable improvement in this area, and testing oneself in



practical positions is a good way to go about it.

Rozentalis puts a real emphasis on simplified and endgame positions — he authored *The Correct Exchange in the Endgame* (2016, 2018) — and you will find that the decision of whether to exchange (or not) often depends upon one's knowledge of endings. For example, in this

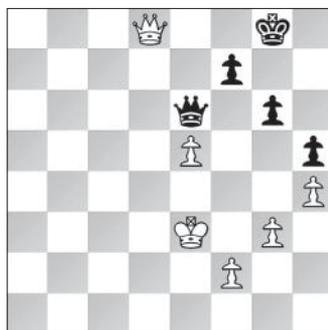
position from Rozentalis - Weindl, Stockholm 1990:



BLACK TO MOVE

Black shouldn't (but did!) exchange on h4, perhaps unaware that the ending after **75. ... Qxh4 76. gxh4 g3 77. h5+ Kxh5 78. Kh1** is dead drawn, with or without the a-pawn. Instead, 75. ... Qe3+ 76. Kf1 Qe4 leads to an easy win.

After decades in the chess world, I was nevertheless unfamiliar with an elementary position that arose in Korchnoi - Lukin, Stockholm 2004:



BLACK TO MOVE

After **81. ... Kg7?** (81. ... Kh7 will hold with good defense), White wins with **82. Qf6+! Qxf6 83. exf6+ Kxf6 84. Kf4**. This really surprised me. Sure, you have the opposition, but is that enough? Yes, as it turns out: **84. ... Ke6** (84. ... Kg7 85. Ke5 f6+ 86. Ke6 f5 (86. ... g5 87. f4) 87. f4 Kg8 88. Kf6 Kh7 89. Kf7 Kh6 90. Kg8 g5 91. hxg5+ Kg6 92. Kf8) **85.**

Kg5 Ke7 (85. ... Ke5 86. f3 Ke6 87. f4 and f4-f5) **86. f3** (86. f4? Ke6) **86. ... Ke6 87. f4 Ke7 88. f5 gxf5 89. Kxf5**, etc. A handy piece of chess knowledge!

In some cases, the solution comes down to pure calculation rather than any sort of intuition. Here's a high-level example from Harikrishna - Sutovsky, Montreal 2007:



BLACK TO MOVE

Black can maintain equality by moves such as 29. ... Rd8 or even 29. ... g5!, but he decided to make a simple draw in a more forcing fashion by **29. ... Re6? 30. Rxe6 fxe6**. Now 31. Ke3 Kf7 32. Kd3 Kxf6 33. h4 Ke7 will draw, since Black can keep White's king from penetrating. But White holds the remarkable sequence **31. g4!! hxg4 32. Kg3 Kf7 33. Kxg4 Kxf6 34. Kh4!**, which leaves him a pawn down(!) but winning, primarily because he has extra pawn moves to waste in zugzwang positions. The game went **34. ... a5 35. a4 Ke7** (if 35. ... Kf7 36. Kg5 Kg7 37. h3! Kf7 38. Kh6 Kf6 39. h4 Kf7 40. Kh7 Kf6 41. Kg8 and wins) **36. Kg5 Kf7 37. Kh6 Kf6 38. h4! Kf7 39. Kh7 Kf6 40. Kg8, Black resigned.**

Most of the book's exercises have more pieces involved and many are more difficult than these, with some solutions taking up several pages. But every position comes from an over-the-board game and looks like something that could easily arise at any level of play. If you are looking for a set of practical and instructive positions to study, *To Exchange or Not?* qualifies nicely and offers something a little out of the ordinary. ♠

Kotronias, Vassilios. How to Play Equal Positions. Chess Stars, 2021. ISBN-13 9786197188325, 228 pages. (Available from uscfsales.com, product code B0154EU, \$31.95.)

Rozentalis, Eduardas. To Exchange or Not? The Ultimate Workbook. Thinkers Publishing, 2020. ISBN-13 9789492510945, 192 pages. (Available from uscfsales.com, product code B0086TH, \$33.95.)

MAKE → YOUR → MOVE

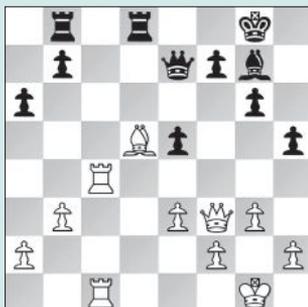
BY **FM CARSTEN HANSEN**

THIS MONTH'S PUZZLES ARE A MIX FROM THE NATIONAL OPEN in Las Vegas in June and various other events.

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

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

TACTIC I.



WHITE TO MOVE

TACTIC II.



WHITE TO MOVE

TACTIC III.



BLACK TO MOVE

TACTIC IV.



BLACK TO MOVE

TACTIC V.



WHITE TO MOVE

TACTIC VI.



BLACK TO MOVE

TACTIC VII.



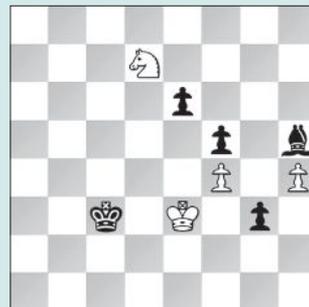
BLACK TO MOVE

TACTIC VIII.



WHITE TO MOVE

TACTIC IX.



BLACK TO MOVE

POSITION 1: ONE GUARD, MANY TASKS
POSITION 2: DOUBLE DISTRACTION
POSITION 3: STRONG RUNNER

POSITION 4: CLEARANCE BRILLIANCE
POSITION 5: ADDING HEAVY FIREPOWER
POSITION 6: DRILLING HOLES

POSITION 7: JUMBLED, LOOSE PIECES
POSITION 8: REORGANIZING
POSITION 9: CAREFUL COUNTING

TOURNAMENT LIFE ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Executive Board authorizes a temporary change in the US Chess Grand Prix (GP) rules for the period March 4, 2020 through August 31, 2021 out of concern for the unforeseeable impacts the COVID-19 (Coronavirus) could have on participation in GP events. The change allows organizers with guaranteed prize funds to change the status of their prize fund without first seeking US Chess permission to make the change. More specifically, organizers who have announced "XXXX in Guaranteed prizes" (or similar words) for their GP events shall be allowed to re-state their prize funds in their publicity as "XXXX in Projected prizes based on ### players," where ### represents the number of players in last year's event rounded to the nearest five players. For new GP events lacking historical attendance data, the organizer shall specify a "based on" number of players as part of the Projected Prize Fund language in their publicity. This decision includes all GP tournaments that already have been advertised in Chess Life. For any GP events being publicly advertised (whether by TLA, another website, flyers, emails, social media, etc.), organizers shall take all necessary steps to ensure their revised pre-tournament announcements call attention to this change in prize fund status and provide the appropriate "Projected based on XXX players" in the language of their updated publicity. US Chess asks that the chess community support this temporary change in the spirit that it is intended. The Executive Board shall revisit this matter as necessary.

NATIONAL EVENTS & BIDS NOW ON USCHESSE.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

Grand Prix

The Grand Prix point totals reflect all rated event information as of March 23, 2021 for the 2020 Grand Prix.

2020 GRAND PRIX STANDINGS

We apologize for any confusion regarding the Grand Prix standings. The final standings here have inconsistencies when compared to the standings published in the January 2021 Chess Life, which covered events through December 1, 2020. What follows is an explanation for those inconsistencies.

The system that has calculated Grand Prix standings for many years failed to credit players from certain membership categories with the points they earned in Grand Prix events ending after July 7, 2020. This was an unintended consequence of a coding change in our new membership database that launched on July 10, 2020. As a result of this coding change, points had been incorrectly given to players who finished lower in the event standings, as the correct players had been skipped. Due to the lack of Grand Prix events after July 7, this error was not immediately identified.

Once this coding error was identified in December 2020, manual re-calculations for all 2020 Grand Prix events were undertaken to ensure the accuracy of the standings. As a result of this, some players had points added compared to previously published standings, whereas a few players had points removed. We are confident that these final standings reflect the correct allotment of Grand Prix points as stated in program regulations.

2020 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	

Name	State	Pts
1. IM ZURABI JAVAKHADZE	TX	80.00
2. IM JOHN DANIEL BRYANT	CA	66.50
3. FM ROBERT SHLYAKHTENKO	CA	58.50
4. GM ALEXANDER SHABALOV	PA	57.50
5. IM AARON GRABINSKY	OR	48.60
6. GM FRANCESCO RAMBALDI	MO	44.00
7. GM FIDEL CORRALES JIMENEZ	MA	42.00
8. GM HANS NIEMANN	CT	39.43
9-10. IM PRAVEEN BALAKRISHNAN	VA	38.00
9-10. GM BRANDON JACOBSON	NJ	38.00

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

51st annual Continental Open

AUGUST 12-16, 12-15, 13-15 OR 14-15, MASSACHUSETTS

US CHESSE GRAND PRIX POINTS: 200 (ENHANCED)

Sturbridge Host Hotel, 366 Main St (Rt 20 West), Sturbridge MA 01566 (I-84 Exit 3, near I-90). Free parking, 60 miles from Logan Airport (Boston), 55 miles from Bradley Airport (Hartford), 20 miles from Worcester Airport. **Masks may be required**, spectators may be restricted.

Top 3 sections are FIDE rated. **Prizes \$40,000 projected** based on 320 paid entries (GMs, IMs, WGMs, FIDE foreign, U1200 section, re-entries count as half entries, scholastic prize free entries not counted); else raised or lowered in proportion except **\$30,000 (75% each prize) minimum guaranteed**. In 7 sections (unrated allowed only in U2200, U2000 or U1200). **Master Section, Aug 12-16:** 9SS, 40/80, SD/30+30 (note change), GM & IM norms possible. Open to 2200/over USCF and 2100/over FIDE (see peakingrty.us). Prizes \$3000-1800-1200-1000-800-700-600-500-400-400, clear or tiebreak win \$200 bonus, top FIDE U2300/Unr \$2000-1000. **Foreign GM bonus prize pool:** \$4000 projected divided evenly among foreign GMs who play all 9 games with no byes. **Minimum prize** \$300 to US GMs and foreign IMs/WGMs who play all 9 games with no byes. **Under 2200, Under 2000, Under 1800 Sections, Aug 12-15 or 13-15:** 7SS, 40/80, SD/30+30 (note change), (3-day option, rds 1-2 G/60 d10). Prizes each section \$2000-1000-500-300-200. **Under 1600, Under 1400 Sections, Aug 12-15 or 13-15:** 7SS, 40/80, SD/30+30 (note change), (3-day option, rds 1-2 G/60 d10). Prizes each section \$1500-750-400-300-200. **Under 1200 Section, Aug 14-15:** 7SS, G/60 d10. Prizes \$800-400-300-200-100, top Under 1000 (no Unr) \$200-100. **Prize limits:** 1) If any post-event regular OTB rating posted 1/1/20-8/10/21 was more than 50 points over section or prize maximum, prize limit \$400. 2) If current Online Regular rating is more than 50 points over section or prize maximum, prize limit \$400. 3) Unrated limits \$800 in U2100, \$300 in U1200. 4) Balance of any limited prize goes to next player(s) in line. **Mixed doubles bonus prizes:** best male/female combined 2-player team score: \$1000-500-300-200. For Master Section, only rounds 1-7 counted towards doubles. Must average under 2200; may play different sections; register (no extra fee) before both players begin round 2. **Foreign player ratings:** see foreignratings.com. **US player ratings:** Official August ratings used; August FIDE ratings used for Master Section. **Unofficial or Online Regular USCF ratings** usually used if otherwise unrated. **Master entry fee:** \$198 online at chessaction.com by 7/15, \$228 online by 8/5, \$250 until 12 noon 8/12 or at site. **GMs, IMs, WGMs, FIDE rated foreign players:** \$50 at chessaction.com by 7/15, \$75 by 8/5, \$100 until 12 noon 8/12 or at site. **FMs or FIDE 2300/over:** \$100 at chessaction.com by 7/15, \$125 by 8/5, \$150 until 12 noon 8/12 or at site. **U2200 through U1400 sections EF:** \$148 at chessaction.com by 7/15, \$163 by 8/5, \$180 until 1 hour before rd 1. **U1200 section EF:** \$83 by 8/5, \$100 until 1 hour before rd 1. **No checks** at site, credit cards OK. **Online EF \$5** less to MACA members; join at masschess.org. **Special 1 yr USCF dues** with magazine if paid with entry: Online at chessaction.com, Adult \$40, Young Adult \$25, Youth \$18. Mailed or at site, \$45, \$27 & \$20. **Re-entry:** \$100, no Master to Master. **5-day schedule (Master only):** Reg. ends Thu 6 pm, rds Thu 1 pm & 7 pm, Fri 11 am & 5 pm, Sat-Sun 10 am & 4 pm, Mon 10 am. **4-day schedule (U2200 to U1400):** Reg. ends Thu 6 pm, Rds. Thu 7 pm, Fri 11 am & 5 pm, Sat-Sun 10 am & 4 pm. **3-day schedule (U2200 to U1400):** Reg. ends Fri 10 am, Rds. Fri 11, 2 & 5, merges with 4-day at 5 pm. **2-day schedule (U1200 only):** Reg. ends Sat 9 am, Rds. Sat 10 am, 1 pm, 4 pm & 7 pm, Sun 10 am, 1 pm & 4 pm. **4-day & 3-day schedules** compete for same prizes. **Byes:** OK all, limit 3 (limit 2 in last 4 rds), must commit by rd 3. **Hotel rates:** \$99-99-109-119, sturbridgehosthotel.com, us group code 2108CONTIN, or 800-582-3232, reserve by 7/28 or rate may increase. **Car rental:** Avis, 800-331-1600, AWD #D657633, or reserve car online through chessaction.com. **Foreign player ratings:** See foreignratings.com. **US player ratings:** August official regular OTB ratings used; FIDE used for Open Section. Unofficial or online uschess.org ratings usually used if otherwise unrated. **Electronic devices:** See device-rules.com. **Awards:** If not claimed at site, paid electronically through Zelle or PayPal (may take a few weeks). **Ent:** Continental Chess, Box 8482, Pelham NY 10803. **Questions:** Director@Chess.US. **Refunds:** \$15 service charge. **Entries posted** at chessaction.com (click "entry

list" after entry). **Bring set, board, clock if possible-** none supplied. **Invitations:** Go@chess.us.

GRAND PRIX

HOLLYWOOD MASTERS FIDE TOURNAMENT

AUGUST 13-15, CALIFORNIA, SOUTHERN

US CHESSE GRAND PRIX POINTS: 15

THYMELE ARTS 5481 SANTA MONICA BLVD LOS ANGELES CA 90029, 5 ROUND SWISS, G/100+30. (2000+ FIDE RATED ONLY WITH NO EXCEPTIONS) FIDE & USCF rated - FIDE ratings, rules and pairings used. Parking \$10. **EF:** \$165 payable via PayPal on www.acapasadena.org. Free for GMs, WGMs, IMs, unless they win prize the entry fee will be deducted. **Rounds:** Friday 7 pm. Saturday-Sunday 11 am and 6 pm. **Prizes:** 1ST: \$1000. 2ND \$500 3rd \$300, Info: (818) 738-8965 akopianrobert1982@gmail.com **Organizer:** Robert Akopian. **Fide Arbiter:** Randall Hough. Limited to 30 players including me. First come first serve!! The Live count of paid entrees updated at www.acapasadena.org

GRAND PRIX

Oswaldo Fernandez Memorial AUGUST 15, CONNECTICUT

US CHESSE GRAND PRIX POINTS: 10

4 Round SS, G/30;d5. **Round Times:** 1:00, 2:30, 4:00, 5:30pm. **Prizes:** 1st \$300, 2nd, \$200, 3rd, \$100. **Entry Fee:** \$25 Members, \$40 Non members. 30 spots available, must register online before 8:00pm on 8/14. **Register online** at <http://fairfieldcounty.chess.com/oswald.html>. **Address:** 710 West Avenue, Norwalk, CT 06850. **Organizer:** Melvin Patrick **Email:** cccchess@gmail.com **Phone:** 203-505-6215 **Website:** <http://fairfieldcounty.chess.com/>

GRAND PRIX • ENHANCED GRAND PRIX • JUNIOR GRAND PRIX

11th annual Central California Open

AUGUST 20-22 OR 21-22, CALIFORNIA, NORTHERN

US CHESSE GRAND PRIX POINTS: 80 (ENHANCED)

5SS, 40/80, SD/30+30 (2-day option, rds 1-2 G/60 d10), Doubletree Hotel, 2233 Ventura St, Fresno CA 93710. Free airport shuttle, free parking for hotel guests. Cosponsored by Fresno Chess Club & Fresno Chess Foundation. **Masks** may be required. **\$5 10,000 guaranteed prizes.** In 4 sections: **Open (open to all):** \$1500-800-400-200, clear/tiebreak 1st \$100, top USCF U2250 \$500-250. **FIDE. Under 2100:** \$1000-500-250-150, top U1900/Unr \$450-230. **FIDE. Under 1700:** \$800-400-200-100, top U1500 (no unr) \$380-190. **Under 1300:** \$500-250-150-100, top U1100 (no unr) \$200-100. **Unrated prize limits:** U1300 \$200, U1700 \$400; balance goes to next player(s) in line. **Mixed doubles:** best male/female 2-player combined score among all sections: \$200-100. Must average under 2200; may play in different sections; register (no extra fee) by 2 pm 8/21. **Top 3 sections EF:** \$93 online at chessaction.com by 8/18, 3-day \$98, 2-day \$97 mailed by 8/9, \$110 at site, or online until 2 hours before rd 1. **Under 1300 Section EF:** all \$30 less than above. **Fresno Chess Club members:** online or mailed EF \$15 less. **GMs, IMs & WGMs free,** \$80 deducted from prize. **Unofficial or Online Regular** uschess.org ratings usually used if otherwise unrated. **If USCF Online Regular** rating is 50 or more points over section or prize maximum, prize limit \$150. **Special 1 year USCF dues** with magazine if paid with entry: Online at chessaction.com, Adult \$40, Young Adult \$25, Youth \$18. Mailed or at site, \$45, \$27 & \$20. **Re-entry** \$60; not available in Open. **No checks** at site, credit cards OK. **3-day schedule:** Reg ends Fri 6 pm, rds Fri 7 pm, Sat 11 & 5, Sun 10 & 3:30. **2-day schedule:** Reg ends Sat 10 am,

rds Sat 11, 2 & 5, Sun 10 & 3:30. **Byes:** OK all, limit 2; must commit before rd 2. **HR:** \$139-139, 559-268-1000, request chess rate, reserve by 8/6 or rate may increase. **Car rental:** Avis, 800-331-1600, use AWD #D657633, or reserve car online through chessaction.com. **Awards:** If not claimed at tournament, paid electronically through Zelle or PayPal. **Ent:** chessaction.com or Continental Chess, Box 8482, Pelham NY 10803. **Refunds:** \$15 service charge. **Questions:** Director@Chess.US **Advance entries** posted at chessaction.com (click "entry list" after entering). **Bring set, board, clock if possible-** none supplied. **Blitz tournament** Sat 9:30 pm, enter by 9:15 pm.

