

U.S. MASTERS ■ SPICE CUP ■ FIDE GRAND SWISS

CHESSLIFE

2021 WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP

CARLSEN WINS!

FEBRUARY 2022
USChess.org

YERMO on the Match

PLUS

Analysis by

WESLEY SO

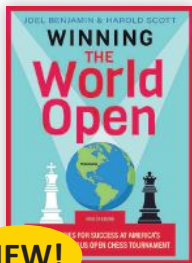




888.51.CHESS (512.4377)



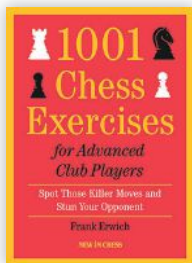
www.USCFSales.com



NEW!

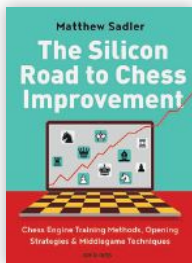
Strategies for Success at America's Most Prestigious Open Chess Tournament
Joel Benjamin & Harold Scott

In this new book, GM Joel Benjamin and Harold Scott present the history of the World Open, from its humble beginnings to the juggernaut it has become today. There are many entertaining stories and scandals that the reader will enjoy. *Winning the World Open* is as entertaining as it is instructive.



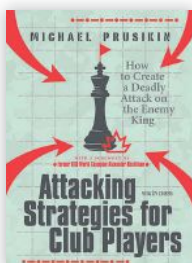
Spot Those Killer Moves and Stun Your Opponent
Frank Erwich

In this follow-up to his acclaimed *1001 Chess Exercises for Club Players*, Erwich teaches how to reach the next level of identifying weak spots, recognizing patterns of combinations, visualizing tricks and calculating effectively. Geared towards the reality of the advanced club player: it is not enough to spot simple combinations, at this level you must be able to resist your reflexes and look deeper.



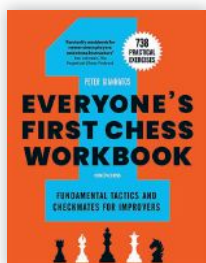
Explains how an Engine can Help Your Chess
Matthew Sadler

Matthew Sadler explains what is best in opening prep and improving your technique: playing training games against your engine! He also shows how the top engines tackle crucial middlegame themes, and presents new strategies that the engines found in popular openings such as the King's Indian, the Grünfeld, the Slav, the French and the Sicilian. Your chess engine can do so much more than just calculate variations!



How to Create a Deadly Attack on the Enemy King
Michael Prusikin

If you want to win more games, you should become a better attacker. Studying typical attacking motifs and ideas easily brings dividends while you are having a good time. Battering rams, obstructive sacrifices, pawn storms, striking at the castled position, sacrificing a knight on f5, GM Prusikin demonstrates the most important patterns of attack with lots of clear and well-chosen examples.



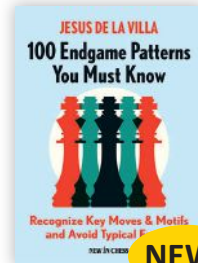
Fundamental Tactics and Checkmates for Improvers
Peter Giannatos

The perfect first chess workbook for adult improvers and other beginners. Coaches might find the book, with 738 exercises, very useful as well. It features a complete set of fundamental tactics and checkmate patterns.

'Beautifully formatted with 3 diagrams per page and tremendous examples.'
Fred Wilson, The Marshall Spectator

Recognize Key Moves and Motifs in the Endgame and Avoid Typical Errors
Jesus de la Villa

If you liked the best-seller *100 Endgames You Must Know*, you will surely like this new book by the same author, a Spanish Grandmaster. Endgame patterns are crucial. They help you spot key moves quicker, analyze and calculate better and avoid making errors.



NEW!

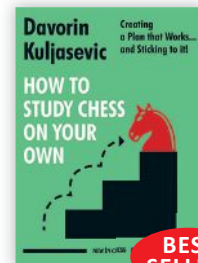
Creating a Plan that Works... and Sticking to It!
Davorin Kuljasevic

Stop wasting time and energy! Optimize your learning process, develop good study habits and get rid of useless ones.

"I recommend this book unconditionally, it will be the standard work on studying chess for years."

Barry Braeken, Schaaksite

"Extremely impressive." – *Richard James, British Chess News*



BEST SELLER!

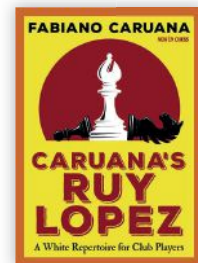
Caruana Explains the Ruy Lopez for Club Players

"Caruana, like the late Bobby Fischer, has the ability to make complex material accessible to a wide audience, something not common for an elite player."

IM John Donaldson

"An ideal way for an up-and-coming player to get to grips with the white side of the Spanish. There can be no better training tool."

GM Glenn Flear, Yearbook 141



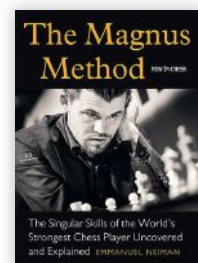
The Singular Skills of the World's Strongest Chess Player Uncovered and Explained

Why do Carlsen's opponents fail to see his moves coming?

"A revelation about the chess toolkit of today's chess world champion."

Miguel Ararat, Florida Chess Quarterly

"An excellent collection of lessons, not least from the aspects of technique and psychology." – *CHESS Magazine*



Magnus Carlsen: A Life in Pictures

Jonathan Tisdall

The story of the reigning World Chess Champion. The book shows more than 200 pictures, including some iconic images. Carlsen doesn't shy away from his celebrity status, and was both a G-Star model and a Real Madrid VIP-guest. But his most genuine smile breaks through when he talks chess with his youngest fans, the kids in a chess tournament.



NEW!

COLUMNS

- 10 CHESS TO ENJOY**
ENTERTAINMENT
Naked Push
BY GM ANDY SOLTIS
- 13 PUZZLES**
MAKE YOUR MOVE!
BY FM CARSTEN HANSEN
- 48 SOLITAIRE CHESS**
INSTRUCTION
The Immortal Akiba Rubinstein
BY BRUCE PANDOLFINI
- 50 BOOKS AND BEYOND**
SHOULD I BUY IT?
Strong Coffee
BY IM JOHN WATSON

DEPARTMENTS

- 4 FEBRUARY PREVIEW**
SOCIAL MEDIA GUIDE
FOR MEMBERS
- 5 COUNTERPLAY**
READERS RESPOND
- 6 FIRST MOVES**
CHESS NEWS FROM
AROUND THE U.S.
- 12 US CHESS AFFAIRS**
NEWS FOR OUR MEMBERS
- 53 TOURNAMENT LIFE**
- 58 CLASSIFIEDS**
- 59 SOLUTIONS**
- 60 MY BEST MOVE**
PERSONALITIES
1ST LT. EIGEN WANG

As we were going to press, we announced that US Chess will move its headquarters to St. Louis. See the full announcement on CLO and in the March issue of Chess Life.

PHOTO: COURTESY FIDE / NIKI RIGA

It was a tough go for Nepo, but he'll bounce back.



30 COVER STORY

CARLSEN RETAINS WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP

Carlsen defeats Nepomniachtchi 7½-3½ — and hints he may not play another match.

BY GM ALEX YERMOLINSKY

16 EVENTS U.S. MASTERS

The 2021 U.S. Masters

GM Alcantara and IM Peddi tie for first place — and five norms are earned!

BY GM ALEX FISHBEIN

20 EVENTS SPICE CUP

Spicy Times in St. Louis

Nyzhnyk wins 2021 SPICE Cup

BY GM BENJAMIN GLEDURA

24 EVENTS GRAND SWISS

The 2021 FIDE Grand Swiss

Firouzja wins in Riga; Caruana qualifies for Candidates

BY GM SAMUEL SEVIAN

38 ANALYSIS WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP

“A Historic Game!”

Exclusive analysis of game six of Carlsen - Nepomniachtchi

BY GM WESLEY SO



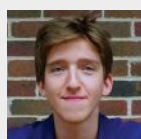
GM ALEX YERMOLINSKY (Cover Story) is a native of St. Petersburg, Russia, and was one of the top players in the U.S. during the 1990s. He won the U.S. Championship in 1993 (shared with GM Alex Shabalov) and in 1996. Since 2007 Yermolinsky has lived in South Dakota and works as an analyst and commentator for various internet and print chess sources. His book *The Road to Chess Improvement* appeared to

excellent reviews in 2000, and he was inducted into the U.S. Chess Hall of Fame in 2012.



GM ALEX FISHBEIN

(U.S. Masters) won the first Denker Tournament of Champions in 1985. He became a grandmaster in 1992 and over the years has won clear or equal first in many national events like the World Open, Chicago Open, and National Open. Although Fishbein has worked in finance for more than 25 years, he continues to actively compete and is the author of multiple books. He currently resides in Tennessee.



GM BENJAMIN GLEDURA

(SPICE Cup) is a Hungarian grandmaster who studies at Webster University and competes for their storied chess team. Currently rated 2652 FIDE, he is the 91st ranked player on the January

2022 FIDE rating list.



GM SAMUEL SEVIAN

(Grand Swiss) became a grandmaster at the age of 13 years, 10 months, and 27 days — at that time, an American record. Among his many accomplishments is his shared first place finish (before tiebreaks) at the 2021 U.S. Championship.



GM WESLEY SO

(Game Six) is the current U.S. Champion and the eighth ranked player in the world according to the January 2022 FIDE rating list. He has competed for both his native Phillipines and the United States

in international team play, and he is a frequent winner in online rapid and blitz events.

ADIEU, KORY!

This month we wish a very fond farewell to our outgoing Art Director, Kory Kennedy.

In his time with US Chess, Kory has spearheaded a successful redesign of *Chess Life* and produced an eye-catching Annual Report. We wish him the best with his future projects.



EDITORIAL

CHESS LIFE/CLO EDITOR **John Hartmann** (john.hartmann@uschess.org)

ART DIRECTOR **Kory Kennedy**

PUBLICATIONS EDITOR **Melinda Matthews**

CREATIVE CONTENT COORDINATOR **Natasha Roberts**

TECHNICAL EDITOR **IM Ron Burnett**

TLA mmatthews@uschess.org

US CHESS STAFF

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR **Carol Meyer**

SENIOR DIRECTOR OF STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION **Daniel Lucas**

DIRECTOR OF EVENTS **Boyd Reed**

DIRECTOR OF DEVELOPMENT **Geoffrey S. Isaak**

DIRECTOR OF ADMINISTRATION **Judy Misner**

WOMEN'S PROGRAM DIRECTOR **Jennifer Shahade**

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF EVENTS **Pete Karagianis**

FIDE EVENTS MANAGER **Christopher Bird**

TECHNICAL & RATINGS MANAGER **Korey Kormick**

CORRESPONDENCE CHESS COORDINATOR **Michael Buss**

SENIOR ACCOUNTANT **Debra Robison**

GOVERNANCE COORDINATOR **Jennifer Pearson**

GOVERNANCE COORDINATOR **Rose McMahon**

MEMBERSHIP ASSOCIATE **Christine Green**

EXECUTIVE BOARD

PRESIDENT **Mike Hoffpauir** (president@uschess.org)

VICE PRESIDENT **Randy Bauer** (vp@uschess.org)

VICE PRESIDENT OF FINANCE **Chuck Unruh** (vpfinance@uschess.org)

SECRETARY **Fun Fong** (secretary@uschess.org)

MEMBER AT LARGE **David Day** (DavidChessDay@gmail.com)

MEMBER AT LARGE **John Fernandez** (john.fernandez@gmail.com)

MEMBER AT LARGE **David Hater** (dhater1@aol.com)

MEMBER AT LARGE **Kevin Pryor** (pryorkevin@yahoo.com)

INQUIRIES

For communications and press inquiries, please contact Dan Lucas at dllucas@uschess.org

To submit letters to the editor, please email letters@uschess.org

For advertising inquiries or TLA display ads, please contact Melinda Matthews at mmatthews@uschess.org

To join US Chess or enter a tournament directed by US Chess, go to uschess.org or call 1-800-903-USCF (8723)

To notify us of a change of address, please email addresschange@uschess.org

For Tournament Director Certification information, please email tdcert-group@uschess.org

For staff contact information, please see new.uschess.org/about

Please submit all other inquiries to feedback@uschess.org, (931) 787-1234, fax (931) 787-1200

14th annual OPEN at FOXWOODS

April 13-17, 14-17 or 15-17, Easter weekend, Foxwoods Resort Casino
\$75,000 projected prizes, \$50,000 minimum, GM & IM norms possible!

Open Section: 9 rounds, Apr 13-17, 40/90, SD/30, +30, FIDE rated, FIDE norms possible.

Other sections: 7 rounds, Apr 14-17 or 15-17, 40/90, SD/30, +30 (3-day option, rds 1-2 G/60 d10). U2200 & U2000 are FIDE rated.

Foxwoods Resort Casino, in the woods of Southeast CT.

Masks may be required.

Certification of Covid vaccination required.

7 sections. Prizes \$75,000 based on 500 entries (seniors, re-entries, U1100, Open GMs/IMs/WGMs & foreign FIDE count half, else proportional); minimum 2/3 each prize guaranteed.

Open: \$7000-4000-2000-1000-800-600-500-400-300-300, clear or tiebreak 1st \$200 bonus, top FIDE 2250-2399 \$2000-1000, top FIDE U2250/Unr \$2000-1000. 200 GPP.

U2200/Unr, U2000/Unr, U1800: Each \$4000-2000-1000-700-500-400-300-300-300.

U2000 Section Unr limit \$1000.

U1600, U1400: Each \$3000-1500-1000-600-500-400-300-300-200-200.

U1100/Unr: \$1000-600-500-400-300-300-300-200-200, Unrated prize limit \$300.

Mixed doubles: Male/female combined 2-player team scores among all sections: \$1000-600-400-200. Must average under 2200, may play in different sections, register (no fee) before both begin round 2.

FIDE ratings used in Open, Apr official USCF in others. Unofficial or USCF Online Regular ratings usually used if otherwise unrated.

If under 26 games rated by April 2022 list, limit \$600 U1100, \$1500 U1400, \$2500 U1600 & U1800.

If any post-event Regular OTB or Regular Online rating posted 4/11/21-4/11/22 was more than 50 points over section maximum, prize limit \$800.

Entry fees, titled player minimum prizes, special USCF dues: See www.chessevents.us.

5-day reg. ends Wed 6 pm, rds Wed 7 pm, Thu 12 noon & 7 pm, Fri/Sat 11 & 6, Sun 10 & 4:30.

4-day reg. ends Thu 6 pm, rds Thu 7 pm, Fri/Sat 11 am & 6 pm, Sun. 10 am & 4:30 pm.

3-day reg. ends Fri 10 am, rds Fri 11, 2:30 & 6, merges with 4-day Fri at 6 pm.

Half-point byes: OK all, limit 3 (limit 2 in last 4 rds). must commit before rd 3.

Bring set, board, clock if possible- none supplied.

Special room rates: Grand Pequot Tower (tournament site, very luxurious): Fri/Sat \$209, others \$153. Fox Tower (5-7 minute walk in connected building): Fri/Sat \$179, others \$123. Great Cedar Hotel (4-6 minute walk, connected building): Fri/Sat \$149, others \$103. All: \$4.95 resort fee, includes wired internet, fitness center, pool, spa, coffee, etc.

Blitz tournament Sat 10:30 pm.

Entries, registration list: chessaction.com.



The Internet Chess Club and Continental Chess Association presents:

Your best choice for online fun!

- 👑 Over **\$250,000** in prize money paid out
- 👑 Class prizes so you can win too!
- 👑 Longer controls for an OTB experience
- 👑 Weekly US Chess rated events
- 👑 US Chess approved fair play oversight



More information:

chessaction.com

US CHESS ONLINE

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!



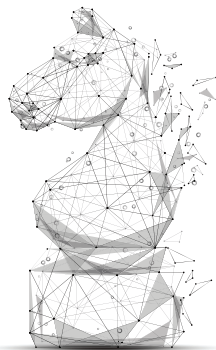
CHESS LIFE ONLINE (CLO) is our news page. Here you'll find the latest information about US Chess events, tournaments both large and small, and features like Wednesday Workouts and our award-winning series of podcasts. uschess.org/news

uschess.org

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



the social purpose of our 501(c)(3) mission. Think of it as a mixture of news and outreach. facebook.com/uschess



TWITTER This is where we share links and news to keep you updated on what's happening in the world of chess. We're not as witty as Anish Giri or Magnus Carlsen, but we'll do our very best to keep you informed and entertained. twitter.com/uschess



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

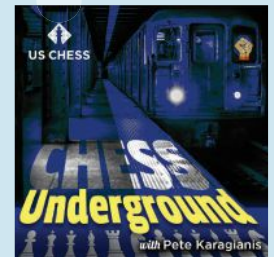
have you swing by and follow us. This is where we plan to share updates on our progress and development as a non-profit, as well as the accomplishments we're most proud of as we go along. linkedin.com/uschess



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

Penguins and Prose...



The Great Outdoors

In Antarctica to view a total solar eclipse, San Diego Chess Club member Ken Green (right) stopped at the South Pole on December 11, 2021 for a game of chess with Rhona Fraser (left) of Inverness, Scotland. In summer, with constant daylight from September to March, the temperature was a relatively mild -20F (-29C). With chances for both sides after the English Opening, 1. c4, a draw was agreed in an unclear middle-game due to mutual frostbite.

Ken Green
Via email

Consider The Bar Raised

Regarding Mr. Gordon's letter (December 2021) about the letters:

While his opinion may be sound, his use of all caps as a replacement for a deft expression of the English language made

Look, we all love chess, but then I see a photo like this and I feel like I really need to up my game.

Donald McAndrew
Via email

me write this in an attempt to raise the proverbial bar for future letters about letters.

Well, Mike?

I am an amateur player, perhaps around 1400 FIDE strength, who has been a long-time subscriber to *Chess Life*. I want to commend FM Mike Klein on his fine article "Different Wavelengths" in the December 2021 issue of your magazine.

I have had a longstanding interest in IM Josh Waitzkin, having read the fine book *Searching for Bobby Fischer* written by his father Fred. I have seen the movie of the same name, and I have owned several editions of the *Chessmaster* chess software that Josh was associated with.

I devoured "Different Wavelengths," and I was left with one impression: "Wow, this is well written. Mike is a talented writer." He mentions that he is "trying to hold off the senescence that eventually comes to all chess players."

Well, if this senescence does come to Mike at the peril of his chess career, my suggestion to him would be to consider becoming a writer of fiction. He has the talent to become a best-selling author.

If Mr. Klein does become known as one of America's finest fiction writers, it would be appreciated if he could give me a brief acknowledgment

for the nudge. Perhaps it could read as "I started writing novels because some guy up in Canada who is a weak chess player wrote a Letter to the Editor of *Chess Life*, believing I could become a successful full-time writer." That would make my day.

Donald Gardiner, MD
Via email

Errata:

Ethan Guo was inadvertently excluded from the 2021 All-America Team (Age 8) as printed in our January issue. Congratulations to Ethan for his accomplishments, and our apologies for our oversight!

US CHESS TRUST

PROVIDES FREE SETS, BOARDS AND US CHESS MEMBERSHIPS TO AT-RISK SCHOOLKIDS!



WGM and IM Carissa Yip
2021 US Chess Trust Samford Fellow
2021 US Women's Champion!

USCT also supports:

- Scholar Chess Player Awards
- GM Denker Tournament of HS Champs
- WIM Haring National Girls Champs
- Barber Tournament of MS Champs
- U.S. Blind Championship
- Pan-American Intercollegiate Team
- Final Four of College Chess
- World Chess Hall of Fame
- And many other programs

For more information on the good work of the US Chess Trust, please go to www.uschesstrust.org. Or contact us at info@uschesstrust.org.

The Trust is a separate 501(c)(3) organization operating independently of US Chess.



Keeping Dementia in Check

The transcendent value of chess

BY **DANA LUSTBADER, MD, FCCM, FAAHPM**

M

Y 95-YEAR-OLD FATHER Teddy, a retired professor of electrical engineering from the University of Wisconsin-Madison, began playing chess when he was six years old. It was the only activity he could afford after his father died from gunshot wounds during World War I, leaving his mother to raise

five children alone in a cramped basement apartment in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. When I was six — the age he began playing — my father started teaching me chess instead of reading evening bedtime stories. I eventually moved to New York, became a physician, and had five children of my own — and I shared my love for chess with them.

About five years ago, Teddy developed

dementia. He became forgetful and had multiple falls that resulted in hospitalization. Most of the time, he couldn't remember my name or where he was. But even though his short-term memory was fading, he could recall distant memories, solve complex math problems — and play chess.

Teddy hadn't played chess in two decades, so I wasn't expecting much the first time I



Teddy with Zoe Wong



Teddy with Brad Phillips

dusted off an old chess set and sat down to play with him. To my surprise, he remembered practically everything, including how to castle. He confused the king and queen a few times, so to solve that minor issue, we broke out the nail polish and painted the queen's head bright pink.

Chess quickly became much more than simple entertainment to Teddy: it helped him regain a sense of purpose. Over the following few months, we played chess for hours every time I visited. Whenever I left Wisconsin to return to New York, Teddy was especially sad to lose his chess partner.

After one of these visits, I returned to

New York determined to find a regular chess partner for Teddy. I began by searching the internet for chess-playing volunteers in Madison, with no luck. I then emailed local high school chess clubs but learned that COVID-19 had sidelined all student volunteers. Finally, Mike Nietman from US Chess responded. He referred me to his colleague, Brad Phillips, who had played chess as a volunteer in prisons and nursing homes. "I love facilitating chess activities, particularly for people who may not otherwise be able to participate," Brad says. "Playing chess with Ted was an opportunity to help him experience the joy of chess again."

Brad and Teddy began playing regularly. On the days Brad was scheduled to visit, Teddy would be so excited that he'd wake up early and sit at the table for hours waiting for Brad's arrival. Brad even gave Teddy his own tournament-style chess set with large, weighted pieces. Teddy treasured this gift and kept it on his fireplace mantle.

After a series of falls and increasing confusion, Teddy ended up in the hospital again. We eventually flew him to New York to live in my home, where he is currently enrolled in hospice care. The most difficult part of relocation for Teddy was that he missed playing chess with his friend, Brad. I posted a request for chess-playing volunteers on a New York Listserv and was thrilled when Flora, a coach from Make Your Move Chess Academy, responded that her daughter, Zoe Wong, was interested. Flora says, "When we received the email from Dana requesting a volunteer to play with Ted, I thought, 'What a great opportunity to teach kids about using the skills they learn to help others.'"

Zoe, a delightfully gracious eight-year-old, now plays with Teddy every week. While seated, her feet don't reach the floor, but this tiny competitor still has a lot of lessons to share. Her favorite part of each visit is when she gives Teddy checkmate-in-one puzzles to solve. She tells him, "You are about to checkmate your opponent in just one move — you just need to find that winning move and you'll win the game." It usually takes several tries, but eventually Teddy does, indeed, finds the winning move. And when he finally gets it, his face lights up with joy. ♠

THE BENEFITS OF CHESS FOR OLDER ADULTS



▶ **AS REFLECTED IN THE US CHESS Vision Statement** — *Chess is recognized as an essential tool that promotes inclusiveness and benefits education, rehabilitation, recreation, and friendly competition.* US Chess has historically been about competition. Yet we often hear about the observed benefits of chess among young people, including improved focus, learning to plan ahead, and tapping one's inner creativity. These benefits know no age

bounds. And for older adults, the benefits of chess appear in ways we might not expect to see.

For older adults, chess can be a tool that combats some of the hidden conditions associated with aging.

CHESS COMBATS ISOLATION. According to the National Poll on Healthy Aging, adults between ages 50-80 report feeling isolated from others 27% of the time. Other research has suggested that "chronic loneliness can impact older adults' memory, physical well-being, mental health, and life expectancy." Providing opportunities for regular in-person interaction that leads to a feeling of connectedness will lead to positive health impacts on cognition, depression, and memory.

CHESS REQUIRES AN ACTIVE BRAIN. According to a 20-year study in France, older adults who played board games appeared to have a reduced risk of dementia of 15%.

CHESS IS A GAME FOR ALL AGES. Chess is inherently social. Bringing two people together across the board is about more than bragging rights. Friendly competition between generations can lead to improved learning, understanding, and friendships between unlikely parties.

The US Chess Senior Committee will be leading efforts in 2022 to use chess as part of "The Longest Day" campaign, the Alzheimer's Association's annual fundraiser for research and local services. Watch for more information in early 2022 to learn how you can participate.

17th Annual

April 22 - 24, 2022

HYATT REGENCY MCCORMICK PLACE
CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

Presented by



The Champion in each age category, qualifies to represent the USA at the 2022 World Cadets, and World Youth Championships

MAIN EVENT

6-SS, G/90,d5

Friday April 22

2:30 PM Opening Ceremony
3:00 PM Round 1

Saturday April 23

10:00 AM Round 2
2:30 PM Round 3
6:30 PM Round 4

Sunday April 24

9:00 AM Round 5
1:00 PM Round 6
5:00 PM Awards Ceremony

ENTRY FEE

\$80 postmarked by 3/14, \$95
by 4/11, \$105 after/on-site.

SIDE EVENTS

Bughouse Tournament

Fri. April 22 11:00 AM
Entry fee: \$40 per team

Blitz Tournament (G/5,d0)

Fri. April 22 7:00 PM
Entry fee: \$30 4/11, \$35
after/on-site.



SECTION/AWARDS

Age as of 1/1/2022

Under 8 top 15 individuals
top 500 – 799, top U500, top 6 schools
Under 10 top 15 individuals
top 700 – 999, top U700, top 6 schools
Under 12 top 15 individuals
top 900 – 1199, top U900, top 6 schools
Under 14 top 15 individuals
top 1100 – 1399, top U1100, top 4 schools
Under 16 top 8 individuals
top 1300 – 1599, top U1300, top 3 schools
Under 18 top 8 individuals,
top 1500 – 1799, top U1500, top 3 schools

HYATT MCCORMICK PLACE

2233 S. Dr Martin Luther King Jr
Dr, Chicago, IL 60616

HOTEL RESERVATIONS

single - quad \$169
(312) 567-1234, online at
www.allgirls.rknights.org
Reserve early hotel may sell out /
raise rates

INFO

www.allgirls.rknights.org
(773) 844-0701
info@renaissanceknights.org

Online Registration: www.allgirls.rknights.org

Mailed Registration: make checks payable to: Rknights 599 Linden Ln, Wauconda, IL 60084

www.kasparovchessfoundation.org

CHESS SUBSCRIPTIONS

NEW IN CHESS MAGAZINE

One Year Subscription

8 Issues



New in Chess is the magazine of choice for serious Chess players. If it is happening in Chess, you'll read about it in New in Chess Magazine. It features On the spot tournament reports, in-depth interviews with top players, comprehensive analysis!

NICYSUB

Subscription **\$100.00**

If Purchased Individually \$119.95

AMERICAN CHESS MAGAZINE

One Year Subscription

6 Issues



The American Chess Magazine brings you 100 colorful pages, packed with amazing chess material, ranging from world class play to local State news and games. Instructive and entertaining games from recent events are presented with outstanding annotations, while special attention is given to overviews of latest trends in the openings, and explanations of practical endgame techniques. Here's your chance to subscribe and save 20% off MSRP and receive FREE SHIPPING!

BOSUBACM6

Subscription **\$129.95**

If Purchased Individually \$149.95

CHESS INFORMANT

One Year Subscription

4 Issues



Subscribe to Chess Informant – the publication the Pros Use and Create! Subscriptions come with tons of benefits: SAVE 20% off the cover price! Pay once—as soon as a new issue comes out, it is sent directly to you. Don't worry about ordering every issue—subscribe once and let us take care of it for you!

BOSUBINF

Subscription **\$129.95**

If Purchased Individually \$159.95

Naked Push

How do you get an opening named after you?

BY GM ANDY SOLTIS

W

WHEN RUSSIAN GM EVGENY Sveshnikov died last year he was remembered primarily for an ugly move.

After 1. e4 c5 2. Nf3 Nc6 3. d4 cxd4 4. Nxd4 Nf6 5. Nc3, he played 5. ... e5. This made his d-pawn backward — a fundamental positional error, in traditional thinking.

But when he won with 5. ... e5!, it became “the Sveshnikov Variation.”

This raises a question every newcomer to chess asks: How do you get your name on an opening?

Well, it used to happen by writing. The first named openings — the Ruy Lopez, Philidor’s Defense, Ponziani Opening, Damiano Defense — come to us from authors. There are no surviving examples of them playing their opening.

The first player to be widely honored for an opening we *know* he played was a Welsh sea captain.

GIUOCO PIANO (C52)

William Davies Evans
Alexander McDonnell
London 1825

1. e4 e5 2. Nf3 Nc6 3. Bc4 Bc5 4. 0-0 d6 5. b4



Captain Evans later suggested an improvement, 4. b4!, and that’s how the Evans Gambit is known today.

5. ... Bxb4 6. c3 Ba5 7. d4 Bg4 8. Qb3 Qd7? 9. Ng5! Nd8 10. dxe5 dxe5 11. Ba3 Nh6? 12. f3 Bb6+ 13. Kh1 Bh5 14. Rd1 Qc8



The captain was lucky in three ways. First, his opponent was one of the world’s strongest players and, second, he allowed a flashy finish.

If Black had been an obscure amateur — and Evans had won with the routine 15. Qb5+! Nc6 16. Bd5 — the b2-b4 idea might have been overlooked.

15. Rxd8+ Qxd8 16. Nxf7 Qh4? 17. Qb5+ c6 18. Qxe5+ Kd7 19. Qe6+ Kc7 20. Bd6, mate.

The third way the captain was lucky is that chess magazines were about to begin publishing. Every new medium needs content, and opening analysis turned out to be a perfect page-filler. More than 50 articles appeared, in English, German, and French magazines, calling the captain’s opening “the Evans Gambit.”

He deserved the legacy because b2-b4 is even more striking than Sveshnikov’s 5.

... e5. It is a naked push: An unprotected pawn advances to a square where it can be captured by either of two enemy pieces.

Since Captain Evans’ day there have been several examples of a naked push and each forced us to rewrite “book.” For example, in the Old Indian Defense — 1. d4 Nf6 2. c4 d6 3. Nc3 e5 — a major line used to begin 4. Nf3 e4 5. Ng5 Bf5



The e4-pawn is beyond Black’s ability to defend it. For example, 6. Qc2 Qe7 7. f3! exf3? 8. Qxf5.

But the opening was considered playable because 6. ... h6! 7. Ngxe4 Nxe4 8. Nxe4 Qh4! was analyzed out to perpetual check.

However, this sub-variation has been virtually retired by a naked push, 6. g4!. White will win the more valuable e4-pawn after 7. Bg2.

For example, 6. ... Bxg4 7. Bg2 Nc6 8. Ngxe4 Nxe4 9. Bxe4 Be7 10. Rg1 Qd7 11. Be3 led to a quick White win in Lastin - Kurenkov, Moscow 2007, after 11. ... f5 12. Bxc6 Qxc6 13. Nd5 Qxc4 14. Nxe7. (Note that 14. ... Kxe7 fails to 15. f3.)

Today’s grandmasters are constantly trying new ideas, so it shouldn’t be surprising we see new versions of a naked push.

In the 2011 Candidates match GM Boris Gelfand uncorked a surprise after 1. d4

QUIZ FOR FEBRUARY

NO ONE HAS HAD AS MULTI-faceted a chess résumé as Yuri Averbakh. The Russian grandmaster, born 100 years ago this February 8, was a world championship candidate, a pioneering endgame composer and analyst, an international arbiter at world championship matches, the author of more than 30 books, host of a long-running Russian TV show about chess, and the most prolific chess magazine editor in history. His games provide our six quiz positions this month. In each diagram you are asked to find the fastest winning line of play. This will usually mean the forced win of a decisive amount of material, such as a minor piece or rook. For solutions, see Page 58.

PROBLEM 1

GM Yuri Averbakh
GM Tigran Petrosian



WHITE TO MOVE

PROBLEM 2

Yuri Averbakh
Alexey Sokolsky



WHITE TO MOVE

PROBLEM 3

IM Nikolai Novotelnov
Yuri Averbakh



BLACK TO MOVE

PROBLEM 4

GM Yuri Averbakh
GM Alexander Tolush



WHITE TO MOVE

PROBLEM 5

Yuri Averbakh
IM Frantisek Zita



WHITE TO MOVE

PROBLEM 6

GM David Bronstein
GM Yuri Averbakh



BLACK TO MOVE

Nf6 2. c4 e6 3. Nf3 d5 4. Nc3 Be7 5. Bg5 h6 6. Bxf6 Bxf6 7. Qb3 dxc4 8. Qxc4 0-0 9. g3.

The usual move was 9. ... b5!, so he would get more than enough play after 10. Nxb5 Ba6 11. Qa4 c5.

But the game went 10. Qxb5 Nd7 and ended early: 11. Bg2 c5 12. 0-0 Rb8 13. Qa4 a5 14. dxc5 draw. So 9. ... b5! never became known as the “Gelfand Variation.”

How can you top the naked push? Well, you can put a pawn on a square where it can be captured by any of *three* enemy pieces.

The Ukrainian GM Mikhail Golubev is an expert on the Sicilian Defense’s Dragon Variation (1. e4 c5 2. Nf3 d6 3. d4 cxd4 4. Nxd4 Nf6 5. Nc3 g6). After a main line, 6. Be3 Bg7 7. f3 0-0 8. Qd2 Nc6 9. Bc4 Bd7 10. 0-0-0, he ventured 10. ... b5!?

(See diagram top of next column)

White can safely capture the pawn all three ways. The idea is simply to open queenside lines and worked well in Yuri Vovk - Golubev, Illchevsk 2006 after 11. Bxb5 Nxd4 12. Bxd4 Bxb5 13. Nxb5 Rb8.

But 10. ... b5 isn’t quite sound and unlikely to become the “Golubev Variation.”



As it stands now, Sveshnikov may be the last person to get a major opening variation attached to his name. There’s a bit of irony there.

Half a century ago, opening theory said after 1. e4 c5 2. Nf3 Nc6 3. d4 cxd4 4. Nxd4 Nf6 5. Nc3 e5 6. Ndb5 d6, the best moves are 7. Bg5 a6 8. Bxf6 gxf6 9. Na3.

(See diagram top of next column)

Books contained a tiny mention of 9. ... b5, Sveshnikov’s main line. Instead, there were many pages devoted to a naked push, 9. ... d5!?



The point is Black gets good play after 10. exd5 Nd4 or 10. Qxd5 Be6.

An influential 1956 game went 10. Nxd5 Bxa3 11. bxa3 Rg8 (11. ... Be6!) 12. Qd2 Be6 13. g3? f5! and Black soon won.

Black was a Czech IM named Jiri Pelikan who played 5. ... e5 for several years. And so it was known as the “Pelikan Variation” — until Sveshnikov came along. ♠

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

Frank P. Samford Jr. and Frank Samford III Chess Fellowships



THE FRANK P. SAMFORD JR. and Frank Samford III Chess Fellowships are pleased to announce the 36th consecutive annual awards. The Fellowships were created by the late Frank P. Samford Jr. of Birmingham, Alabama to advance the game he loved by identifying and assisting the most promising young chess masters in the United States.

Since its inception in 1987 the Samford, under the leadership of Frank Samford III, has been successful in promoting the chess careers of close to three dozen young Americans, many of whom have gone on to become grandmasters, members of the U.S. Olympiad chess team and United States chess champions. Four of the five members of the 2018 silver-medal winning U.S. Olympiad team were Samford Fellows.

The Fellowships are open to American chessplayers who are under the age of 25 at the start of the Fellowships, July 1, 2022, and

have been permanent residents of the U.S. for at least one year prior to that date. Leadership of the Fellowship program is provided by Mr. Samford Jr's grandson, Paul Samford of Atlanta, Georgia, with the able help of Al Lawrence of the US Chess Trust.

The 2022 Samford Chess Fellows will receive expense money for training by leading chess coaches, chess books, computer equipment, and other study materials as well as opportunities to travel and compete in tournaments and matches at the highest levels. The yearly value of the Fellowships (including training, study materials and tournament travel) is \$70,000. The Fellowships are given for a one-year term. Individuals may apply more than one year and are eligible for maximum funding up to, but not exceeding, \$82,000.

The 2022 Samford Fellows will be selected by the Samford Chess Fellowship Committee ("Committee"), consisting of Paul Samford, grandmaster Yuri Shulman and

International Master John Donaldson. Each applicant, who can be of any gender, must be able to demonstrate talent, achievement and commitment to chess. They must be willing to make the determined effort required to become a leading grandmaster and possible challenger for the world chess championship.

For further details and an application form write to:

John Donaldson
Secretary
Samford Chess Fellowship
1623 ½ Martin Luther King Junior Way
Berkeley, CA 94709
Email: imwjd@aol.com

Completed applications for the 2022 Fellowship must be received no later than May 15, 2022. The Committee expects to announce the winner in June, 2022. All decisions by the Committee will be final. ♠

PAST SAMFORD WINNERS

(not including renewals)

- 1987 Joel Benjamin
- 1988 Maxim Dlugy
- 1989 Patrick Wolff
- 1990 Alex Fishbein
- 1991 Ilya Gurevich
- 1992 Alex Sherzer
- 1993 Ben Finegold
- 1994 Gata Kamsky
- 1995 Josh Waitzkin
- 1996 Tal Shaked
- 1997 Boris Kreiman

- 1998 Dean Ippolito
- 1999 Greg Shahade
- 2000 Michael Mulyar
- 2001 Eugene Perelshteyn
- 2002 Varuzhan Akobian
- 2003 Dmitry Schneider
- 2004 Rusudan Goletiani
- 2005 Hikaru Nakamura
- 2006 David Pruess
- 2007 Josh Friedel
- 2008 Vinay Bhat
- 2008 Irina Krush
- 2009 Ray Robson

- 2010 Robert Hess
- 2011 Alex Lenderman
- 2012 Timur Gareev
- 2012 Alejandro Ramirez
- 2013 Sam Shankland
- 2014 Daniel Naroditsky
- 2015 Samuel Sevian
- 2015 Kayden Troff
- 2016 Wesley So
- 2017 Jeffrey Xiong
- 2018 Awonder Liang
- 2018 Samuel Sevian
- 2019 Awonder Liang

- 2019 Samuel Sevian
- 2019 Christopher Yoo
- 2020 Nicholas Checa
- 2020 Awonder Liang
- 2020 Carissa Yip
- 2020 Christopher Yoo
- 2021 Praveen Balakrishnan
- 2021 Akshat Chandra
- 2021 Nicholas Checa
- 2021 Abhimanyu Mishra
- 2021 Hans Niemann
- 2021 Carissa Yip
- 2021 Christopher Yoo



Balakrishnan

Chandra

Checa

Mishra

Niemann

Yip

Yoo

MAKE YOUR MOVE

BY **FM CARSTEN HANSEN**

THIS MONTH'S PUZZLES ARE FROM ALL TAKEN FROM THE 2021 FIDE Grand Swiss in Riga, Latvia.

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 1-2 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. Answers are on pages 58 and 59. ♠

TACTIC I.



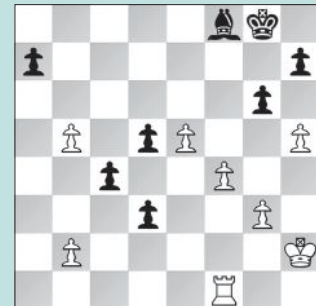
BLACK TO MOVE

TACTIC II.



WHITE TO MOVE

TACTIC III.



BLACK TO MOVE

TACTIC IV.



WHITE TO MOVE

TACTIC V.



WHITE TO MOVE

TACTIC VI.



BLACK TO MOVE

TACTIC VII.



WHITE TO MOVE

TACTIC VIII.



WHITE TO MOVE

TACTIC IX.



WHITE TO MOVE

Position 1: A HEAVY KNOCK ON THE DOOR

Position 2: THREATS AND DEFENSE

Position 3: OPENING A PATH FORWARD

Position 4: BLOCKERS

Position 5: COMBINING THREATS

Position 6: NECESSARY PREPARATION

Position 7: WHAT'S LEFT BEHIND MATTERS

Position 8: PREPARE THE KNIFE

Position 9: THE THREATS COME TOGETHER

2022

World Amateur Team & U.S. Amateur Team Championship East

Welcome back
to the country's
favorite event
—Live and
in-person!
Come on home
to friends old
and new.

February 19-21

Parsippany Hilton

1 Hilton Court

Parsippany, NJ 07054



For help forming teams contact:
noreenchess@gmail.com
or *esdoyle@aol.com*

See TLA section of this issue
for complete details.



MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

THE 2022 SPRING SCHOLASTIC NATIONALS

2022 NATIONAL
HIGH SCHOOL (K-12)
CHAMPIONSHIP

APRIL 8-10

Sheraton Memphis
Downtown Hotel
MEMPHIS
Tennessee

2022 NATIONAL
MIDDLE SCHOOL (K-8)
CHAMPIONSHIP

APRIL 29-MAY 1

Gaylord Texan Resort
and Convention Center
GRAPEVINE
Texas

2022 NATIONAL
ELEMENTARY (K-6)
CHAMPIONSHIP

MAY 13-15

Greater Columbus
Convention Center
COLUMBUS
Ohio



The world's largest chess community
Play with millions from around the world!

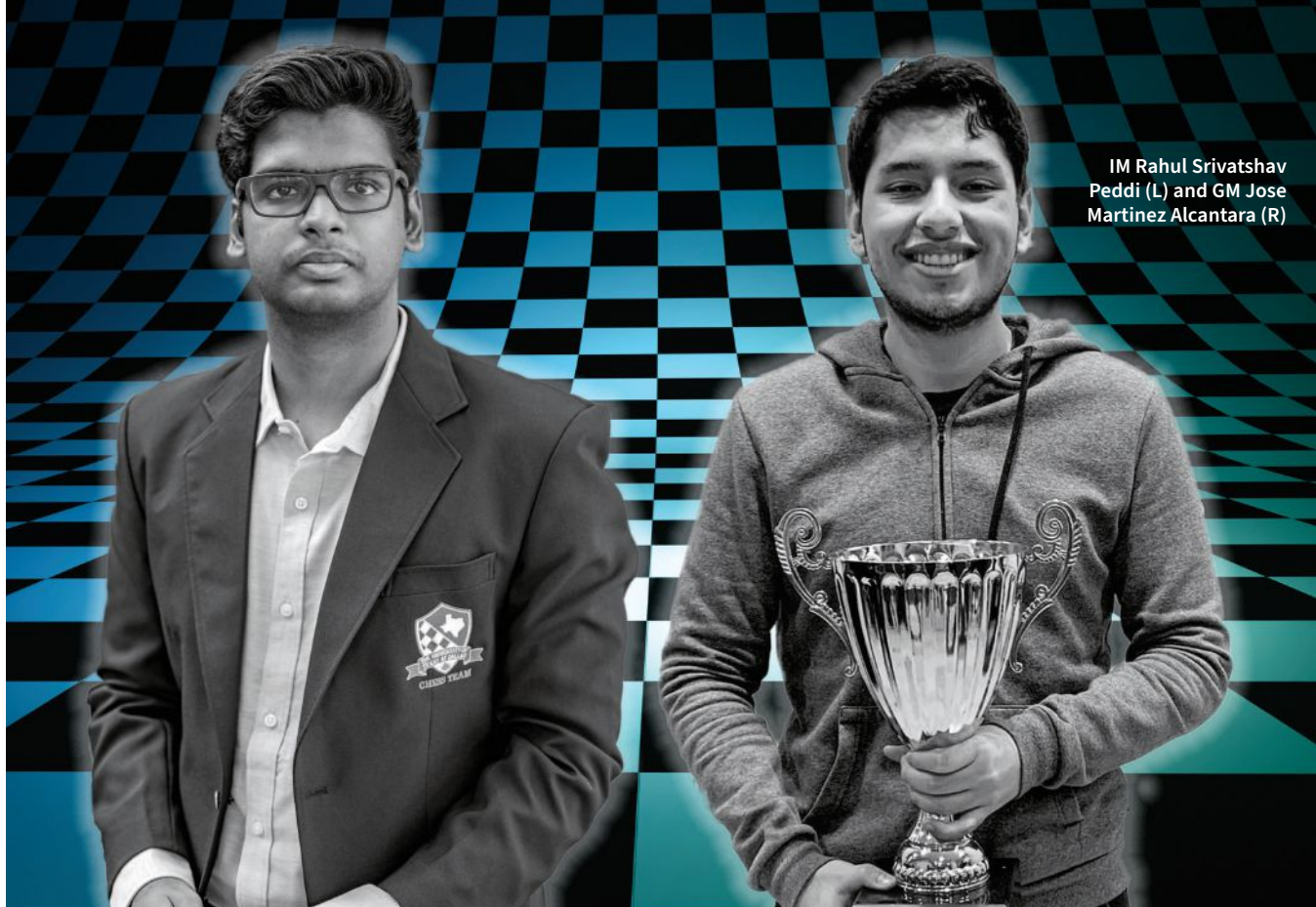


Improve with Lessons, Videos, & Tactics
FREE Unlimited Play on Web & Mobile!



Titled Players get Free Diamond Memberships and
\$1000 Titled Tuesday Tournaments!





IM Rahul Srivatshav Peddi (L) and GM Jose Martinez Alcantara (R)

THE 2021 U.S. MASTERS

GM Alcantara and IM Peddi tie for first place – and five norms are earned!

BY GM ALEX FISHBEIN

THE U.S. MASTERS HOLDS A SPECIAL PLACE IN THE TOURNAMENT calendar. The name evokes images of a high-class event. I remember the first U.S. Masters at the Stanley Hotel in Estes Park, Colorado in 1984, the site of future U.S. Championships. But after that the tournament was only held sporadically until Dr. Walter High revived the tradition.

With his friendly and unassuming nature, High adds a personal touch to the U.S. Masters. He has organized the U.S. Masters every year since 2012, except for last year (due to the COVID-19 pandemic). Now he has teamed up with the Charlotte Chess Center and Scholastic Academy. Under the leadership of FM Peter Giannatos and IA Grant Oen, CCCSA has made a major contribution to American chess. No fewer than 10 Americans have achieved their third and final GM norms in Charlotte — all in the last four years!

The organization was exceptional. All the rounds started on time, all clocks and sets were provided, the pairings were announced at least 45 minutes before each round, and the top 24 boards were streamed. Each player had a name tag with the country, flag, and state if American-based. Everyone is made to feel equal, and even the name “U.S. Masters” gives the sense that everyone has a chance to win. And these days, it is truer than ever before. Here in the U.S. Masters, we did not have to wait long to see upsets:

FRENCH DEFENSE, WINAWER VARIATION (C16)

FM Evan Park (2168)

GM Nicolas Checa (2545)

U.S. Masters (1), Charlotte, 11.24.2021

1. e4 e6 2. d4 d5 3. Nc3 Bb4 4. e5 b6 5. a3 Bxc3+ 6. bxc3 Qd7 7. h4 Ba6 8. Bxa6 Nxa6 9. a4 Ne7

Checa wants no part of a theoretical battle here. However, his even younger opponent demonstrates good strategic knowledge here. 10. h5 was played twice before — both times in the Austrian team championships?! — but Evan holds his h-pawn back for now. We soon see why.

10. Ne2! Nb8 11. Nf4 Nbc6?

Already a fatal error!



12. Nh5! Rg8

Hiding on the kingside with 12. ... Kf8 13. Qg4 Rg8 14. Rh3 is not on the black king's calendar.

13. Bh6!

Black cannot recapture because of the fork which loses the queen for two pieces. Park duly converted his advantage, and **Black resigned** on move 57. He continued his great form and finished in a tie for third with 6½ points, easily good enough for an IM norm and close to a GM norm.

The tournament featured three participants in this year's U.S. Championship: GMs Aleksandr Lenderman, Daniel Naroditsky, and John Michael Burke. All of them suffered defeats in the early rounds.

ONE FALSE MOVE

GM Alexander Fishbein (2431)
GM John Burke (2569)
U.S. Masters (3), Charlotte, 11.25.2021



BLACK TO MOVE

After running into difficulties in the opening round, here, against me in the third round, John tried an interesting pawn sacrifice and could have achieved counterplay here when he erred with:

27. ... Bc4?

Black's plan to block my rook and maintain the only open file fails for tactical reasons. Correct is 27. ... Kf6 28. f3 g5! 29. Rc7 Rd1+ 30. Kf2 Rd2+ 31. Kg3 h5 32. h4 gxh4+ 33. Kxh4 Rxc2 34. Rxa7, and with his active pieces, Black is very much in the game.

28. f4! b5

Critically weakening the dark squares, but 28. ... Rd4? loses to 29. Rxc4 Rxc4 30. Bd5+.

29. Kf2! Rd6

After 29. ... Rd2+ 30. Ke3 Ra2 31. Rc3 Kf6 32. Kd4! the white king has a clear path.

30. Ke3 Kf6 31. a4! a6 32. a5 Ke6 33. h4 Rd8 34. g4 Rd6 35. Rg1 g5 36. hxg5 hxg5 37. Rh1 gxf4+ 38. Kxf4 Rd2 39. Rh6+ Kd7 40. Rxa6 Rb2 41. Ke5 Rxb4 42. Ra7+ Ke8

43. Bc6+ Kf8 44. Kf6, Black resigned.

The sensation of the tournament was IM Rahul Srivatshav Peddi. A recent arrival and a student at UT Dallas, he is unknown to American audiences. But he came in with three GM norms already, only needing to hit FIDE 2500 to become a grandmaster. After a slow start, he defeated three GMs, showing brilliant tactics along the way.

QUEEN'S GAMBIT, SEMI-SLAV VARIATION (D43)

GM Nikolas Theodorou (2576)
IM Rahul Srivatshav Peddi (2449)
U.S. Masters (6), Charlotte, 11.27.2021

1. d4 d5 2. c4 c6 3. Nf3 Nf6 4. Nc3 e6 5. Bg5 h6 6. Bh4 dxc4 7. e4 g5 8. Bg3 b5 9. Be2 Bb7 10. Qc2

We are in a sharp and theoretical line of the Semi-Slav. 10. 0-0 and 10. h4 are more common here.

10. ... Nbd7 11. Rd1 Nh5!? 12. d5 Nxg3 13. hxg3 exd5 14. exd5 cxd5 15. Nxd5 Bg7 16. Ne3

Aiming for the weak f5-square.

16. ... Qa5+ 17. Kf1 Rd8 18. Nf5 Kf8 19. Rd6

We are still in theory, but Theodorou was walking into a minefield. The most recent grandmaster game here was Adhiban - Erigaisi from the Indian Team Championship in 2020. Black lost quickly after 19. ... Nb8? 20. Qd1!. Peddi saw that game, as he was on the same team as GM Erigaisi! He knew the improvement:

PHOTOS: COURTESY DAWN MOORE



FM Evan Park



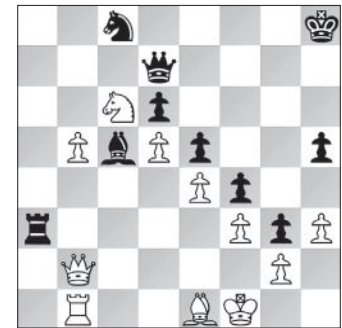
GM Alex Fishbein



GM Jose Martinez Alcantara

A BIG REVERSAL

IM Craig Hilby (2441)
GM Jose Martinez Alcantara (2608)
U.S. Masters (3), Charlotte, 11.25.2021



WHITE TO MOVE

19. ... Nc5! 20. b4!?



20. ... Rxd6! 21. Nxd6!

Clearly better for Black is 21. bxa5 Be4! 22. Qc1 Bxf5, with enough material for the queen, powerful bishops, and a passed pawn.

21. ... Qxb4 22. Qf5 Ke7 23. Nxb7?

This loses. The position is very complicated, but remains balanced after 23. Qxf7+ Kxd6 24. Qxg7 Qb1+ 25. Ne1.

23. ... Nxb7 24. Ne5 Nd6!

Now Peddi was out of theory, and he met the challenge.

25. Qd7+ Kf6 26. Bd1!? h5

Black wins easily with 26. ... Qd2 27. Ng4 Kg6 28. Bc2+ Qxc2 29. Qxd6+ f6. After the text, White can survive. But I am not attaching question marks because people cannot be expected to play flawlessly in a position like this.

27. Rxb5

Correct is 27. f4!, for example: 27. ... gxf4 28.

gxf4 Qd2 29. Bf3 c3 30. g4! hxg4 31. Nxb7+ Kg6 32. Ne5+ Kf6 with equality.

27. ... Rxb5 28. Qd8+ Ke6!

Not 28. ... Kxe5? 29. Qe7+ Kd4 (29. ... Kf5? 30. Bc2+ Ne4 31. Bxe4+ Kg4 32. Qd7+ f5 33. Qxf5 mate; 29. ... Kd5? 30. Bf3+ Kc5 31. Qxa7 mate) 30. Qe3+ Kd5 31. Bf3+ Ne4 32. Qxe4+ Kd6 33. Qc6+ and a draw is unavoidable.

29. Qd7+ Kd5 30. Bf3+ Kxe5!

But now, with the bishop on f3, the knight can be taken.

31. Qe7+ Kf5 32. Be4+



White wins the queen but loses the game.

32. ... Nxe4 33. g4+ Kf4! 34. Qxb4 Rh1+ 35. Ke2 Bc3 36. g3+ Kxg4 37. f3+ Kxg3 38. fxe4 Re1, mate.

Peddi finished with 7/9, in a first-place tie with Peruvian GM Jose Martinez Alcantara, who had quite a different path to that score:

45. Ra1?

Black was in trouble for much of this game, and here 45. Rc1 with threats of Rc1xc5 and Nc6xe5 would be devastating. The text move gives him a reprieve.

45. ... Re3 46. Ra8 Kh7 47. Ba5 h4 48. Rb8 Ba7! 49. Nxa7?

The position was already hard to navigate. Here I think 49. Ra8 Qb7 50. Rxa7 Nxa7 51. Bd2! Rd3 52. Ke2 Rxd2+ 53. Kxd2 draws.

49. ... Qxa7 50. Rxc8 Qxa5

Now Black is the one who is attacking.