GRAND PRIX • STATE CHAMPIONSHIP EVENT

2021 Arkansas State Championship

AUGUST 20-22, ARKANSAS

US CHESSE GRAND PRIX POINTS: 6

2021 Arkansas State Championship. **Arkansas State University Pavilion,** 2605 A St, Jonesboro, AR 72401. 6-SS, **EF:** \$50 in advance, \$60 at site, two open schedules. **Sch. 1,** Reg: Friday 6-6:45p, G/120 d5, Rds: Fri 7p, Sat 9a-2p-7p, Sun 9a-2p. **Sch. 2,** Reg: Sat 8-8:45a, Rds 1-2 G/60 d5, Rds 3-6 G/120 d5, merge rd 3. Rds Sat 9a-11a-2p-7p, Sun 9a-2p. \$5 (b.50) 1st \$450 2nd \$300 U2000,U1800,U1600,U1200/Unr: \$250 ea. Trophies to all prizes (AR res. only). 1/2 pt. Bv available at reg. USCF and ACA reg. OSA. **Ent:** Nicholas Jaeger, 1508 South Louisiana Street, Little Rock, Arkansas, 72202. njjae@ualr.edu, 870-688-6423

GRAND PRIX • JUNIOR GRAND PRIX

2021 Des Moines Open (IASCA GP Qualifier) FIDE-Rated

AUGUST 21-22, IOWA

US CHESSE GRAND PRIX POINTS: 10

COVID-19: As of now there are no mask (Masks) or social distancing requirements. This is Subject to Change. FIDE-Rated. 5-SS; G/90+30 inc. Holiday Inn 6111 Fleur Drive, Des Moines, IA 50321. 515.287.2400. **HR:** \$105 plus taxes if reserved by July 24th. Market rate was given for reserving after July 24th. **Round times:** Saturday 10:00; 2:30; 7:00 Sunday 9:30; 2:00. **Entry fee:** \$60 before August 21st, \$70 on site. **Prize info:** \$1000 b/30 entries. **Top 3 guaranteed.** \$350, \$200 & \$150 **U2200** \$125 **U2000**-\$100 **U1800**-\$75. Unrated not eligible for prizes. **Registration:** On-site registration 8:30-9:45am on Saturday August 21st or pay on-line prior to August 21st at: <https://www.kingregistration.com/event/2021d-mop>. USCF membership required. On-site available. IASCA membership required, \$10, available on-site. Other states accepted. **Additional information:** **Byes:** One 1/2 point bye per player. Last round bye must be requested prior to the start of the 1st round. **Byes** for all other rounds a must be requested 1 hour prior to the start of the round. **USCF:** ratings used for pairing rank and prizes. **FIDE:** Swiss pairing and floor rulings. USCF July supplement used for ratings. FIDE rule 11.3 enforced with regards to electronic devices. **Players** must turn in a scoresheet for every game. **NO ELECTRONIC SCORESHEETS.** **No spectators are allowed in the playing hall 10 minutes after the start of the round. Players are allowed spectate after their game is over.** **Spectator rules are subject to change.** **Contact:** Bill Broich by phone at (515) 205-8062 or email: bill@dschess.com

GRAND PRIX • ENHANCED GRAND PRIX • JUNIOR GRAND PRIX

16th annual Indianapolis Open

AUGUST 27-29 OR 28-29, INDIANA

US CHESSE GRAND PRIX POINTS: 100 (ENHANCED)

5SS, 40/80, SD/30+30 (2-day option, rds 1-2 G/60 d10), Hilton Garden Inn Indianapolis Airport, 8910 Hatfield

Drive, Indianapolis IN 42641. Free parking, free airport shuttle, free wireless. **Masks** may be required. **\$14,000 guaranteed prizes.** In 5 sections. **Major:** Open to 1900/above. \$1500-700-500-300, clear/tiebreak winner \$100 bonus, top USCF U2300 \$600-300. **FIDE. Under 2100:** \$1000-500-300-200, top Under 1900/Unr \$400-200. **FIDE. Under 1800:** \$1000-500-300-200, top Under 1600 (no Unr) \$400-200. **Under 1500:** \$800-400-300-200, top Under 1300 (no Unr) \$300-150. **Under 1200:** \$700-350-200-100, top Under 1000 (no Unr) \$200-100. **Mixed doubles bonus prizes:** best male/female 2-player team combined score among all sections: \$500-300-200. Must average under 2200; may play different sections; register (no extra fee) by 2 pm 8/28. **Unrated prize limits:** U1200 \$100, U1500 \$200, U1800 \$300. **Playing up in Major:** see *peaking.us*. **EF:** \$118 online at *chessaction.com* by 8/25, 3-day \$123, 2-day \$122 mailed by 8/17, all \$130 (no checks, credit cards OK) at site or online until 1 hour before round 1. GMS \$100 from prize. **Unofficial or Online Regular uschess.org** ratings usually used if otherwise unrated. **If online regular rating is 50 or more points over section or prize maximum, prize limit \$200. Special 1 year USCF dues** with magazine if paid with entry. Online at *chessaction.com*: Adult \$40, Young Adult \$25, Youth \$18. Mailed or at site, \$45, \$27 & \$20. **Re-entry \$50;** no Major to Major. **3-day schedule:** Reg. ends Fri 6 pm, rds. Fri 7 pm, Sat 11 & 5, Sun 10 & 3:30. **2-day schedule:** Reg. ends Sat 10 am, rds. Sat 11, 2 & 5, Sun 10 & 3:30. **ALL:** Half point byes OK all, limit 2, must commit before rd 2. **HR:** \$115-115-115, use link at *chessvents.us* or 855-618-4697, request chess rate; reserve by 8/12 or rate may increase. **Awards:** if not claimed at site, paid electronically through Zelle or PayPal. **Car rental:** Avis, 800-331-1600, AWD D657633, or reserve car online through *chessour.com*. **Ent:** *chessaction.com* or Continental Chess, Box 8482, Pelham NY 10803. \$15 service charge for refunds. **Questions:** *Director@Chess.US*. **Entries posted at chessaction.com** (click "entry list" after entering). **Blitz tournament Sat 9:30 pm**, enter by 9:15 pm. **Bring set, board, clock if possible:** none supplied.

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

52nd annual Atlantic Open

AUG. 27-29 OR 28-29, VIRGINIA

US CHESS GRAND PRIX POINTS: 150 (ENHANCED)

NOTE CHANGES. 55S, 40/80, SD 30+30 (2-day option, rds 1-2 G/60 d10), Sheraton Reston Hotel, 11810 Sunrise Valley Drive, Reston VA 20191 (21 miles from Washington). Free parking, free airport shuttle, free shuttle to Metro subway & Reston Town Center. **Masks** may be required. **\$30,000 guaranteed prizes.** Major: Open to 1900/up (see *peaking.us*). \$3000-1500-700-400-300, clear or tiebreak 1st \$100 bonus, top USCF U2300 \$1300-700. **FIDE. Under 2100:** \$2000-1000-500-400-300. **FIDE. Under 1900:** \$2000-1000-500-400-300. **Under 1700:** \$1800-900-500-300-200. **Under 1500:** \$1500-800-400-300-200. **Under 1300:** \$1300-700-400-300-200. **Under 1000:** \$800-400-300-200-100. **Mixed doubles:** best male/female 2-player team combined score among all sections: \$1000-500-300-200. Must average under 2200; may play in different sections; register (no extra fee) by 2 pm 8/28. **Unrated** may not win over \$150 in U1000, \$300 U1300, \$450 U1500, \$600 U1700, or \$750 U1900; balance goes to next player(s) in line. **Top 5 sections EF:** \$133 online at *chessaction.com* by 8/25, 3-day \$138, 2-day \$137 if check mailed by 8/17, \$150 at site or online until 1 hour before rd 1. GMS free; \$100 from prize. **Under 1000 Section EF:** All \$50 less than top 5 sections **EF Unofficial or Online Regular uschess.org** ratings usually used if otherwise unrated. **If Online Regular rating is 50 or more points over section or prize maximum, prize limit \$400. Special 1 year USCF dues** with magazine if paid with entry. Online at *chessaction.com*: Adult \$40, Young Adult \$25, Youth \$18. Mailed or at site, \$45, \$27 & \$20. **ALL:** No checks at site, credit cards OK. **Re-entry \$60,** no Major to Major. **3-day schedule:** Reg. ends Fri 6 pm, rds. Fri 7 pm, Sat 11 & 5, Sun 10 & 3:30. **2-day schedule:** Reg. ends Sat 10 am, rds. Sat 11, 2 & 5, Sun 10 & 3:30. **Bye:** all, limit 2, must commit before rd 2. **HR:** \$84-84-94, link at *chessvents.us* or 703-620-9000, reserve by 8/6 or rate may increase. **Car rental:** 800-331-1600, use AWD D657633, or reserve car online through *chessour.com*. **Ent:** *chessaction.com* or Continental Chess, Box 8482, Pelham NY 10803. \$15 service charge for refunds. **Questions:** *Director@Chess.US*, 347-201-2269. **Entries posted at chessaction.com** (click "entry list" after entering). **Blitz tournament Sat 9:30 pm**, enter by 9:15 pm. **Bring set, board, clock if possible:** none supplied.

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

143rd annual New York State Championship

SEPTEMBER 3-6, 4-6 OR 5-6, NEW YORK

US CHESS GRAND PRIX POINTS: 100 (ENHANCED)

Out of state welcome. 65S, 40/80, SD/30+30, 2-day option in U2100/below, rds 1-3 G/40 d10, Albany Mar-

riott, 189 Wolf Road, Albany 12205 (Thruway Exit 24, I-87 north to Wolf Rd, Exit 4). Free parking, wireless & airport shuttle, restaurants nearby. **\$14,000 guaranteed prizes.** In 5 sections. **Championship,** open to 1900/above (see *peaking.us*). \$1500-800-500-300, top U2300 \$600-300. State title & \$100 bonus to top NYS resident (both decided on tiebreak if tied). **FIDE. Under 2100:** \$1000-500-300-200, top Under 1900/Unr \$400-200. **FIDE. Under 1800:** \$1000-500-300-200, top Under 1600 (no Unr) \$400-200. **Under 1500:** \$900-500-300-200, top Under 1300 (no Unr) \$300-150. **Under 1200:** \$600-400-200-150. **Mixed doubles bonus prizes:** best male/female 2-player team combined score among all sections: \$500-300-200. Must average under 2200; may play in different sections; register (no extra fee) before both begin round 2. **Unrated prize limit \$150** in U1200, \$250 U1500 or \$400 U1800. **Top 4 sections EF:** \$118 online at *chessaction.com* by 8/28, 4-day \$124, 3-day \$123, 2-day \$122 if check mailed by 8/24, all \$130 at site or online until 1 hour before round 1. GMS, IMs & WGMs free, \$100 from prize. **Under 1200 Section EF:** All \$20 less than top 4 sections **EF.** All: Online entry \$7 less to NYSCA members (dues \$12/yr with 2 issues Empire Chess or \$20/yr with 4 issues; join with entry). **Unofficial or Online Regular uschess.org** ratings usually used if otherwise unrated. **If Online Regular rating is 50 or more points over section or prize maximum, prize limit \$200. Special 1 year USCF dues** with magazine if paid with entry. Online at *chessaction.com*, Adult \$40, Young Adult \$25, Youth \$18. Mailed or at site, \$45, \$27 & \$20. **Re-entry (U2100 & below) \$60.** No checks at site, credit cards OK. **3-day schedule:** Reg. ends Sat 11 am, rds. Sat 12 & 6, Sun 12 & 6, Mon 10 & 3:30. **4-day schedule:** Reg. ends Fri 6 pm, rds. Fri 7 pm, merges with 3-day Sat 6 pm. **2-day schedule:** Reg. ends Sun. 10 am, rds. Sun 11, 1:30, 3:30, 6, Mon 10 & 3:30, no 2-day Championship. **Bye:** all, limit 2, must commit before rd 3. **HR:** \$100-100, 800-443-8952, 518-458-8444, reserve by 8/20 or rate may increase. NYSCA meeting 9 am Sun. **Ent:** *chessaction.com* or Continental Chess, Box 8482, Pelham NY 10803. **Questions:** *Director@Chess.US*. \$15 service charge for refunds. **Entries posted at chessaction.com** (click "entry list" after entering). **NYS Blitz Championship Sun 10 pm**, enter by 9:45 pm.

GRAND PRIX • STATE CHAMPIONSHIP EVENT

2021 Michigan Open

SEPTEMBER 3-6, MICHIGAN

US CHESS GRAND PRIX POINTS: 300

7-SS: Open (1800+ or with Play Up Fee), Reserve (Under 1800), 4-day and 3-day schedules available for Open & Reserve sections. Open Section FIDE Rated (4-day Time Control Games Only), 8-SS: Booster (Under 1200), ONLY 2-day schedule (Sat & Sun) for Booster section, NO Monday Games. **With the planned July 1 lifting of epidemic orders, we are expecting that we will be able to hold the event at full capacity with no COVID-19 protocols. Keep in mind that the situation may change, and adjustments may need to be made to limit participation. Masks, Sanitizing Wipes, and Hand Sanitizer will be available for players desiring protections.** **LOCATION:** Radisson Hotel Lansing, 111 N. Grand Avenue, Lansing, MI 48933. Near the State Capitol in Downtown Lansing - Same Hotel as the Michigan Class. **Room Rate:** \$99 by 8/20/2021, after if space available. **Valet Parking:** \$10/night for hotel guests. Phone: (517) 482-0188 Ask for Michigan Chess Association room block. **Online Reservations:** *www.radisson.com/lansingmi* - Promotion Code: MCA921. **ELIGIBILITY:** USCF membership required. MCA membership required for Michigan residents. **REGISTRATION:** Online: *www.onlineregistration.cc*. Mail: Jeff Aldrich, P.O. Box 40, Flint, MI 48501, 810-955-7271, *jeffchess64@gmail.com*. **On-Site:** Fri 6:00-6:29pm, Sat 8:30-8:59am. Up to 2 Half-Points Byes in all rounds but the final round. **ENTRY FEES:** 4-day Paid by 9/1: Open \$65, Reserve \$55; 3-day Paid by 9/1: Open \$66, Reserve \$56; 2-day Paid by 9/1; Booster \$35. **After 9/1:** Open \$80, Reserve \$70, Booster \$45. **Open Section Play Up Fee:** Players U1800 in Open section, add \$15. Players recently over 1800 may request to have the play up fee waived. **Juniors:** (U18) \$5 discount for Open and Reserve sections only. Re-entry allowed for 4-day advance price. **Free Entry to GM/IM/FM/2200+** when registering by 9/1, \$65 EF deducted from prize. **Advance Payments:** Check made payable to MCA. **On-Site Payments:** Cash, Check made payable to MCA, or Credit Card. **SCHEDULE:** 4-day: Fri (8/30): 7pm, Sat 10am, 7pm, Sun 10am, 6pm, Mon 9:30am, 3pm. 3-day: Sat (8/31): 9:30am, 12:30pm, then merge w 4-day at 7pm. 2-day (Booster only): Sat (8/31) & Sun (9/1): 9:30am, 11:00am, 12:30pm, 2pm (same schedule each day). **TIME CONTROL:** Open/Reserve 4-day: G/100+30 (scorekeeping required for entire game). Open/Reserve 3-day: Rounds 1&2, G/60; d10 then merge. **Booster (2-day):** G/30;d5 (all games). **MEMBERSHIP MEETING:** 4:00pm Sunday, September 5. MCA members, make your voice heard! Includes Officer Elections - Note that MCA Bylaws require voting members be at least 16 years old and in good standing for 30 days prior to the meeting (August 6). **PRIZES: \$4050 GUARANTEED PRIZE FUND:** Tro-

phies for all Place-Winners. **OPEN:** 1st \$800, 2nd \$400, 3rd \$300. (30 Grand Prix Points); **U2200:** \$250; **U2100:** \$250; **U2000:** \$250; **U1900:** \$250. **RESERVE:** 1st \$375, 2nd \$250, 3rd \$175; **U1600:** \$150; **U1500:** \$150; **U1400:** \$150; **U1300:** \$150; **U1200:** \$150. **BOOSTER (Trophies only):** Top 5 Overall; **U1000:** 1st, 2nd; **U800:** 1st, 2nd; **U600:** 1st, 2nd; **Unrated 1st, 2nd.** **Address:** 111 N. Grand Ave., Lansing, MI 48933. **Organizer:** Michigan Chess Association **Email:** *jeffchess64@gmail.com*. **Phone:** 810-955-7271 **Website:** *https://www.michess.org/*