51. Rc1 Ra3 52. b6 Qa6+ 53. Qe2 Qxb6 54. Qd2 Qa6+ 55. Qe2 Qa7 56. Qb2 Kg6! 57. Rb1 Rb3!, White resigned.

Alcantara pulled off another miraculous win in round eight against the top seed:

TAKEDOWN

GM Jose Martinez Alcantara (2608)
GM Aleksandr Lenderman (2624)
U.S. Masters (8), Charlotte, 11.28.2021



WHITE TO MOVE

24. Rg1 Rf7

Not 24. ... Rg8?? 25. Qxd5! with mate coming.

25. Rd3 Rd8 26. Rg3

White has a scary-looking lineup on the g-file, but Black's defense is solid.

26. ... Bh4 27. Rh3?! Rxd4 28. Rxh4 Qd8!

29. Rh6? Rd1! 30. Rh3

If 30. Rxe6? Rxd1+ 31. Qxd5+.

30. ... Rfd7 31. Rf3 Rxd1+ 32. Kxg1 Rd1+?

Black would reach a winning pawn ending after 32. ... Rg7 33. Rg3 Qd1+ 34. Qf1 Qxf1+ 35. Kxf1 Rxd1 36. hxd3 Kg7 37. Kf2 Kg6 38. Kg2 Kh5 39. Kh3 b5 40. b4 a6 41. a3 h6 42. Kg2 Kg4.

33. Rf1 Qd4+ 34. Qf2 Rxf1+ 35. Kxf1

Now the pawn ending is drawn, as Black cannot penetrate on the kingside. A half-point behind here in round eight, Alex still chases the ghost of a missed win.

35. ... Qc4+ 36. Kg2 Qd5+ 37. Kg3 Qxa2?!

38. Qc2! Qd5 39. Qc8+ Kg7 40. Qe8



40. ... Qc5??

Now looking to force a draw, he forgets that White can capture the e6-pawn with check.

41. Qd7+! Kf8 42. Qd8+ Kf7 43. Qf6+ Ke8

44. Qxe6+ Kd8 45. Qg8+ Kc7 46. Qxh7+ Kb8 47. Qxf5 Qg1+ 48. Kh3 Qf1+ 49. Kh4 Qf2+ 50. Kg5, Black resigned.

Alcantara defeated Peddi in the playoff and is the 2021 U.S. Masters champion. Tied for third, in tiebreak order, were: your reporter, IM Christopher Yoo, GM Bryan Smith, FM Evan Park, GM Ehsan Ghaemmaghami, GM Brandon Jacobson, GM Nikolas Theodorou, GM Daniel Naroditsky, GM Aran Hakobyan, GM John Michael Burke, GM Varuzhan Akobian, GM Gabriel Flom Battaglini and GM Akshat Chandra.

Christopher Yoo earned his third and final GM norm here, which isn't too surprising — he made all his norms in Charlotte! Yoo

needed to win in the last round to clinch the norm, and he delivered:

QUEEN'S GAMBIT ACCEPTED (D27)

IM Christopher Yoo (2499)

IM Matyas Marek (2372)

U.S. Masters (9), Charlotte, 11.28.2021

1. d4 d5 2. c4 dxc4 3. e3 Nf6 4. Bxc4 e6 5. Nf3 a6 6. 0-0 c5 7. Be2 Nc6 8. dxc5 Bxc5 9. Qxd8+ Kxd8

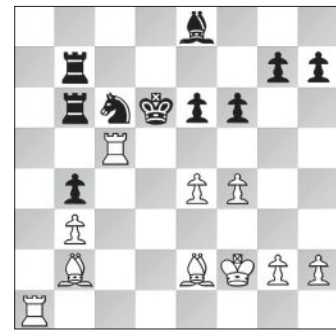
Christopher is not afraid of trading queens. The black king will not be safe in the center.

10. b3 Ke7 11. Bb2 Bd7 12. Nbd2 b5 13. Rfc1 Bd6 14. a4! Rab8 15. axb5 axb5 16. Nb1 Rb6 17. Nc3 Rhb8 18. Nd2 Bb4 19. Nce4 Nxe4 20. Nxe4 f6 21. Nc5! Bxc5 22. Rxc5 b4 23. f4 R8b7 24. Kf2 Be8 25. e4 Kd6

(See diagram at top of next column)

26. e5+! fxe5

This is not yet an endgame! Note that 26. ...



Kxc5 leads to disaster after 27. Rc1+ Kd5 28. Bf3, mate.

27. fxe5+ Kc7 28. Bf3 Kb8 29. Rac1 Rc7

Black is completely tied up here. Christopher later simplified too soon into a rook ending, which, while winning, was not trivial in time trouble. After some mutual errors, he prevailed, as **Black resigned** on move 65.

The return of the U.S. Masters after a one-year break was a special one, indeed. I am looking forward to more great tournaments in Charlotte in 2022! ♠



IM (and soon-to-be GM) Christopher Yoo

2021 U.S. MASTERS AT A GLANCE NOVEMBER 24-28, 2021 | CHARLOTTE, NC

1ST-2ND: GM Jose Martinez Alcantara, IM Rahul Srivatshav Peddi, 7/9. **3RD-15TH:** GMs Akobian, Battaglini, Burke, Chandra, Fishbein, Ghaemmaghami, Hakobyan, B. Jacobson, Naroditsky, Smith, and Theodorou, IM Yoo, FM Park, 6½/9. **U2400:** FM Park, 6½/9. **U2250:** WGM Cervantes, IM Rodriguez Rivera, Vanapalli, 5½/9. **U2200:** FM Lin, 5½/9. **GM Norms:** Peddi, Yoo. **IM Norms:** Park, Aaron, Vanapalli.



GM Illia Nyzhnyk (L)
and Webster coach GM
Liem Quang Le (R)

Spicy Times in St. Louis

NYZHNYK WINS 2021 SPICE CUP

BY **GM BENJAMIN GLEDURA**

THE 15TH EDITION OF THE SPICE Cup took place from October 17-22, 2021, at the Clayton Plaza Hotel in St. Louis.

As always, it was sponsored by Webster University and the Susan Polgar Foundation. But there was novelty this year as well. The new Webster University chess coach, GM Liem Quang Le, served as the main organizer of the event.

Playing any tournament in the time of COVID can be difficult. Here, both the playing hall and the hotel were impeccable. All players were required to wear masks during the tournament, helping to prevent any transmission during the tournament. The top boards saw another benefit: the first six DGT boards were cordoned off in a separate room.

This year's tournament roster was slightly weaker than it was in 2020, as three Webster students (GMs Lazaro Bruzon, John Burke, and Aleksandr Lenderman) were occupied with the U.S. Championship across town. Still, seven grandmasters turned up, and the tournament managed to attract both young talents and a YouTuber who is known by millions of chess fans.

When the tournament began, I believed I had a shot at winning the trophy. But there were no easy games from the outset — the lower-rated opponents were playing very strong chess! Perhaps it was another instance of over-the-board ratings being out-of-date after the pandemic-induced layoff.

After I slipped in the second round, GMs Illia Nyzhnyk and Yuniesky Quesada grabbed the lead. I eventually caught up, finishing in shared second through fourth place, while Nyzhnyk took clear first and Quesada landed in third place via tiebreaks. Congratulations to them both, and also to IM Christopher Yoo, who finished fourth!

Before we get to some of the games, I'd like to offer special thanks to the people who made the tournament run: the main arbiters, FA Glenn Panner and FA Judit Sztaray. Thanks also to Anastasia Wzywany, who helped to organize the event.

In what follows, I have analyzed three important games. Two are from the final round. The first, however, is a barnburner from earlier on.

CARO-KANN DEFENSE (B12)

GM Jose Martinez Alcantara (2620)

IM Levy Rozman (2362)

SPICE Cup (3), St. Louis, 10.18.2021

This battle of two famous streamers was definitely one of the hottest games at the

2021 SPICE Cup. If you want to know what IM Levy Rozman thought about this game, then check out his video on his "GothamChess" YouTube channel. Here's my take on it!

1. e4 c6 2. d4 d5 3. e5 Bf5 4. h4 h6!?

This is a bit out of fashion. The main line today begins with 4. ... h5.

5. g4 Be4 6. f3 Bh7 7. e6!

White sacrifices a pawn to stunt Black's development. After the alternative 7. Bd3 Bxd3 8. Qxd3 e6 Black is completely fine, and both ... c6-c5 and ... Nb8-c6 come naturally.

7. ... Qd6

This is Black's idea in this move order — the queen is eyeing the g3-square. Worse is 7. ... fxe6 8. Bd3 Bxd3 9. Qxd3 when Black is in trouble.

8. exf7+ Kxf7 9. f4!?

A double-edged move. It covers the soft g3-square and frees the f3-square for the knight. But it also weakens the e4-square. Grandmasters try to always consider which squares are left undefended when making a move.

9. ... Nf6

Surely not 9. ... Be4? 10. Nf3 Bxf3 11. Qxf3 with a huge White advantage.



10. Nf3!

A smart pawn sacrifice that gives White tremendous compensation.

10. ... Nxg4 11. Bh3

The most common move in the database is 11. h5, when White has solid compensation, planning Nf3-e5. Here is a great example that shows how White can make use of his better development: 11. ... Qe6+ 12. Ne5+ Nxe5 13. fxe5 Ke8 14. Nc3 g5 15. hxg6 e.p. Qxg6 16. Bf4 Qxc2 17. Qxc2 Bxc2 18. Bh3 Na6 19. Kd2 Bh7 20. Rag1 Kd8 21. e6 Nc7 22. Be5 Rg8 23. Rxg8 Bxg8 24. Rf1 Bxe6 25. Rxf8+ and White went on to win in Najer - Bures, Czech Republic 2015.

11. ... h5

Worse is 11. ... Nf6?! 12. Ne5+ Ke8 13. c4 e6 14. Nc3 with a solid White edge.

12. Ne5+ Ke8!

Black has to give the pawn back, otherwise White would have a crushing position.

13. Bxg4 hxg4 14. Qxg4 Be4!

Not 14. ... Nd7?! 15. Qh5+! g6 16. Qg4 Nf6 17. Qh3 burying the bishop on h7.

15. Qc8+ Qd8

A critical position. Outrating his opponent by 250 points, White does not want to make a repetition. How can he keep the game going?

16. Qe6

Trading queens with 16. Qxd8+ Kxd8 17. Rh2 Ke8 would only help Black.

Both players thought that Black would be fine if White went fishing for a pawn with 16. Qxb7. I probably would have thought the same. Some analysis: 16. ... Bxh1 (White has an edge after 16. ... Nd7 17. Rh2 Rc8 18. Nc3) 17. Qxa8 Rxh4 18. Nc3! (Black has a crushing advantage after 18. Nxc6? Nxc6 19. Qxc6+ Kf7 with better piece development and a safer king.) 18. ... Bg2 19. Kf2! Qc8! This doesn't look promising for White, but there's a nice advantage after playing some precise (albeit slightly inhuman) moves: 20. Bd2! (The excitement peters out after 20. Nxc6 Qxc6 21. Qxc6+ Nxc6 22. Kxg2 Nxd4 23. Nxd5 Nxc2) 20. ... Rh2 21. Rg1! Be4+ 22. Ke1 Bxc2 23. Nd1! and White is for choice.

16. ... Qd6 17. Qf7+! Kd8 18. Rh2 Nd7 19. Nc3



We have reached another critical position. Black has a couple of choices here.

19. ... Nxe5!?

Not ideal, to put it mildly.

Another idea is 19. ... Qb4!? but Black has to play precisely here: 20. Bd2 Bxc2 (not 20. ... Qxb2? 21. Rb1 Qxc2 22. Rxb7, or 20. ... Qxd4? 21. 0-0-0) 21. Nxd5 Nxe5 22. fxe5



Qxb2 23. Rc1 Qxa2 24. Rxc2 Qxd5 25. Qxd5+ cxd5 26. e6 and things are very complicated!

Black's best option was 19. ... Bh7 with a murky position: 20. Qh5 Kc7 (or 20. ... Nxe5 21. fxe5 Qg6) 21. Be3 Qf6 22. 0-0-0 e6 and both sides have chances.

20. fxe5 Qg6 21. Qf2 e6 22. Be3

After the correct 22. h5! Qf5 23. Nxe4! Qxe4+ 24. Qe3 White will go for the endgame, with hopes for an advantage thanks to his edge in space.

22. ... Be7?!

In his post-game analysis on YouTube, Rozman analyzed 22. ... Bb4 23. 0-0-0 Bxc3 24. bxc3 and said that he was (understandably) afraid of this during the game. But Black has control over the light squares, so if he could solve his only problem — his lack of development — then he would be fine. The position is equal after 24. ... Qe8 25. Rg1 Rh7 26. h5 Kc7 27. h6 Qd7.

23. 0-0-0 Rf8

Perhaps stronger was 23. ... Kd7 24. Rg1 Raf8 25. Qe1 when White has a slight but stable advantage.

24. Qg1! Rf3?

A blunder, but one that went unnoticed!

25. Nxe4?

After 25. Rg2! Qf5 26. Rxc7 Bxc2 27. Rg8+ Bf8 28. Rxf8+ (or 28. Qg7) 28. ... Qxf8 29. Kxc2 the game would have ended more quickly.

25. ... Qxe4

White plays nearly perfectly from this point forward.

26. Bg5! Rf7 27. Rf2! Rxf2 28. Qxf2 Bxc5+ 29. hxg5 Ke7 30. Rf1! Qg6 31. Qe3

White is totally winning, in no small part due to his safer king. Martinez Alcantara's technique is instructive.

31. ... Kd7 32. Kb1 Rh8 33. a4!

Giving the king luft, and also gaining space on the queenside.

33. ... Rh2 34. Qc3 b6 35. a5! Kc7 36. b4 Kb7 37. b5! cxb5 38. axb6 axb6 39. Rf8, Black resigned.

A great fight from both players, but White played better in the critical moments.

QUEEN'S GAMBIT (D30)

GM Illia Nyzhnyk (2670)

IM Justus Williams (2420)

SPICE Cup (9), St. Louis, 10.22.2021

GM Illia Nyzhnyk was leading the field by a half-point entering the final round, and he knew that a win guaranteed him clear first place. Let's see how he handled this crucial game.

1. d4 d5 2. c4 e6 3. g3 a6!? 4. Bg2 dxc4 5. Nc3

Slightly unusual — usually White does not respond to ... d5xc4 with Nb1-c3 in the Catalan.

5. ... Nf6 6. Qa4+ Bd7?!

Black would have had a better setup after 6. ... Nbd7 7. Qxc4 (7. Nf3 c5) 7. ... c5.

7. Qxc4 b5 8. Qd3 Bc6 9. Bxc6+

White could have kept the bishops on the board with 9. Nf3 b4 10. Nb1 Be4 11. Qd1 c5 12. Be3! and White has an edge in a complex position.

9. ... Nxc6 10. Nf3 Nb4!

IM and YouTube celebrity Levy Rozman explains Black's decision on move 19.

A typical plan to open up the position.

11. Qb1 c5! 12. dxc5 Bxc5 13. 0-0

A key moment: Black needs to play precisely to equalize, including the completion of his development.

13. ... Rc8

A safer choice would have been 13. ... 0-0 14. Bg5 Be7 15. Rd1 Qc7! (worse is 15. ... Qb6 16. a3 Nc6 17. Ne4 Nd5 18. Bxe7 Ncxe7 19. Ne5 Rad8 20. b4 when White is slightly better) 16. a3 (or 16. a4 bxa4! 17. Rxa4 Rfd8 18. Bxf6 gxf6 with equality) 16. ... Nc6 17. Ne4 Nd5 and Black's position seems stable. Sometimes simple chess is best!

14. Bg5!

Trying to cause some problems in Black's position.

14. ... h6?!

Black has to be careful after 14. ... Be7?! 15. Rd1 Qb6 16. Bxf6! Bxf6 17. Qe4 and if 17. ... Nc6? 18. Nd5! wins. I still think Black had to finish his development with 14. ... 0-0 15. a4 (15. Ne4 Be7 16. Rd1 Nfd5!) and now 15. ... Nbd5! is the most precise way to equalize.

15. Bxf6

Better to win the tempo immediately with 15. Rd1 Qb6 16. Bxf6 gxf6 transposing to the game.

15. ... gxf6?!

White can now make use of Black's bad pawn structure. Better was 15. ... Qxf6 16. a3 Nc6 17. Ne4 which is a bit unpleasant, but holdable for Black.

16. Rd1

White seizes the opportunity to start his attack, and from here, Nyzhnyk does not fail at his task.

16. ... Qb6



17. a3!

Disregarding the f2-pawn.

17. ... Bxf2+

Or 17. ... Nc6 18. Ne4 Be7 19. b4 and White has a big advantage, with Qb1-b2 to follow.

18. Kg2 Nd5

Not 18. ... Nc6? 19. Ne4.

19. Nxd5 exd5 20. e4!

Opening the position, and leaving the black king stranded in the center.

20. ... dxe4?

Hastening the end. Black's best, 20. ... 0-0, would not save him after 21. exd5.

21. Qxe4+ Kf8 22. Rd7! Re8 23. Qd5 Re6**24. Rc1!**

Bringing the last piece into the attack.

24. ... Kg7 25. Rcc7 Rf8 26. Qh5, Black resigned.**BOGO-INDIAN DEFENSE (E11)**

GM Benjamin Gledura (2628)

GM Brandon Jacobson (2492)

SPICE Cup (9), St. Louis, 10.22.2021

One last game! I was half a point behind the tournament leader, and I had to win this game to have a chance to win the tournament. I played Brandon a few days earlier at the Washington Chess Congress tournament with opposite colors, and that ended in a draw. So, I was prepared for a big fight.

1. d4 d5 2. c4 e6 3. Nf3 Nf6 4. g3 Bb4+ 5. Bd2 a5 6. Bg2 0-0!? 7. 0-0 dxc4 8. a3

Deviating from a game played two rounds earlier: 8. Qc2 Bxd2 9. Nbx2 b5 10. a4!? c6 11. b3 cxb3 12. Nxb3 Ba6 13. Nc5 b4 14. Rfd1 Nfd7 (after 14. ... Nd5 Black should be fine) 15. Ne5 and White had the initiative in Nyzhnyk - B. Jacobson, St. Louis 2021.

8. ... Bxd2?!

I think this is already a slight misstep. After 8. ... Bd6!? Black equalizes with 9. Qa4 Nc6 10. Qxc4 e5!

I considered 8. ... Be7! when I played my seventh move, and wasn't sure how to evaluate it. The a2-a3 and ... a7-a5 moves definitely favor Black in these positions. My intention over the board was to play 9. Qa4, but I missed a nice idea: 9. ... b6! 10. Ne5 Ra7! which is kind of unusual for Black, but it works out. Play continues 11. Qxc4 (11. Rd1 Ba6!) 11. ... Ba6 12. Qa4 Bxe2 13. Re1

Ba6 14. Nc3 c5 15. Be3! and the position remains unclear.

9. Nbx2 b5 10. b3 cxb3 11. Qxb3 c6

After some transpositions, I was back in book — I was familiar with the position and I knew where to put my pieces.

12. Rfc1 Bb7 13. Qb2!

This gives the knight a place on the b3-square, and it defends the d4-pawn. Now Nf3-e1-d3 is possible to gain total control over the c5-square.

13. ... Nbd7 14. Ne1**14. ... Qb8?!**

This was a slight surprise at the board, but I soon understood my opponent's idea. The ... c6-c5 break is available in many positions.

The always creative GM Daniil Dubov tried 14. ... e5?! against me in a key game at the Online Olympiad in 2020.

15. Nd3

Grabbing the pawn with 15. Bxc6 would have helped Black, as his play would have been much easier: 15. ... Bxc6 16. Rxc6 Qb7 17. Rac1 Rac8 18. Rxc8 Rxc8 19. Rxc8+ Qxc8 20. Qxb5 Qc1 and the position is equal.

15. ... Rc8 16. Rab1

Played to prevent Black's ... c6-c5 idea; then I was intending to play Nb3-Nc5 with a very pleasant position.

My first instinct was to go for the simple plan with Nb3-Nc5, gaining control over

the position, but then I was bothered by 16. Nb3 c5!? 17. Bxb7 Qxb7 18. Nbx5 Nxc5 19. Nxc5 Qd5.

Instead 16. Nb3 c5!? 17. dxc5! was a key idea I should have considered, i.e., 17. ... Bxg2 18. Kxg2 Qb7+ 19. f3 Qd5 and now 20. e4!? is a nice tactical resource, but after 20. ... Qxd3 21. Rc3 Qc4! 22. Rxc4 bxc4 23. Nd4 Nxc5 Black should be fine. The simple 20. Qc3 gives White an advantage.

16. ... c5 17. dxc5 Bxg2 18. Kxg2 Qb7+ 19. f3! Rab8 20. e4!?

Better was 20. Nb3 Qa8 21. Nd4.

20. ... Qa8 21. Qc3

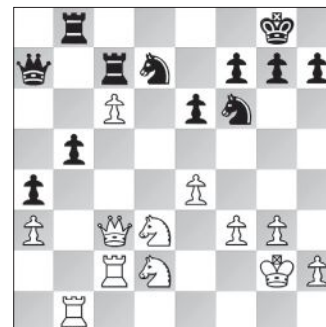
Here I think my opponent realized that his position is very hard to play, and perhaps even already lost.

21. ... a4

One of the points of my previous move was 21. ... Rc7 22. Nb3 Rbc8 23. Qxa5 Qxa5 24. Nxa5 Nxc5 25. Rxb5! and White should win.

22. Rc2 Qa7 23. c6!

Here I knew I was winning, but I still had to bring home the full point!

23. ... Rc7?

A blunder in a very tough position.

24. Rxb5!, Black resigned.

The idea is 24. Rxb5 Rxb5 25. cxd7 Rxd7 (if 25. ... Rxc3 it's mate in two with 26. d8=Q+) 26. Qc8+ and mate is imminent. ♠

2021 SPICE CUP AT A GLANCE

OCTOBER 17-22, 2021 | ST. LOUIS, MO

GM Nyzhnyk, 7/9. | GM Gledura, GM Quesada, IM Yoo, 6½/9. | GM Martinez Alcantara, GM B. Jacobson, IM Williams, FM Mardov, 5½/9. | GM Moradiabadi, IM Bora, R. Chen, FM Chambers, Proleiko, 5/9. | FM Homa, FM Woodward, Amburgy, Xie, 4½/9. | GM Cordova, Narayanan, Nakada, FM Atanasov, FM J. Chen, 4/9. | IM Rozman, Shoykhet, 3½/9. | IM Ostrovskiy, FM Eckert, Singh, Deshpande, 3/9. | FM Betaneli, FM Yanay, 2½/9. | FM Park, ½/9. | Shoaf, 0/9.

THE 2021 FIDE Grand Swiss

Firouzja wins in Riga;
Caruana qualifies for Candidates

BY GM SAMUEL SEVIAN



THE FIDE GRAND SWISS IS ONE OF THE HIGHLIGHTS OF THE international chess calendar. It is an opportunity to earn one of two seats in the Candidates, while also enjoying the rare experience of playing 11 games with some of the world's top players. It is, in my view, the most competitive event of the year, producing dramatic chess that is always exciting to watch.

This year's tournament was held in Latvia's beautiful capital, Riga. The playing venue and the hotel were located in the most attractive part of the city, which you would only get to see in mornings (before rounds) because of an 8 p.m. curfew. The organizers did an amazing job running the tournament given all the logistical challenges imposed by the government's lockdown. All players had to be tested every few days, and meals were delivered to players in their respective hotel rooms. While safety had to come first, the downside was that most players had very little time to roam around the city after their games.

The American contingent consisted of five players, four of whom traveled to Riga immediately after the U.S. Championship closing ceremony: GMs Fabiano Caruana, Hans Niemann, Dariusz Swiercz, Jeffery Xiong, and your author. (GM Levon Aronian played in this event under the Armenian flag, his last before his transfer to the United States was finalized as of December 1. There were no American entries in the Women's Grand Swiss. ~ed.) I was tired after my strong showing at the U.S. Championship, where I tied for first place, but I was in very good spirits after my performance.

With such a tight travel schedule, there was a jet-lag issue in the first rounds, but I managed to score two good wins — against India's rising star GM Praggnanandhaa and the experienced Polish GM Mateusz Bartel — along with four draws in the first six rounds. Then came the game with Fabiano in round seven, our second encounter in two weeks.



NIMZO-INDIAN DEFENSE, 4. f3 VARIATION (E20)

GM Fabiano Caruana (2800)

GM Samuel Sevian (2654)

FIDE Grand Swiss (7), Riga, 11.03.2021

1. d4 Nf6 2. c4 e6 3. Nc3 Bb4 4. f3 c5 5. d5
0-0 6. e4 d6 7. Nge2 b5 8. Nf4 exd5!?

An interesting pawn sacrifice.

9. Nfxd5 Nxd5 10. Qxd5 Qb6!

The rook is taboo as the queen will be trapped after ... Bc8-b7.



11. cxb5

The main line is 11. Bf4 Be6 12. Qxd6 (12. Qxa8? Nc6 13. Qxf8+ Kxf8 and here the queen is more than a match for the rooks) 12. ... Qa5. Black has pressure on the c3-knight and along the d-file for the pawn.

11. ... Bb7 12. Qd2

A strange move, putting the queen in a pin, but there is an idea behind it.

12. ... d5!

Black has to play energetically to justify the material investment.

13. a3

Grabbing the pawn with 13. exd5? is not advisable: 13. ... Re8+ 14. Be2 c4! keeps the king trapped in the center.

13. ... Bxc3

The point of White's 12th move is seen after 13. ... Ba5 14. b4! cxb4 15. Nxd5 Bxd5 (worse is 15. ... bxa3 16. Nxb6 Bxd2+ 17. Bxd2 axb6 18. Bb4!) 16. axb4! eliminating the dark-squared bishop.

14. Qxc3 d4!

Here Fabiano paused for the first time in the

The playing hall at the Hanzas Perons Cultural Center in Riga during the second round.

game, perhaps trying to recall his preparation. The inferior 14. ... dxe4? 15. Be3 Nd7 16. 0-0-0! gives White quick development with threats.

15. Qc2?!

Inaccurate. The right way to proceed was 15. Qb3, but Black is fine here, either continuing with Benko Gambit-esque play with ... a7-a6 or playing for quick development with ... Nd7-e5.

15. ... a6!



16. bxa6?!

Continuing on the wrong path.

Correct was 16. a4 as he needs to control the b5-square to block the a6–f1 diagonal later on. And after 16. ... axb5 17. Bxb5 Ba6 18. Bxa6 Qxa6 19. b3! (stopping ... c5-c4) 19. ... Nc6 (19. ... Nd7 20. Kf2 Rac8 21. Rd1 is equal) 20. Qxc5 Na5 21. Qb5! and now we see the point of 16. a4!. White manages to either trade queens or get his king to safety.

16. ... Bxa6 17. Bxa6 Qxa6!

I think this is what Fabiano missed when he played 15. Qc2. I keep feeding him material to prevent him from castling.

18. Qxc5

After thinking for over 40 minutes, Fabiano decides to accept the sacrifice. Trying to castle artificially with 18. Kf2 c4 19. Rd1 won't work as after 19. ... Nc6 my central pawns are monstrous.

18. ... Rc8 19. Qd5!



The best defense, controlling many squares from the center. After 19. Qxd4 Nc6! White has no good squares for the queen.

Here I spent some time thinking. Naturally 19. ... Rc2 hangs mate, so I felt I had two choices: either bring the a8-rook out, hopefully to c2, or add the b8-knight to the attack.

19. ... Ra7?!



Though neither move was objectively winning, he had to be more careful after 19. ... Nc6! and now the analysis is both deep and beautiful: 20. Bd2 Rab8 and now the path divides.

(a) I was most concerned with 21. b3 during the game, but as Fabiano pointed out during our post-game analysis, Black has a brilliant geometric idea available: 21. ... Rb5 22. Qc4 Ne5! (22. ... Nb4 gives White the neat shot 23. axb4! Qxa1+ 24. Kf2 Qa6 25. Ra1! Qb7 26. Ra7! and White is fine) 23. Qxd4 (23. Qe2 d3 24. Qf2 Rxb3 25. 0-0 Rb2 followed by ... Rc8-c2, and Black is crashing through; after 23. Qa4 Qxa4 24. bxa4 Rb2 the bishop will eventually fall) and now the move I missed was 23. ... Qf6!!



POSITION AFTER 23. ... Qf6

What an amazing idea. Black threatens a discovery with ... Ne5xf3+, there's ... Rc8-d8 looming, and if White puts the king on e2, the black queen can always go back to a6! White can't survive for long.

(b) 21. Rc1! is the only defense, but I'm not sure he would find it given we were both under 25 minutes at this point. Play continues 21. ... Rxb2 22. Rf1! (We discussed 22. Qc4 after the game, but it loses to 22. ... Qxa3 23. Qxd4 Rd8! 24. Rxc6 Rxd4 25. Rc8+ Qf8 26. Rxf8+ Kxf8 27. Bc3 Rxe4+ 28. fxe4

Rb1+) 22. ... Qd3 23. Rf2 Rc2 (after 23. ... Rxd2 24. Rxd2 Qe3+ 25. Kf1! Qxd2 26. Rxc6 Rb8 27. Qb3! White survives due to Black's weak back-rank!) 24. Rxc2 Qxc2 25. Kf1 Rd8 and even after all these brilliant defensive moves, White still has to be very careful.

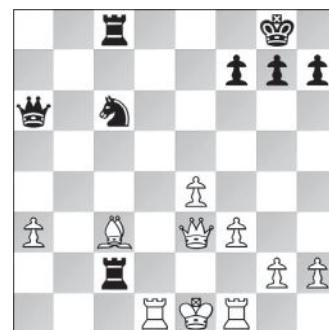
20. Bd2 Rac7 21. Rd1 Rc2 22. Qxd4

Here we were already both low on time, so mistakes began to creep in. Better is 22. Rf1!, defending the second rank.

22. ... Nc6 23. Qe3 Rxb2 24. Bc3 Rc2!

The best attempt to keep playing for a win, this move keeps tension and forces White to come up with a defensive plan. Here 24. ... Rxc2 is basically agreeing to a draw in light of 25. Rg1!.

25. Rf1?



Short on time, I had to act fast and choose between a number of fascinating possibilities.

Mistaken is 25. Qd3? Qxd3 26. Rxd3 Rc1+ when White can't block without losing the bishop on c3.

I expected 25. Rd3! with the idea of castling short. This is a forced draw according

to the computer, but White has to be careful: 25. ... Ne5 26. Bxe5 Rc1+ 27. Rd1 Rxd1+ 28. Kxd1 Qa4+ 29. Ke1 Qa5+ 30. Kf2 Rc2+ 31. Kg3 Qxe5+ 32. f4 Qb2 (32. ... Qd6 33. Qf3! Qg6+ 34. Kh3 Qh6+ is a draw) 33. Rd1! Rxg2+ 34. Kf3 h6 35. Rb1! Qc2 36. Rc1 Qa2 37. Ra1! and this time the perpetual is “on” the queen!

25. ... Qxa3?!

Objectively this is fine, but I burned too much time deciding.

I spent a lot of time looking at 25. ... Qc4 26. Ba1 Rd8! and initially I thought this won, but amazingly White holds on with 27. Rf2! Rxd1+ (after 27. ... Rxf2 28. Qxf2! I have to settle for a draw) 28. Kxd1 (forcing me to give up my c2-rook) 28. ... Rxf2 29. Qxf2 Qd3+ 30. Kc1 with equality.

26. Bd2 Qxe3+

Basically a draw offer.

After 26. ... Qa6 27. Kf2! Rd8 28. Kg1 Rd3 29. Qe1 Nd4 30. Rf2 White is hanging on.

The last try to play for a win was 26. ... Qa2! 27. Rf2 Rd8!. Again, the computer manages to hold the position, but it would be very difficult for a human player.

27. Bxe3 Rxg2 28. Rd2 Rxd2 29. Kxd2 Ne5 30. Bf4 f6 31. Bg3 Kf7 32. f4 Nc4+ 33. Kd3 Nb2+ 34. Ke3 Nc4+ 35. Kd3 Nb2+ 36. Ke3 Nc4+, draw.

In the end, my plus three score put me in a massive split from fourth through 16th place, but with inferior tiebreaks I did not qualify for the FIDE Grand Prix series. The two Candidates spots went to the tourna-

ment winner, GM Alireza Firouzja (8/11), and our own Fabiano Caruana, who qualified on tiebreaks over GM Grigoriy Oparin. Chinese GM Lei Tingjie won the Women’s Grand Swiss by a point and a half at 9/11. She also qualified for the 2022 Women’s Candidates.

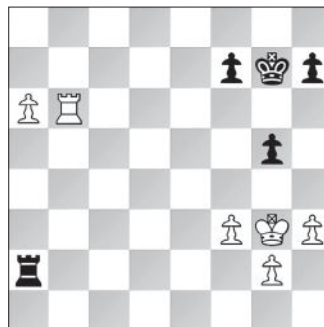
This tournament felt like a breakout event for Firouzja, who played excellent chess in Riga. His round seven win over GM Evgenij Najer will appear in future endgame books.

TECHNICALITIES

GM Alireza Firouzja (2770)

GM Evgenij Najer (2654)

FIDE Grand Swiss (7), Riga, 11.03.2021



WHITE TO MOVE

White is up a pawn, but can’t progress without the king coming to the queenside to help. But in that case, Black is able to snag a pawn or two on the kingside. What to do?

1. f4!

Firouzja sacrifices the g2-pawn in order to

expedite the king to b8. If he had waited, Black would have played ... h7-h5 followed by ... h5-h4+, forcing the white king back to h2.

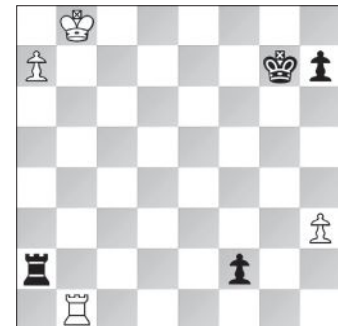
1. ... gxf4+ 2. Kxf4 Rxg2 3. Ke5

The white king now makes a beeline for b8. Black must try to create counterplay with his f-pawn.

3. ... Ra2

Cutting the king off with 3. ... Rd2 wouldn’t help: after 4. Rb7 Ra2 5. a7 Ra6 6. Kd5! the idea is Kd5-c5-b5, followed by Kb5-b6-c7-b8. Black cannot play the king up followed by ... f7-f5 because of Rb7-b6+! distracting the black rook from control of the a8-square.

4. Kd6 f5 5. Kc7 f4 6. Kb8 f3 7. a7 f2 8. Rb1



The critical position. White has stopped Black’s pawn from promoting and threatens to queen himself. How should Black defend?

8. ... f1=Q?

Najer decides to force White’s king into the corner, but he underestimated White’s Lucena-like idea of bringing the rook to b7. There were two drawing alternatives.

One idea was to allow White to promote, bring the king down, take the h3-pawn, and then try to promote the black h-pawn. While this feels slow, it becomes clear after analysis that the white king is far enough away from the promotion square on h1. A sample line would be 8. ... Kg6! (or any other king move up, i.e., 8. ... Kf6 or 8. ... Kh6) 9. a8=Q Rxa8+ 10. Kxa8 Kg5 11. Rf1 as White must get rid of this passer. After 11. ... Kh4 12. Rxf2 Kxh3 Black gains a crucial tempo with ... Kh3-g3, which helps him win the race. Play continues: 13. Kb7 (cutting the king with 13. Rf7 h5 14. Rg7 is generally a good idea in rook versus pawn endings, but here White is just one tempo short: 14. ... h4 15. Kb7 Kh2 16. Kc6 h3 17. Kd5 Kh1 18.

The round seven battle between Firouzja and Najer, seen here in the early middlegame.





GM Alexandr Predke

Ke4 h2 19. Kf3 stalemate!) 13. ... h5 14. Kc6 Kg3 15. Ra2 h4 16. Kd5 h3 17. Ke4 h2 and the game is drawn.

The alternative 8. ... Rb2+! requires more calculation than does 8. ... Kg6. Here both sides promote, but Black has a perpetual: 9. Rxb2 f1=Q 10. Rb7+ Kg6 11. Rb6+! (or 11. a8=Q Qf8+ 12. Ka7 Qa3+ with a draw) giving some extra cushion for the king and forcing Black to give accurate checks. After 11. ... Kh5 12. a8=Q Qf8+ 13. Ka7 Qa3+! 14. Ra6 Qc5+ 15. Kb7 Qb4+ and Black can always force White to move either the rook or king via accurate checks, keeping the queen stuck on a8 forever.

9. Rxf1 Rb2+ 10. Ka8 Rb3 11. Rc1!

The key point; otherwise, White can't make any progress. The idea is Rc1-c7-b7 followed by evacuating the king from the corner.

11. ... Kg6 12. Rc7 h5 13. Rb7 Rxb3 14. Rb6+!

Precise — not even giving Black the chance to sacrifice the rook.

14. ... Kg5 15. Kb7 Ra3 16. Ra6 Rb3+ 17.

Kc7, Black resigned.

After all the lateral checks on the third rank, White's king hides on g7.

One could annotate literally dozens of games from this tournament, so rich and interesting was the play. But one battle stood out. It may not have made much difference in terms of the final standings, but it certainly made an impression on the spectators!

KING'S INDIAN DEFENSE (E71)

GM Alexandr Predke (2666)

GM Nodirbek Yakubboev (2621)

FIDE Grand Swiss (2), Riga, 10.28.2021

1. d4 Nf6 2. c4 g6 3. Nc3 Bg7 4. e4 d6 5. h3 0-0 6. Bg5

White's idea is to provoke ... h7-h6 and at some point play Qd1-d2 with tempo. Otherwise, the bishop stands well on g5.

6. ... Nc6 7. Nf3 h6 8. Be3 e5 9. d5 Nd4!?

An interesting pawn sacrifice, but very logical after 6. ... Nc6.

10. Nxd4 exd4 11. Qxd4

One of Black's ideas is seen after 11. Bxd4 Nxe4! 12. Nxe4 (12. Bxg7 Re8! is a nice idea, as the threat of discovery on the e-file means that White can't save the piece) 12. ... Qh4! and now the black queen threatens the e4-knight and also the d4-bishop via x-ray, i.e., 13. g4 (if 13. Bxg7 Qxe4+ and ... Kg8xg7) 13. ... Re8 14. Bg2 Bf5!! and White can't save his extra piece due to all the cross-pins!

11. ... Ng4!

The second idea behind 9. ... Nd4. If White retreats the queen, Black takes the e3-bishop and has a powerful bishop on g7. This

is more than enough compensation for the pawn.

Here 11. ... Re8 (threatening ... Nf6xe4) doesn't work now: 12. Qd3! Nxe4 13. Nxe4 Bf5 14. f3! and White is just up a piece.

12. hxg4!!

A brilliant long term queen sacrifice. White gets a knight and the all-important King's Indian g7-bishop for the queen. The dark squares will be very weak, and the weak h6-pawn, which was provoked by 6. Bg5, is incredibly important!

Black has great compensation after 12. Qd2 Nxe3 13. Qxe3 f5!

12. ... Bxd4 13. Bxd4



In his notes to this game for *ChessBase Magazine* 205, Predke says that his analysis ended around here, but he only remembered that White had an advantage after the queen sacrifice. He had to work out the details on his own. Fortunately, the plan is fairly clear: all-out attack on the h-file. A possible plan is to play Bf1-e2, protecting the g4-pawn, followed by Rh1-h2, 0-0-0, and Rd1-h1. For his part, Black has to try creating counterplay on the queenside.

13. ... Kh7?

I think 80% of players would automatically play this move, which protects the pawn. But as we'll see in the game, this is too slow.

I think Black should have considered 13. ... f6! (or 13. ... c5! 14. dxc6 e.p. bxc6 15. Rxh6 f6! transposing) 14. Rxh6 Kg7 15. g5 c5! 16. dxc6 e.p. bxc6 17. 0-0-0 Qa5 which attacks the g5-pawn and creates counter-chances on the queenside, with ideas like ... Ra8-b8 (or ... Rf8-f7-b7) to hit the b2-pawn.

14. Be2!

Now White has an additional idea: he could try f2-f4, preparing g4-g5!

14. ... f5?!

Panic. This allows Be2-d3, x-raying the black king. Here 14. ... c5 was the last chance to

2021 FIDE GRAND SWISS AT A GLANCE

OCTOBER 27 - NOVEMBER 7, 2021 | RIGA, LATVIA

OPEN SWISS ▶ 1ST: GM Alireza Firouzja, 8/11. **2ND-3RD:** GMs Fabiano Caruana, Grigoriy Oparin, 7½/11. **4TH-16TH:** GMs Yu Yangyi, Vincent Keymer, Maxime Vachier-Lagrave, Alexandr Predke, Alexei Shirov, David Howell, Gabriel Sargissian, David Antón Guijarro, Anton Korobov, Samuel Sevian, Andrey Esipenko, Bogdan-Daniel Deac, Vladislav Artemiev, 7/11. Firouzja and Caruana qualify for 2022 Candidates. Other Americans: GMs Levon Aronian, Jeffery Xiong, 6½/11. GM Dariusz Swiercz, 6/11. GM Hans Niemann, 5½/11. 108 players.

WOMEN'S SWISS ▶ 1ST: GM Lei Tingjie, 9/11. **2ND-3RD:** IM Elisabeth Paetz, WGM Zhu Jiner, 7½/11. **4TH-7TH:** GMs Mariya Muzychuk, Harika Dronavalli, IMs Lela Javakhishvili, Olga Badelka, 7/11. Lei qualifies for 2022 Women's Candidates. 50 players.

muddy the waters, although Black's position is still bad after 15. dxc6 *e.p.* bxc6 16. f4 f6 17. 0-0-0 h5 18. Bc5! converting into a winning endgame.

15. exf5 gxf5 16. Rh5!

Very nice. The idea is to meet 16. ... fxc6 with 17. Bd3+, as Black can't block with 17. ... Bf5.

16. ... Kg6 17. Kd2!

Now the last attacker can join the party.

17. ... fxg4 18. Rah1 Bf5



19. Rxh6+

Most precise was 19. Bd3! Bxd3 20. Rxh6+

Kf7 21. Kxd3 when the white knight gets into the game with Nc3-e4. Here's a sample continuation: 21. ... Ke8 22. Ne4 Kd7 23. Rh7+ Kc8 24. Bf6! Qe8 (or 24. ... Rxf6 25. Nxf6 Qxf6 26. Rh8+ Kd7 27. R1h7+) 25. Be7! Rf7 (25. ... Rg8 26. Bxd6!) 26. Rh8 Rxe7 27. Nf6! (avoiding the inferior 27. Rxe8). Now Black either loses the queen or gets mated after 27. ... Qxh8 28. Rxh8+.

19. ... Kf7 20. R1h5 Ke7 21. Nd1

A good multi-purpose move. The idea is to bring the knight to e3 with tempo, while also having a retreat square for the d4-bishop in case Black plays ... c7-c5.

21. ... c5 22. Bc3 Kd7 23. Ne3 Bb1 24. Bxg4+ Kc7 25. f3?!

A small mistake in mutual time trouble.

The brute force 25. Kc1! was winning, with the idea that after 25. ... Bxa2 the f5-square is available, i.e., 26. Nf5 Bxc4 27. Rxd6 Qxd6 28. Nxd6 Kxd6 29. Be6 and now Bc3-e5+ is coming with deadly effect.

25. ... Qe8

Here 25. ... a5! would keep the game going for a while. Now ... Ra8-a6 protects the d6-

pawn and gives the king shelter on b8! White is still winning but mate is off the table.

26. Rh1 Bg6 27. Re1

Crushing was 27. Be6! with the idea of invading with Ne3-g4-f6.

27. ... Rg8 28. Be6 Qf8

Too passive. Yakubboev missed a good fighting chance with 28. ... Qa4! followed by opening up the queenside with ... b7-b5!.

29. Re1 Re8

Hoping White grabs the Exchange, but there's no reason to give up such a powerful bishop. Now Predke finds a nice way to finish the game.

30. R1h4! Rxe6

If 30. ... Bb1 31. Rf6! wins the queen, because 31. ... Qg7 (or 31. ... Qe7) is met with 32. Rf7+.

31. dxe6 Qe8 32. Nd5+ Kc6 33. Nf6 Qe7

34. Rg4, Black resigned.

Now Black will lose his bishop, his rook, and then suffer the indignity of checkmate. Instead Yakubboev resigned. What an imaginative game by Predke! ♠

NOW THAT'S DEDICATION!

It takes more than a little snow to prevent Rev. John Peter Giunta from enjoying his new issue of *Chess Life*.



PHOTO: COURTESY EMILY N. GIUNTA

ALBERTO CHUECA
REACH YOUR GOALS IN CHESS

ALBERTO CHUECA
HIGH PERFORMANCE CHESS ACADEMY

USCF Regular Rating History for 15782318 DMYR VIZVARKHI

Year	Rating
2015	1100
2016	1200
2017	1400
2018	1700
2019	1900

FROM 1100 TO +1900 (RATING) IN ONLY 2 YEARS.
WORLD CHESS CHAMPION FIDE GIRLS RAPID U10!

albertochueca.com

Would you like to know more about my methodology?

[Book a meeting](#)



GM Magnus Carlsen.
Photo courtesy FIDE /
Eric Rosen.

CARLSEN RETAINS WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP

**CARLSEN DEFEATS NEPOMNIACHTCHI 7½-3½ –
HINTS HE MAY NOT PLAY ANOTHER MATCH**

BY GM ALEX YERMOLINSKY

Game one in
Dubai: Life inside
the fishbowl.

YOU
ARE



REALIZE THAT EVERYONE WHO BOTHERS TO READ THIS REPORT WILL already be familiar with the result and the games from the World Championship match. News travels instantaneously these days, and during the match there were plenty of live broadcasts hosted by various experts, most with grandmaster pedigree. Computer evaluations were readily available, blunders were immediately found, and engine-approved improvements given — there should be no mystery left.

What could I possibly add to all this?

I decided to write some game annotations from the perspective of a chess fan. Therefore, I skipped every game where Nepo had White and started with 1. e4 e5. This is not just because I'm not that familiar with the resulting symmetrical pawn structures, but mostly, it's because these games bored me to tears.

Experts like Vladimir Kramnik and Peter Svidler praised the quality of Nepo's opening preparation for the match. How so? It is not difficult at all to get a good position with White in a quiet opening. The question is: What can you do with such a position when your opponent is confident in his ability to equalize the game, which he has done many times before?

Consider this. Playing the Ruy Lopez with Black, Carlsen scores 59% in his career, and 55% in 2021. In comparison, facing 1. d4 with Black he scores 57% career-wise and only 52% in 2021.

Do these numbers mean anything? Maybe. Maybe not. More importantly, at least to my mind, is the fact that Magnus doesn't seem have a set opening in closed games. He has tried many things, ranging from 3. ... a6!? in the Queen's Gambit Declined to the King's Indian Defense. Sometimes it seems he himself doesn't know what he's going to do next.

Granted, Nepo is mainly a 1. e4 player, but I still think he made a poor choice wasting the white pieces on a lost (or, in this case, drawn) cause. Before someone brings up game five, where there was a c3-c4 move at some moment that was supposed to give Ian a large advantage, I concede the point, but would also mention that one chance in five games in essentially the same structure is not a whole lot of opportunities.

Games where Carlsen had the white pieces were instrumental for both the course and eventual outcome of the match, so I would like to focus on those and start with game two.

CATALAN OPENING (E05)

GM Magnus Carlsen (2855)

GM Ian Nepomniachtchi (2782)

FIDE World Championship (2), Dubai,
11.27.2021

1. d4 Nf6 2. c4 e6 3. Nf3 d5 4. g3 Be7 5.
Bg2 0-0 6. 0-0 dxc4 7. Qc2 b5!?



A good choice from Ian. While not a novelty (this move has been known for 10 years), it still has the element of surprise, and the resulting positions may suit the challenger's style better than the dry technical stuff in the main lines.

8. Ne5!?

A rare move, which indicates the depth of Carlsen's preparation. Theory has tended to focus on 8. a4.

8. ... c6

This position can be reached via move transposition from the 4. ... dxc4 lines, but White doesn't always put his queen on c2. The amount of factual material — games to study — is surprisingly scarce.

One thing I noticed is that 8. ... Qxd4 can be answered with 9. Qc3, a move that is unavailable when the moves a2–a4 and ... b5–b4 are included. Now we have a queen trade, which Magnus almost always welcomes. (9. Nxf7 is an unlikely choice for the champion) 9. ... Qxc3 10. Nxc3 Nd5 (compensation for the Exchange is questionable in case of 10. ... Nbd7 11. Bxa8 Nxe5 12. Bf4) and here White has a choice between captures on b5 or d5, or the attractive 11. a4.

9. a4

Obviously, White isn't interested in helping Black's development with something like 9. Nxc6 Nxc6 10. Bxc6 Rb8 11. a4 a6.

9. ... Nd5 10. Nc3

In the spirit of gambit play one may contemplate 10. b3!?

10. ... f6!

Driving the white knight from its active position is Black's first accomplishment, if you don't count taking the gambited pawn.

11. Nf3 Qd7!?

Nepo continues with a non-standard queen placement.

The expected 11. ... b4 12. Ne4 Ba6 would reach a position from the old classic Gelfand - Shirov, Paris 1992.

Note that 11. ... Bb7? falls victim to a tactical shot: 12. axb5 Nxc3 13. bxc3 cxb5 14. Ng5.

12. e4

The obvious drawback of this move is surrendering the d3-square.

Again, I'd be interested in 12. b3 but here Black has 12. ... b4! 13. Nxd5 cxd5 14. bxc4. White got his pawn back and seems to be in good shape, but the development of the black pieces puts this evaluation in doubt.

12. ... Nb4 13. Qe2 Nd3 14. e5!

Looking at 14. axb5 cxb5 15. b3 one more time, I discovered a tactical idea. 15. ... b4 16. Na4 Nxc1 (16. ... Ba6 17. bxc4 Bxc4 18. Rd1 Ne5) 17. Rfxc1 c3 18. Nb6! There it is! Of course, the outcome is not so clear: 18.

... axb6 19. Rxa8 Bb7 20. Ra2 Nc6 21. Qb5 Qc7 22. d5 Na5



POSITION AFTER 22. ... Na5

Who stands better here and why? I'd like to apologize to my dear readers for clogging my notes up with complex variations that did not happen in the actual game. The thing is, this type of position is an excellent playground for creative chess, something I cannot say about the boring (to me) 1. e4 e5 structures that took an inordinate amount of attention in the games where Ian had the white pieces. Perhaps that was the challenger's downfall. One has to stay with his natural style and game, no matter what the coaches (computers?) say.

14. ... Bb7

Ian likes to keep the tension, so his decision was correct, despite the engine's preference for 14. ... f5. Perhaps Nepo was concerned with 15. axb5 cxb5 (15. ... Bb7!?) 16. Bg5!? but then 16. ... Nc6! 17. Nxb5 Bxg5 18. Nxg5 Rb8 19. Nd6 Nxd4 appears to be fully playable.

15. exf6 Bxf6 16. Ne4 Na6 17. Ne5?

If there's one area of chess where Magnus Carlsen can err, it's in his handling of complex, irrational positions containing multiple options that go beyond his considerable calculating horizon. The text move is designed

to create a great outpost on d6 to offset the impact of the equally great d3-knight, but the champion missed one pesky detail.

Instead, 17. Nxf6+ gxf6 18. Bh6 Rf7 19. Ne1 Nab4 20. Nxd3 Nxd3 21. b3 would continue posing problems without further material investment.

17. ... Bxe5 18. dxe5 Nac5!

That's the move Magnus overlooked. To give the champion full credit he didn't back down.

19. Nd6! Nb3

Hard to blame Ian for going after the Exchange, although I think 19. ... Nxa4 20. b3 Nc3 21. Qd2 b4 may have been equally good.

20. Rb1 Nbx1 21. Rbxc1 Nxc1 22. Rxc1

Carlsen is down quite a bit of material, but he has the kind of positional compensation he can put his finger on. The d6-knight is great, and there are some kingside attack prospects present. But after Nepo confidently (and quickly!) played his next two moves I thought he was going to win this game.

22. ... Rab8 23. Rd1 Ba8 24. Be4!

White's play is very consistent. He fully



realizes that half-measures like 24. Nxb5 Qe7 25. Nd6 would come up short after 25. ... Rb4 26. a5 c5.

24. ... c3!?

There's a bit of mystery about this move. Ian must have looked at 24. ... Qe7 25. Qh5 g5 (the alternative 25. ... g6 26. Bxg6 c5 27. Be4 offers White good compensation based on the long-term weakness of the black king) 26. Bg2 bxa4 27. Ne4 and was unhappy about the need to switch to defense. Still, after a couple of cool moves — 27. ... Kh8! 28. Nf6 Qf7! 29. Qxg5 Rbd8 30. Rc1 Rd4 — Black would beat off the attack and get on the path to victory.

25. Qc2!

The point of Black's previous move was 25. bxc3 bxa4 26. Qh5 g6 27. Bxg6 hxg6 28. Qxg6+ Qg7 29. Qxe6+ Kh8 30. Rd4 Rb1+ 31. Kg2 c5+. A great idea, indeed, but Carlsen saw it too!

25. ... g6 26. bxc3



26. ... bxa4?

Finally, a real error that throws away Black's advantage. It seems like Ian was too focused on the need to open the b-file to stop the sac on g6.

After the game Nepo lamented missing 26. ... Qg7 27. f4 g5!. Had he seen and played it, the likely continuation would have been 28. Qb3 gxf4 29. Qxe6+ Kh8 30. Nf5 Qg6 31. Qxg6 hxg6 32. Ne7 Rfd8 33. Nxc6+ Kg7 34. Rf1 fxc3 35. Nf4 Kg8 36. e6 bxa4 with only marginal chances for survival for White. This is how close the challenger was to lighting up the scoreboard early in the match.

27. Qxa4 Rfd8 28. Ra1 c5 29. Qc4!

Carlsen is in his element. In his view there's no rush to take the a7-pawn, it's more important to maintain the strong points of the position.

29. ... Bxe4 30. Nxe4 Kh8 31. Nd6 Rb6 32. Qxc5 Rdb8 33. Kg2 a6 34. Kh3 Rc6?!

Ian was drifting a bit around these parts.

Practically speaking, the best choice was to force a draw with 34. ... Qc6 35. Nf7+ Kg8 36. Qe7 Qf3! 37. Nh6+ Kh8 38. Nf7+ etc.

35. Qd4 Kg8 36. c4 Qc7

Fortunately for the challenger he was still up the Exchange, so he had enough wiggle room to escape the worst.