ENHANCED GRAND PRIX • JUNIOR GRAND PRIX

87th Annual Southwest Open

SEPTEMBER 3-6 OR 4-6, TEXAS

US CHESS GRAND PRIX POINTS: 60 (ENHANCED)

7SS G/90 for 30 sec inc. Doubletree by Hilton DFW Airport North, 4441 W. John Carpenter Fwy., Irving, TX 75063. **Hotel rates:** \$99. Reserve at 972-929-8181 or at 800-446-6677 mention group Name Dallas Chess Club or group code DCC by 8/2. Or see hotel booking link on tournament website. After 8/2 the rate may not be honored. Hotel has complimentary hotel shuttle to/from DFW airport. Tournament has 3 Sections. **Open Section:** This section is FIDE rated and uses FIDE rules. USCF rules/ratings used for awarding prizes. USCF ratings used for pairing purposes. Please check tournament website for rules about FIDE registration. \$\$ 1,000-500-250, 2200-2399 \$750, U2200 \$750. There will be a special college prize(s) depending on entries. **Reserve Section:** Open to U2000. \$ This section is FIDE rated and uses FIDE rules. Please check tournament website for rules about FIDE registration. \$ 800-400-200. Class Prizes will be determined at tournament based on entries. Unrateds may play in this section. **Notice Section:** Opened to U1400 and Unrated. This section is USCF rated only. \$\$ \$500. Class Prizes (if any) will be determined at tournament based on entries. Note that TD may start White's clock at the start of each round. **All 3 (Open, Reserve and Notice):** Except for approved Electronic scorekeeping devices, no electronics are allowed in the playing area during the round. This includes rest rooms by the playing area. This rule applies to players, parents, coaches. Players not at the board within 60 minutes of the start of the round will forfeit game unless arbiter decides to grant extend time. (Note that the clock will keep running.) Texas Chess Association membership required. Other states accepted. Note that the floor will be closed during the round. Other Covid-19 rules will be in effect such as masks must be worn. See *www.dallaschess.com*. **EF:** \$99 if received by 8/27, else \$113. **EF for Senior/Handicap/Additional family participant/re-entry \$65** by 8/27 else \$79. (Reentry not allowed in Open Section.) Add \$5 for CC phone entries; Note that entry must be done online at *www.dallaschess.com*. Note that entries may be limited due to any special distancing rules in effect during the dates of the tournament. **4-day:** Rounds Fri: 7:10 pm, Sat: 2:10 pm & 7:20, Sun: 11:30 am & 5:20 pm, Mon: 9:20 am & 2:20 pm. **3 day:** Rd. 1 on Sat. 9/4 at 9 am then merge with 4 day. Foreign Unrated must play in Open section. Tournament may use CCA rules for foreign ratings and for minimum ratings. Up to two ½-pt byes available if requested before end of rd. 2, but byes for both rd. 6 AND 7 not permitted. Texas Chess Association meeting on Sunday 9/5 at 8:30 am. **ALL:** Dallas Chess Club, C/O Barbara Swafford, 2709 Longhorn Trail, Crowley, TX 76036. Info: Bar Swafford, 214-632-9000, *info@dallaschess.com*, *www.dallaschess.com* NS. NC. W. FIDE. JGP.

GRAND PRIX • STATE CHAMPIONSHIP EVENT

2021 Michigan Speed Championship

SEPTEMBER 4, MICHIGAN

US CHESS GRAND PRIX POINTS: 10

Held with the Michigan Open. USCF Blitz rated. USCF Memb Rqrd, MCA Memb Rqrd for Michigan residents. 5-2SS. TL: G5;d0. **Rds:** Starts at 3:30pm. **EF:** \$20 online in adv. \$25 onsite. **Reg:** *www.onlineregistration.cc*. Sat 9:00am-3:00pm. **\$\$:** 1st Trophy + \$150, 2nd: \$125, 3rd: \$100, 4th: \$75, 5th: \$50; Trophy 1st, 2nd U2000, U1800, U1600, U1400, U1200, U1000, U800, U600, U400, Unr **Address:** 111 N. Grand Ave., Lansing, MI 48933. **Organizer:** Jeff Aldrich **Email:** *jeffchess64@gmail.com* **Phone:** 810-955-7271 **Website:** *https://www.michess.org/*

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

80th New England Open

SEPTEMBER 4-6, MASSACHUSETTS

US CHESS GRAND PRIX POINTS: 30

6SS, 40/120, SD/30, d5 (2-day schedule G/45, d5 in rds. 1-3. No 2-day Championship sect.) Westford Regency Inn & Conference Center (I-495 exit 83), 219 Littleton Road, Westford, MA 01886. **Masks** may be required. **\$5,400** fully paid entries (\$30 off entries count half), 75% G. 5 sects. **Championship,** open to players rated 1800/above: \$600-300-250,

top U2400 \$250, top U2200 \$250. **FIDE. Under 2000:** \$400-200-150. **Under 1800:** \$400-200-150. **Under 1500:** \$300-150-100. **Under 1200:** \$250-150-100, top U1000 \$100. New England championship title to highest scoring New England resident or student in each sect. **Unrated prize limit \$200** in U2000, \$150 in U1800, \$125 in U1500, \$100 in U1200, can't win title. Unofficial *uschess.org* ratings usually used if otherwise unrated. **EF:** \$69 for 3-day, \$68 for 2-day if mailed by 8/30 or online by 9/2, \$80 at site. \$30 discount to players in U1200 sect. rated U1000 or unrated. Free to GMs and IMs. **3-Day Schedule:** Reg. Sat. 8:30 to 9:30 a.m. Rds. Sat. 10:30 a.m. and 5 p.m., Sun. 10:30 a.m. and 5 p.m., Mon. 10 a.m. and 4 p.m. **2-Day Schedule (U2000 to U1200 only):** Reg. Sun. 8:30 to 9:30 a.m. Rds. Sat. 10:30 a.m., 1 p.m., 3 p.m. and 5 p.m., Mon. 10 a.m. and 4 p.m. **Byes:** 1-5 in Championship sect., 1-6 in others, limit 2, rds. 4-6 must commit before rd. 2. **Membr. Reg:** Mass. residents: MACA (\$12 adult, \$6 junior U18), WMCA, O.K. N.H. residents: NHCA (\$9 adult, \$6 junior U19). **New England Blitz Championship:** Sun. 9/5. 5SS (dbl), G/5, d0. **Reg. ends 9:15 p.m.** 1st round at 9:30 p.m., others ASAP. 75% of EFs returned as prizes. **EF:** \$10 if playing in main trmt., else \$15. Blitz rated, higher of regular or blitz ratings used for pairings and prizes. **HR:** \$149-149, reserve by 8/4 and mention MA Chess Association chess trmt. 978-692-8200. **Ent:** payable to MACA and mail to Robert Messenger, 4 Hamlet Dr. Apt. 12, Nashua NH 03062, or online at *www.masschess.org*. Info: send email to *info@masschess.org* or call 603-891-2484. Day of the tournament call 603-557-1732

HERITAGE EVENT • GRAND PRIX • STATE CHAMPIONSHIP EVENT

73rd Annual New Jersey Open Championship

SEPTEMBER 4-6, NEW JERSEY

US CHESS GRAND PRIX POINTS: 80

55S; Newly Renovated Headquarters Plaza Hyatt, a luxury hotel including spa. **Masks** required. Please go to *NJSCF.org* for additional information and a list of our COVID-19 rules. Free parking for day visitors. For chess rate (\$139/night) use *www.hyatt.com/en-US/group-booking/MORRM/G-NJCS* for online reservations. **Please register for hotel by 8/2.** Short walk to train station with service to New York and Philadelphia (via Newark), 5 minute walk to many restaurants and shopping. **EF:** \$78 if received by 8/28, GMS and IMs free entry, \$81 online at *njscf.org* until midnight 9/2, \$90 onsite. **Re-entry:** \$40. In 3 sections, Open Section, Under 1800, Under 1600. With 3 day and 2 day schedules. **Prizes:** Open: \$1000, \$850, \$700, \$500, \$450, Class Prizes: 2200 - 2399: \$400, \$250, \$100; 2000 - 2199: \$400, \$250, \$100; U2000: \$400, \$250, \$100; Class Prize: Top Senior (55+): \$150; Trophy to NJ Champion. Under 1800 Section: \$400, \$250, \$100, Class Prizes: Top Senior (55+): \$150. Under 1600 Section: \$400, \$250, \$100, Class Prizes: Top Senior (55+): \$150, Top D, E & F: \$150. \$100 prize for best Open section game. \$100 prize for best game in either Under 1800 or Under 1600 section. **All sections get these trophies:** Top 3, Top Senior over 55, Top under age 16, Top under age 13. Unrated may win first place in Open section only. **3 day registration at hotel:** 9:00am-11:00am 9/4, **2 day reg at hotel:** Sunday, 9/5 9:10 am. **Rounds:** 3 day Saturday 12:00 & 6:30 pm, Sunday 11 am & 6 pm, Monday 9 am & 3:30 pm. **Rounds:** 2 day 1-2-3(G/60 d5) Sunday 10:30 am, 12:45 pm and 3:00 pm. 3 Day and 2 Day schedules merge in round 4. Mail checks made payable to NJSCF to: Hal Sprechman, 15 Reigate Ln., Manchester, NJ 08759. Entries should include name, USCF ID and expectations, mailing address, email address, phone, section and schedule desired and entry fee. **Address:** 3 Headquarters Plaza, Morristown, NJ 07960 **Organizer:** Harold Sprechman **Email:** *halsprechman@gmail.com* **Phone:** (732) 259-3881 **Website:** *http://www.njscf.org*

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

Southern California Open

SEPTEMBER 4-6, CALIFORNIA, SOUTHERN

US CHESS GRAND PRIX POINTS: 30

6 Round Swiss, 3 day is G/100 +30 increment, or for 2 day option, first 3 games are G/45, d5, then merges in round 4 on Sunday at 4:30. Open and U2200 Sections are FIDE rated except for the 2 day schedule. **Prizes:** \$520,000 Guaranteed. Open Section: 1st \$2,400, 2nd \$1,600, 3rd \$1,200, 4th \$900, 5th \$600, 6th \$500, 7th \$400; BU2300 \$1,000, 2nd U2300 \$600. Next 4 sections: U2200, U2000, U1800 and U1600 prizes are all \$1,000-600-400-200. U1400 Section: \$600-400-200-100. U1200 Section: \$400-200-100. **Registration:** 3-day: 8:30 AM to 9:30 AM Saturday; **2-day:** 8 AM to 9 AM Sunday and 4:30 PM on Sunday; 10 AM and 4 PM on Sat, 10 AM and 4:30 PM on Sunday; 10 AM and 4 PM on Monday. **2-day:** 9:30 AM, 11:30, 1:30 PM & 4:30 PM on Sunday, then 10 AM and 4 PM on Monday. **Entry Fee:** \$90 Early Bird Special if received by 7/31, or \$100 by 8/22, \$120 after 8/22 and \$140 if you pay at the door. Only \$75 if

U1200 and playing in that section. GMS, IMs, WGMs and WIMs all play for free but \$100 deducted from any prize winnings, must register by 8/28, email chucnglo@aol.com or call Chuck Ensey at 858-432-8006. Ratings based on September Supplement. Unrated players are not eligible for any cash prizes, book prize for Best Unrated in each section. Provisional players (less than 25 games) can win only 50% of any prize, the balance goes the remaining prize winners. **Re-entry fee** from 3-day to 2-day is \$75, must be U2300, \$15 charge for refunds before playing a game. **Mail entries** to SDC, PO Box 120162 San Diego CA 92112, or **enter online** at www.schess.com. SCCF membership required for all So. Cal. residents (\$20). Two half point byes OK in rounds 1-5, must request at least one hour before round starts; last round byes are okay but must be requested before the start of round 3 and are irrevocable. 3 half point byes allowed if age 67 or older. **Info:** Call Chuck Ensey 858-432-8006. \$25 fine for forfeits at TD discretion. No cells phones please, their use can lead to fines or loss of game. **Hotel:** Special rate of \$189 (regular rate is \$249) if booked by 8/03/21, call 1-619-221-1900 or book online using group code SDC. See www.marriott.com/sanal. Please book early as this is a small hotel with only 200 rooms and they always sell out quickly. This hotel is the home of the Dreaming King Open in January. Lots of restaurants near by and a large grassy park to relax in. **Address:** 2592 Laning Rd., San Diego, CA 92106 **Organizer:** Charles H Ensey **Email:** chucnglo@aol.com **Phone:** 8584328006 **Website:** <https://sandiegochessclub.com>

GRAND PRIX + ENHANCED GRAND PRIX

**2021 Las Vegas Open
SEPTEMBER 15-19, 16-19, OR 17-19, NEVADA**

US CHESS GRAND PRIX POINTS: 300
Open Section September 15-19: 9-SS, G/90 +30. GM & IM norms possible. **Under Sections** September 16-19 or 17-19: 7-SS, G/90 +30 (3-day round 1 G/45 +10). Rio All-Suites Hotel and Casino, 3700 W Flamingo Rd, Las Vegas \$30,000 **Guaranteed Prize Fund.** **Open:** 3000-1500-700-300-200; top under 2300: 1000-500, \$300 bonus prize for the first 20 GMS, WGMs or foreign IMs who enter and play all 9 rounds with no byes. **Under 2200:** 1500-750-350-250-200. Top under 2050: 500-250. **Under 1900:** 1500-750-350-250-200. Top under 1750: 500-250. **Under 1600:** 1500-750-350-250-200. Top under 1450: 500-250. **Under 1300:** 1200-600-250-200-200. Top under 1000: 400-200. Top under 800: 400-200. Top unrated 400-200. **Mixed Doubles:** best male/female combined 2-player team score: 1000-500-200. Average rating below 2200, teammates may play in different sections, only rounds 1-7 count for Open Section. Unrated or provisionally rated players may not win more than \$400 in any under section, balance goes to next players in line. **EF Section:** \$199 by 7/31, \$239 by 8/31, \$260 later. \$100 less for foreign FIDE rated players. \$100 more for players who have never been rated 2200 USCF or 2100 FIDE. GM, WGM and foreign IM free by 8/31. **Under sections:** \$139 by 7/31, \$159 by 8/31, \$180 later. Re-entry \$100 cannot re-enter into same schedule and section. **5-day schedule (Open Only):** Register by 5 Wed **Rds** 6:30, 1-6:30, 10-3:30, 10-3:30. **4-day schedule:** Register by 5 Thu **Rds** 6:30, 1-6:30, 1-6:30, 10-3:30, 10-3:30 **3-day schedule:** Register by 9 Fri **Rds** 10-1-6:30, 10-3:30, 10-3:30 Half point byes available in any round if requested at least 2 hours before the round; Sunday byes must be requested before the start of round 4 and may not be cancelled. Chess sets and boards provided for tournament play only, not for skittles. Please bring digital chess clocks! **ENTER** Vegas Chess Festivals, PO Box 90925, Henderson, NV 89099-0925, online at chess.vegas.org by 6/21. Info: (702) 930-9550. FIDE NSW

GRAND PRIX

**CFCC Back to the Board In-Person
Open Tournament**

SEPTEMBER 18-19, FLORIDA
US CHESS GRAND PRIX POINTS: 15
Central Florida Chess Club, 865 North State Road 434, Altamonte Springs, FL, 32714 (next to Brewster's Ice Cream). **\$1,175 in prizes - 100% Guaranteed!** **Open SSS G/90;d5 - Limited Seating** (4 players Only). **Prizes - 1st \$400 - 2nd \$240 - 3rd \$160** Top Under U1800/U1500/U1200 \$125/ea. **Early Entry Fee** \$60 (by Aug 20th), **Late Entry Fee** \$70 (after Aug 20th) **Requested Byes:** 1/2-pt, must commit before Round 2 is paired (max 2 byes) **Round Times:** Sat: 10am/2pm/6pm, Sun: 10am/2pm Free Parking - **Free Chess Lecture 9:00-9:45am with FM Alex Zeller - Chess Store:** Open during tournament hours, CFCC Club Membership EF discount available: \$10 (\$5 for Jr/Sr) (Must be current, see onsite TD to claim discount). **Online Registration Only** (No On-site Entry): https://www.chessregister.com/register?event_key=douP4IRngJmTCLNvXtRg%3d%3d **INFO:** www.centralflorchess.org or email: info@centralflorchess.org, **Tournament Di-**

rector: Steven Vigil call/text (321) 297-7087 or email at: chessteacher1977@yahoo.com - Please see our website at www.centralflorchess.org/events for the latest Covid-19 information for this event.