37. Qg4 Rxd6

About time.

38. exd6 Qxd6 39. c5

Or 39. Qe4 Rc8 40. Kg2 Qc6.

39. ... Qxc5 40. Qxe6+ Kg7 41. Rxa6 Rf8

42. f4 Qf5+ 43. Qxf5 Rxf5

Reaching a theoretically drawn rook end-game. Fans of the trademark Magnus squeeze would have to wait about a week for their favorite show.

44. Ra7+ Kg8 45. Kg4 Rb5 46. Re7 Ra5 47.

Re5 Ra7 48. h4 Kg7 49. h5 Kh6 50. Kh4

Ra1 51. g4 Rh1+ 52. Kg3 gxh5 53. Re6+

Kg7 54. g5 Rg1+ 55. Kf2 Ra1 56. Rh6 Ra4

57. Kf3 Ra3+ 58. Kf2 Ra4, draw

There is a lot to unpack here. First, Carlsen didn't shy away from a big battle, as shown by his choice of 8. Ne5!?. Likely this possibility — Nepo allowing the Catalan — was considered during his preparation, and perhaps that's where Carlsen's second Daniil Dubov's impact came into play, but was it a rational decision this early in the contest? Karpov would never had played this way when faced with an unexpected opening; instead, he would have quickly moved to draw and let his team get to work. Clearly,

Magnus pushed his luck, choosing to swim in uncharted waters.

Secondly, Ian's play from move 24 onward was either affected by nervousness, or restrained by the bounds of the chosen match strategy. Either way, he missed a great opportunity to accomplish something no other challenger was able to do against Carlsen — take an early lead and draw Magnus out of his shell.

It is rather pointless to speculate on what would have happened had Nepo won the second game, but as the match progressed, equilibrium was maintained until game six. Such developments usually favor the more experienced match player, which is Carlsen.

I'm entirely grateful I didn't have to go through all 130+ moves of game six, courtesy of GM Wesley So. (See his extensive analysis beginning on page 38. ~ed.)

Here we have it: Carlsen deservedly took the lead. Such a possibility couldn't have been dismissed by Nepo and his team. Some kind of decisive change was due, but it never came. With two games following on consecutive days, the schedule was not kind to the challenger, who was not given any time to recover.

Game seven was essentially a no show. The same would have been true for the following one, if it weren't for Ian losing his nerve.

PETROFF DEFENSE (C43)

GM Magnus Carlsen (2855)

GM Ian Nepomniachtchi (2782)

FIDE World Championship (8), Dubai, 12.05.2021



PHOTO: COURTESY FIDE / ERIC ROSEN

1. e4

Before the game I was wondering what Nepo's strategy would be after he found himself one game down halfway through the match. There were certainly reasons to abandon caution in favor of randomizing his opening choices. Was he going to try 1. ... g6?

1. ... e5 2. Nf3 Nf6

The Petroff?!?!?

3. d4 Nxe4 4. Bd3 d5 5. Nxe5 Nd7 6. Nxd7 Bxd7 7. Nd2

If this rare move indicates anything, it would be that Carlsen didn't really mind a draw.

The difference between the text and the common move 7. 0-0 is that after 7. ... Bd6 the same idea 8. Nd2 (better and more popular is 8. Nc3, and, of course, there is always 8. c4) becomes ineffective, as Black can simply answer it with 8. ... 0-0 based on 9. Nxe4 dxe4 10. Bxe4 Bxh2+ 11. Kxh2 Qh4+.

7. ... Nxd2 8. Bxd2 Bd6?!

It's remarkable that Ian barely spent seconds on this obviously inferior move.

White hasn't castled yet, so 8. ... Qe7+ suggests itself. In a handful of games that saw this position, the outcome was always the same — draw agreed before move 20.

9. 0-0



Suddenly Black is uncomfortable, and the 15 minutes Ian spent on his reply reflected that.

9. ... h5!?

Credit goes to the challenger for choosing the most combative reply.

On 9. ... 0-0 10. Qh5 forces the unwanted 10. ... f5 where there follows 11. Bg5 Qe8 12. Qf3 Qg6 13. Bf4 c6. It's not a catastrophe



Sergey Karjakin @SergeyKaryakin · Dec 10, 2021

Despite the final result I am proud that I was part of the very nice team! Thanks @lachesisq for this invitation. Probably there were mistakes in preparation, but only few people know how hard Ian worked before the tournament. Hope he will recover and come back stronger! 🙌🙌🙌



76 192 4.6K



Sergey Karjakin @SergeyKaryakin · Dec 10, 2021

Of course I congratulate a World Champion, but just a small remark.

Imagine you have to play a World Championship match against Carlsen. Will you accept help from let's say...Hammer or Tari? 🙄

332 221 880



Sergey Karjakin @SergeyKaryakin · Dec 10, 2021

And will you offer them to help you? 🙄

49 11 363

yet, but White can milk his advantage for a long time, and who is better at that than the World Champion?

On the other hand, 9. ... Qh4 10. g3 Qxd4 11. Bc3 Qg4 12. Qxg4 Bxg4 13. Bxg7 Rg8 14. Bf6 forces Black to part with the h7-pawn to avoid losing the Exchange.

10. Qe1+

Magnus is staying the course. He planned to finish the three-game stretch while maintaining the lead, and nothing could tempt him to change his mind.

Seeing Black move his h-pawn brings to mind the possibility of 10. c4 but then a line similar to the previous note — 10. ... Qh4 11. g3 Qxd4 12. Bc3 Qg4 13. Qxg4 Bxg4 14. Bxg7 Rg8 15. Bf6 dxc4! 16. Bh7 — is a different kettle of fish. Black can sac the Exchange because of his massive pawn advantage on the queenside.

10. ... Kf8?!

Nepo tried to rationalize this decision on his post-match interview; to me, his explanations were not at all convincing. All I can see here is White having a slight initiative with zero risk, thanks to the undeveloped h8-rook. Again, 10. ... Qe7 had to be played.

11. Bb4 Qe7 12. Bxd6 Qxd6 13. Qd2 Re8

14. Rae1 Rh6?!

A natural, but awkward, attempt to justify

Karjakin was critical on Twitter of Dubov's joining Team Carlsen.

his previous play.

It was easy for commentators to cite the computer suggestion 14. ... Rxe1 15. Rxe1 g6 16. Re5 Kg7 as perfectly good for Black. What is missing from this account is how Ian (or anyone else) would think of his own play in the opening, regardless of the "objective" evaluation of the given position. No one can be happy with having to repair self-inflicted damage, however minor it may be in the eyes of computers.

15. Qg5 c6 16. Rxe8+ Bxe8 17. Re1 Qf6 18. Qe3 Bd7 19. h3 h4

It was already impossible to get the game back to normal tracks. In case of 19. ... Qd6 20. Qg5 Qf6 21. Qg3 Qd6 White avoids the queen trade with 22. Re5! leaving the black h-pawn sticking out like a sore thumb, e.g., 22. ... h4 23. Qf4 Re6? 24. Qxh4 Rxe5 25. dxe5 Qxe5 26. Qb4+ winning the b7-pawn.

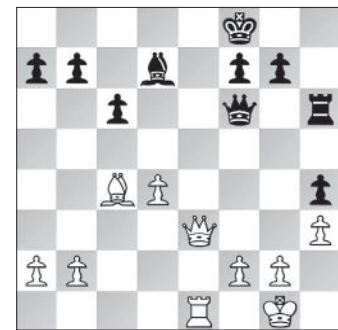
20. c4

White cranks up the pressure, but I bet Magnus didn't expect a quick return on his efforts.

20. ... dxc4

At least 20. ... g5 would have been consistent with Black's previous play.

21. Bxc4



21. ... b5?!

Taken out of context of the game thus far, this just looks like a terrible, unforced blunder. However, as discussed above, it did not come from nowhere.

Even this far into the game there was a defense. 21. ... Kg8 would keep the game going, because in reply to 22. Qe7 Black has 22. ... Be6.

22. Qa3+ Kg8 23. Qxa7 Qd8

The endgame after 23. ... Bxh3 24. Qxf7+ Qxf7 25. Re8+ Kh7 26. Bxf7 would be tough to hold, particularly against Magnus Carlsen.

24. Bb3 Rd6 25. Re4 Be6 26. Bxe6 Rxe6 27. Rxe6 fxe6 28. Qc5 Qa5 29. Qxc6 Qe1+ 30. Kh2 Qxf2

All Black's attempts to conjure a perpetual are going to be brushed away by the centralized white queen.

31. Qxe6+ Kh7 32. Qe4+ Kg8 33. b3 Qxa2 34. Qe8+ Kh7 35. Qxb5 Qf2 36. Qe5 Qb2 37. Qe4+ Kg8 38. Qd3 Qf2 39. Qc3 Qf4+ 40. Kg1 Kh7 41. Qd3+ g6 42. Qd1 Qe3+ 43. Kh1 g5 44. d5 g4 45. hxg4 h3 46. Qf3, Black resigned.

In short, Nepo's attempt to change his playing style — to become ultra-solid, to turn himself into Karjakin 2.0 — failed miserably, despite (or possibly because of) the sudden presence of Coach Sergey in Dubai.

This raises a general question about team selection and the effect the presence of some helpers can have on the player himself. Back in the day, the impact was negligible. It didn't matter at all who Botvinnik's, Spassky's or Fischer's seconds were — the player remained himself and played chess the way he always did.

The battles between Karpov and Korchnoi, and later between Kasparov and Karpov, were nearly the same in that respect. The help they received was largely restricted to the preparation of particular opening variations that may or may not have seen the light of day in actual games. Assistance in analyzing adjourned games was also important at that time, but today, it holds only an academic interest.

When Kasparov secured the services of Kramnik for his match with Anand in 1995, what did he need him for? Almost the entire match was contested in 1. e4 openings, hardly an area of Kramnik's expertise. In my view, it was done mainly to impress the opponent, as a weapon of the psychological warfare. Make the other guy worry about

what's coming at him — even if in reality it may be nothing — and frustrate him with the thought of the whole chess world uniting against him.

Did Kramnik's presence in Kasparov's camp affect Anand that much? Probably not, if we judge things by the first half of that match. If anything, the impact of Vishy's much less known team member, the young American GM Patrick Wolff, was much more significant. Garry's mainstay opening, the Najdorf/Scheveningen combo, suffered some blows and had to be abandoned for the rest of the contest.

I think there was something else behind Kasparov's decision. For a long time, he was praising Kramnik as his future successor in the great line of champions, beginning with Steinitz and Lasker. One wonders what the old guys themselves would think of such a ploy, trying to tame and mold the young talent at the champion's whim. At any rate, we all know how it worked out five years later, in London 2000. Kramnik did fulfill the prophecy; only, at least in his opponent's view, it all happened a bit too soon.

This century is rather short of such controversies when it comes to world championship matches. GM Peter Heine Nielsen's defection from Anand's to Carlsen's camp was downplayed by both sides. A rather noisier reaction was provoked by the presence of Dubov in Carlsen's team in Dubai.

The belligerence of Karjakin and others was surprising. Some statements read as if it were 1978 and Baguio City all over again, where the world was once again splitting into two warring factions, and where chess plays its traditional minor role. If that's the case, then we're all in deep trouble. For my part, I can only hope that that the sole outcome of this controversy will be Dubov taking the title from Carlsen come 2023, in an ironic echo of what happened in 2000.

With the match now done, I suspect it is Nepo who is left wondering if he shouldn't have played by the rules. Perhaps a Rocky Balboa type of "me against the world" attitude, supported by a small, close-knit group of friends, would have been a better bet.

ENGLISH OPENING (A13)

**GM Ian Nepomniachtchi (2782)
GM Magnus Carlsen (2855)
FIDE World Championship (9),
12.07.2021**

1. c4

With his back against the wall, Nepo finally turns away from 1. e4.

1. ... e6 2. g3 d5 3. Bg2 d4!?

This move must have been part of Carlsen's general preparation. Playing it in a very favorable match situation shows Magnus' confidence.

4. Nf3 Nc6!?

This is a specific setup that takes into account the issue of White's extra tempo, compared with straight-up Reversed Benoni or Benko lines (after 4. ... c5).

5. 0-0 Bc5 6. d3 Nf6 7. Nbd2

Attacking the center requires some preparation.

The immediate 7. e3 0-0 8. exd4 Nxd4 9. Nc3 hardly poses big problems for Black, who can neutralize the g2-bishop with a timely ... c7-c6. Even the pawn sac 9. ... e5! is playable here.

7. ... a5

Played in anticipation of White's next move.

8. Nb3 Be7 9. e3 dxe3

Both this and the following move are practically forced in order to counter White's central play.

In comparison, 9. ... e5 10. exd4 exd4 11. Re1 0-0 12. a4 Re8 13. Bd2 leaves the d4- and a5-pawns vulnerable in the face of the upcoming Nf3-e5.

10. Bxe3 Ng4!

Magnus admitted he remembered his lines up to and including this move.

11. Bc5 0-0

Here we arrive at the first major crossroads for White.

12. d4

The alternative was 12. Bxe7 Qxe7 13. Nfd4. In this situation Magnus most likely would think of 13. ... Nxd4 (the unbalanced position arising from 13. ... Nge5 14. Nxc6 Nxc6 15. Bxc6 bxc6 16. d4 Qd6 17. Re1 a4 18. Nc5 would be a bit out of his style, and it did not match the match situation either) 14. Nxd4 e5!. This is the only way to solve the

FIDE World Championship

DUBAI, UAE, NOVEMBER 26 - DECEMBER 10, 2021

			1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	
1	GM Magnus Carlsen	2855	½	½	½	½	½	1	½	1	1	½	1	7½
2	GM Ian Nepomniachtchi	2782	½	½	½	½	½	0	½	0	0	½	0	3½

problem of developing the c8-bishop. Play continues 15. Qe2 Nh6 16. Rfe1 f6



POSITION AFTER 16. ... f6

If the game got this far, then Ian would have to find something quickly before his backward d3-pawn became a problem.

12. ... a4 13. Bxe7 Qxe7 14. Nc5 a3?!



Judging by the time spent on this move Magnus was out there on his own.

Some commentators quoted a computer game, which went 14. ... e5 15. Re1 Rd8 16. b4! (16. Nxa4 Qb4 17. b3 exd4 is clearly safe and sound for Black) I don't have it in my database, so I can only suggest 16. ... axb3 e.p. 17. Nxb3 e4 18. Nfd2 f5 19. f3 Nf6 20. fxe4 Nxd4 21. exf5 as a reasonable continuation. In any event, this seems more up Ian's alley than what he played earlier in the match.

15. bxa3?

There is no cogent explanation to this meek choice, except to admit that the challenger's spirit was already broken.

The energetic move 15. b4! had to be played. One has to go forward if one wants to win games. Here 15. ... Nxb4 16. Rb1 b6 17. Rxb4 bxc5 18. Rb5 was the line given by the commentators. While I'm not stating White is winning here — in fact his advantage is going to be rather small after he takes on c5 on the next move — it was the only way to continue.

15. ... Rd8 16. Nb3 Nf6 17. Re1 Qxa3

Black's play on the a-file effectively makes the development of c8-bishop a minor issue.

18. Qe2

We all saw a video of Magnus' famous "j'adoube" that happened in this position. I'm certain that he wasn't thinking of moving his f6-knight, because there was nowhere to go with it.

18. ... h6 19. h4 Bd7! 20. Ne5 Be8

Even the potential doubling up of the c-pawns doesn't bother Black because White's a2-pawn is not much of a passer. The position is equal.

21. Qe3 Qb4 22. Reb1 Nxe5

Carlsen said he thought he was winning a pawn; otherwise, I bet his choice would have been 22. ... Ra3 23. Nxc6 Bxc6 24. Bxc6 bxc6 25. Qe2 Rda8.

23. dxe5 Ng4 24. Qe1!

Black's g4-knight is in a spot of bother, to borrow a British idiom.

24. ... Qxe1+

Not 24. ... Qxc4? 25. f3.

25. Rxe1 h5 26. Bxb7 Ra4



Luckily for the champ, his pieces were active enough to make holding his position easy, but nobody expected the game to be decided in just one move.

27. c5??

This, and after a four-minute think??

Naturally 27. f3 Nh6 28. Be4 Nf5 29. Kf2 Rxc4 30. Rec1 Bb5 is equal.

27. ... c6

The bishop is trapped. It's game over, and with a three-game lead, the rest of the match had become a formality.

28. f3 Nh6 29. Re4 Ra7 30. Rb4 Rb8 31. a4 Raxb7 32. Rb6 Rxb6 33. cxb6 Rxb6 34. Nc5 Nf5 35. a5 Rb8 36. a6 Nxc3 37. Na4 c5 38. a7 Rd8 39. Nxc5 Ra8, White resigned.

I would like to leave aside the loaded ques-

tion of Nepo tanking the rest of the match. As a former player myself, I can understand how Ian felt, and different people react to such situations in different ways. To me, this loss doesn't signify the end of Nepo's career. What doesn't kill us makes us stronger, and I wouldn't be surprised at all if Ian returns to the heights of the chess world.

One thing remains to discuss: Carlsen's statements regarding his future participation in World Championship matches. Magnus expressed his conviction that he's done dealing with his generation of opposition, saying that he only can be motivated by the emergence of a truly new challenger, such as 18-year-old GM Alireza Firouzja.

It may have not been a most courteous statement in regards to others, but I welcome the bluntness of it. What if Carlsen keeps his word and refuses the challenge from, say, Caruana? Is the chess world coming to yet another split, akin to what we remember from 1993?

Personally, I think there will be very little interest in an alternative World Championship match and the title that comes with it. Chess is moving full speed toward a new format of competition, one already represented by Carlsen's own Online Champions Tour.

We can already see a certain lack of interest in official FIDE events. Top American players, along with their Chinese counterparts, may lack the ability (or interest?) to travel to Europe, depending on the prevailing COVID-19 situation. If this happens, it will totally strip the FIDE cycle of its legitimacy. And this is true in both directions, as we can recall the number of cancellations and replacement player invitations for Grand Chess Tour events in St. Louis last summer.

Can chess be played entirely on the internet? I can live with that.

In conclusion, I want to reiterate that this report doesn't reflect anyone's opinions except mine. Send comments to the editor! ♣

Want to play through all 11 games of the 2021 FIDE World Championship? For more on the match as a whole, including analysis of all 11 games by some of America's leading players, revisit our **CLO** coverage at new.uschess.org/category/world-championship or check out our Lichess study at lichess.org/study/1NIB7sSp.

“A HISTORIC



GM Magnus Carlsen

GM WESLEY SO ON GAME SIX OF CARLSEN - NEPOMNIACHTCHI

Editor's note: GM Wesley So was one of our guest analysts covering the 2021 FIDE World Championship for Chess Life Online. As luck would have it, it was the fateful sixth game of the match that he was scheduled to annotate.

We present here So's analysis of that critical game. For more on the match, including analysis of all 11 games by some of America's best players, revisit our CLO coverage at new.uschess.org/category/world-championship or check out our Lichess study at lichess.org/study/1NIB7sSp.

QUEEN'S PAWN GAME (D02)

GM Magnus Carlsen (2855)
GM Ian Nepomniachtchi (2782)
FIDE World Championship (6), Dubai,
12.03.2021

After five fighting draws, everyone was very excited to see what would happen in game six. Would Carlsen and Nepomniachtchi continue to play solidly, or would we see a good fight with mistakes by one or both of the players?

1. d4 Nf6 2. Nf3

Ian has usually played the Grünfeld his entire career, but for the world championship match he's clearly prepared new openings for his Black repertoire.

2. ... d5

The Queen's Gambit Declined variations with 3. c4 e6 are very solid, but retain a hint of dynamism for Black. But we can assume that Magnus has something up his sleeve.

3. g3

GAME!”



GM Ian Nepomniachtchi



A big surprise. I would expect the London or the Torre Attack more. This move seems like a desperate attempt to lead Ian away from his opening preparation. I played this myself a couple of years ago, but it was basically a last-ditch attempt to get a playable

position out of the opening. The idea is to go for the Catalan, while avoiding lines with an early ... dxc4.

3. ... e6

Black has many moves here. Ian decides to avoid any adventures. He sticks to his preparation and invites Magnus to transpose back to the regular Catalan main line.

(a) The critical continuation is 3. ... c5 4. Bg2 cxd4 5. 0-0 and now not 5. ... Nc6 6. Nxd4, when White gets a Grünfeld position a tempo up.

(a1) The main line instead is 5. ... e6 just continuing development. This seems to be the simplest for Black, with 6. Nxd4 e5! 7. Nb3 Be6. Black has lost a tempo moving the e-pawn twice, but the b3-knight is poorly

placed. After hundreds of games in this position, the position is just equal according to theory. One of the critical lines is 8. Nc3 Be7 9. f4 (9. Bg5 Nbd7) 9. ... exf4 10. gxf4 and now the simple 10. ... g6 to prevent f4-f5 solves all problems. After 11. Nd4 Nc6 12. Nxe6 fxe6 13. Kh1 0-0 White has the bishop pair, and in return Black finished his development very quickly.

After 6. Nxd4 e5! 7. Nf3 Nc6 8. c4 d4 9. e3 Be7 10. exd4 exd4 Black's activity and passed d-pawn compensates for the isolani. I played this with White before, but Black is completely fine. He just has to remember 11. Bf4 0-0 12. Ne5 Qb6 13. Qb3 Na5 14. Qxb6 axb6 15. Nd2 and now the important move 15. ... Nh5 grabbing the bishop pair, with equality.



These four photos, left to right, give a sense of the mental toll taken on the players as this historic game progressed.

(a2) 5. ... h6 is another possibility, waiting for White to take on d4. But this is a bit weird, as it does not *force* White to take. Black has some problems after 6. b3 e6 7. Bb2 Bc5 8. Nxd4 and I slightly prefer White, for example after 8. ... e5 (8. ... 0-0 9. c4) 9. Nf3 e4 10. Nd4 0-0 11. c4 Re8 12. cxd5 Nxd5 13. e3 Nd7 14. Nc3 the d4-knight is very well placed, and there is pressure on the long diagonals from White's two bishops.

Two sixth move alternatives: 6. Bf4 e6 7. Nxd4 g5 8. Be5 Nbd7 9. Bxf6 Nxf6 is completely fine for Black, thanks to the bishop pair, while 6. Nxd4 e5 7. Nb3 Nc6 8. c4 d4 can only be better for Black.

There are other logical moves besides 3. ... c5.

(b) 3. ... g6 is a move here, transposing to the Neo-Grünfeld after 4. Bg2 Bg7 5. c4 c6.

(c) One of the critical setups against 3. g3 is 3. ... Bf5 4. c4 e6 5. Nc3 when Black has developed his light-squared bishop outside the pawn chain and has a solid position.

(c1) Now 5. ... h6 is a nice move, preventing him from playing Nh4, grabbing the bishop pair. 6. Bg2 (6. Qb3 Nc6 7. Bd2 Bb4 with equality) 6. ... c6 7. 0-0 Be7 Black has achieved an ideal setup, and now just wants to finish his development. 8. Qb3 (8. Nd2 Nbd7 9. e4 dxe4 10. Ndx4 Nxe4 11. Nxe4 Nf6 is equal) 8. ... Qb6 9. c5 Qa6 followed by ... b7-b6 next move, with about equal chances.

(c2) I think 5. ... c6 is recommended by GM Sam Shankland, and he played this in our game: 6. Nh4 dxc4 7. Nxf5 exf5 8. e3 Nbd7 9. Bxc4 Nb6 10. Bb3 Qd7 and Black equalized in So - Shankland, chess24, 2021, but some people don't want to just give up the bishop pair right away.

(d) 3. ... c6 4. c4 leads to some kind of Slav with a g3 setup.

(e) After 3. ... Bg4 4. Bg2 e6 5. 0-0 c6 6. h3 Bh5 7. c4 Be7 8. Nc3 White gets a favorable Reti setup with the pawns on d4 and c4. White is supposed to be slightly better because he can grab the bishop pair after 8. ... 0-0 9. Qb3 Qb6 10. Ne5 followed by g3-g4.

4. Bg2 Be7 5. 0-0 0-0

This is actually a nice move-order by Magnus, as he avoided ... d5xc4 and the early ... Bf8-b4+ lines. Now he could play 6. c4, which is what everyone expected. But instead he came up with something else!

6. b3

This 6. b3 move can be quite venomous, although Black should be okay. But it's easy to relax and think you're equalizing comfortably, only to find that it's not the case. White has hidden potential in the position, thanks in part to his well-placed bishops on the long diagonals.

The second game of the match went (via transposition) 6. c4 dxc4 7. Qc2 b5. I assume Magnus did not want a theoretical discussion in a line where both players would be well prepared.

6. ... c5

The principled reply, immediately fighting for control of the center. After 6. ... b6 7. c4 Bb7 8. Nc3 White has better chances for an advantage, with more space.

7. dxc5

7. c4 was all the rage a few years ago, as after 7. ... dxc4 8. bxc4 cxd4 9. Nxd4 the position could get quite tricky thanks to the passive bishop on c8. Then Dominguez Perez came up with the new move 9. ... Qb6 which solves the problems. Here ... Rf8-d8 is a serious

threat, softening the outpost of the knight on d4. After 10. Ba3 Bxa3 11. Nxa3 e5 12. Ndc2 Rd8 13. Qc1 Nc6 Black finishes up his development, and should have enough activity in this position.

7. ... Bxc5 8. c4

White has to break up the enemy central pawn chain.

8. ... dxc4

Ian's move is more accurate than 8. ... Nc6 9. cxd5 Nxd5 as the knight on d5 sometimes gets in the way of Black's coordination. Play might continue 10. a3 a5 11. Bb2 Qe7 12. Qc2 Rd8 13. Rc1 with an edge for White.

9. Qc2 Qe7 10. Nbd2!



This is clearly targeted preparation from Magnus. Most commentators were full of praise for this move. It is a relatively unknown idea, and while objectively it's quite harmless, it poses the opponent with practical problems to solve over the board. First Black has to decide whether to take on b3.

Carlsen did not want to take with 10. Qxc4 b6 (10. ... Bd7 followed by ... Rf8-c8 is completely fine too) as White will have to waste time moving the queen once again: 11. Bb2 Ba6 (11. ... Bb7 is equal) 12. Qh4 Nc6

PHOTOS: COURTESY FIDE / ERIC ROSEN



13. Ng5 h6 14. Bxc6 hxg5 15. Qxg5 Bxe2 16. Bxa8 Bxf1 and this is given by the machine as a pretty clear-cut way to equality, but it is by no means forced.

10. ... Nc6

Black wants to avoid any nonsense and just finishes up his queenside development.

Grabbing a pawn with 10. ... cxb3 11. Nxb3 can get tricky, as first of all Black's bishop does not have a safe place for itself. Play might continue 11. ... Bd6 (11. ... Bb6 12. a4! with the threat of Bc1-a3 or a4-a5 looks very good) 12. Nfd2! (I'm sure this is all in Magnus' preparation!) 12. ... Nc6 13. Nc4 Rd8 14. Rd1 and here White has compensation. At the very least he can grab the bishop pair.

11. Nxc4 b5

I like this move, as it's the most logical and simple continuation.

The machine prefers 11. ... e5 gaining space, and making things very concrete. After 12. Bb2 e4 13. Ng5 Bf5 14. Rad1 Rad8 Black's active pieces compensate for his weak pawn on e4.