GRAND PRIX + JUNIOR GRAND PRIX

**Indy FIDE \$10,000
SEPTEMBER 24-26 OR 25-26, INDIANA**

US CHESS GRAND PRIX POINTS: 30
SSS; 3 or 2 Day Option. Delta Hotels by Marriott, 5860 Fortune Cir W, Indianapolis, IN 46241. Free WiFi, Free Airport Shuttle, Free Parking, Restaurant on site. **\$10,000 BASED ON 130 PAID ENTRIES!** **Premier (1901+)** [FIDE Rated] \$1200, \$800, \$500, \$300 U2300: \$600, \$400 U2100: \$500, \$300 Reserve (1601-1900) \$800, \$500, \$300; U1750: \$200 **Novice (1301-1600)** \$800, \$500, \$300; U1450: \$200 **Apprentice (unrated -1300)** \$800, \$500, \$300; U1000: \$200 **Bonus:** Trophies to all prize winners in Reserve, Novice, and Apprentice (USCF tiebreaks used for trophies) **Premier Section:** FIDE + USCF rated, uses FIDE rules. This tournament will use USCF ratings for pairings and prize purposes. Foreign players must disclose their FIDE ID before the first round. USA players without a FIDE ID must agree to represent USA in international competition in order to play and must provide necessary information to receive a FIDE ID. Default late forfeiture time is 1 hour. TD may extend at TD's discretion. Players must use provided score sheets and submit copies each round. No electronic notation devices allowed in the Premier section. **Schedule All Sections: 3-Day:** (G/90, inc/30) Fri: 7PM Sat: 10:30 am 4:30 pm Sun: 9 am 2:30 pm **2-Day:** (Rounds 1 & 2 = G/45, inc/5) (Rounds 3-5 = G/90, inc/30) Sat: 10:30 am, 1 pm, 4:30 pm (merge) Sun: 9 am 2:30 pm **First two rounds of 2-day Premier section not FIDE rated.** **Byes:** Up to two 1/2 point byes available if requested before the end of round 2, cannot be changed. TD reserves the right to combine sections based on turnout. Unrated may play up at TD's discretion. Bring boards, sets and clocks, supplies are limited. **Entry Fees:** \$128 by 9/10, \$140 after, \$160 on site. **Discounts:** \$10 discount to senior players (55+) **Re-entry:** \$65. Re-entry is not allowed in the Premier Section. **Playing Up:** Players may play up ONE section for a \$25 fee. Minimum USCF rating to play up in the Premier Section is 1800, no exceptions. **GM IM WGM FREE Entry! No deduction if committed by 9/10! FREE contact TD.** Email: bcchessclubindy@gmail.com or call / text 317-286-6183 to register. **PayPal:** PayPal users please send payment to: bccc.tournaments@gmail.com. Please include your USCF and FIDE ID (if applicable), published regular rating, schedule, and best contact info to send entry confirmation. **Add \$4 for PayPal fee / per player.** **Credit Card:** by phone ok until 9/23, player pays cc fees. PayPal or cash at site, no checks. Please join / renew USCF membership at least 24 hours before the tournament. Maximum player capacity may be limited to 150. **Early registration is highly encouraged. (The last few events have sold out!) Sign up early and guarantee your spot!** Our last FIDE event had 155 players! **Cross table:** <http://www.uschess.org/msa/XtbMain.Pdf?202105168032.0-12787646> **On site registration:** Friday: 4:30 to 5:45 pm. Saturday: 8 am to 9:30 am. **Face coverings may be required depending on Indiana Covid-19 rules.** Sanitizer, Scoresheets, pens, ibuprofen etc., Water stations available (All Free). No eating at the board, drinks are ok. **NO CELL PHONES / ELECTRONIC DEVICES! Subject to DQ. Metal Detectors will be used.** **Blitz Side Event:** 7 SS Open double round (14 games); Sat. 9:30 pm, USCF blitz rated, G3 +2, EF: \$25 (GM's Fee) \$275, \$175, \$125, U1800 \$100, U1500 \$75, based on 45 paid entries. September Published USCF Blitz ratings used. **Questions:** Please email B C Chess Club at: bcchessclubindy@gmail.com or call / text 317-286-6183 anytime Please go to our Facebook Page: B C Chess Club for more updates, photos and details. **Hotel Rate:** \$105 by 9/18 Call 317-247-9700 or go to link. 20% discount at on-site restaurant, mention the chess tournament. **Hotel Link:** <https://www.marriott.com/events/start.mi?id=1622041882371&key=GRP>. **ORGANIZER:** B C Chess Club **Email:** bccc.tournaments@gmail.com **Phone:** 13172866183 **Website:** <https://www.facebook.com/indychessfun/>

HERITAGE EVENT + GRAND PRIX + ENHANCED GRAND PRIX + JUNIOR GRAND PRIX

25th annual Eastern Chess Congress

OCTOBER 1-3 OR 2-3, NEW JERSEY
US CHESS GRAND PRIX POINTS: 120 (ENHANCED)
SSS, 40/80, SD/30+30 (2-day option, rds 1-2 G/60 d10), Hyatt Regency Princeton, 102 Carnegie Center, Princeton, NJ 08540. Free parking, wireless & fitness center, 10% discount in hotel restaurant (except alcohol). **\$5 20,000 guaranteed.** In 7 sections. **Premier (1900) up, see peakingrule:** \$2000-1000-500-300, clear win or 1st on tiebreak \$100, top USCF

U2300 \$800-400. **FIDE. Under 2100:** \$1400-700-400-200. **FIDE. Under 1900:** \$1400-700-400-200. **Under 1700:** \$1300-700-400-200. **Under 1500:** \$1200-600-400-200. **Under 1300:** \$1000-500-300-200. **Under 1100:** \$500-300-200-100. **Mixed doubles:** best male/female 2-player combined score among all sections: \$800-400-200. Most average under 2200; may play in different sections; register (no extra fee) by 2 pm 10/2. **Unrated prize limits:** \$100 U1100, \$200 U1300, \$300 U1500, \$400 U1700, \$500 U1900. **Top 5 sections EF:** \$118 online at chessaction.com by 9/29, 3-day \$123, 2-day \$122 mailed by 9/21, all \$140 at site, or online until 2 hrs before round 1. **Under 1100 EF:** all \$50 less than above. **All:** No checks at site, credit cards OK. **Unofficial uschess.org ratings** usually used if otherwise unrated. **If Online Regular rating** is 50 or more points over section or prize maximum, prize limit \$300. **Special 1 year USCF dues** with magazine if paid with entry. Online at chessaction.com, Adult \$40, Young Adult \$25, Youth \$18. Mailed or at site, \$45, \$27 & \$20. **Re-entry** \$50 (no Premier to Premier). GMS \$100 from prize. **3-day schedule:** Reg. ends Fri 6 pm, rds. Fri 7, Sat 11 & 5, Sun 10 & 3:30. **2-day schedule:** Reg. ends Sat 10 am, rds. Sat 11, 2 & 5, Sun 10 & 3:30. **Bye:** all, limit 2; must commit before rd 2. **HR:** \$123-123, 609-987-1234 or use link at chesshour.com, reserve by 9/9. **Car rental:** Avis, 800-331-1600, use AWD #D657633. **Ent:** chessaction.com or Continental Chess, Box 8482, Pelham, NY 10803. **Questions:** director@chess.us. \$15 service charge for refunds. **Entries posted** at chessaction.com (click "entry list" after entering) **Awards:** If not claimed at tournament, paid electronically through Zelle or PayPal. **Bring set, board, clock** if possible - none supplied. **Blitz tournament** Sat. 9:30 pm, enter by 9:15 pm.

GRAND PRIX + ENHANCED GRAND PRIX + JUNIOR GRAND PRIX

12th annual Washington Chess Congress

OCTOBER 7-11, 8-11, OR 9-11, VIRGINIA
US CHESS GRAND PRIX POINTS: 200 (ENHANCED)
Premier Section, 9SS, Oct 7-11, 40/80, SD/30+30; GM & IM norms possible, FIDE rated. **Other Sections,** 7SS, Oct 8-11 or 9-11, 40/80, SD/30+30 (3-day option, rounds 1-2 G/60 d10). **Sheraton Reston Hotel,** 11810 Sunrise Valley Drive, Reston VA 20191 (21 miles from Washington). Free parking, free airport shuttle, free shuttle to Metro subway & Reston Town Center. **\$30,000 guaranteed prizes.** In 4 sections: **Premier:** Open to FIDE 2000/over, foreign FIDE 1900/over, or USCF 2100/over. \$3000-1500-1000-800-700-600-500-400, clear or tiebreak first bonus \$100, top FIDE Under 2300/Unr \$1700-900. **FIDE. Foreign GM prize pool:** \$4000 divided evenly among foreign GMs who play all 9 games with no byes. **Minimum prize \$300** to US GMS and foreign IMs/WGMs who play all 9 games with no byes. **Under 2200:** \$2000-1000-500-300-200, top Under 2000 (no Unr) \$1200-600. **Under 1800:** \$1700-900-500-300-200, top Under 1600 (no Unr) \$800-400. **Under 1400:** \$1000-500-300-200-100, top Under 1200 (no Unr) \$400-200. **Prize limits:** Unrated cannot win over \$200 in U1400 or \$400 in U1800. **If current Online Regular rating** is more than 50 points over section or prize maximum, prize limit \$300. **Mixed doubles bonus prizes:** best male/female 2-player team combined score among all sections: \$1000-500. Only first 7 rounds of Premier counted. Team must average under 2200; may play in different sections; register (no extra fee) before both players begin round 2. **Ratings:** October FIDE ratings used in Premier, USCF October official in other sections. Unofficial web ratings usually used if otherwise unrated. **Top 3 sections EF:** \$168 online at chessaction.com by 10/5, 5-day \$175, 4-day \$174, 3-day \$173 if check mailed by 9/23, all \$200 at site or online until 1 hour before rd 1. **U1400 Section:** all EF \$50 less than top 3 sections EF. Premier GMS & foreign IMs/WGMs \$50 at chessaction.com by 9/23, \$100 after 9/23 or at site; US IMs/WGMs, foreign FIDE rated \$90 at chessaction.com by 9/23, \$140 after 9/23 or at site. **Special 1 yr USCF dues** with magazine if paid with entry. Online at chessaction.com, Adult \$40, Young Adult \$25, Youth \$18. Mailed or at site, \$45, \$27 & \$20. No checks at site, credit cards OK. **Re-entry:** \$80, no Premier to Premier. **5-day schedule (Premier only):** Reg. ends Thu 6 pm, rds. Thu 7 pm, Fri 1 pm & 7 pm, Sat 11 am & 5 pm, Sun 10 am & 4 pm, Mon 10 am & 3:30 pm. **4-day schedule:** Reg. ends Fri 6 pm, rds Fri 7 pm, Sat 11 & 5 pm, Sun 10 & 3:30. **3-day schedule:** Reg. ends Sat 10 am, rds Sat 11, 2 & 5, Sun 10 & 4, Mon 10 & 3:30. **Byes:** OK all; limit 3 (limit 2 in last 4 rds), must commit before rd 3. **Electronic device rules:** see devicerules.com. **Awards:** If not claimed at tournament, paid electronically by Zelle or PayPal. **HR:** \$99-99-109-119, link at chessevents.us or 703-620-9000, reserve by 9/17 or rate may increase. **Car rental:** Avis, 800-331-1600, use AWD #D657633 or reserve car online at chesshour.com. **Ent:** Continental Chess, Box 8482, Pelham NY 10803. **Questions:** Director@Chess.US **Refunds,** \$15 service charge. **Entries posted** at chessaction.com (click "entry list" after entering). **Bring set, board, clock** if possible - none supplied. **Blitz tournament** Sun. 9:30 pm, enter by 9:15 pm.

HERITAGE EVENT + GRAND PRIX + ENHANCED GRAND PRIX + JUNIOR GRAND PRIX

29th annual Midwest Class Championships

OCTOBER 8-10 OR 9-10, ILLINOIS
US CHESS GRAND PRIX POINTS: 120 (ENHANCED)
SSS, 40/80, SD/30+30 (2-day option, rds 1-2 G/60 d10), Westin Chicago North Shore Hotel, 6013 North Milwaukee Ave., Wheeling, IL 60090 (from Chicago, I-294 north to US-45 north; from Milwaukee, I-94 to Lake Cook Rd to US-45 south). Free parking. **\$20,000 guaranteed prizes.** In 7 sections. **Premier (2000/ up):** \$2000-1000-500-300, clear win or 1st on tiebreak \$100, top U2300 \$800-400. **FIDE. 1800-2099:** \$1400-700-400-200. **FIDE. 1600-1899/Unr:** \$1400-700-400-200. **1400-1699/Unr:** \$1300-700-400-200. **1200-1499/Unr:** \$1200-600-400-200. **Under 1300/Unr:** \$1000-500-300-200. **Under 1100/Unr:** \$500-300-200-100, plaques to top 3, top U900, U700, U500, Unrated. **Mixed doubles bonus prizes:** best male/female 2-player combined score among all sections: \$800-400-200. Most average under 2200; may play in different sections; register (no extra fee) by 2 pm 10/9. **Unrated prize limits:** \$100 U1100, \$200 U1300, \$300 1200-1499, \$400 1400-1699, \$500 1600-1899. **Top 6 sections EF:** \$113 online at chessaction.com by 10/6, 3-day \$118, 2-day \$117 mailed by 9/27, all \$130 at site, or online until 2 hrs before round 1. **Under 1100 EF:** all \$50 less than above. **All:** No checks at site, credit cards OK. Online EF \$5 less to ICA members; join/renew at il-chess.org. **Unofficial or Online Regular uschess.org ratings** usually used if otherwise unrated. **If Online Regular rating** is 50 or more points over section or prize maximum, prize limit \$300. **Special 1 yr USCF dues** with magazine if paid with entry. Online at chessaction.com, Adult \$40, Young Adult \$25, Youth \$18. Mailed or at site, \$45, \$27 & \$20. **Re-entry** \$50; no Premier to Premier. GMS \$100 from prize. **3-day schedule:** Reg. ends Fri 6 pm, rds. Fri 7, Sat 11 & 5, Sun 10 & 3:30. **2-day schedule:** Reg. ends Sat 10 am, rds. Sat 11, 2 & 5, Sun 10 & 3:30. **Bye:** all, limit 2; Premier must commit before rd 2, others before rd 3. **HR:** \$119-119-119-119, 800-937-8461, 847-777-6500, reserve by 9/24 or rate may increase. **Car rental:** Avis, 800-331-1600, use AWD #D657633. **Ent:** chessaction.com or Continental Chess, Box 8482, Pelham, NY 10803. **Questions:** Director@Chess.US. \$15 service charge for refunds. **Entries posted** at chessaction.com (click "entry list" after entering). **Awards:** If not claimed at tournament, paid electronically through Zelle or PayPal. **Bring set, board, clock** if possible - none supplied. **Blitz tmt.** Sat. 9:30 pm, reg. By 9:15 pm.

HERITAGE EVENT + GRAND PRIX

**53rd Jerry Spann Memorial
October 9-10, OKLAHOMA**

US CHESS GRAND PRIX POINTS: 10
5-SS, G/90+30. Site: Tulsa Holiday Inn CITY CENTER, 17 W. Seventh Street, Tulsa OK 74119. 918-585-5898. **HR:** \$95. **Three Sections: Open, Reserve (U1800), Unrated (U1200).** EF: \$45 if mailed by 10/4, \$55 thereafter, with these discounts: \$10 off for Seniors over age 60, FREE for Masters 2200+ (deducted from winnings). FREE entry for new USChess members or those renewing after 18 months off. **Registration:** page12image10018303209-945am Sat 10/9. **Prizes \$2200** (1st Prize Gtd, each section, rest b/55 paid entries): Open: \$500(G)-200, X: 200, A: 175. Reserve (U1800): \$250(G) C. 175 D: 175, Unrated (U1200): \$200(G), 1000/below: \$125. **Rounds:** 10-2:30-7, 9-1:15. Byes: One 1/2-pt bye Rds. 1-5 if commit before Sat 9pm. **Adv. Entries:** www.paysal.me/Braunlich or mail T.Braunlich, 1638 S. Carson Ave.#803 Tulsa OK 74119. **Info:** tom.braunlich@cox.net. **Website:** ocfchess.org LS W. *CHECK prior to the tournament for possible last-minute COVID virus policy changes.

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

38th Annual Sands Regency Reno-Western States Open

OCTOBER 15-17 AND 16-17, NEVADA
US CHESS GRAND PRIX POINTS: 150 (ENHANCED)
OPEN SECTION FIDE RATED \$527,500 b/275 GTD\$17,000, 6SS, 6 Sections, OPEN Section 40/2, G/55 Min-d5, ("X"; "A", "B", "C"; "D") Sections 40/2, G/1-45 - 2-Day Schedule G/1-45). Sands Regency Hotel/Casino, 345 N. Arlington Ave, Reno, NV 89501-1866-386-7829 or (775) 348-2200. \$527,500 b/275, GTD \$517,000 (1st - 7th Open Section) plus 1/2 of all other prizes. **OPEN (2200 & above)** EF: \$179. ($2000/2199$) EF: \$250, (1999 & below) EF: \$300, (GMS & IMs free but must enter by (9/18) or pay late fee). \$52,000-1,000-900-800-700-600-500, (2399/below) - \$1,000-500, (2299/below) - \$1,000-500. (If there is a tie for 1st then a playoff for \$100 out of prize fund plus trophy). **EXPERT Section (2000-2199)** EF: \$179; \$52,000-1,000-500-300-200. **Sec. "A"** (1800-1999) EF: \$178; \$51,800-

900-500-300-300, **Sec. "B"** (1600-1799) EF: \$177; \$51,700-800-400-300-300, **Sec. "C"** (1400-1599) EF: \$176; \$51,500-700-400-300-300, **Sec. "D"** (under \$1399 & below) EF: \$165; \$51,000-500-300-200; (1199 & below) - \$5300; **2-Day EF:** \$175 (No Open Section). Top Senior (65+) - \$200; Club Champ. - \$600-300. **ALL:** Entries must be postmarked by 9/18 or pay late fee \$11, do not mail after 10/8 or email after 10/12, \$22 at site. **Trophies:** Open Champion, 1st Senior, 1st Unrated, 1st Expert and 1st - 3rd ("A" - "D" sections). Unrated players are free entry but not eligible for cash prizes - must join USCF for 1 full year thru this tournament. 1st UNR = Trophy + 1 yr USCF Mem. Senior Discount (65+) - \$20. Players may play up. Provisionally rated players may only win 1/2 of 1st place money (except Open Section 1st-7th). CCA ratings may be used. Note: pairings not changed for color unless 3 in a row or cause a plus 3 and if the unlikely situation occurs 3 colors in a row may be assigned. **SIDE EVENTS:** Wed. (10/13) 7:00pm GM Sergey Kudrin - Clock Simul with game analysis (ONLY \$30!); Thurs. (10/14) 6-7:15pm Lecture by IM John Donaldson (FREE); 7:30pm-GM Enrico Sevillano - Simul (\$20); 7:30pm-Blitz (G/5 d0!) Tourney (\$25) 80% entries = Prize Fund. Sat. (10/16) (3-4:30pm) Free Game/Position Analysis - IM John Donaldson. **REG:** (Thurs,10/14) 5-8pm (Friday,10/15) 9-10am and (Sat,10/16) 9-10 am. RDS: (Fri) 12-7, (Sat) 10-6, (Sun) 9:30-4:30. 2-Day (10/16) Rd 1 (10:30 am), Rd 2 (12:45 pm), Rd 3 (3:00 pm), Rd 4 merge with regular schedule - (6:00 pm). Byes available any round if requested by Rd.1 (Open Section 2 byes max). **ENT:** make checks payable and send to: SANDS REGENCY (address listed above), postmarked by 9/18. \$11 late fee if postmarked after 9/18. Do not mail after 10/8 or email after 10/12 - \$22 late fee at site. **HR:** (Sun-Thurs. 5:55-30) (Fri. & Sat. \$117.51) 1-866-386-7829 Reservation Code: CHESS2021 (Reserve by 10/11/21 to get Chess rate. Under 21 years of age must check in the hotel with an adult.) **ALL prize winners** (including juniors attending with parents) must have photo to id to collect prize money at site. *****Neither the tournament director(s) nor the Sands Regency will be held liable for any player/spectator whose health may be compromised by attending the tournament. In addition, the tournament may be restricted based on current State/Government Covid19 regulations.*** INFO:** Jerry Weikel, 6578 Valley Wood Dr., Reno, NV 89523, (H) 775-747-1405 or (Cell) 775-354-8728 (AFTER 10/14/21 please call cell number ONLY or the Sands Regency), wackyjk@aol.com or check

out our website at: www.renochess.org. To verify your entry, please check Reno Chess website.

GRAND PRIX • ENHANCED GRAND PRIX • JUNIOR GRAND PRIX

7th annual Central New York Open OCTOBER 22-24 OR 23-24, NEW YORK

US CHESS GRAND PRIX POINTS: 30 (ENHANCED) SSS, 40/80, SD/30 +30 (2-day option, rds 1-2 G/60 d10), Quality Inn & Suites Fairgrounds, 100 Farrell Road, Syracuse 13209. Free parking, free breakfast, free wifi. **\$5000 guaranteed** prize fund; 4 sections. **Open:** Open to all. \$700-400-200, top USCF U2100 \$300-150. **FIDE. Under 2000:** \$500-250-150, top U1800 \$300-150. **FIDE. Under 1700:** \$400-200-100, top U1500 (no unr) \$240-120. **Under 1400:** \$200-100-60, top U1200 (no unr) \$120-60. **Unrated prize limit** \$100 in U1400, \$200 U1700. **Mixed doubles:** \$200-100 to best male/female team combined score among all sections. **Must average under 2200;** may play different sections; register (no extra fee) by 2 pm 10/23. **College team prizes:** Plaques to top 2 teams (top 3 from school, all sections). **Scholastic team prizes:** Plaques to top 2 K-12 teams (top 3 from school, all sections). **Top 3 sections EF:** \$88 at chessection.com by 10/20, 3-day \$93, 2-day \$92 mailed by 10/11, \$100 at site or online until 1 hour before round 1. NYSCA members, online entry \$5 less (may join with entry). **U1400 Section EF:** all \$20 less than above. **No checks** at site, credit cards OK. **GMs, IMs & WGMs:** \$80 from prize. **All:** Re-entry \$40; no Open to Open. **Unofficial or Online Regular uschess.org ratings** usually used if otherwise unrated. If Online Regular rating is 50 or more points over section or prize maximum, prize limit \$150. **Special 1 yr USCF** with magazine if paid with entry. Online at chessection.com, Adult \$40, Young Adult \$25, Scholastic \$18. Mailed or at site, \$45, \$27 or \$20. **3-day reg.** ends Sat 6 pm, rds. Fri 7, Sat 11 & 5, Sun 10 & 3:30. **2-day reg.** ends Sat 10 am, rds Sat 11, 2 & 5, Sun 10 & 3:30. **Bye:** all, limit 2; must commit before rd 2. **HR:** \$69-69, reserve by 10/4, link at chessevents.us (recommended) or call 315-457-8700. **Ent:** chessection.com or Continental Chess, Box 8482, Pelham NY 10803. **Questions:** Director@Chess.US. Prizes not claimed at site paid by Zelle or PayPal. **Refunds:** \$15 service charge. **Entries posted** at chessection.com (click "entry list" after entering). **Blitz tmt.** Sat 9:30 pm, reg. ends 9:15 pm. **Bring set, board, clock** if possible - none supplied.

GRAND PRIX • ENHANCED GRAND PRIX • JUNIOR GRAND PRIX

16th annual Los Angeles Open NOVEMBER 5-7 OR 6-7, CALIFORNIA, SOUTHERN

US CHESS GRAND PRIX POINTS: 80 SSS, 40/80, SD/30 +30 (2-day option, rds. 1-2 G/60 d10), Airtel Plaza Hotel, 7277 Valjean Ave, Van Nuys CA 91406. Parking about \$8/day, \$12 including overnight. Flyaway bus, LAX-Van Nuys about \$10 each way; free shuttle to bus and train station. Free wireless, gym, indoor pool, hot tubs; restaurants within walking distance. **\$15,000 guaranteed prizes.** 6 sections. **Major:** Open to 1900/up (see peakrating.us). \$1500-800-400-300, clear or tiebreak winner \$100 bonus, top U2250 \$600-300, FIDE. **Under 2050:** \$1200-600-400-200. **FIDE. Under 1850:** \$1200-600-400-200. **Under 1650:** \$1100-600-300-200. **Under 1450:** \$1000-500-300-200. **Under 1200:** \$500-250-150-100. **Unofficial or Online Regular uschess.org ratings** usually used if otherwise unrated. **Unrated prize limits:** U1200 \$100, U1450 \$200, U1650 \$300, U1850 \$400. **If USCF Online Regular rating** is 50 or more points over section maximum, prize limit \$200. **Mixed doubles bonus prizes:** best male/female 2-player team combined score among all sections: \$500-300-200. Team must average under 2200; may play in different sections; register (no extra fee) by 2 pm 11/6. **Top 5 sections EF:** \$113 online at chessection.com by 11/3, 3-day \$118, 2-day \$117 mailed by 10/25, \$130 online or at site until 1 hour before round 1. **Under 1200 EF:** all \$40 less than top 5 sections EF. **GMs** \$100 from prize. **No checks** at site; credit cards OK. **Online EF** \$5 less to SCCF members; join/renew at scchess.com. **All: Special 1 yr USCF dues** with magazine if paid with entry: Online at chessection.com, Adult \$40, Young Adult \$25, Youth \$18. Mailed or at site, \$45, \$27 & \$20. Re-entry (no Major to Major) \$60. **3-day schedule:** Reg. Fri to 6 pm, rds Fri 7, Sat 11 & 5, Sun 10 & 3:30. **2-day schedule:** Reg. Sat to 10 am, rds Sat 11, 2 & 5, Sun 10 & 3:30. **Byes:** OK all rds, limit 2; must commit before rd 2. **Prizes not claimed** at site paid by Zelle or PayPal. **HR:** \$114-114, \$18-997-7676, reserve by 10/22 or rate may increase. **Car rental:** Avis, 800-331-1600, use AWD #0657633. **Questions:** Director@Chess.US. **Ent:** chessection.com or Continental Chess, PO Box 8482, Pelham NY 10803. **Refunds,** \$15 service charge. **Entries posted** at chessection.com (click "entry list" after entering). **Blitz tournament** Saturday 9:30 pm, enter by 9:15 pm.

GRAND PRIX • ENHANCED GRAND PRIX • JUNIOR GRAND PRIX

30th annual Kings Island Open NOVEMBER 12-14 OR 13-14, OHIO

US CHESS GRAND PRIX POINTS: 150 SSS, 40/80, SD/30 +30 (2-day option, rds 1-2 G/60 d10), Embassy Suites Cincinnati NE, 4554 Lake Forest Dr, Blue Ash OH 45242 (I-71 to Exit 15 or I-275N to Exit 47). Free parking. **\$25,000 guaranteed.** 7 sections. **Major (1900/up):** \$2500-1300-700-500-300, clear/tiebreak 1st \$100 bonus, top U2300 \$1200-600. **FIDE. See peakrating.us.** **Under 2100:** \$1600-800-400-300-200. **FIDE. Under 1900:** \$1600-800-400-300-200. **Under 1700:** \$1400-700-400-300-200. **Under 1500:** \$1200-600-400-300-200. **Under 1250:** \$1000-500-400-300-200. **Under 1000:** \$800-400-250-150-100. **Mixed doubles:** best male/female 2-player team combined score among all sections: \$800-400-200. Must average under 2200; may play in different sections; register (no extra fee) by 2 pm 11/13; prize limits do not apply to mixed doubles. **Unrated prize limits:** U1000 \$100, U1250 \$200, U1500 \$300, U1700 \$400, U1900 \$500. Balance goes to next player(s) in line. **Top 6 sections EF:** \$128 online at chessection.com by 11/10, 3-day \$133, 2-day \$132 mailed by 11/1, \$150 at site or online until an hour before rd 1. **GMs** \$120 from prize. **Under 1000 Section EF:** all \$30 less than above. **OCA members:** online EF \$5 less. **All:** No checks at site, credit cards OK. Re-entry \$60; no Major to Major. **Unofficial or Online Regular USCF ratings** usually used if otherwise unrated. **If Online Regular rating** is 50 or more points over section or prize maximum, prize limit \$400. **Special 1 yr USCF dues** with magazine if paid with entry - online at chessection.com, Adult \$40, Young Adult \$25, Youth \$18. Mailed or at site, \$45, \$27 & \$20. **3-day schedule:** Reg ends Fri 6 pm, rds Fri 7 pm, Sat 11 & 5, Sun 10 & 3:30. **2-day schedule:** Reg ends Sat 10 am, rds Sat 11, 2 & 5, Sun 10 & 3:30. **Byes:** OK all; limit 2, must commit by rd 2. **HR:** Suite with king bed & queen couch/bed \$108, suite with 2 beds & queen couch/bed \$118, more than 2 in room \$10 more each additional. Free hot breakfast for all room occupants, free wifi. Up to 4 allowed in king suite, to 6 in larger suite. 513-733-8900, reserve by 11/1 or rate may increase. **Car rental:** Avis, 800-331-1600, use AWD #0657633, or reserve through chesstour.com. Car rental is easiest & cheapest transportation from Cincinnati Airport. **Ent:** chessection.com or Continental Chess, Box 8482, Pelham NY 10803. **Questions:** Director@Chess.US. Refunds, \$15

Continental Chess OTB Tournament Schedule

See www.chessevents.us for details & possible changes, or TLA for details

CONTINENTAL OPEN, Aug 12-16, 12-15, 13-15 or 14-15, Sturbridge, Mass. GM & IM norms possible in 9 round Premier Section, other sections are 7 rounds. \$40,000 projected prizes including \$4000 foreign GM pool, \$30,000 minimum guaranteed.

CENTRAL CALIFORNIA OPEN, Aug 20-22 or 21-22, Fresno. \$10,000 guaranteed prizes.

ATLANTIC OPEN, Aug 27-29 or 28-29, Reston VA, near DC. \$30,000 guaranteed prizes.

INDIANAPOLIS OPEN, Aug 27-29 or 28-29. \$14,000 guaranteed prizes.

NEW YORK STATE CHAMPIONSHIP, Sept 3-6, 4-6 or 5-6, Albany. 6 rds, \$14,000 guaranteed.

EASTERN CHESS CONGRESS, Oct 1-3 or 2-3, Princeton NJ. \$20,000 guaranteed.

WASHINGTON CHESS CONGRESS, Oct 7-11, 8-11 or 9-11, Reston VA, Columbus Day weekend. \$30,000 guaranteed prizes including \$4000 foreign GM pool, GM & IM norms possible in 9 round Premier Section, other sections are 7 rounds.

MIDWEST CLASS CHAMPIONSHIPS, Oct 8-10 or 9-10, Wheeling, Illinois. \$20,000 guaranteed.

CENTRAL NEW YORK OPEN. Oct 22-24 or 23-24, Quality Inn Fairgrounds, Syracuse. \$5000 guaranteed prizes.

LOS ANGELES OPEN, Nov 5-7 or 6-7, Van Nuys. \$15,000 guaranteed prizes.

KINGS ISLAND OPEN, Nov 12-14 or 13-14, Embassy Suites Cincinnati Northeast. \$25,000 guaranteed prizes,

NIAGARA FALLS OPEN, Nov 19-21 or 20-21, Sheraton Hotel. \$15,000 guaranteed prizes.

NATIONAL CHESS CONGRESS, Nov 26-28 or 27-28, 6 rounds, Loews Philadelphia Hotel. \$43,000 guaranteed prizes.

NORTH AMERICAN OPEN at Bally's Las Vegas, Dec 26-30, 26-29 or 27-29. Open 9 rounds with GM & IM norms possible, other sections 7 rounds. \$125,000 guaranteed prizes!

OTHER EVENTS: See www.chessevents.us.

service charge. **Entries posted at chessaction.com** (click on "entry list" after entry). **Prizes not claimed** at site sent by Zelle or PayPal. **Blitz tournament** Sat 9:30 pm, reg. by 9:15 pm.