The alternative 11. ... Bd7 leaves Black slightly worse after 12. Bb2 Rfd8 13. e3.

12. Nce5 Nb4!

Black has to be careful not to blunder with 12. ... Bb7? 13. Nxc6 Bxc6 14. b4 and White wins material thanks to the pin on the c-file.

13. Qb2 Bb7

White has to act quickly, as now all of Black's pieces are well developed.

14. a3

Maybe more interesting is 14. Bg5 putting Black into an unpleasant pin, but he is not really risking anything as long as he finds 14. ... h6 15. Bh4 and now the important

15. ... g5! (15. ... Bxf3 16. Bxf3 g5 could be enough for equality too.) 16. a3 gxh4 17. axb4 Bxb4 18. Nxh4 Rfc8 and Black is okay as ... Nf6-d5 is coming and the bishop is well placed on b4.

14. ... Nc6 15. Nd3

Magnus tries to keep the pieces on the board for the time being.

The alternative 15. Bg5 Nxe5 16. Qxe5 a5 equalizes completely, but objectively White has nothing better than equality.

15. ... Bb6

The bishop is very well placed on this diagonal, and it also facilitates ... Nc6-d4 later.

16. Bg5 Rfd8

Threatening ... Nc6-d4; therefore Magnus takes on f6 right away.

17. Bxf6



17. ... gxf6!?

This is slightly confusing to me, and it also confused the commentators. Was Ian already getting overly ambitious? It is generally recommended to remove the queens if your king's position is weakened, but here, Ian did not seem to care about general principles. He seems to have been aiming for a dynam-

ic position where anything could happen.

Black's king is still very safe even with the queens on the board, but most people would simply play 17. ... Qxf6 18. Qxf6 gxf6 with a completely equal endgame. After 19. Rfc1 Rac8 20. b4 Kg7 it's very hard to see how White can make progress — he cannot underestimate the bishop pair. 17. ... Qxf6 is definitely a much safer option.

18. Rac1 Nd4

In the interview Ian suggested the double-edged 18. ... e5 as an improvement: 19. Nh4 Nd4 leaves the knight is very well placed here in the center, and after 20. b4 Rac8 Black has very good activity, although in return the light squares on the kingside become slightly (but permanently) vulnerable.

19. Nxd4 Bxd4 20. Qa2 Bxg2 21. Kxg2

White gets a good knight versus bishop position, and Black's f-pawns are also doubled. Normally White can be happy with this in the Catalan, but after the next two moves it's clear that Black was absolutely fine.

21. ... Qb7+ 22. Kg1

If 22. f3 Be3 and the bishop is boss, controlling a lot of squares.

22. ... Qe4!

A very strong move. Ian does not give his opponent time to consolidate. The queen and the bishop are well placed in the center, controlling a lot of squares, and it is hard to dislodge the active queen on e4. White can trade queens, but that kind of acquiesces to a draw.

23. Qc2 a5

Another possibility was 23. ... Rac8 24. Qxc8 Rxc8 25. Rxc8+ Kg7 26. Nf4 e5 27. e3 with equality.

24. Rfd1

Naturally White could have gone for 24. Nf4 f5 25. e3 Qxc2 26. Rxc2 Be5 and I suspect the game would have been quickly drawn.

24. ... Kg7



The king is safe here on g7. The f6- and f7-pawns defend him well, and he can always play ... h7-h5 to gain space.

25. Rd2

After 25. Qd2 Bb6 White has no way to make progress.

25. ... Rac8!?

A very brave and fighting decision. This is partly the reason that Ian ultimately lost, but I think he should be applauded him for his fighting spirit. As they say, "to win without risk is to triumph without glory."

The simplest way to equality is 25. ... b4 26. axb4 axb4 and now (a) 27. Qc4 27. ... Qf5 28. Rdc2 and almost any move leads to equality, for example 28. ... Bc3 29. Nxb4 Bd2 (b) With 27. Nxb4 Bxf2+ 28. Kxf2 Qxb4 Black has no risk whatsoever. In fact White has to be slightly careful, as his king's position is open, and after 29. Rxd8 Rxd8 30. Qc3 Qb6+ if Black is allowed to bring his rook to b4, blocking the b-pawn, things could get tricky.

26. Qxc8!

White can play 26. Qd1 but as Magnus correctly realized, Black is risking more in this material imbalance. Play might continue 26. ... Bc3 27. Rdc2 b4 with equality.

26. ... Rxc8 27. Rxc8 Qd5

White has to be a bit careful with his queenside pawns at the moment.

28. b4 a4

I think 28. ... axb4 29. axb4 Qb3 might have been a bit safer for Black, as he has to worry about fewer pawns on the queenside.

29. e3

Of course 29. Nf4? has to be avoided because

of 29. ... Bxf2+.

The alternative is 29. Rcc2 defending the rook and threatening to move the knight to f4. Black still equalizes after 29. ... Qb3 30. Nc1 Qb1! which is a key move, temporarily neutralizing White's rooks, i.e., 31. Kg2 Bb2 32. Rxb2 Qxc1 and Black easily holds the draw thanks to his queen activity.

29. ... Be5

I think the simplest way for Black to hold the draw is 29. ... Bb2! and given the way the game went, this might be a critical miss by Ian. After 30. Rc5 Qd6 Black forces the trade of minor pieces as ... Bb2xa3 is an annoying threat. With 31. Rxb2 Qxd3 32. Rbc2 Qxa3 33. Rxb5 Black has multiple ways to make the draw, for example 33. ... Qa1+ 34. Kg2 Qb1 35. Rc3 Qe4+ 36. Kg1 Qb1+ and Black gives perpetual check as White's king lacks a safe place to hide.

30. h4

Typical Magnus. White gains some space on the kingside with this useful move, and gets the h2-square to stash his king.

30. ... h5?!

This gives White a long-term target on h5. I believe the simplest path to the draw still begins with 30. ... Bb2

31. Kh2 Bb2?

But now this is a blunder, and perhaps Ian sensed it — he seemed to hesitate here for a moment. Both players were getting low on time at this point, and a lot of things can happen before the time control!

The correct path was 31. ... Qb3 32. Nxe5 fxe5 33. Rc7 Qxa3 34. Rdd7 Kg6 35. Rxf7 and now 35. ... Qb2! is important, attacking the f2-pawn. Black threatens to quickly push his a-pawn and White has no more than perpetual check here.

32. Rc5 Qd6



33. Rd1?!

Missing the win, but of course this move

is very ambitious too, as Magnus keeps the minor pieces on the board.

White actually starts a winning attack after 33. Rcc2! Bxa3 34. Nf4 Qxb4 and now very strong is 35. Rd7! (35. Nxf5+ Kh6! is far from clear, i.e., 36. Nxf6 Qb1 and things get very messy) 35. ... e5 36. Nxf5+ Kg6 and both players missed the spectacular 37. Rc6!!

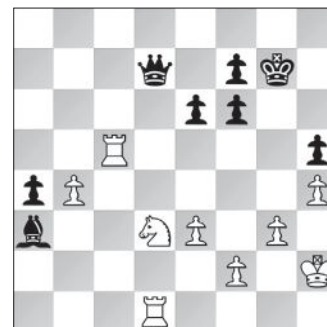


POSITION AFTER 37. Rc6

White sacrifices a knight, but Black has no defense after 37. ... Kxh5 38. Rxf7 followed by Rc6xf6. Black's bishop cannot join the defense of his king and he is just lost. Of course, I think it's fair to say that without an engine, 37. Rc6 is almost impossible to find from afar.

By the way, note that the two rooks versus queen idea is still just a draw: 33. Rxb2 Qxd3 34. Rbc2 f5 with equality.

33. ... Bxa3 34. Rxb5 Qd7! 35. Rc5



The only move. 35. Rb6? loses to 35. ... Qc7 followed by ... Qc7-c2!

35. ... e5!?

I'm not sure why Ian avoided the obvious 35. ... Bxb4 36. Rcc1 Be7 when Black is not risking anything. His pawns are compact and his king is safe. White should have little problem holding the draw with 37. Ne5 followed by Rd1-d7, but still it would keep the match score tied.

36. Rc2 Qd5?

With little time on the clock, Ian missed his last chance to play for a win.

Here again 36. ... Bxb4 looks simplest, just



grabbing the pawn. After 37. Rcc1 Ian can just force a draw by playing 37. ... Qf5 38. Nxb4 Qxf2+ with a perpetual. Even stronger is 37. ... Ba3 38. Ra1 and now 38. ... Qg4! which you can't blame anyone for missing. Black attacks the rook on d1 and plays ... Ba3-e7 next while keeping his extra a-pawn. Black has good winning chances here.

37. Rdd2 Qb3 38. Ra2

Now White is able to consolidate his position and coordinate the rooks without risk.

38. ... e4?

Black should have enough for a draw after 38. ... Bxb4 39. Rdb2 Qxd3 40. Rxb4 a3 41. Ra4 f5 42. R4xa3 Qf1, but it's not that fun for the queen.

39. Nc5 Qxb4



40. Nxe4?

A typical move 40 mistake! Just when you make the time control and get extra time, you relax and play the most obvious move.

Magnus probably did not even consider 40. Rdc2! — if he had I'm sure he'd know it

wins right away. After 40. ... f5 41. Nxa4! Qxa4 42. Rc3 White wins the a-pawn and this position is easily winning. Compared to the variation we saw with 38. ... Bxb4, here Black's pawn is fixed on the e4-square, and he no longer has counterplay associated with ... f5-f4.

40. ... Qb3 41. Rac2

White is not risking anything anymore, and it's a two-result type of position. Black has to defend very accurately in order to avoid any trouble.

Looking back now, it's difficult to believe that the game would continue on for 90 more moves! It's clear to be best in chess you need to have the best physical shape and stamina as well. Preparing beforehand, and then sitting at the board for anywhere from three to eight hours per game ... this is very difficult, even for strong competitors like the world champion and the challenger.

41. ... Bf8 42. Nc5

Bringing the knight over to f4 to attack Black's weak pawn.

42. ... Qb5 43. Nd3 a3 44. Nf4 Qa5 45. Ra2

The machine insists that Black should have no problems holding here, but over the board, it's very difficult to defend. The h5-pawn is falling and the black king is vulnerable. If the f6-pawn was on g6, I think things would be very different.

45. ... Bb4 46. Rd3

Here 46. Rd5 Qa4 does not give White time to win the h-pawn as 47. Nxh5+ Kh6 allows ... Qa4-b3 with counterplay.

Nepomniachtchi looks back (with a bit of chagrin?) as he leaves the board.

46. ... Kh6 47. Rd1 Qa4

For the time being, Ian is defending very well. He is trying to prevent White from consolidating by always retaining ... Qa4-b3 as an option.

48. Rda1 Bd6 49. Kg1 Qb3 50. Ne2

White wasn't able to grab the h-pawn; now the knight hurries back to the queenside in order to help deal with the a-pawn.

50. ... Qd3 51. Nd4

The good thing, from White's perspective, is that all the two rooks versus queen positions are winning for him, thanks to the doubled f-pawns. If he can trade off the minor pieces or win the a3-pawn, the game is over. At this point, however, it's not clear how to achieve that.

51. ... Kh7 52. Kh2

The try 52. Nc2 is always met by 52. ... Be5. White can go for 53. Ne1 Qb5 54. Rxa3 Bxa1 55. Rxa1 but I think Black holds after 55. ... Qb2 56. Ra7 Qe2 57. Ng2 Qd1+ 58. Kh2 Qd2 59. Rxf7+ Kg6.

52. ... Qe4?

This looks fine, but in retrospect, it gave Magnus definite chances. Probably Ian got a little impatient and decided to try for quick counterplay.

Black can just move his king back and forth with 52. ... Kh6 (or even 52. ... Kg6) and it's not clear what Magnus can do to make progress. In fact I don't see how prog-

ress is possible, because Black can play ... f6-f5 next, and sometimes get counterplay with ... f5-f4.

53. Rxa3!

Magnus takes up his chance. From here the game is still within the boundaries of the draw, but it's clear that Black made it much more difficult for himself to hold on. 53. Kg1 Bxg3 54. fxxg3 Qxe3+ leads to an immediate draw.

53. ... Qxh4+

Completely lost for Black is 53. ... Bxa3 54. Rxa3 as Ra3-a5 is coming.

54. Kg1 Qe4

If 54. ... Qg4 55. Ra4 and White controls the fourth rank while preventing ... h5-h4. Black should now play 55. ... Be5! preparing ... h5-h4 again, but after 56. R1a2 Qd1+ 57. Kg2 h4 58. Nf5 hxg3 59. Nxxg3 Qd5+ I don't think White can win this position, although of course defending this is not pleasant for Black.

55. Ra4



Now Magnus gets in his typical squeeze, showcasing one of his main strengths which he has earned so many wins with.

55. ... Be5 56. Ne2 Qc2 57. R1a2! Qb3 58. Kg2 Qd5+ 59. f3

White consolidates his position on the king-side and now Black has to do some passive defending. All this definitely plays to Magnus' style.

Perhaps 59. Kh2 followed by Ne2-f4 is also worthy of attention.

59. ... Qd1

Black can just wait with 59. ... Kg7 60. Kf2 (60. Nf4 Bxf4 61. exf4 h4 is equal) 60. ... Qb3 and just sit at the moment.

60. f4 Bc7 61. Kf2 Bb6 62. Ra1

For the moment Nepomniachtchi is still holding in this position. Now ... Qd1-d7



may be an option, with the idea to invade on the h3-square.

62. ... Qb3 63. Re4 Kg7 64. Re8

Magnus probes for a weakness. Now Black has to watch out for 65. Raa8.

64. ... f5 65. Raa8 Qb4

It might be more accurate to try 65. ... Qd3, keeping an eye on the e3-square. Now 66. Rac8 Ba5 67. Rg8+ Kf6 followed by ... Ba5-d2 may be sufficient to hold.

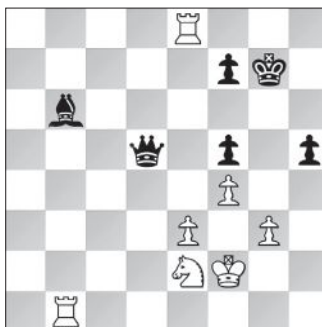
66. Rac8 Ba5 67. Rc1

Avoiding the tricky ... Qb4-e1+ threat!

67. ... Bb6 68. Re5 Qb3 69. Re8 Qd5 70. Rcc8 Qh1 71. Rc1 Qd5

It may seem like Magnus is just going around in circles, but he is making Ian burn a lot of time on the clock, and he is hoping for inaccuracies.

72. Rb1



Equal is 72. Re5 Qd3 73. Rc3 Qb1.

A haggard Carlsen meets the press for some post-game, post-midnight interviews.

72. ... Ba7?!

And finally Magnus is rewarded! This allows White to infiltrate with his rooks.

Better is 72. ... Bc7, preventing Re8-e5 and the plan that was seen in the game. Here 73. Re7 here is met by 73. ... Qd8 74. Nd4 Kg6 when Black is able to defend all of his weaknesses.

73. Re7 Bc5 74. Re5!

Now Magnus is making real progress.

74. ... Qd3 75. Rb7 Qc2 76. Rb5!

This wins some material by force, thanks to the weak f5-pawn.

76. ... Ba7 77. Ra5 Bb6 78. Rab5 Ba7 79. Rxf5 Qd3!

Very good defense by Black! White now has to give up his rook in return for the bishop and pawns.

80. Rxf7+

One key point: White cannot hang on to the two rooks, since after 80. Rg5+ Kf8 81. Rbe5 f6 Black wins some material back.

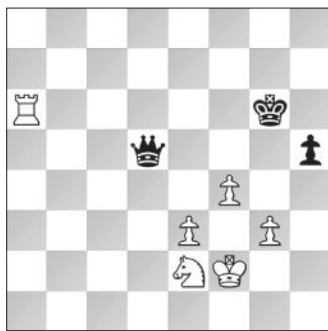
80. ... Kxf7 81. Rb7+ Kg6 82. Rxa7

This endgame is a theoretical draw, but things could get tricky in a practical game with the pressure of a world championship and continued pressure via the clock. Meanwhile, Magnus just keeps playing without any risk whatsoever and slowly makes progress.

82. ... Qd5

Watching this game live, I assumed that Ian would hold this draw, but looking at it again, the position is not easy to assess. The machine with its tablebases says it's a draw, but practically speaking, I think White's chances of converting this is close to 50–50. Sooner or later White is going to be able to advance his pawns. The problem is Black's king is quite vulnerable, and meanwhile, White's king can hide from the checks with accurate play.

83. Ra6+!



Maybe 83. Nd4 is more accurate, as this allows Black to activate his king.

83. ... Kh7

Maybe Ian should just go on with 83. ... Kf5! activating his king. Things are still tricky! For example, 84. g4+! (84. Nd4+ Kg4 85. Rg6+ Kh3 86. Rg5 Qg2+ 87. Ke1 Qh1+ 88. Kd2 Kg2 should be a trivial draw since Black's king is very active, attacking the enemy pawns) 84. ... Kxg4 85. Rg6+ Kh4 86. Rg3 traps the king on h4. Here Black has some ways to make a draw thanks to the stalemate trick. A sample idea is 86. ... Qh1 (86. ... Qf7 87. Nd4 Qa2+ 88. Kf3 Qf2+! holds) 87. Nd4 (87. Ng1 Qg2+) 87. ... Qh2+ 88. Rg2 and now 88. ... Qg3+ 89. Kf1 Qh3 with a draw.

84. Ra1 Kg6 85. Nd4 Qb7 86. Ra2 Qh1 87. Ra6+ Kf7 88. Nf3

Defending the king and threatening to advance the f-pawn. The knight is a very good defender in preventing enemy checks.

88. ... Qb1 89. Rd6 Kg7 90. Rd5 Qa2+ 91. Rd2 Qb1 92. Re2

I really like this setup by White. He puts his rook and knight behind the pawns, supporting their advance.

92. ... Qb6 93. Rc2

93. Kg2 Qb5 annoys the white rook.

93. ... Qb1 94. Nd4 Qh1 95. Rc7+ Kf6 96.

Rc6+ Kf7 97. Nf3 Qb1 98. Ng5+ Kg7 99. Ne6+ Kf7 100. Nd4 Qh1 101. Rc7+ Kf6 102. Nf3

It seems we've seen this position before? Magnus recognizes this, and does not fall for any threefold repetition.

102. ... Qb1 103. Rd7 Qb2+ 104. Rd2 Qb1 105. Ng1 Qb4 106. Rd1 Qb3 107. Rd6+

Giving a check to avoid any threefold.

107. ... Kg7 108. Rd4 Qb2+ 109. Ne2

Finally Magnus reroutes his knight to the e2-square, shielding the king and preparing the advance of his e-pawn.

109. ... Qb1 110. e4 Qh1 111. Rd7+ Kg8

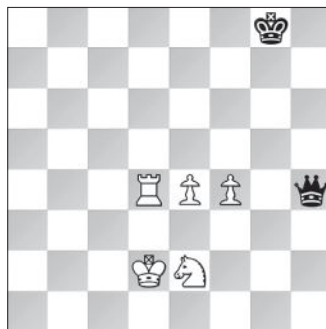
112. Rd4 Qh2+ 113. Ke3

Again, the white knight is very good at shielding the king from queen checks.

113. ... h4

Maybe 113. ... Qh3!? is an option here, although White can play 114. Rd5 with the idea to meet ... h5-h4 with Rh5.

114. gxh4 Qh3+ 115. Kd2 Qxh4



116. Rd3!

Magnus is very careful and does not carelessly advance his pawns right away. Instead he first improves the position of his pieces and makes sure that there is no perpetual check.

116. ... Kf8 117. Rf3! Qd8+ 118. Ke3 Qa5 119. Kf2!

I like this rerouting of the king, as it belongs on the short side of the pawns where there are less checks.

119. ... Qa7+ 120. Re3

White sets up a barricade to protect his king and is now ready to advance his pawns.

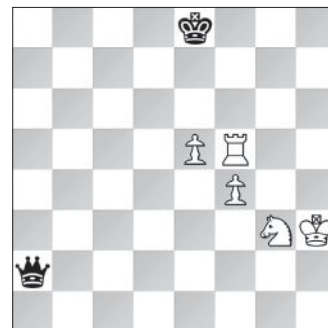
120. ... Qd7 121. Ng3 Qd2+ 122. Kf3 Qd1+ 123. Re2 Qb3+ 124. Kg2

White's king is shielded from checks, his rook is well protected, and the pawns are supported from behind. Now Carlsen has

managed to conjure excellent practical chances.

124. ... Qb7 125. Rd2 Qb3 126. Rd5 Ke7

127. Re5+ Kf7 128. Rf5+ Ke8 129. e5 Qa2+ 130. Kh3



130. ... Qe6?

The final mistake.

According to the tablebases, 130. ... Qb1 holds the draw. It appears that the right plan is to put the queen behind the pawns and pin the knight from the back: 131. Kh4 Qe1 132. Rf6 Ke7 133. Kg4 Qg1! and the queen just waits from behind, pinning the white forces. After 134. Rg6 Kf7 Black should hold, but it's still quite tricky with a ticking clock, i.e., 135. Kf5 Qh2! 136. e6+ Kf8 137. Rf6+ Ke8 138. Ne4 Qh3+ 139. Ke5 Qh5+ 140. Ng5 Qe2+..

Also holding is 130. ... Qc2 131. Kh4 Qf2. Engines holds the draw easily, but a human would struggle to find all the only moves.

131. Kh4 Qh6+

It's too late for the black queen to go back, as after 131. ... Qa2 132. Nh5! Ke7 133. Kg5 Qg2+ 134. Kh6 White's king infiltrates the enemy position, and after Rf5-f6 Black has no more checks.

132. Nh5!

The knight prevents any checks, and meanwhile Rf5-f6 followed by the king invasion is crushing.

132. ... Qh7

Black no longer has any defense. After 132. ... Ke7 133. Rf6 Qh8 134. Kg5 the white king invades via the h6-square, after which the pawns advance: 134. ... Qg8+ 135. Kh6 Qh8+ 136. Kg6 Qg8+ 137. Ng7 and White controls too many important squares.

133. e6 Qg6 134. Rf7 Kd8 135. f5 Qg1 136. Ng7, Black resigned.

A historic game! It was fascinating to watch, and credit to both sides for playing very well! ♠

OPENS JANUARY 27, 2022

ON VIEW THROUGH JULY 17, 2022

Celebrating 10 Years in Saint Louis!

MIND ART EXPERIENCE

MIND, ART, EXPERIENCE: 10 YEARS OF CHESS & CULTURE IN SAINT LOUIS CELEBRATES THE BEST CHESS, ART AND CULTURE FROM ALL 50 EXHIBITIONS HELD AT THE WORLD CHESS HALL OF FAME SINCE ITS 2011 RELOCATION TO SAINT LOUIS, MISSOURI. THE THREE-FLOOR SHOW FEATURES MORE THAN 120 ARTWORKS AND ARTIFACTS, INCLUDING PIECES RELATED TO WORLD CHESS CHAMPIONS WORKS BY INTERNATIONALLY-ACCLAIMED ARTISTS, CHESS-INSPIRED CREATIONS BY SAINT LOUIS-BASED CREATIVES AND LOANS FROM NOTABLE CHESS COLLECTORS AND ART INSTITUTIONS.

Chess *for* Everyone

Exhibitions

Family Activities

Classes & Lectures

Casual Chess Play



Public Tours

Tournaments

School Programs

Private Lessons

Concerts

Summer Camps

Chess Gifts

World's Largest Chess Piece

Visit saintlouischessclub.org and worldchesshof.org for more info about our virtual & in-person offerings.

 Saint Louis
CHESS CLUB

 WORLD
CHESS
HALL OF FAME

Q BOUTIQUE

Like, Share, Subscribe:

@STLChessClub

@WorldChessHOF



The Immortal Akiba Rubinstein

It turns out he wasn't just good at openings and endgames...

BY BRUCE PANDOLFINI



FOR SEVEN OR EIGHT YEARS — let's say 1907 to 1914 — Akiba Rubinstein (1880-1961) may have been the best chess player in the world. His name often

appears on lists of great players who might have become world champion if events had gone a little differently, but the quality of his performances declined significantly after the ravages of World War I. He was certainly known for his opening contributions and especially for his consummate mastery of endings. But he could also attack with power and *élan*, as in this month's game against Amos Burn (Black) at Ostend in 1906. The game began as a Queen's Gambit Declined:

QUEEN'S GAMBIT DECLINED (D40)

Akiba Rubinstein
Amos Burn
Ostend, 1906

1. d4 d5 2. Nf3 Nf6 3. c4 e6 4. Nc3 Nbd7



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 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.**

5. e3 **Par Score 5**
White secures his center and opens a developing line for the king-bishop. You may accept **full credit** for 5. Bg5 or 5. cxd5.

5. ... **Be7**
Black gets ready to castle kingside. He could also have played 5. ... Bb4 or even 5. ... c6.**

6. Bd3 **Par Score 5**
Unafraid of losing a tempo (if Black plays 6. ... dxc4), Rubinstein activates his king-bishop. Accept **full credit** for 6. cxd5 or 6. Be2.

6. ... **0-0**
Black castles first. White has a slight edge.**

7. 0-0 **Par Score 5**
Now it's Rubinstein's turn to castle. You may have **full credit** for 7. cxd5.

7. ... **dx4**
Black takes the tempo after all, though it does surrender control over the e4-square. The idea is to liquidate a few pawns, giving White an isolated d-pawn — which he may not mind!**

8. Bxc4 **Par Score 5**

8. ... **c5**
Natural. Black hopes to gain some freedom, while giving White an isolani.**

9. Qe2 **Par Score 5**
This is a typical deployment. White has the option of placing a rook on the d1-square.

9. ... **Nb6**
Burn attacks the c4-bishop. He might have tried 9. ... a6, preparing ... b7-b5.**

10. Bb3 **Par Score 5**
White keeps the bishop on the a2-g8 diagonal, which winds up being important. You may accept **full credit** for 10. Bd3 or 10. dxc5.

10. ... **cx4**
Ending the tension and hoping to inflict an isolani. Also possible was 10. ... Nbd5.**

11. exd4 **Par Score 5**
Rubinstein accepts the isolated d-pawn to open lines for attack and gain space. His edge is minimal, nothing to write home about. Accept **full credit** for 11. Nxd4.

11. ... **Bd7**
Black's queen-bishop is not very useful here, but at least his home rank is cleared.**

12. Re1 **Par Score 5**
White doubles up on the open e-file. You may accept **full credit** for 12. Ne5, establishing a powerful placement in the enemy camp.

12. ... **Bc6**
Black finds something useful for the light-squared bishop.**

13. Ne5 **Par Score 5**
White's knight assumes an imperious post, anchored by the isolated d-pawn. Black must now decide whether or not to take that attacked d-pawn.

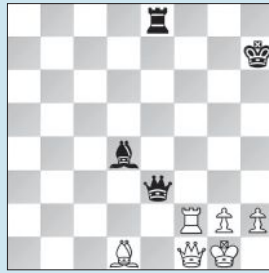
ABCS OF CHESS

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.

FEBRUARY EXERCISE: There are 64 squares on a chessboard. Each one of them can be used as a memory trigger for some famous position, or simply for one significant to you. Going around the board, square to square, try to recall a memorable move that happened there. Consider d8 — that's the square Morphy ended the celebrated Opera Game on. You get the idea. See how many squares you can fill in with your cultured chess memory. It might even be fun.