GRAND PRIX + ENHANCED GRAND PRIX + JUNIOR GRAND PRIX

Niagara Falls Open

NOVEMBER 19-21 OR 20-21, NEW YORK

US CHESS GRAND PRIX POINTS: 120 (ENHANCED)

5SS, 40/80, SD/30 +30 (2-day option), rds 1-2 G/60 d10), Sheraton Niagara Falls, 300 3rd St, Niagara Falls NY 14303, adjacent to Seneca Niagara Resort Casino. Free parking, 25 miles from Buffalo Airport, free wifi, special offers for casino and other local attractions. **\$15,000 guaranteed prizes.** In 5 sections. **Major:** Open to 1900/above. \$2000-1000-600-400, clear/tie-break winner \$100 bonus, top USCF U2300 \$600-300. **FIDE. Under 2100:** \$1000-500-300-200, top Under 1900/Unr \$400-200. **FIDE. Under 1800:** \$1000-500-300-200, top Under 1600 (no Unr) \$400-200. **Under 1500:** \$800-450-300-200, top Under 1300 (no Unr) \$300-150. **Under 1200:** \$600-400-200-100, top Under 1000 (no Unr) \$200-100. **Mixed doubles bonus prizes:** best male/female 2-player team combined score among all sections: \$500-300-200. Must average under 2200; may play different sections; register (no extra fee) by 2 pm 11/20. **Unrated prize limits:** U1200 \$100, U1500 \$200, U1800 \$300. **Playing up in Major:** see pekrating.us. **Top 5 sections EF:** \$118 online at chessaction.com by 11/17, 3-day \$123, 2-day \$122 mailed by 11/8, all \$130 (no checks, credit cards OK) at site or online until 1 hour before round 1. **GMs \$100 from prize. U1200 Section EF:** all \$20 less than above. **Online EF \$5** less to NYSCA members. **Unofficial or Online Regular USCF ratings** usually used if otherwise unrated. **If Online Regular rating** is 50 or more points over section or prize maximum, prize limit \$200. **Special 1 year USCF dues** with magazine if paid with entry. Online at chessaction.com, Adult or Senior \$40, Young Adult \$25, Youth \$18. Mailed or at site, \$45, \$27 & \$20. **Re-entry \$50;** no Major to Major. **3-day schedule:** Reg ends Fri 6 pm, rds. Fri 7 pm, Sat 11 & 5, Sun 10 & 3:30. **2-day schedule:** Reg ends Sat 10 am, rds. Sat 11, 2 & 5, Sun 10 & 3:30. **All:** Half point byes OK all, limit 2, must commit before rd 2. **HR:** \$89-89, best to use link at chessaction.com (may also call 716-285-3361, request chess rate). Reserve by 11/6 or rate may increase. **Prizes not claimed** at site paid by Zelle or PayPal. **Car rental:** Avis, 800-331-1600, AWD D657633, or reserve car online through chessaction.com. **Ent:** chessaction.com or Continental Chess, Box 8482, Pelham NY 10803. \$15 service charge for refunds. **Questions:** Director@Chess.US. **Entries posted at chessaction.com** (click "entry list" after entering). **Blitz tournament** Sat 9:30 pm, enter by 9:15 pm. **Bring set, board, clock** if possible- none supplied.

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

52nd annual National Chess Congress

NOVEMBER 26-28 OR 27-28, PENNSYLVANIA

US CHESS GRAND PRIX POINTS: 200 (ENHANCED)

6SS, 40/90, SD/30 +30 (2-day option), rds 1-3 G/50 d10), U800 & U600 sections play separate 2-day schedule only, 11/27-28, G/50 d10. **Loews Hotel**, 1200 Market St, Philadelphia PA 19107, \$43,000 **GUARANTEED PRIZES.** In 10 sections. **Premier (2000/over):** \$4000-2000-1000-600-400, clear win or tiebreak 1st \$200, USCF U2400 \$1800-900. **FIDE. Under 2200:** \$2400-1200-600-400-300. **FIDE. Under 1800:** \$2400-1200-600-400-300. **Under 1600:** \$2000-1000-600-400-300. **Under 1400:** \$1600-800-500-300-200. **Under 1200:** \$1400-700-400-300-200. **Under 1000:** \$1200-600-400-300-200. **Under 800:** Trophies to top 10, top 3 same school scholastic/college teams of 3. **Under 600:** Trophies to top 10, top 3 same school scholastic/college teams of 3. **Unrated** may not win over \$200 in U1000, \$300 U1200, \$400 U1400, \$500 U1600, \$600 U1800, or \$700 U2000. **Mixed doubles:** top male-female combined score \$2000-1000-600-400, averaging under 2200, any sections, reg. before both players begin rd 2, teams including an unrated limited to \$400. **Top 8 sections entry fee:** \$138 online at chessaction.com by 11/24, 3-day \$143, 2-day \$142 mailed by 11/15 <http://entry.cc/home/merchant.wm>, \$160 at site or online until 90 minutes before rd 1. **GMs \$120 from prize.** Re-entry (no Premier to Premier) \$60. **Under 800, Under 600 EF:** \$48 online <http://entry.cc/home/merchant.wm> at chessaction.com by 11/24, \$52 mailed by 11/20, \$60 by 9/27 online or at site. **All:** No checks at site, credit cards OK. **Special 1 yr USCF** with magazine paid with entry. At chessaction.com, Adult \$40, Young Adult \$25, Youth \$18. Mailed or at site, \$45, \$27 & \$20. **3-day schedule:** Reg ends Fri 11 am, rds. Fri 12 & 6:15, Sat 12 & 6:15, Sun 10 & 4. **2-day**

top 8 sections schedule: Reg. ends Sat. 9 am, rds Sat 10, 12:45, 3:30 & 6:15, Sun 10 & 4. **2-day U800 & U600 sections schedule:** Reg. ends Sat 9 am, rds 10, 12:45 & 3:30 each day. **Half point byes** OK all rounds; limit 3, must commit before rd 3. **HR:** \$114-114-139-139, link at chessaction.com (recommended) or 215-627-1200, reserve by 11/11. **Parking:** Loews valet chess rate 25% off regular (about \$36). Gateway Garage, 3/5 mile away at 1540 Spring St (1 block from Sheraton Hotel), about 59/day Sat & Sun, \$25 other days. **Car rental:** 800-331-1600, use AWD D657633 or link at chessaction.com. **Ent:** chessaction.com or Continental Chess, Box 8482, Pelham NY 10803. **Refunds,** \$15 service charge. **Questions:** Director@Chess.US. **Advance entries** posted at chessaction.com (click "entry list" after entry). **Blitz tournament** Sat 10 pm; enter by 9:45 pm.

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

31st annual North American Open

DECEMBER 26-30, 26-29 OR 27-29, NEVADA

US CHESS GRAND PRIX POINTS: 300 (ENHANCED)

Open Section, Dec 26-30: 9SS, 40/100, SD/30 +30. GM & IM norms possible. **Other sections, Dec 26-29 or 27-29:** 7SS, 40/100, SD/30 +30 (3-day option), rds 1-2 G/60 d10). Bally's Casino Resort, 3645 Las Vegas Blvd. S, Las Vegas, NV 89103. **\$125,000 guaranteed prizes.** In 7 sections. **Open:** \$10000-5000-3000-2000-1300-1000-800-700-600-500, clear winner or 1st on tiebreak bonus \$300, top FIDE Under 2400/Unr \$3000-2000-1000. **FIDE rated,** GM & IM norms possible. **Under 2300:** \$7000-4000-2000-1200-800-600-500-400-400. **FIDE. Under 2100:** \$7000-4000-2000-1200-800-600-500-400-400. **FIDE. Under 1900:** \$7000-4000-2000-1200-800-600-500-400-400. **Under 1700:** \$6000-3000-1500-1000-800-600-500-400-400. **Under 1500:** \$5000-2500-1300-1000-700-600-500-400-300-300. **Under 1250:** \$3000-1500-1000-800-600-500-400-400-300-300, top Under 1000 (no unr) \$1000-500. No separate U1000 section; under 1000 in U1250 play for both U1250 and U1000 prizes; receive larger if winning both. **Prize limits:** 1) Unrated limit \$500 in U1250, \$1000 U1500, \$1300 U1700, \$1600 U1900, \$2000 U2100. 2) Under 26 OTB regular games played as of Dec 2021 official may not win over \$1500 U1250, \$3000 U1500 or U1700. Games rated too late for Dec 2021 list not counted. 3) If post-event rating posted 1/1/20-12/20/21 was more than 50 points over section maximum, prize limit \$2000. 4) If USCF Online Regular rating is more than 50 points over section or prize maximum, prize limit \$500. 5) Balance of any limited prize goes to next player(s) in line. **Mixed doubles bonus prizes:** best male/female combined 2-player team score: \$2000-1000-500-300-200. Only rounds 1-7 of Open Section counted. Team must average under 2200; may play in different sections; register (no extra fee) by 3 pm 12/27; prize limits do not apply to doubles. **Top 6 sections EF:** Online at chessaction.com: \$245 <http://chessaction.com> by 9/15, \$275 by 12/23. Mailed by 12/13: 5-day \$280, 4-day \$279, 3-day \$278. Do not mail entry after 12/13. Online 12/24 to 2 hours before round 1, or at site 12/26 to 1 hour before round 1: <http://chessaction.com>/\$300. **Open Section EF \$100** more to US players if not USCF or FIDE rated 2200/over. **Under 1250 Section EF:** All \$100 less than above. **Seniors 65/over in U1500/over:** All \$100 less than above. **Re-entry \$120;** no Open to Open. **Foreign GM:** Free (\$200 from prize); minimum prize \$500 if playing all games with no byes, no deduction from minimum prize. **Foreign IM/WGM/WIM in Open Section:** Free (\$200 from prize); minimum prize \$300 if playing all 9 games with no byes, no deduction from minimum prize. **US IM/WGM, foreign FM/WFM in Open Section:** Entry fees \$150 less than above. **All:** No checks at site, credit cards OK. **Special 1 yr USCF** dues with magazine if paid with entry. Online at chessaction.com, Adult \$40, Young Adult \$25, Youth \$18. Mailed or at site, \$45, \$27 & \$20. **5-day reg.** ends 12/26 10 am, rds 12/26-28 11 & 6, 12/29 10 & 4:30, 12/30 10 am. **4-day reg.** ends 12/26 5 pm, 12/26 6 pm, 12/27-28 11 & 6, 12/29 10 & 4:30. **3-day reg.** ends 12/27 10 am, rds 12/27 11, 2:30 & 6, 12/28 11 & 6, 12/29 10 & 4:30. **Bye:** all, limit 3, limit 2 in last 4 rounds; must commit before rd 3. **HR:** 599-99, 800-833-3308, 702-739-4111, rate may increase or chess block sell out about 11/15. Free parking if guest room at Bally's. **Car rental:** Avis, 800-331-1600, use AWD #657633. **Ratings:** December FIDE used in Open, December official USCF in others. For foreign players in U2300 & below, see foreignratings.com. Players who fail to disclose foreign or FIDE ratings may be expelled. **Special rules:** CCA electronic devices rules used; see devicelures.com. **Prizes not claimed** at site sent by Zelle or PayPal. **Blitz 12/29 10 pm. Ent:** chessaction.com or Continental Chess, Box 249, Salisbury Mills, NY 12577 (Director@Chess.us, www.chessevents.us). \$15 service charge for refunds. **Entries posted at chessaction.com** (Click "entry list" after entering).

Online

Online Scholastic Tournaments Every Wednesday

WEEKLY ON WEDNESDAY, STARTING FROM WEDNESDAY, APRIL 14, 2021

DMV Chess runs weekly scholastic tournaments online every Wednesday! Register/view details for this week's DMV Chess scholastic tournament on our website: dmvchess.com. **Format for our Wednesday Tournaments:** Every Wednesday at 6 pm Eastern Time. Open to players from all geographical locations! **3 round Swiss;** G/25/+5 (USCF-online-regular-rated). **Two Sections:** K-12 and K-5. Trophies as prizes! **Organizer:** DMV Chess **Email:** tournaments@dmvchess.com **Phone:** 703-415-6600 **Website:** <https://www.dmvchess.com/scholastic-tournaments>

Online Scholastic Tournaments Every Saturday

WEEKLY ON SATURDAY, STARTING FROM SATURDAY, APRIL 17, 2021

DMV Chess runs weekly scholastic tournaments online every Saturday! Register/view details for this week's DMV Chess scholastic tournament on our website: dmvchess.com. **Format for our Saturday Tournaments:** Every Saturday at 2 pm Eastern Time. Open to players from all geographical locations! **4 round Swiss;** G/25/+5 (USCF-online-regular-rated). **Four Sections:** K-12, K-8, K-5, and K-3. Trophies as prizes! **Organizer:** DMV Chess **Email:** tournaments@dmvchess.com **Phone:** 703-415-6600 **Website:** <https://www.dmvchess.com/scholastic-tournaments>

Online Open Tournaments Every Sunday

WEEKLY ON SUNDAY, STARTING FROM SUNDAY, APRIL 18, 2021

DMV Chess runs weekly open tournaments online every Sunday! Register/view details for this week's DMV Chess open tournament on our website: dmvchess.com. **Format for our Sunday Tournaments:** Every Sunday at 2 pm Eastern Time. Open to players from all geographical locations! Sections for players of all ages/skill levels. **4 round Swiss;** G/30/+5 (USCF-online-regular-rated). **Four Sections:** Open, Under 1600, and Under 1100, and Under 700. Plaques/trophies as prizes! **Organizer:** DMV Chess **Email:** tournaments@dmvchess.com **Phone:** 703-415-6600 **Website:** <https://www.dmvchess.com/scholastic-tournaments>

Online Blitz Tournaments Every Thursday

WEEKLY ON THURSDAY, JUNE 10 - DECEMBER 30, 2021

Online Blitz Rated Tournaments Every Thursday at 6 pm Eastern Time! All players from any geographical location can participate. **7 Rounds, Time control** of Game in 5 minutes with a 3-second increment. **Registration links** for the upcoming week's blitz tournament are posted every Monday on dmvchess.com. **Questions?** Don't hesitate to contact us at 703-415-6600 or tournaments@dmvchess.com. **Organizer:** DMV Chess **Website:** <https://www.dmvchess.com/>

Climb the Rating Ladder Weekly Courses with USCF Rated Online Games

FRIDAY, JUNE 11 - DECEMBER 31, 2021

Weekly online courses for scholastic players with USCF-rated online games! Students play one rated game every week after which the instructor analyzes the games with the class as a group. **Time control:** Game in 25 minutes with a 5-second increment. Courses on Mondays, Tuesdays, Fridays, and Saturdays! View our full offering of courses on dmvchess.com. **Organizer:** DMV Chess **Email:** courses@dmvchess.com **Phone:** 703-415-6600 **Website:** <https://www.dmvchess.com/>

2nd annual CCA August Open

SATURDAY, AUGUST 21, 2021

5-5S, G/40+10, at Internet Chess Club. \$2000 guaranteed prizes. Must be on Zoom (use real name) to be eligible for prizes (side/rear camera angle); see cazooom.com. In 3 sections. **Open Section:** Open to all, \$400-200-100, top U2200 \$140, U2000 \$120. **Under 1900/Unr Section:** \$250-130-70, top U1700 (no Unr) \$120. **Under 1500/Unr Section:** \$200-100-50, U1300 (no Unr) \$120; unrated limit \$80. **Entry fee** at chessaction.com: \$48 by 8/19, \$65 by 11:30 am EDT 8/21, entry after 10 am EDT 8/21 must take half point by in rd 1. **New players** (first CCA event on ICC) enter by 8/19 or risk not being paired for rd 1. **GMs \$40 from prize.** **Log in** playcca.com 30 minutes before game, rounds begin EDT 11 am, 1:15 pm, 3:30 pm, 5:45 pm,

8 pm. **Half point byes:** Available all rounds, limit 2 byes, must be claimed with registration & cannot be changed. **Online Regular rated** (will not affect OTB ratings). **Online Regular ratings** used for pairings & prizes (OTB Regular used if no Online Regular). \$15 service charge for refunds. **WARNING: YOU MUST BE LOGGED IN WHEN PAIRINGS ARE ISSUED, OR YOU WILL NOT BE PAIRED.**

Regional

CALIFORNIA

AUGUST 20-22 OR 21-22, 2021

11th annual Central California Open (CA)

See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

NOVEMBER 5-7 OR 6-7, 2021

16th annual Los Angeles Open (CA)

See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

CONNECTICUT

AUGUST 12-16, 12-15, 13-15 OR 14-15, 2021

51st annual Continental Open (MA)

See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

IDAHO

WEEKLY ON SUNDAY AND SATURDAY, STARTING FROM SATURDAY, JUNE 5, 2021

Chandra Alexis Chess Club

The Chandra Alexis Chess Club is open Wed.-Sun., 11 a.m. - 4 p.m., for lessons, games and tournaments. The club offers weekly 4 RD/SS USCF/FIDE rated and scholastic team tournaments. We are located at 7337 W. Northview Street, Suite 4, Boise, ID 83704. Suite 4 is the Blue Penicill White Pawn office. As seating is limited to 12 players, all tournaments are invitationals. Check chandraalexischessclub.org for registration information. Contact USCF Senior TD/FIDE National Arbitrator for the U.S., George Lundy, 208-375-1211 evenings.

ILLINOIS

AUGUST 16-21, 2021

2021 North American Youth Chess Championships

Presented by the Renaissance Knights Chess Foundation, International Chess School, US Chess, & FIDE America. **FIDE & USCF Rated - FIDE Titles and Norms will be awarded.** 9 SS, G/90 + 30 second increment per move. **Open & Girls Sections:** Age as of 1/1/2021, Under 8, Under 10, Under 12, Under 14, Under 16, Under 18. **EF:** \$150.00 thru Jun 15, \$175.00 thru Jul 15, \$200.00 thru Aug 15, \$225.00 onsite. **Blitz EF:** \$30 thru Jul 15, \$40 thru Aug 15, \$50 onsite. **Schedule:** Aug 16 - 5 pm Blitz, Aug 17 - 9 am Opening Ceremony, 10 am Rd 1, 4 pm Rd 2, Aug 18 - 10 am Rd 3, 4 pm Rd 4, Aug 19 - 10 am Rd 5, 4 pm Rd 6, Aug 20 - 10 am Rd 7, 4 pm Rd 8, Aug 21 - 10 am Rd 9, 3 pm Closing Ceremony. **Titles to be Awarded:** FIDE Titles and norms will be awarded to the top 3 players in each section. **Awards:** Trophies for the top 10 players in U8 - U14 sections; top 5 players in U16 & U18 Section. **HR:** Hilton Chicago, 720 S Michigan Ave, Chicago, IL 60605 \$165 single/double, \$189 triple, \$214 quad. **Reservations:** Online or 1-312-922-4400 Reserve early rate may increase / sell out. **Byes:** No half-points byes, only zero-point byes. Info: online at: <https://www.naycc2021.com/>

AUGUST 27-29 OR 28-29, 2021

16th annual Indianapolis Open (IN)

See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

SEPTEMBER 24-26 OR 25-26, 2021

Indy FIDE \$10,000 (IN)

See Grand Prix.

OCTOBER 8-10 OR 9-10, 2021

29th annual Midwest Class (IL)

See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

INDIANA

AUGUST 27-29 OR 28-29, 2021

16th annual Indianapolis Open (IN)

See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

SEPTEMBER 24-26 OR 25-26, 2021

Indy FIDE \$10,000 (IN)

See Grand Prix.

OCTOBER 8-10 OR 9-10, 2021
29th annual Midwest Class (IL)
 See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

NOVEMBER 12-14 OR 13-14, 2021
30th annual Kings Island Open (OH)
 See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

◆ KENTUCKY

AUGUST 27-29 OR 28-29, 2021
16th annual Indianapolis Open (IN)
 See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

SEPTEMBER 24-26 OR 25-26, 2021
Indy FIDE \$10,000
 See Grand Prix.

NOVEMBER 12-14 OR 13-14, 2021
30th annual Kings Island Open (OH)
 See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

◆ MARYLAND

MARYLAND CHESS TOURNAMENTS (NORTH PENN CHESS CLUB)

Maryland Chess runs 21+ annual K-12 tournaments every other Saturday from September through June & 12+ annual 1-day or multi-day open tournaments for adults & K-12 players on weekends. See www.MDChess.org for tournament announcements, registration for tournaments, updated wallcharts, live standings, signup for K-12 & open e-newsletters, lists of coaches & clubs, camp announcements, & news. K-12 MD players who compete in the Varsity section (for players rated 1600+) of 1 of 8+ annual MD-Sweet-16 Qualifiers can qualify for the \$48,000+ scholarship to the University of Maryland, Baltimore County awarded annually. UMBC is a perennial top-10 contender for the collegiate national chess championship.

AUGUST 27-29 OR 28-29, 2021
52nd annual Atlantic Open (VA)
 See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

OCTOBER 7-11, 8-11, OR 9-11, 2021
12th annual Washington Chess Congress (VA)
 See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

NOVEMBER 26-28 OR 27-28, 2021
52nd annual National Chess Congress (PA)
 See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

◆ MASSACHUSETTS

AUGUST 12-16, 12-15, 13-15 OR 14-15, 2021
51st annual Continental Open (MA)
 See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

◆ MICHIGAN

SEPTEMBER 3-6, 2021
2021 Michigan Open
 See Grand Prix.

SEPTEMBER 4, 2021
2021 Michigan Speed Championship
 See Grand Prix.

SEPTEMBER 24-26 OR 25-26, 2021
Indy FIDE \$10,000 (IN)
 See Grand Prix.

◆ NEW JERSEY

AUGUST 27-29 OR 28-29, 2021
52nd annual Atlantic Open (VA)
 See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

SEPTEMBER 4, 2021
New Jersey Scholastic K-8 Championship
 5-SS, G/30 d5. Newly renovated! Hyatt Morristown, 3 Speedwell Ave., Morristown, NJ 07960. Phone: 973-647-1234, mention NJ Chess. Free parking, public transportation to NYC, Phil. walking distance, 30 restaurants, shops and parks within 5 minute stroll. Masks must be worn. Please go to NJSCF.org for additional information

and COVID-19 rules. In three sections: Under 1200, Under 900, Under 600. Trophies to Top Ten in each section. **Registration:** Saturday, Sept 4th, 11 am - 12 noon. **Rounds:** 12:30 pm, then ASAP. EF: \$35 if postmarked by August 25th. \$45 cash at site. \$37 online at rjscf.org until midnight 9/2. One 1/2 point bye allowed if requested with entry fee. August Rating Supplement used. **Entries:** to Hal Sprechman, 15 Reigate Ln, Manchester, NJ 08759. Entries must include section, name, USCF ID and expiration date, mailing address, email address, phone number, and entry fee. Checks made out to NJSCF. Questions to halsprechman@gmail.com, phone: (732) 259-3881. W.

OCTOBER 1-3, 2021
25th annual Eastern Chess Congress (NJ)
 See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

NOVEMBER 26-28 OR 27-28, 2021
52nd annual National Chess Congress (PA)
 See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

◆ NEW YORK

AUGUST 12-16, 12-15, 13-15 OR 14-15, 2021
51st annual Continental Open (MA)
 See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

AUGUST 27-29 OR 28-29, 2021
52nd annual Atlantic Open (VA)
 See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

OCTOBER 1-3, 2021
25th annual Eastern Chess Congress (NJ)
 See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

OCTOBER 22-24 OR 23-24, 2021
7th annual Central New York Open (NY)
 See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

NOVEMBER 19-21 OR 20-21, 2021
Niagara Falls Open (NY)
 See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

NOVEMBER 26-28 OR 27-28, 2021
52nd annual National Chess Congress (PA)
 See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

◆ OHIO

MONTHLY ON SUNDAY, STARTING FROM SUNDAY, APRIL 25, 2021, UNTIL SUNDAY, OCTOBER 10, 2021

Sunday In The Park Series
 Griggs Dam Park Shelter House. Sunday in the Park. 2nd and 4th Sunday every month, April 25th through October 10th, 2021. Location: 1st shelter house at Griggs Dam Park, 2933 Riverside Drive Columbus Ohio 43221. Entry: \$20 at site, prizes no less than 75% of entry fees, 2 or more classes, top prize \$100 G. Registration 9:30 am, Tournament @ 10:00 am. Time control G/45, 5 sec. delay. Covid protocol observed. Info: Lou Friscoe 614-228-8111

AUGUST 27-29 OR 28-29, 2021
Indianapolis Open (IN)
 See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

SEPTEMBER 24-26 OR 25-26, 2021
Indy FIDE \$10,000 (IN)
 See Grand Prix.

SEPTEMBER 25-26, 2021
Golden Buckeye Senior Open & Adult U1800 Chess Tournament
 A State Championship Event. A relaxed schedule, rustic secluded venue and natural setting make for a memorable weekend! 2 sections Senior (age 50+), Adult U1800 (age 18+), 5SS G/75 d10. **Registration** Sat 9:30-10. **Rounds** 10:15-2:30; Sun 9:30-1:15. Side blitz Fri eve. **EF** \$45 thru 9/20 then \$55. Trophy prizes, 1st place OH resident is 2021 OH Senior Champ! Golden Buckeye group rate \$119/night thru 8/21, likely to sell out, reserve early, offsite accommodations are at least 30-minutes away. 800-ATA-PARK. **Full details** including health precautions and registration form or link at www.neilley.com/chess_grant@neilley.com, or 614-314-1102. **Address:** 14755 Cadiz Rd, Lore City, OH 43755

NOVEMBER 12-14 OR 13-14, 2021
30th annual Kings Island Open (OH)
 See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

NOVEMBER 19-21 OR 20-21, 2021
Niagara Falls Open (NY)
 See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

◆ PENNSYLVANIA

North Penn Chess Club
 Main & Richardson - St. John's UCC, 500 West Main St., Lansdale, PA 19446. See www.northpennchessclub.org for schedules & info or 215-699-8418

AUGUST 27-29 OR 28-29, 2021
52nd annual Atlantic Open (VA)
 See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

OCTOBER 1-3, 2021
25th annual Eastern Chess Congress (NJ)
 See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

OCTOBER 7-11, 8-11, OR 9-11, 2021
Washington Chess Congress (VA)
 See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

OCTOBER 22-24 OR 23-24, 2021
7th annual Central New York Open (NY)
 See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

NOVEMBER 19-21 OR 20-21, 2021
Niagara Falls Open (NY)
 See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

NOVEMBER 26-28 OR 27-28, 2021
52nd annual National Chess Congress (PA)
 See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

◆ VIRGINIA

AUGUST 27-29 OR 28-29, 2021
52nd annual Atlantic Open (VA)
 See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

OCTOBER 7-11, 8-11 OR 9-11, 2021
Washington Chess Congress (VA)
 See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

NOVEMBER 26-28 OR 27-28, 2021
52nd annual National Chess Congress (PA)
 See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

◆ WASHINGTON

OCTOBER 2-3, 2021
16th Susan Polgar Foundation National Open for Girls & Boys
2-day Championship Sections: K-5 Open, K-8 Open, K-12 Open, K-5 Girls, K-8 Girls, K-12 Girls. Format: 6SS, G/60; d5. Dual NWSRS and US Chess Rated. Rounds: Sat/Sun @ 9:30am, 12:00pm, and 2:30pm. Prizes include \$100,000 in Scholarships to Webster University!
1-day Sections (Saturday-only): K-3 Open, 4-8 Open, 9-12 Open, K-1 U800, 2-3 U800, 4-8 U900. Format: 5SS, G/30; d5. Dual NWSRS and US Chess rated Open sections, NWSRS rated Reserve sections. Rounds: Sat @ 9:30am, 11:00am, 12:30pm, 2:00pm, 3:30pm. WA State Elementary Qualifier. **Fun Side Events:** Saturday 10/2: 11am-12pm - Parents & Coaches Seminar, 2-3pm - Girls Workshop, 5:30-8pm - Simul and Q&A. Sunday 10/3: 8:30-9:30am - Breakfast w/ Susan, 10am-4pm - Polgar Chess Camp, 5-5:30pm - Puzzle Solving Competition, 5:30-7pm - Blitz Championship. **All Sections:** Registration deadline Fri. Oct 1 @ 5pm. Check-in required only for those that did not pre-pay: 8 - 8:45am. Unpaid players not checked in by 8:45am will receive a zero-point bye for any missed rounds. Trophies for top-scoring individuals and teams. Higher of US Chess or NWSRS rating will be used to determine section and pairings. **Hotel Information:** Hyatt Regency Bellevue, address above. **Phone:** 425.698.4250, request the Polgar Chess block. For online hotel reservations: <https://www.hyatt.com/en-US/group-booking/BELLE/G-SPOL> Cut-off date for discounted hotel reservations is 9/3/2021. **Flyer:** https://nvchess.com/calendar/SPFNO_2021.pdf **Address:** 900 Bellevue Way NE, Bellevue, WA 98004 **Organizer:** Washington Chess Federation **Email:** WashingtonChessFederation@gmail.com **Phone:** 206-769-3757 **Website:** <http://www.spfno.com/>

◆ WISCONSIN

OCTOBER 8-10 OR 9-10, 2021
29th annual Midwest Class (IL)
 See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

THANK YOU TO OUR BENEFACTORS

Thank-you for being the sustaining force behind all our initiatives, and for making all of our programs possible.



For a full list of our Benefactors please visit

<https://new.uschess.org/benefactor-members>





Gold & Silver Affiliates



US CHESS would like to recognize and thank all of our Affiliates for their commitment and hard work.

US CHESS GOLD AFFILIATES

Bay Area Chess

2050 Concourse Drive #42
San Jose, CA 95131
408-409-6596
ask@bayareachess.com
www.bayareachess.com

ChessNYC.com

1562 1st Ave #189
New York, NY 10128
212-475-8130
info@chessnyc.com
www.chessnyc.com

New Millennium Chess LLC

70 Pine Street, PH 5601
New York, NY 10005
212-475-8130
info@NewMillenniumChess.org
www.NewMillenniumChess.org

Chess Club and Scholastic Center of Saint Louis

4657 Maryland Avenue,
St. Louis, MO 63108
314-361-CHESS
info@saintlouischessclub.org
www.saintlouischessclub.org

Berkeley Chess School

2622 San Pablo Avenue,
Berkeley, CA 94702
510-843-0150
tournaments@berkeleychess
school.org
www.berkeleychessschool.org

Continental Chess Association

P.O. Box 8482
Pelham, NY 10803
201-347-2269
director@chess.us
www.chesstour.com

PaperClip Pairings

4 Jalapa Court
Brownsville, TX 78526
956-621-0377
rrferrari@bisd.us

San Diego Chess Club

2225 Sixth Avenue,
San Diego, CA 92101
619-752-4377
chucnglo@aol.com
www.sandiegochessclub.org

Capital Area Chess

Centreville VA
703-627-5314
info@capitalareachess.com
www.capitalareachess.com

Marshall Chess Club

23 West 10th Street,
New York, NY 10011
212-477-3716
admin@marshallchessclub.org
www.marshallchessclub.org

Sacred Heart University Chess Club

5151 Park Avenue
Fairfield, CT 06825
203-365-4827
clubchess@sacredheart.edu
www.sacredheartclubsports.
com/sports/Chess

WilliamsburgTutoring.com

60 Broadway
Brooklyn NY 11249
info@ChessNYC.com
www.WilliamsburgTutoring.com

Caveman Chess, LLC

27 Morris Street
Park Ridge, IL 60068
224-985-5244
contact@cavemanchess.com
www.cavemanchess.com

US CHESS SILVER AFFILIATES

Chess Center of New York (NY)

www.chesscenter.cc

Little House of Chess, Inc. (NY)

littlehouseofchess.com

Oklahoma Chess Foundation (OK)

www.OCFchess.org

En Passant Chess Club (TX)

td_edg@twc.com

Long Island Chess Nuts (NY)

516-739-3907

Rochester Chess Center (NY)

www.chessset.com

Evangel Chess Club (AL)

www.evangelchurch.me

Michigan Chess Association (MI)

www.michess.org

Sparta Chess Club (NJ)

www.spartachessclub.org

Jersey Shore HS Chess League (NJ)

shoreschessleague@yahoo.com

TLA CHESS (VA)

tla.chess.llc@gmail.com

For all information on becoming a Gold or Silver Affiliate, please visit www.uschess.org/content/view/7905/95.

CORRESPONDENCE CHESS

Check out these US Chess Rated Events!

7-Player Championship Events

2021 Golden Knights (Postal) | **2021 Electronic Knights** (Email)

FORMAT: Players play 6 games as single round robin, groupings based on order entries received. Players start in Preliminary round and qualify for Semi-final and then Final rounds based on scores in previous round. **ENTRY FEE:** \$25 per entry. Players can enter up to a maximum of 10 times per event. **PRIZES:** Prize fund of \$2300 based on 200 entries. \$10 correspondence chess gift certificate to players knocked out in Preliminary round.

7-Player Round Robins

Victor Palciauskas Tournament (ICCF Server)

FORMAT: Players play 6 games as single round robin, groupings based on ratings. **ENTRY FEE:** \$5 per entry. **PRIZES:** 1st place receives a signed certificate.

4-Player Quads

John W. Collins Memorial (Postal) | **Walter Muir E-Quads** (ICCF Server)

FORMAT: Players play 6 games as double round robin, groupings based on ratings. **ENTRY FEE:** \$10 per entry. **PRIZES:** 1st place receives \$25 correspondence chess gift certificate and signed certificate.

2-Player Matches (Postal or Email)

FORMAT: Players play either 2 or 6 games against the same opponent, pairings based on ratings or players may name their own opponent. **ENTRY FEE:** \$5 per entry. **PRIZES:** None.

Three ways to enter:

- Visit us online at uschess.org
- Mail in the form below
- Call 931-787-4123

GENERAL INFORMATION

- US Chess membership must remain current for the duration of all events.
- Postal events are open only to US Chess members who reside on the contiguous USA, Alaska, Hawaii or have an APO/FPO postal address.
- Email events are open to all US Chess members with an accessible email account.
- ICCF Server events are open to all US Chess members with access to the ICCF internet based correspondence chess server and an ICCF account (free to create) in good standing.
- For events with groupings based on ratings, the following rating classes will be used:
 - o Class A: 1800 and above
 - o Class B: 1500-1999
 - o Class C: 1200-1699
 - o Class D: 1399 and below
- If you do not have an existing correspondence rating, please estimate your playing strength when submitting your entry.
- Correspondence chess gift certificate prizes can be used on correspondence chess entries only. They cannot be used for membership renewals or at US Chess Sales.