PROBLEM 1

Mating net



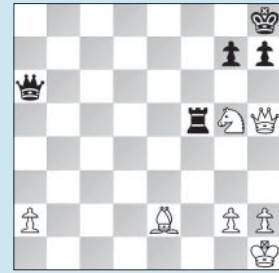
PROBLEM 2

Mating net



PROBLEM 3

Mating net



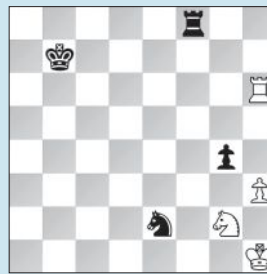
PROBLEM 4

Mating net



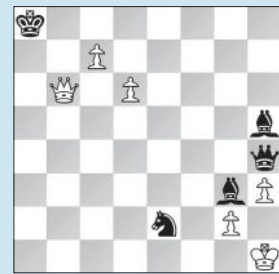
PROBLEM 5

Mating net



PROBLEM 6

Mating net



13. ... **Bd5**
Black tries to secure the position. On 13. ... Qxd4, add **1 bonus point** if you had planned on 14. Nxf7!.**

14. **Nxd5** **Par Score 5**
Now that Black's light-squared bishop is more menacing, Rubinstein gets rid of it.

14. ... **Nbxd5**
Slightly better was possibly 14. ... Nfxd5, which avoids White's next move.**

15. **Bg5** **Par Score 5**
Rubinstein clears the home rank and eyes some interesting tactics.

15. ... **Rc8**
A mistake. Two better moves were 15. ... Bb4 and 15. ... Qd6. Black is now lost.**

16. **Bxf6** **Par Score 6**
A winning move. Just like that. It doesn't matter how Black takes back.

16. ... **Bxf6****

17. **Nxf7** **Par Score 7**
Black's position falls apart. If Burn had played 16. ... Nxf6, then 17. Nxf7 Rxf7 18. Qxe6 wins (**1 bonus point**). Or if he had tried 16. ... gxf6, then 17. Qg4+ Kh8 18. Nxf7+ Rxf7 19. Qxe6 also wins (**1 bonus point**).

17. ... **Rxf7****

18. **Qxe6** **Par Score 5**
Black's position is in tatters. The b3-bishop now becomes the destroyer of worlds.

18. ... **Bxd4**
The try 18. ... Kf8 gets the rook out of the pin, but it wouldn't have saved the game.**

19. **Bxd5** **Par Score 5**
White is going to emerge materially ahead however Black continues.

19. ... **Bxf2+**
This looks good, but it doesn't save the day.**

20. **Kh1** **Par Score 5**

20. ... **Qf8**
Black hopes that he still has some life after 21. Qxf7+ Qxf7 22. Bxf7+ Kxf7 23. Rf1 Rc2.**

21. **Rf1** **Par Score 6**
But this move is much stronger than 21. Qxf7+. The pinned rook cannot run away.

21. ... **Rc2**
This defense doesn't quite work.**

22. **Rac1** **Par Score 6**
By developing this last piece, White ensures a quick win.

22. ... **Rxc1**
Obviously, 22. ... Rxb2 loses in several ways, including by 23. Qxf7+ followed by mate, i.e., 23. ... Qxf7 24. Rc8 mate or 23. ... Kh8 24. Qxf8 mate.**

23. **Rxc1** **Par Score 5**
White has unanswerable threats and Black has nothing. So...

23. ... **Black resigned.**
A very neat and economical little gem by Rubinstein. ♠

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

Strong Coffee

GM Gawain Jones stirs the pot with his *Coffeehouse Repertoire*.

BY IM JOHN WATSON

O

F LATE WE ARE SEEING numerous opening repertoire books and electronic products by strong players. Most of these recommend variations

within a particular White or Black opening, for example, a Caro-Kann Defense repertoire or a tome on “Beating the Sicilian.” That’s difficult enough, but a few brave authors have taken on the more ambitious task of presenting a complete repertoire for White from the very first move, or a repertoire for Black versus all of White’s first moves. You can imagine that with the increasing depth of established theory, such an under-

taking has become an extremely daunting one. In his recent *Coffeehouse Repertoire* books, grandmaster Gawain Jones presents a deep repertoire with 1. e4, and it takes two volumes and 1000 pages to complete the chore.

These are pages of the dense analytical detail that Quality Chess books are known for, with limited verbal explanation. That might seem excessive, but in fact, Jones can be commended for his efficiency. Quality Chess has already published two even lengthier multi-volume works devoted to repertoires with 1. e4. GM Parimarjan Negi’s brilliant and original five-volume series clocks in at 2280 pages (so far: he hasn’t

even written about 1. e4 e5 yet!). And GM John Shaw’s three-volume *Playing 1.e4* series consumes 1472 pages. Finally, I should mention that GM Justin Tan’s recent book *1.e4! The Chess Bible* (out from Thinkers Publishing in 2021) takes up the same challenge; so far, his first volume takes up 462 pages, to be followed by two more of presumably similar length. Such books are not for the faint of heart.

Jones never skimps on detail, so even 1000 pages would never have sufficed had the material not been further constrained. He achieves this by avoiding the traditional main lines in almost every opening. But the word ‘coffeehouse’ in the title is misleading; it has connotations of risky, marginally unsound lines full of traps and tactics. As far as I can see, thankfully,

there are no such lines at all in these books. Here’s how Jones explains his process for selecting variations:

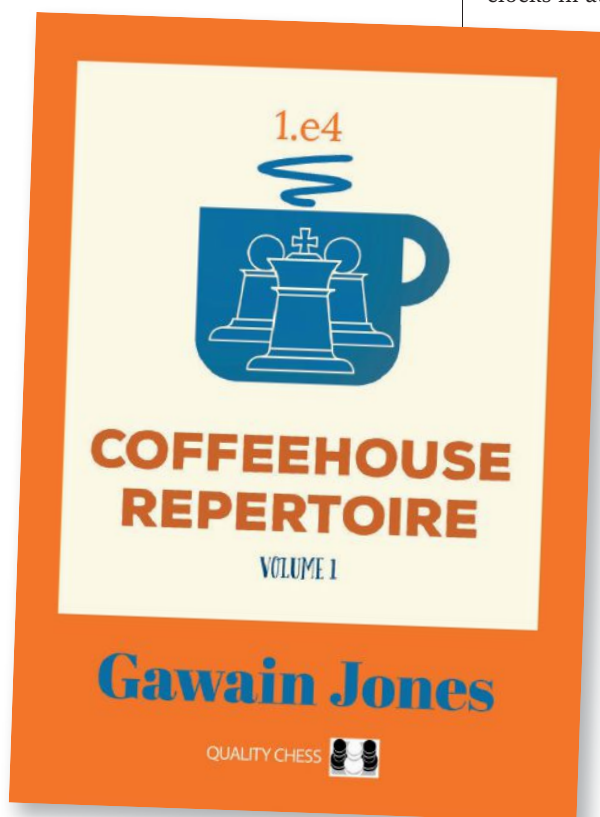
Primarily I wanted the choices to be sound: I’ve wasted too much time trying to fix holes in dodgy lines to inflict them upon you. Of course these recommendations will work best if they surprise your opponent, but I believe they all have inherent merit too.

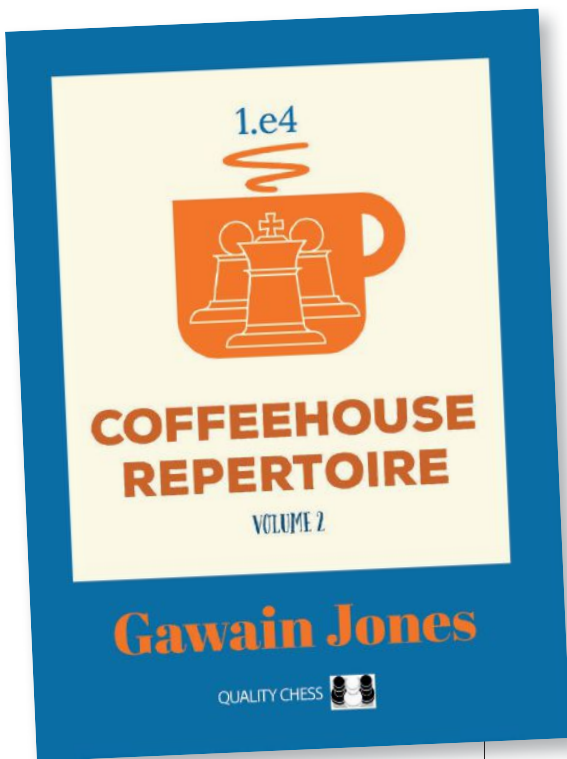
Secondly, I wanted the repertoire choices to pack a genuine punch. Surprising your opponent with an insipid line may work occasionally, but will hardly scare a well-prepared opponent. With this repertoire, even if your opponents know what’s coming, they won’t have an easy time.

Thirdly, I aimed for relatively off-beat choices where possible, provided they met the above two criteria. A lot of your opponents are unlikely to have faced these lines many times (if at all) before. (Preface)

Let me jump into a few examples of these choices. Versus the all-important **1. e4 e5 2. Nf3 Nc6**, Jones features the Scotch Gambit line **3. Bc4 Nf6 4. d4 exd4 5. e5**, or, after **3. Bc4 Bc5**, **4. c3 Nf6 5. d4**. He has extensive personal playing experience with these lines versus elite grandmasters. Jones knows and cites the relevant literature, and as in the rest of the book, consistently quotes the best and most recent correspondence games. I was impressed by the fact that the lengthiest lines end in positions with sufficient play for both sides, to the extent that they seem quite as practical as entering into one of the typical Ruy Lopez main lines.

For the Scotch Gambit order, the first thing I checked was to see if he had noticed and included an ingenious idea I saw a year ago on





Andrew Liu's *chess.com* blog in the line **5. e5 d5 6. Bb5 Ne4 7. Nxd4 Bd7 8. Bxc6 bxc6 9. 0-0 Bc5 10. f3 Ng5 11. Be3** (Jones also has a separate recommendation with much original analysis on 11. f4) **11. ... 0-0 12. f4**



In this much-analyzed position, Liu found the spectacular **12. ... f6!**, when the main line goes **13. exf6 Nh3+! 14. gxh3 Bxh3 15. b4! Bb6 16. Rf3! Bg4 17. fxg7 Re8 18. Bf2 Qf6 19. c3 Qg6! 20. Kh1 Bxd4 21. cxd4 Qh5 22. Nd2 Re4**. Liu stopped here, without a definitive assessment. The 12. ... f6 idea was played in just a single correspondence game at about the same time, but I'm not sure who discovered the idea first. (Note that this idea was also discussed in our May 2020 review column. ~ed.)

Jones indeed analyses the line at length, with extensive notes on the alternatives, and at the final position cites GM Jacob Aagaard's ingenious suggestion **23. f5!**, with the main line of some very complex analysis

continuing **23. ... Rf4 24. Rxf4 Bxd1 25. f6** (25. Nf1 "would be another possible route to investigate") **25. ... Qe2 26. Nf3 Qf1+ 27. Ng1 Bf3+ (27. ... a5!?) 28. Rxf3 Qxa1 29. Kg2!?**. This is equal, according to Jones, with the idea Nh3-f4 or Rf3-f4 and Ng1-f3. The game continues!

The point is that, when necessary, Jones insists upon finding the very best ways for both sides to proceed, and tries to avoid dead ends without any prospects. This is a high-integrity approach.

I used to play the Alekhine Defense (**1. e4 Nf6**), and have tried to keep up with the literature, most recently GM Christian Bauer's *The Modernized Alekhine Defense* (Thinkers Publishing, 2021). Bauer demonstrates convincingly that many of the main lines that have been supposed to favor White are at least playable for Black. Interestingly, both Jones and Tan offer the

Four Pawns Attack, **2. e5 Nd5 3. c4 Nb6**

4. d4 d6 5. f4, as the suggested solution, even though it hasn't traditionally been the most popular system or a favorite of many leading grandmasters. But I think it hits the spot.

Bauer has two main recommendations versus the Four Pawns involving an early ... g7-g6, and two more conventional solutions in a 'Bonus' chapter; unfortunately, Jones' analysis of all these lines is very convincing (as is Tan's, by the way), and I don't find any of them really acceptable from Black's point of view. To my mind, the Four Pawns has become an existential threat to 1. ... Nf6; hopefully, an enterprising analyst can improve upon Black's chances.

Jones gives two related move orders versus the Caro-Kann, **1. e4 c6**. His primary choice is **2. d4 d5 3. exd5 cxd5 4. Nf3** (about as far from a 'coffeehouse' line as one can imagine), when one idea is **4. ... Nc6 5. Bb5** and another is **4. ... Nf6 5. Ne5**. This innocent-looking approach uses up 52 pages of analysis, and Jones also offers a secondary suggestion **1. e4 c6 2. Nf3 d5 3. exd5 cxd5 4. Ne5!?**

(See diagram top of next column)

I recently played a casual game in this line and was successful against a strong opponent. Since d2-d4 usually follows, 4. Ne5 contains some themes similar to the 2. d4 line, but my game went in a unique and interesting direction, which is a sign in its favor.

The French Defense, **1. e4 e6 2. d4 d5**, is met by **3. e5**, the Advance Variation. Even



with some clever choices which cut down White's workload this section extends over 108 pages. The most distinctive part of the repertoire is in what Jones calls the Hector Variation: **3. ... c5 4. c3 Nc6 5. Nf3 Qb6 6. Bd3 cxd4 7. 0-0!?**. This gambit variation has been played by Carlsen and Vachier-Lagrave, among others. Jones has contributed to its theory in his own games; his main line goes **7. ... Bd7 8. Re1 Nge7 9. h4!?**



At first you might think this is truly a coffeehouse line, *i.e.*, of a speculative nature, but practice, theory, and time spent communing with the engines all show that White gets either compensation for his pawn or an interesting game if Black returns it. True, I believe that Black can get full equality with accurate play, but the resulting positions are complex and full of opportunities for both sides, which fits in well with the goals of Jones' repertoire. (See our report on the U.S. Women's Championship in our January 2022 issue for two games by IM Carissa Yip in this variation. ~ed.)

The following struggle between top-flight grandmasters illustrates how wild the play can become.

FRENCH DEFENSE, ADVANCE VARIATION (C02)

GM Maxime Vachier-Lagrave (2763)

GM Pavel Ponkratov (2659)

FIDE Grand Swiss (6), Riga, 11.03.2021

1. e4 e6 2. d4 d5 3. e5 c5 4. c3 Nc6 5. Nf3 Qb6 6. Bd3 cxd4 7. 0-0 Bd7 8. Re1 Nge7

The point is that 8. ... dxc3 9. Nxc3 brings out White's pieces very rapidly, for example, 9. ... Nb4 10. Be3 Bc5 11. Bxc5 Qxc5 12. Rc1 (12. Bb1) 12. ... Qb6 (12. ... Nxd3! 13. Qxd3 Ne7) 13. Bb1 Ne7 14. Ng5! Ng6? 15. Qh5 Nc6 16. Nxd5! exd5 17. e6 0-0-0 18. Nxf7 with a winning attack in Ehlvest - Rathavel, *chess.com* 2020.

9. h4 h6 10. a3!?

10. h5 has been played in most games and is Jones' main line, but the a-pawn move is also logical, preparing queenside expansion.

10. ... Rc8

Logically developing while delaying ... dxc3. A typically wild game followed after 10. ... g5! 11. b4 g4 (11. ... gxh4) 12. Nxd4 Nxd4 13. Be3 Nf3+ 14. gxf3 Qc7 15. fxe4 Rg8 16. f4 in Sousa - Perez Candelario, Toledo 2021.

11. b4 a6 12. Bb2 g5!?

Adventurous. Solider is 12. ... Nf5, intending 13. Bxf5 exf5 14. cxd4 Be6 with equality.

13. Nh2!

This may not be objectively best, but poses difficult problems. The alternative 13. h5 g4 14. Nxd4 g3! is dynamically balanced.

13. ... Bg7 14. Ng4



14. ... gxh4! 15. cxd4!?

A gamble, played in coffeehouse style. The more rational 15. Qf3 Qd8! 16. cxd4 (16. Nf6+ Bxf6 17. exf6 Ng8!) 16. ... Nf5 17. Bxf5 exf5 18. Ne3 0-0 is double-edged.

15. ... h5?

Instead 15. ... Nxd4! eliminates the key central pawn, when one critical line is 16. Nd2! Bb5 17. Ne4! Bxd3 18. Nd6+ Kd7 19. Qxd3 Nc2 20. Nxf7 Nxe1 21. Rxe1 Rhf8 22. Nd6 Rf4 23. Nxc8 Kxc8.

16. Nf6+ Bxf6 17. exf6 Ng8 18. Qf3 Rh6??

A blunder. Black needed to retreat: 18. ... Qd8! 19. Nc3 Kf8 20. Nxd5! exd5 21. Qxd5 Nxf6 22. Qd6+ Kg7 23. d5 Bf5! 24. Qxd8 Rcxd8

25. Bxf5 Rxd5 26. Be4 Rd6 defends for the time being, although White's bishops give him the edge.

19. Qxd5

White has the threat of Qd5-g5 and d4-d5, as well as a timely Nd2-e4.

19. ... Nxf6 20. Qg5 Ng4 21. Nc3! Qd8

White wins after 21. ... Qxd4 22. Nd5! Qxf2+ 23. Kh1.

22. Qxd8+ Kxd8 23. Ne4

Black's position is hopeless: 24. f3 is threatened as well as Ne4-d6 or Ne4-c5.

23. ... e5

Here 23. ... Rg6 also loses after 24. f3 Nh6 25. Nd6.

24. f3 Nxd4 25. fxe4 hxg4 26. Ng5, Black resigned.

I've saved the Sicilian Defence (1. e4 c5) for last because authors who wish to keep the material limited usually resort to lines such as the Alapin (2. c3) or Closed (2. Nc3 with g2-g3 next) or perhaps even the Grand Prix (2. Nc3 Nc6 3. f4). Jones finds a different path that also steers away from the appalling weight of Open Sicilian theory (which requires 1248 pages in Negi!), yet keeps the game complex and open-ended. He starts with 2. Nc3, meeting 2. ... Nc6 with 3. Bb5, while offering analysis of the 'Chameleon' variation 3. Nge2 as an option for those willing to enter certain Open Sicilians but avoid the Najdorf or Dragon. After 2. ... e6, 3. Nf3 keeps things flexible, for example, 3. ... Nc6 4. Bb5 or 3. ... a6 4. g3.

Arguably the core of the repertoire is Carlsen's variation 2. ... d6 3. d4 cxd4 4. ... Qxd4, with one main line proceeding 4. ... Nc6 5. Qd2 g6 6. b3 Bh6 7. f4 Nf6 (7. ... f5 8. Bb2 Nf6 9. 0-0-0 is critical and analyzed in detail) 8. Bb2



As you might expect from a variation stemming from Carlsen, this has been

played a fair amount on the top grandmaster level and is analyzed in various sources. I think there are a few lines in which Black gets sufficient chances, but no more than equality, while Jones demonstrates that even in those cases a game with rich content lies ahead. Although this repertoire against the Sicilian has no 'main lines,' it is nevertheless theoretically demanding, as indicated by the 265 pages Jones devotes to it.

These two volumes have numerous strengths. The author is an experienced and active grandmaster, currently rated in the high 2600s, and having previously broken the 2700 threshold. Among many other titles and tournament wins he counts two British championships.

Jones has played the majority of lines himself, often again the world's leading players. He is assiduously careful to analyze Black's best defenses in every line, admitting objective equality in those cases where it arises, but finding many new moves which ensure that the play will not peter out and the game will remain challenging even in the worst case. This contrasts with many works which constantly claim 'small advantages' or 'better prospects' for the preferred sides in cases where, with a little investigation, one finds complete equality.

One cautionary note: I should make clear that the two volumes of 1. e4 *Coffeehouse Repertoire* are ideally suited for experienced players or truly dedicated students. Many lower players will find the theoretical demands burdensome, and there's very little verbal handholding of the "Why am I playing this move?" variety.

But it's worth pointing out that even developing players could use this book to fill out parts of their repertoires, for example, to gain a practical weapon against 1. ... c5 or 1. ... e5. Furthermore, it can serve as a valuable reference. You can play and practice your openings without having every detail memorized, after all, and use this book as a resource to gradually build your knowledge and understanding. In any case, Gawain Jones has made an important addition to chess theory, and I hope that we see more of him as an author. ♠

Jones, Gawain. Coffeehouse Repertoire 1. e4, Volume 1. Quality Chess, 2021. ISBN-13: 978-1784831455, 432 pages. (Available from uscf-sales.com, product code B0189QT. \$32.95.)

Jones, Gawain. Coffeehouse Repertoire 1. e4, Volume 2. Quality Chess, 2021. ISBN-13: 978-1784831479, 568 pages. (Available from uscf-sales.com, product code B0190QT. \$32.95.)

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 February 28, 2022 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 USCHES.ORG Effective with the November 2020 *Chess Life*, we have removed the National Events and Bids page that has traditionally been part of our TLA section. This information continues to be available here: new.uschess.org/national-events-calendar

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

Nationals

NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP EVENT

2022 U.S. Amateur Team Championship - South

FEBRUARY 4-6, 2022, FLORIDA

Event site: Ramada West Palm Beach Address: 1901 Palm Beach Lakes Blvd., West Palm, FL 33409 Overall prize fund: n/a GP Points: n/a FIDE Rated: N Handicap accessible: N Residency restriction: N Organizer: Boca Raton Chess Club Email: jon@bocachess.com Phone: 561-302-4377 Website: <https://www.bocachess.com> TLA ID: 32054

NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP EVENT

2022 U.S. Amateur Team Championship - North

FEBRUARY 18-20, 2022, ILLINOIS

Event site: Hyatt Regency Schaumburg Address: 1800 E. Golf Rd., Schaumburg, IL 60173 Overall prize fund: n/a GP Points: n/a FIDE Rated: N Handicap accessible: N Residency restriction: N Organizer: Chess Weekend Email: glenn@chess-weekend.com Phone: n/a Website: <http://chess-weekend.com> TLA ID: 32197

NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP EVENT - HERITAGE EVENT

World Amateur Team & U.S. Team East

FEBRUARY 19-21, 2022, NEW JERSEY

Event site: Parsippany Hilton Address: 1 Hilton Ct., Parsippany, NJ 07054 Overall prize fund: n/a GP Points: n/a FIDE Rated: N Handicap accessible: N Residency restriction: N Organizer: Steve Doyle Email: esdoyle@aol.com Phone: (973) 538-1697 Website: <https://njsc.org/> TLA ID: 31487

NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP EVENT - JUNIOR GRAND PRIX

2022 National High School (K-12) Championships

APRIL 8-10, 2022, TENNESSEE

Event site: Renasant Convention Center Address: 255 N Main St., Memphis, TN 38103 Overall prize fund: n/a GP Points: n/a FIDE Rated: Y Handicap accessible: N Residency restriction: N Organizer: Boyd Reed Email: nationalevents@uschess.org Phone: 931-787-2244 Website: <http://www.uschess.org/tournaments/2022/hs> TLA ID: 32429

NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP EVENT

2022 All-Girls National Championships presented by the Kasparov Chess Foundation in association with Renaissance Knights Chess Foundation & US Chess

APRIL 22-24, 2022, ILLINOIS

Event site: Hyatt Regency McCormick Place Address: 2233 South Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Drive, Chicago, IL 60616 Overall prize fund: n/a GP Points: n/a FIDE Rated: N Handicap accessible:

ble: N Residency restriction: N Organizer: David Heiser Email: david.heiser@renaisanceknights.org Phone: 7738440701 Website: <http://allgirls.knights.org/> TLA ID: 31652

NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP EVENT - GRAND PRIX - ENHANCED GRAND PRIX

2022 U.S. Women's Open

JUNE 8-9, 2022, NEVADA

Event site: Westgate Las Vegas Resort Address: 3000 Paradise Rd., Las Vegas, NV 89109 Overall prize fund: \$3,500 GP Points: 50 FIDE Rated: Y Handicap accessible: Y Residency restriction: N Organizer: Vegas Chess Festivals Email: vegas@chessmail.com Phone: 702-930-9550 Website: <https://vegasschessfestival.com> TLA ID: 32319

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

2022 National Open

JUNE 8-12, 2022, NEVADA

Event site: Westgate Las Vegas Resort Address: 3000 Paradise Rd., Las Vegas, NV 89109 Overall prize fund: \$100,000 GP Points: 200 FIDE Rated: Y Handicap accessible: Y Residency restriction: N Organizer: Vegas Chess Festivals Email: vegas@chessmail.com Phone: 702-930-9550 Website: <https://vegasschessfestival.com> TLA ID: 32321

Grand Prix

The Grand Prix continues in 2022. Look for 2021 standings in an upcoming issue.