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Solutions

PAGE 9 CHESS TO ENJOY

PROBLEM 1. 12. d5! wins the bishop or, after 12. ... cxd5? 13. Bb5, the queen. **PROBLEM 2.** Once more it is the ancient sacrifice 13. Bxh7+!. Black resigned in view of 13. ... Kxh7 14. Rh3+ Kg8 15. Qh5 and mate next. Alternatively, after 13. ... Kh8 White wins with 14. Rh3. **PROBLEM 3.** 12. ... Bxg5 13. Bxg5 Qxg5! and White resigns. If 14. hxg5 then 14. ... Rxh1+ wins at least a piece. **PROBLEM 4.** 12. ... Bf2+ 13. Ke2 Nc3+!; if 14. Bxc3 Qe3 mate. **PROBLEM 5.** 12. g4! threatens Qh6-g7 mate and stops the defense ... Ne7-f5. Black resigned after 12. ... Nxe5 13. dxe5. **PROBLEM 6.** Best is 11. Qe2!, threatening 12. Ng5+ Kg8? 13. Qe6 mate as well as 12. Nh4 and 13. Bxg6 mate.

PAGE 47 ABCS OF CHESS

PROBLEM 1. Mating net: Black mates in two starting with 1. ... Rxg3+. **PROBLEM 2. Mating net:** Black mates in three: 1. ... Qxh2+ 2. Kxh2 Rh5+ 3. Kg1 Rh1 mate. **PROBLEM 3. Mating net:** Black mates in three: 1. ... Qh1+ 2. Kxh1 Nf2+ 3. Kg1 Nh3 mate. **PROBLEM 4. Mating net:** Black mates in two: 1. ... Rxb2+ 2. Kxb2 Rb8 mate. **PROBLEM 5. Mating net:** Black mates in 3: 1. ... Nh3+ 2. Kh1 Qg1+ 3. Rxg1 Nf2 mate. **PROBLEM 6. Mating net:** Black mates in two: 1. ... Qb2+ 2. Kxb2 Rxb3 mate.

PAGE 50 MAKE YOUR MOVE

TACTIC 1. 26. Rc7! Rd7 This is the defense Black had counted on when he entered this line. The alternatives are not pretty, for instance, 26. ... e4 27. Bxf7+ Kh7 28. Qxh5+ gxh5 29. Rxe7; or 26. ... Qf6 27. Qxf6 Bxf6 28. Bxf7+ in both cases Black is completely lost. 27. Qxf7+! Exploiting the overburdened black queen. 27. ... Qxf7 28. Rxd7 and Black resigned. Goganov – Nesterov, Sea Harbor Blitz 2021. **TACTIC 2.** 18. d5! White completely tears open Black's king shelter. Another equally strong option is 18. Rxe6+! fxe6 19. Bxg6+ Rxe6 20. Qxg6+ Qf7 21. Qd3 and White should win. 18. ... cxd5 19. Bb5! Or 19. Rxe6+ fxe6 20. Bb5 which transposes to the game. 19. ... Qxb5 20. Rxe6+! The breakthrough. 20. ... fxe6 21. Qxe6+ Kd8 22. Qxg8 Kc7 23. Nd4 Qe8 24. Qxd5 White is easily winning. 24. ... Rb8 25. Ne6+ Kd7 26. Re1 Qc8 27. Nd4 and Black resigned. Saduakassova – Yip, Gelfand Challenge (chess24) 2021. **TACTIC 3.** 28. ... fxg3!! A brilliant strike. 29. Rxd5? White's best was 29. hxg3 when 29. ... Qxb3 30. axb3 e6 leads to an endgame that Levy should win without problems. If the queen captures, Black also wins with 29. Qxd5 g2! and the g-pawn queens. 29. ... Qf2+ 30. Kd2 gxh2! A nasty passed pawn which can only be stopped by exposing the white king to harassment from Black's pieces. 31. Rg5+ Kh8 32. Rh5 Stopping the pawn. Now the black rook joins the fun. 32. ... Rd8+ 33. Kc1 Qe1+ 34. Kc2 Qd1+ 34. ... Qxe2+ obviously also wins. 35. Kc3 Rd3+ and White resigned. Krishnakumar – Rozman, National Open 2021. Check out Rozman's annotations to the game on his GothamChess Youtube channel. **TACTIC 4.** 31. ... Ng5! The only way: Black wants to remove the white defender from f3 to make the attack on the h-file extra dangerous. After 31. ... Nh3 32. Re2 White survives. 32. Nh4 Ng6! Now the h4-knight will be forcefully removed. 33. Nxe6 A better chance of staying in the game was 33. Re2 Nxe6 34. gxh4 Rxh4 although this too is winning for Black. 33. ... Rxh2+ Now Black forces mate. 34. Kg1 Rh1+ 35. Kf2 Qh2+! A nice conclusion to the game. White resigned as he will be mated on the next move. Boekhoff – Gledura, National Open 2021. **TACTIC 5.** 22.

Bxe5! Opening the c-file for the c1-rook which will make its entry into the game shortly. 22. ... fxe5 Or 22. ... Bxf1 23. Rc7 and it is game over for Black. 23. d6! The queen has to keep the g7-pawn protected so it has to cede the control of the 7th rank to White's rook on c1. 23. ... Qf8 24. Rc7 Kh8 25. Rxe7 Note how Black's pieces are lined up on the a-file. 25. ... Nc6 26. Rc1 Bringing the other rook into the attack. 26. ... Rd8 27. h3 Avoiding the embarrassing 27. Rxc6 Ra1+ with mate. 27. ... Rxd6 28. Rxc6 Ra1+ 29. Kh2 Rxc6 30. Rg8+ and Black resigned before he would get mated after 30. ... Qxg8 31. Qxe5+. Hakobyan – Chandra, National Open 2021. **TACTIC 6.** 19. ... Nxf2! Black has other excellent moves, but this direct shot is the best. 20. Kxf2 Bc5+ 21. Kf1 Rxe1+ In the game, Black continued less accurately with 21. ... Qd6? 22. Rxe8+? (22. Ne4! was necessary when White would have had survival chances) 22. ... Rxe8 23. Qb5 a6 24. Qb3 Qg3 25. Bxf7+ Kh8 26. Ne4 Rxe4 27. Be3 Rxe3 28. Qd5 Re1+ and White resigned before she would have gotten mated on the next move. 22. Kxe1 Qd6! Black is slowly but surely targeting the white king which is without any ability to defend himself. 23. Nf1 Stopping ... Qg3+ but opening the central files. 23. ... Re8+ 24. Be2 Rxe2+ 25. Kxe2 Bd3+ 26. Ke1 Qe6+ and it is soon over for White. Shuvalova – Yoo, Gelfand Challenge (chess24) 2021. **TACTIC 7.** 19. ... d4! 20. Nxd4 An important alternative is 20. exd4 when Black continues 20. ... Bxf3 21. gxf3 (or 21. Qxf3 runs into 21. ... Nxd4! and Black is winning because of the back rank mate.) 21. ... Nd5!! 22. Ne4 (or 22. Nxd5 Qe5+!) 22. ... Bxh2+ 23. Kxh2 Qh4+ 24. Bh3 Nef4 25. Qf1 Re6 26. Ng3 Rh6 and Black is winning. 20. ... Nxd4 21. exd4 Bxh2+ 22. Kh1 Or 22. Kxh2 Qd6+ winning White's queen. 22. ... Qd6 23. Qd3 b4 24. Na4 Bf4 25. Rc2 Ne4! Black keeps pouring fuel on the fire. 26. Qh3 Ng5 27. Qh4 Bxg2+! Boom! 28. Kxg2 Qd5+ 29. Kf1 Qxf5 Shockingly, Black is (despite the several sacrifices) up on material. 30. Rc5 Qd3+ 31. Kg2 Qf3+ 32. Kf1 Nh3 and White resigned before he would get mated. Kaidanov – Matviishin, National Open 2021. **TACTIC 8.** 16. Bc2!! Clearing the d3-square for the queen to create a double-threat on h7 and d7. 16. ... hxg5 An important alternative is 16. ... f5 when White continues the attack in the following fashion: 17. Bb3! hxg5 18. hxg5 White's attack is direct and building. The decisive strike is not immediate but looms large. 18. ... Kf7 19. Rh7 Rg8 20. Qd3 Ke8 (or 20. ... Rc7 21. Qxf5+ Ke8 22. Qg6+ Kf8 23. Rh4 and it is over for Black.) 21. e4 Opening files and diagonals toward the black monarch. 21. ... Na5 22. exf5 Nxb3 23. Qxb3 Qc7 24. f6 gxf6 25. gxf6 Bxf6 26. Rxd7 and Black is finished. 17. hxg5 f5 18. gxf6 e.p. Bxf6 Or 18. ... Rxf6 19. Qd3 g6 20. Rh6 and Black will not survive for long. 19. Qd3 Qb6 20. Rh8+! Forcing mate. 20. ... Kf7 21. Ng5+! 21. Qxd7+ will also win for White but the text move leads in a direct path to checkmate. 21. ... Bxg5 22. Qg6+ Ke7 23. Qxg7+ and Black resigned; there is mate in a few moves. Gareyev – Yoo, National Open 2021. **TACTIC 9.** 60. ... e5! But not 60. ... Kc2?? 61. Nf6! Bd1 62. h5 e5 63. Nd5! and White saves himself. Note that 60. ... Bg4 61. Nf6 (if 61. Ne5 Black has to play 61. ... Bh5 when 62. Nd7 e5 leads to the game continuation, whereas 61. ... Bd1 62. Nf3! g2 63. Ng1 leads to a draw) 61. ... e5! 62. Nxe4 exf4+ 63. Kf3 fxg4+ 64. Kg2 Kd4 also wins for Black. 61. Nxe5 Kc2! 62. Nd3 Kd1 and as he is in zugzwang White resigned. If the knight moves then Black has ... Kd1-e1 followed by ... Ke1-f1 and promotion of the g-pawn. Deac – Aronian, Bucharest 2021.



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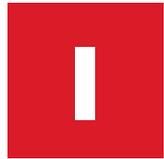
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MY BEST MOVE

MICHAEL BUSS

US CHESS CORRESPONDENCE
CHAMP AND PROUD VETERAN



WAS PART OF THE “FISCHER boom” of chess in the early 1970s. The start of college in 1974 at Iowa State University, leading to a 23-year career as a Naval officer in 1978 through the Navy ROTC program, put my chess-playing days on hold.

During the summer of 1984, I came across Walter Tevis’ novel *The Queen’s Gambit*. My interest in chess was reinvigorated! But it would have to be correspondence chess to accommodate my limited time, with the demands of the Navy and a young family. So, I “re-joined” US Chess. My game was steadily improving. I boldly ventured onward, entering a Golden Knights section in the late 1980s and, later, the Electronic Knights.

In 2006 I went undefeated in a Golden Knights preliminary section. I went undefeated in the semi-final too. Playing in only my second Golden Knights final, I won four and drew two games (Steven Chilson and Chuck Cullum), giving me a final score of 16 wins and two draws for the event. My Best Move comes from the finals section game against Bleys Rose of Sebastopol, California, who at the time was a top 10 US Chess correspondence player.

PIRC DEFENSE (B07)

Michael Buss (2355)

Bleys Rose (2408)

Golden Knights Finals, 2006-2008

1. e4 d6 2. d4 Nf6 3. f3 d5 4. e5 Ng8 5. f4 Bf5 6. c4 dxc4 7. Bxc4 e6 8. Nc3 Nd7 9. Nf3 Nb6 10. Bb3 Ne7 11. a4 Nbd5 12. 0-0 Nb4 13. a5 a6 14. Rf2 Nd3

I think 14. ... h5 was needed.

15. Rd2 Nxc1

Over the past eight moves, rather than develop and consolidate his position, Black has moved his knight six times, only to exchange it on c1!

16. Qxc1 c6 17. Nh4 Bg6 18. Nxc6 hxc6 19. Rd3 Rc8 20. Qc2 Nf5



“...it would have to be correspondence chess to accommodate my limited time...”



21. Ne4!

MY BEST MOVE! The knight takes control of the center while also opening the c-file for the decisive attack!

21. ... Be7

Certainly not 21. ... Qh4? 22. Rh3.

22. g4 Nh6 23. h3 Ng8 24. g5 Rc7 25. Bc4 Rd7 26. Kg2 Bf8

All of the black kingside pieces are back where they started the game!

27. Rb3

Perhaps 27. Qb3 was a little better, but the text works just as well!

27. ... Qc7

Too late now for the queen!

28. Qe2

The threat is 29. Bxa6.

28. ... Be7 29. Qe3 Kf8 30. Rb6 Rh4 31. Kg3 Rh7 32. Qb3 Rh8 33. Rc1 Qd8 34. Bxa6 Rd5 35. Rxc6!, Black resigned.

An interesting side note: Rose and I were also playing in a 2008 Golden Knights final section at around this time. I was happy to concede the loss in the 2008 game, with this game, my second win over a 2400+ player, as more than sufficient compensation.

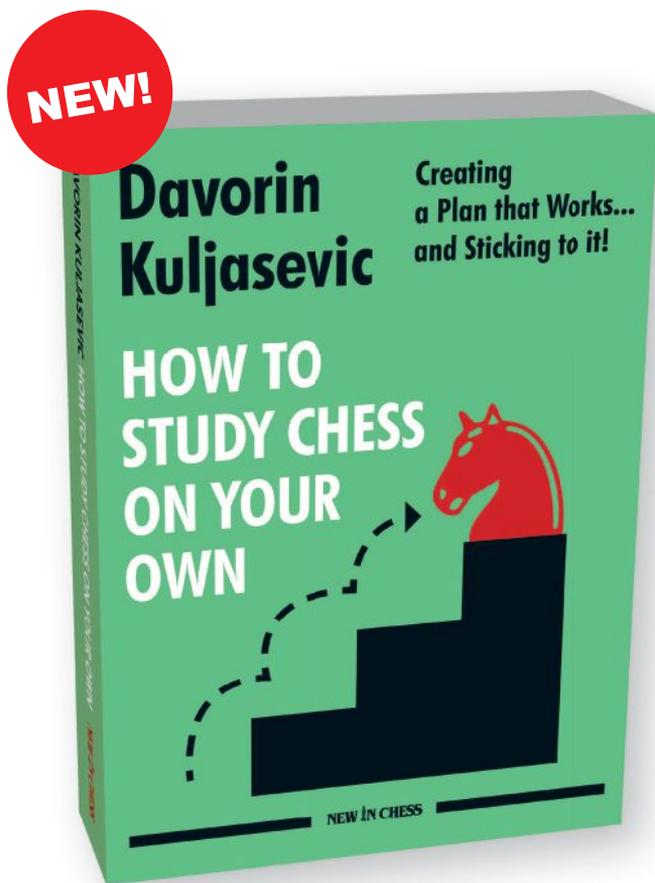
I shared the 2006 Championship with James Traszcz. This would be the first of three Golden Knights Championships, the other two coming 2010 and 2012. It turns out that correspondence chess has suited me rather well! ♠

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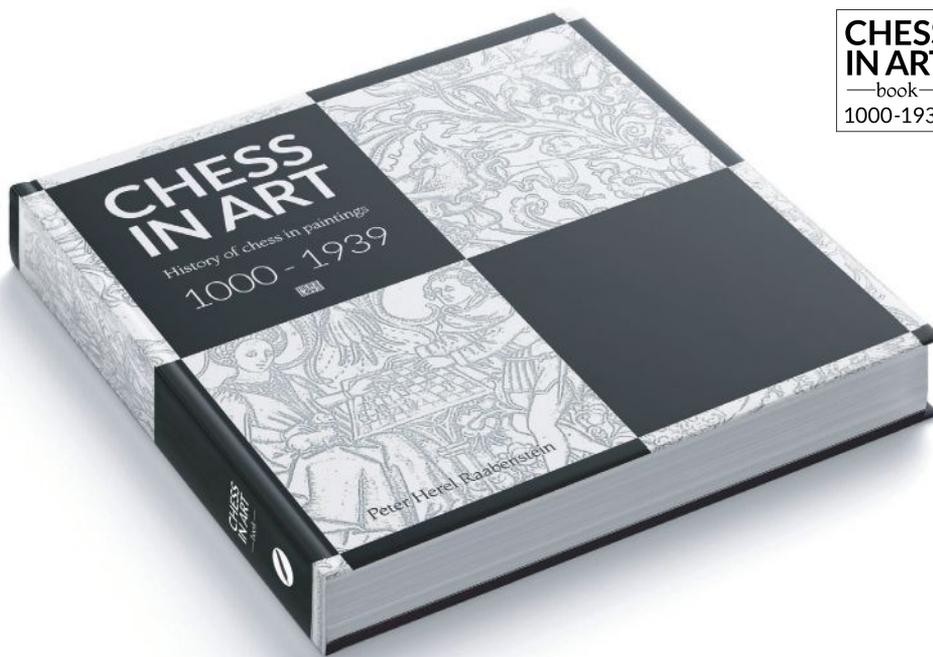
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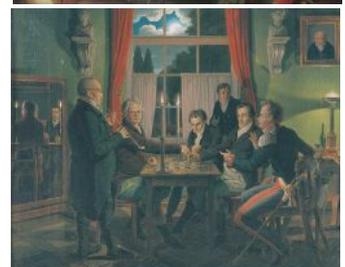
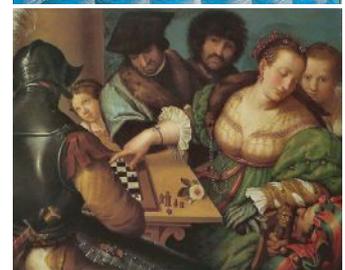


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