GRAND PRIX - ENHANCED GRAND PRIX - REGIONAL - JUNIOR GRAND PRIX

13th annual Southwest Class Championships

FEBRUARY 17-21, 2022, TEXAS

Event site: DFW Airport Marriott South Address: 4151 Centreport Blvd., Fort Worth TX 76155 Overall prize fund: \$32,000 GP Points: 200 FIDE Rated: Y Handicap accessible: N Residency restriction: N Organizer: Continental Chess Association Email: director@chess.us Phone: 3472012269, leave message including email address Website: <http://www.chessevents.us> TLA ID: 31490

GRAND PRIX - ENHANCED GRAND PRIX - REGIONAL - JUNIOR GRAND PRIX

7th annual George Washington Open - CANCELED

FEBRUARY 25-27, 2022, VIRGINIA

GRAND PRIX

8th Queen City Tornado

FEBRUARY 26, 2022, NEW HAMPSHIRE

Event site: DoubleTree Hotel Address: 700 Elm St, Manchester, NH 03101 (Granite St. exit off I-293) Overall prize fund: \$1,460 GP Points: 6 FIDE Rated: N Handicap accessible: Y Residency restriction: N Organizer: Hal Terrie Email: halterrie@comcast.net Phone: 603-668-8368 Website: <https://nhchess.org> TLA ID: 32360

GRAND PRIX

29th Collyer Memorial

FEBRUARY 26-27, 2022, WASHINGTON

Event site: Holiday Inn Spokane Airport Address: 1616 S. Windsor Drive, Spokane, WA 99224 Overall prize fund: \$1,800 GP Points: 10 FIDE Rated: N Handicap accessible: Y Residency restriction: N Organizer: Kevin M. Korsmo Email: kmkorsmo@comcast.net Phone: 15092701772 Website: <http://spokanechessclub.org/> TLA ID: 31843

HERITAGE EVENT - GRAND PRIX - ENHANCED GRAND PRIX - JUNIOR GRAND PRIX

29th annual Western Class Championships

MARCH 4-6, 2022, CALIFORNIA, SOUTHERN

Event site: Hilton Orange County Airport Address: 18800 MacArthur Blvd, Irvine, CA 92612 Overall prize fund: \$20,000 GP Points: 120 FIDE Rated: Y Handicap accessible: Y Residency restriction: N Organizer: Continental Chess Association Email: director@chess.us Phone: 3472012269, leave message including email address Website: <http://www.chessevents.us> TLA ID: 31809

ENHANCED GRAND PRIX - JUNIOR GRAND PRIX

2022 DFW FIDE Premier 1

MARCH 4-6, 2022, TEXAS

Event site: Doubletree by Hilton DFW Airport Address: 4441 W John Carpenter Fwy, Irving, TX 75063 Overall prize fund: \$1,000 GP Points: 30 FIDE Rated: Y Handicap accessible: Y Residency restriction: N Organizer: Luis Salinas Email: info@dallaschess.com Phone: 214-632-9000 Website: <http://www.dallaschess.com/> TLA ID: 32354

GRAND PRIX - JUNIOR GRAND PRIX

Claude E Webber Memorial Cup 2022

MARCH 5, 2022, MAINE

Event site: Bonny Eagle Middle School Address: 1692 Sokokis Trail, Buxton, ME 0409 Overall prize fund: \$500 GP Points: 10 FIDE Rated: N Handicap accessible: Y Residency restriction: N Organizer: Maine Chess Association Email: info@chessmaine.org Phone: 207-939-2782 Website: <https://www.chessmaine.org> TLA ID: 31820

JUNIOR GRAND PRIX

2022 St. Patrick Open

MARCH 12-13, 2022, MONTANA

Event site: Double Tree Hotel Address: 27 N. 27th St., Billings, MT 59102 Overall prize fund: \$350 GP Points: n/a FIDE Rated: N Handicap accessible: Y Residency restriction: N Organizer: Daniel Mattson Email: mattsondm@gmail.com Phone: 406.490.3983 Website: <http://www.montanachess.org/> TLA ID: 32328

GRAND PRIX - ENHANCED GRAND PRIX - JUNIOR GRAND PRIX

19th annual Southern Class Championships

MARCH 18-20, 2022, FLORIDA

Event site: Wyndham Orlando Resort Address: 8001 International Drive, Orlando, FL 32819 Overall prize fund: \$17,000 GP Points: 80 FIDE Rated: Y Handicap accessible: Y Residency restriction: N Organizer: Continental Chess Association Email: director@chess.us Phone: 3472012269, leave message including email address Website: <http://www.chessevents.us> TLA ID: 31810

GRAND PRIX

2022 Lone Star Open

MARCH 18-20, 2022, TEXAS

Event site: DoubleTree by Hilton Bush International Address: 15757 John F. Kennedy Blvd, Houston, TX 77032 Overall prize fund: \$11,000 b/225: 60% gtd. GP Points: 40 FIDE Rated: Y Handicap accessible: N Residency restriction: N Organizer: Francisco Gualalupe Email: fgualalupe@aol.com Phone: (713) 530-7820 Website: <https://www.kingregistration.com/event/2022LoneStar> TLA ID: 32057

GRAND PRIX

Michigantown Madness

MARCH 19, 2022, INDIANA

Event site: Michigantown Lions Community Center Address: 500 Ohio Street, Michigantown, IN 46057 Overall prize fund: n/a GP Points: 10 FIDE Rated: N Handicap accessible: Y Residency restriction: N Organizer: John Herr Email: johnherr13@hotmail.com Phone: 641-745-0200 Website: n/a TLA ID: 32361

GRAND PRIX

30th Massachusetts G/60 Championship

MARCH 20, 2022, MASSACHUSETTS

Event site: Westford Regency Inn & Conference Center Address: 219 Littleton Road, Westford, MA 01886 Overall prize fund: \$2,500 GP Points: 15 FIDE Rated: N Handicap accessible: Y Residency restriction: N Organizer: Massachusetts Chess Association Email: info@masschess.org Phone: 603-891-2484 Website: <http://www.masschess.org> TLA ID: 32352

HERITAGE EVENT - GRAND PRIX - ENHANCED GRAND PRIX - JUNIOR GRAND PRIX

26th annual Mid-America Open

MARCH 25-27, 2022, MISSOURI

Event site: Clayton Plaza Hotel Address: 7750 Carondelet Ave, Clayton, MO 63105 Overall prize fund: \$20,000 GP Points: 120 FIDE Rated: Y Handicap accessible: Y Residency restriction: N Organizer: Continental Chess Association Email: director@chess.us Phone: 3472012269, leave message including email address Website: <http://www.chessevents.us> TLA ID: 31819

GRAND PRIX

CFCC 2022 34th Annual Club Championship

MARCH 26-27, 2022, FLORIDA

Event site: Central Florida Chess Club Address: 865 North State Road 434, Altamonte Springs, FL 32714 Overall prize fund: \$1,175 GP Points: 15 FIDE Rated: Y Handicap accessible: Y Residency restriction: N Organizer: Central Florida Chess Club Email: info@centralchess.org Phone: (407) 312-6231 Website: <https://www.centralchess.org/cfcc-2022-34th-annual-club-championship-tournament> TLA ID: 32425

HERITAGE EVENT - GRAND PRIX

2022 Cincinnati Open

APRIL 1-3, 2022, OHIO

Event site: Embassy Suites Hotel Address: 4554 Lake Forest Drive, Blue Ash, OH 45242 Overall prize fund: \$8,000 b/150 pd. ent. GP Points: 20 FIDE Rated: Y Handicap accessible: Y Residency restriction: N Organizer: Alan Hodge Email: a.hodge195@gmail.com Phone: 5136009915 Website: <https://www.chesscincinnati.com> TLA ID: 32043

HERITAGE EVENT - ENHANCED GRAND PRIX - JUNIOR GRAND PRIX

42nd Annual Marchand Open

APRIL 9-10, 2022, NEW YORK

Event site: Bill Gray's Regional Iplex (on the MCC Campus) Address: 2700 Brighton Henrietta Town Line



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

Rd., Rochester, NY 14623 Overall prize fund: \$17,000 GP Points: 150 FIDE Rated: N Handicap accessible: Y Residency restriction: N Organizer: Ronald Lohrman Email: chesscenter@rochester.rr.com Phone: 585-442-2430 Website: <http://www.nychess.org> TLA ID: 31881

AMERICAN CLASSIC • GRAND PRIX • ENHANCED GRAND PRIX • JUNIOR GRAND PRIX

14th annual Open at Foxwoods
APRIL 13-17, 2022, CONNECTICUT
Event site: Foxwoods Resort Casino Address: Rt 2, Mashantucket, CT 06339 Overall prize fund: \$75,000 b/500 GP Points: 200 FIDE Rated: Y Handicap accessible: Y Residency restriction: N Organizer: Continental Chess Association Email: director@chess.us Phone: 3472012269, leave message including email address Website: <http://www.chessevents.us> TLA ID: 31762

ENHANCED GRAND PRIX • JUNIOR GRAND PRIX

9th Annual Sands Regency - Reno Larry Evans Memorial Open
APRIL 15-17, 2022, NEVADA
Event site: Sands Regency Hotel Casino Address: 345 N Arlington Avenue, Reno, NV 89501 Overall prize fund: \$27,500 GP Points: 150 FIDE Rated: Y Handicap accessible: Y Residency restriction: N Organizer: Jerome V. Weikel Email: wackykl@aol.com Phone: 775-747-1405 Website: <http://www.renochess.org> TLA ID: 32344

GRAND PRIX • ENHANCED GRAND PRIX

13th annual Blitz at Foxwoods
APRIL 16, 2022, CONNECTICUT
Event site: Foxwoods Resort Casino Address: Rt 2, Mashantucket, CT 06339 Overall prize fund: \$2,000 GP Points: 20 FIDE Rated: N Handicap accessible: Y Residency restriction: N Organizer: Continental Chess Association Email: director@chess.us Phone: 3472012269, leave message including email address Website: <http://www.chessevents.us> TLA ID: 32418

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

30th annual Eastern Class Championships
APRIL 29-MAY 1, 2022, CONNECTICUT
Event site: Sturbridge Host Hotel Address: 366 Main St, Sturbridge, MA 01566 Overall prize fund: \$20,000 GP Points: 120 FIDE Rated: Y Handicap accessible: Y Residency restriction: N Organizer: Continental Chess Association Email: director@chess.us Phone: 3472012269, leave message including email address Website: <http://www.chessevents.us> TLA ID: 32412

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

31st annual Chicago Open
MAY 26-30, 2022, ILLINOIS
Event site: Westin Chicago North Shore Hotel Address: 601 North Milwaukee Ave., Wheeling, IL 60090 Overall prize fund: \$100,000 GP Points: 200 FIDE Rated: Y Handicap accessible: Y Residency restriction: N Organizer: Continental Chess Association Email: director@chess.us Phone: 3472012269, leave message including email address Website: <http://www.chessevents.us> TLA ID: 32120

AMERICAN CLASSIC • GRAND PRIX • ENHANCED GRAND PRIX • JUNIOR GRAND PRIX

16th annual Philadelphia Open
JUNE 24-26, 2022, PENNSYLVANIA
Event site: Philadelphia Sheraton Downtown Address: 201 North 17th St., Philadelphia, PA 19103 Overall prize fund: \$15,000 GP Points: 100 FIDE Rated: Y Handicap accessible: Y Residency restriction: N Organizer: Continental Chess Association Email: director@chess.us Phone: 3472012269, leave message including email address Website: <http://www.chessevents.us> TLA ID: 32123

GRAND PRIX • ENHANCED GRAND PRIX • JUNIOR GRAND PRIX

15th annual Philadelphia International
JUNE 24-28, 2022, PENNSYLVANIA

Event site: Philadelphia Sheraton Downtown Address: 201 North 17th St., Philadelphia, PA 19103 Overall prize fund: \$22,000 GP Points: 200 FIDE Rated: Y Handicap accessible: Y Residency restriction: N Organizer: Continental Chess Association Email: director@chess.us Phone: 3472012269, leave message including email address Website: <http://www.chessevents.us> TLA ID: 32121

REGIONAL • JUNIOR GRAND PRIX

World Open Amateur
JUNE 27-29, 2022, PENNSYLVANIA
Event site: Philadelphia Sheraton Downtown Address: 201 North 17th St., Philadelphia, PA 19103 Overall prize fund: \$5,000 GP Points: n/a FIDE Rated: Y Handicap accessible: Y Residency restriction: N Organizer: Continental Chess Association Email: director@chess.us Phone: 3472012269, leave message including email address Website: <http://www.chessevents.us> TLA ID: 32170

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

50th annual World Open
JUNE 29-JULY 4, 2022, PENNSYLVANIA
Event site: Philadelphia Sheraton Downtown Address: 201 North 17th St., Philadelphia, PA 19103 Overall prize fund: \$225,000 GP Points: 300 FIDE Rated: Y Handicap accessible: Y Residency restriction: N Organizer: Continental Chess Association Email: director@chess.us Phone: 3472012269, leave message including email address Website: <http://www.chessevents.us> TLA ID: 32104

Online

Southwest Action

FEBRUARY 12, 2022
Event site: Internet Chess Club Address: playccca.com Overall prize fund: \$3,000 GP Points: n/a FIDE Rated: N Handicap accessible: N Residency restriction: N Organizer: Continental Chess Association Email: events@chessclub.com Phone: 3472012269, leave message including email address Website: <http://www.chessevents.us> TLA ID: 32173

2nd annual CCA February Open

FEBRUARY 26, 2022
Event site: Internet Chess Club Address: playccca.com Overall prize fund: \$2,000 GP Points: n/a FIDE Rated: N Handicap accessible: N Residency restriction: N Organizer: Continental Chess Association Email: events@chessclub.com Phone: 4124365558 Website: <http://www.chessevents.us> TLA ID: 32413

4th annual Western Action

FEBRUARY 27, 2022
Event site: Internet Chess Club Address: playccca.com Overall prize fund: \$3,000 GP Points: n/a FIDE Rated: N Handicap accessible: N Residency restriction: N Organizer: Continental Chess Association Email: director@chess.us Phone: 4124365558 Website: <http://www.chessevents.us> TLA ID: 32414

Regional

ALABAMA

DECEMBER 31, 2021-ONGOING ON SUNDAY, THURSDAY, AND SATURDAY
Weekly and Monthly Rated Chess at Memphis Chess Club (TN)
See Tennessee.

FEBRUARY 4-6, 2022
2022 U.S. Amateur Team Championship - South (FL)
See National Events or www.bocachess.com.

FEBRUARY 26, 2022
Tom Nard Memorial VIII
Event site: Evangel Church Address: 3975 Vaughn Rd., Montgomery, AL 36106 Overall prize fund: \$1,250 b/12; 70% gtd. GP Points: n/a FIDE Rated: N Handicap accessible: Y Residency restriction: N Organizer: Doug Strout Email: evangelchess@yahoo.com Phone: 3343963491 Website: <http://www.facebook.com/evangelchessclub> TLA ID: 32067

FEBRUARY 26, 2022

Free Tournament at Memphis Douglas Community Center (TN)
See Tennessee.

MARCH 17-19, 2022

19th annual Southern Class Championships (FL)
See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

ARIZONA

JUNE 8-9, 2022
2022 U.S. Women's Open (NV)
See National Events.

ARKANSAS

DECEMBER 31, 2021-ONGOING ON SUNDAY, THURSDAY, AND SATURDAY
Weekly and Monthly Rated Chess at Memphis Chess Club (TN)
See Tennessee.

FEBRUARY 4-6, 2022

2022 U.S. Amateur Team Championship - South (FL)
See National Events or www.bocachess.com.

FEBRUARY 26, 2022

Free Tournament at Memphis Douglas Community Center (TN)
See Tennessee.

CALIFORNIA

SEPTEMBER 19, 2021-ONGOING
PCC LBX Hangar Sunday Action
Event site: LBX Hangar Building (inside and out) Address: 4150 McGowen St., Long Beach CA 90808 Overall prize fund: 80% of total entry fee GP Points: n/a FIDE Rated: N Handicap accessible: Y Residency restriction: N Organizer: John Tan Email: paramountchessclub@gmail.com Phone: 3107356871 Website: n/a TLA ID: 31701

MARCH 4-6, 2022

29th annual Western Class Championships (CA-S)
See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

MAY 26-30, 2022
31st annual Chicago Open (IL)
See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

JUNE 8-9, 2022
2022 U.S. Women's Open (NV)
See National Events.

JUNE 29-JULY 4, 2022
50th annual World Open (PA)
See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

COLORADO

JUNE 8-9, 2022
2022 U.S. Women's Open (NV)
See National Events.

CONNECTICUT

APRIL 13-17, 2022
14th annual Open at Foxwoods (CT)
See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

APRIL 16, 2022
13th annual Blitz at Foxwoods (CT)
See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

APRIL 29-MAY 1, 2022
30th annual Eastern Class Championships (CT)
See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

JUNE 29-JULY 4, 2022
50th annual World Open (PA)
See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

DELAWARE

JUNE 29-JULY 4, 2022
50th annual World Open (PA)
See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

FLORIDA

MARCH 17-19, 2022
19th annual Southern Class Championships (FL)
See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

MAY 26-30, 2022
31st annual Chicago Open (IL)
See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

JUNE 29-JULY 4, 2022
50th annual World Open (PA)
See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

GEORGIA

FEBRUARY 4-6, 2022
2022 U.S. Amateur Team Championship - South (FL)
See National Events or www.bocachess.com.

MARCH 17-19, 2022
19th annual Southern Class Championships (FL)
See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

JUNE 29-JULY 4, 2022
50th annual World Open (PA)
See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

ILLINOIS

MARCH 25-27, 2022
26th annual Mid-America Open (MO)
See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

MAY 26-30, 2022
31st annual Chicago Open (IL)
See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

JUNE 29-JULY 4, 2022
50th annual World Open (PA)
See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

INDIANA

MARCH 19, 2022
Michigantown Madness (IN)
See Grand Prix.

MARCH 25-27, 2022
26th annual Mid-America Open (MO)
See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

MAY 26-30, 2022
31st annual Chicago Open (IL)
See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

IOWA

MAY 26-30, 2022
31st annual Chicago Open (IL)
See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

KENTUCKY

DECEMBER 31, 2021-ONGOING ON SUNDAY, THURSDAY, AND SATURDAY
Weekly and Monthly Rated Chess at Memphis Chess Club (TN)
See Tennessee.

FEBRUARY 26, 2022
Free Tournament at Memphis Douglas Community Center (TN)
See Tennessee.

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

◆ 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

FEBRUARY 25-27, 2022
7th annual George Washington Open (VA) - CANCELED
See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

APRIL 13-17, 2022
14th annual Open at Foxwoods (CT)
See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

MAY 26-30, 2022
31st annual Chicago Open (IL)
See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

JUNE 24-26, 2022
16th annual Philadelphia Open (PA)
See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

JUNE 24-28, 2022
15th annual Philadelphia International (PA)
See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

JUNE 29-JULY 4, 2022
50th annual World Open (PA)
See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

◆ SOUTH CAROLINA

FEBRUARY 4-6, 2022
2022 U.S. Amateur Team Championship - South (FL)
See National Events or www.bocachess.com.

◆ TENNESSEE

DECEMBER 31, 2021-ONGOING ON SUNDAY, THURSDAY, AND SATURDAY
Weekly and Monthly Rated Chess at Memphis Chess Club
Event site: Douglas Community Center Address: 195 Madison Ave Suite 101, Memphis, TN 38108 Overall prize fund: n/a GP Points: n/a FIDE Rated: N Handicap accessible: N Residency restriction: N Organizer: Memphis Chess Club Email: info@memphischessclub.com Phone: 7318685755 Website: <https://www.memphischessclub.com> TLA ID: 32334

FEBRUARY 4-6, 2022
2022 U.S. Amateur Team Championship - South (FL)
See National Events or www.bocachess.com.

FEBRUARY 26, 2022
Free Tournament at Memphis Douglas Community Center
Event site: Douglas Community Center Address: 1616 Ash St, Memphis, TN 38108 Overall prize fund: n/a GP Points: n/a FIDE Rated: N Handicap accessible: Y Residency restriction: N Organizer: Memphis Chess Club Email: info@memphischessclub.com Phone: 7318685755 Website: <https://www.memphischessclub.com> TLA ID: 32355

MARCH 25-27, 2022
26th annual Mid-America Open (MO)
See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

◆ TEXAS

FEBRUARY 4-6, 2022
2022 U.S. Amateur Team

Championship - South (FL)
See National Events or www.bocachess.com.

FEBRUARY 12, 2022
Southwest Action
See Online Events or chessevents.us.

FEBRUARY 17-21, 2022
13th annual Southwest Class Championships (TX)
See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

MARCH 25-27, 2022
26th annual Mid-America Open (MO)
See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

MAY 26-30, 2022
31st annual Chicago Open (IL)
See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

JUNE 29-JULY 4, 2022
50th annual World Open (PA)
See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

◆ UTAH

JUNE 8-9, 2022
2022 U.S. Women's Open (NV)
See National Events.

◆ VERMONT

FEBRUARY 26, 2022
8th Queen City Tornado (NH)
See Grand Prix.

◆ VIRGINIA

FEBRUARY 25-27, 2022
7th annual George Washington Open (VA) - CANCELED
See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

APRIL 13-17, 2022
14th annual Open at Foxwoods (CT)
See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

JUNE 24-26, 2022
16th annual Philadelphia Open (PA)
See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

JUNE 24-28, 2022
15th annual Philadelphia International (PA)
See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

JUNE 29-JULY 4, 2022
World Open Amateur (PA)
See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

JUNE 29-JULY 4, 2022
50th annual World Open (PA)
See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

◆ WASHINGTON

JUNE 8-9, 2022
2022 U.S. Women's Open (NV)
See National Events.

◆ WISCONSIN

FEBRUARY 26, 2022
Waukesha Memorial (40th Annual)
Event site: Country Inn & Suites Address: 1250 South Moorland Rd, Brookfield, WI 53005 (Exit 301 AB from I-94) Overall prize fund: n/a GP Points: n/a FIDE Rated: N Handicap accessible: Y Residency restriction: N Organizer: Waukesha Chess Club Email: jnickell@wi.rr.com Phone: 262.544.6266 Website: <https://waukeshachessclub.blogspot.com> TLA ID: 32020

MAY 26-30, 2022
31st annual Chicago Open (IL)
See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

31st annual CHICAGO OPEN
May 26-30, 27-30, 28-30 or 29-30, Memorial Day weekend- see chessevents.us
8 sections, prizes \$100,000 unconditionally guaranteed!
Westin Chicago North Shore Hotel, Wheeling IL - free parking, free lectures by GM John Fedorowicz

Open section, 5/26-30: 9 rounds, 40/90, SD/30, +30.
Other sections: 5/27-30, 28-30 or 29-30: 7 rounds, 40/90, SD/30, +30 (3-day option, rds 1-2 G/60 d10; 2-day option rds 1-4 G/30 d10). All merge & play for same prizes. Unrated not allowed in U1300 through U1900.

Masks may be required. **Certification** of Covid vaccination required (may change based on pandemic status).

Open: \$10000-5000-2500-1300-1000-800-600-500-400-400, clear or tiebreak first \$300 bonus, top FIDE U2400/unr \$2000-1000. FIDE rated, GM and IM norms possible.

U2300, U2100, U1900, U1700: Each \$5000-2500-1200-800-600-500-400-300-300-300. U2300 & U2100 are FIDE rated. Unrated limit in U2100, \$1000.

U1500, U1300: Each \$4000-2000-1000-700-500-400-300-300-300-300.

U1000: \$1000-500-300-200-200-150-150-100-100-100, unrated limit \$200.

FIDE ratings used for Open, May official USCF for others. Unofficial web ratings usually used if otherwise unrated.

Post-event OTB or online rating posted 5/24/21-5/24/22 more than 30 pts over section maximum: prize limit \$1500.

Under 26 games prize limit as of May list: U1000 \$500, U1300 \$1000, U1500 \$1500, U1700 \$2000, U1900 \$2500..

Mixed Doubles: male/female combined score, any section \$2000-1000-500-400-300. See chessevents.us.

Entry fee: \$207 at chessaction.com by 3/22, \$227 by 5/25, \$250 to 2 hrs before rd 1 or at site 1 hr before. Open \$100 more if not USCF 2200/up or FIDE 2100/up. Senior 65/up \$100 less, except U1000. Online \$5 less to ICA memb. Mail or titled entry: see chessevents.us.

Under 1000 Section: \$67 at chessaction.com by 5/25, \$90 online by 2 hours before rd 1 or at site until 1 hour before.
Open titled minimum prizes: see chessevents.us..

5-day schedule (Open only): enter Thu to 6 pm, rds Thu 7 pm, Fri 12 & 7, Sat 11 & 6, Sun 11 & 6, Mon 10 & 4:30.

4-day schedule (U2300 to U1500): enter Fri to 6, rds Fri 7, Sat 11 & 6, Sun 11 & 6, Mon 10 & 4:30.

3-day schedule (U2300 to U1500): enter Sat to 10 am, rds Sat 11, 2:30 & 6, Sun 11 & 6, Mon 10 & 4:30.

2-day schedule (U2300 to U1500): enter Sun to 9 am, rds Sun 10, 12, 2, 3:45 & 6, Mon 10 & 4:30.

U1300, U1000 sections: same as U2300 to U1500 (4-day, 3-day, 2-day options), except last round Mon is 3:30 pm.
1/2-pt byes: limit 3 (2 last 4 rds); must commit before rd 3.

Hotel rates: 1-4/rm \$118, link at chessevents.us or 800-937-8461, reserve by 5/12.

USCF membership required, special rates with entry.
Bring set, board, clock if possible- none supplied. No cellphone possession during play (in bag near table OK)
\$2500 guaranteed blitz tournament, Sunday 10:45 pm.

\$100,000 GUARANTEED PRIZE FUND

NATIONAL OPEN

JUNE 24-28 (OPEN ONLY), 25-28, 26-28, OR 27-28



Now 7 Rounds (Open 9)
8 Sections • Top 3 FIDE Rated

40/90, SD/30, + increment 30

3-day rounds 1-2 G/60 +10 • 2-day rounds 1-4 G/30 +5

Open Section 9 Rounds in 5 days with FIDE Norms Possible

Mixed Doubles Prizes for Best Male/Female Combined Scores

Beginners Section with 3 Schedules of 6 Rounds Each Day at G/30 +5

Winner is a US Chess National Champion and receives a replica of the Edmondson Cup

\$3,500 GUARANTEED PRIZE FUND

U.S. WOMEN'S OPEN

WEDNESDAY & THURSDAY JUNE 24-25

5 Round Swiss • US Chess & FIDE Rated

Game/90, + increment 30

Winner is a US Chess National Champion and receives the Women's Cup



www.VegasChessFestival.com



INTERNATIONAL
CHESS FESTIVAL

JUNE 24-28, 2020



US CHESS
FEDERATION

9th Annual Sands Regency Reno- Larry Evans Memorial Open

A Weikel Tournament

• April 15 - 17 & April 16 & 17, 2022 •

3 DAY SCHEDULE - 2 DAY SCHEDULE

US Chess 150 GPP (Enhanced) • OPEN Section FIDE Rated

PRIZE FUND \$27,500 (b/275) Gtd. \$17,000

6 Rounds • 6 Sections • Entry Fee \$179 or less
Room Rates: \$82.45 Sun-Thu / \$139.20 Fri & Sat
Reservation Code: CHESS422

Wednesday April 13th

• GM Sergey Kudrin Clock Simul/Analysis - Only \$30 •

Thursday April 14th

• GM (TBA) - Simul - \$20 •

• FREE Lecture by IM John Donaldson •

• Blitz Tourney (G/5 d0) - \$25 (80% = Prize Fund) •

Saturday April 16th

• FREE Game / Position Analysis by IM John Donaldson •

For more info email wackyyl@aol.com

SEE TLA on page **54**

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>



US CHESS

Gold & Silver Affiliates

US CHESS would like to
recognize and thank all of our
Affiliates for their commitment
and hard work.

For a full list of Gold and Silver Affiliates and
all information on becoming a Gold or Silver
Affiliate, please visit

www.uschess.org/content/view/7905/95.



US CHESS

CORRESPONDENCE CHESS

Check out these US Chess Rated Events!

7-Player Championship Events

2022 Golden Knights (Postal) | **2022 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, 4, or 6 games against the same opponent. Selecting multiple options may facilitate faster pairings. Pairings based on ratings or players may name their own opponent. **ENTRY FEE:** \$5 per entry. **PRIZES:** None.

Two ways to enter:

- Visit us online at uschess.org
- Mail in the form below

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.

Online entry and payment by credit card is available at new.uschess.org/correspondence-chess

Name _____ USCHESSID# _____ Est. Rating _____ Phone _____

Address _____ City _____ State _____ ZIP _____ E-mail _____

- Golden Knights EF: \$25 | Palciauskas ICCF EF: \$5 | Muir ICCF Quad EF: \$10 | 2-player matches, EF: \$5 per entry, see above for options
 Electronic Knights EF: \$25 | Collins Quad EF: \$10 | Postal Match: 2 | 4 | 6 | Email Match: 2 | 4 | 6
 Check here if you do not wish to have an opponent who is incarcerated (note that this may slow down your assignment).

Make checks payable to US CHESS and mail to: US Chess Correspondence Chess, PO Box 3967, Crossville, TN 38557

Classifieds

Chess Life accepts classified advertising in these categories: Activities, For Rent, For Sale, Games, Instruction, Miscellaneous, Services, Tournaments, Wanted. Only e-mailed copy is accepted. For additional details, including rates and deadlines, visit <https://new.uschess.org/about/advertise>.

For Sale

WORLD'S FINEST CHESS SETS

*The House of Staunton produces unquestionably the finest Staunton Chess sets. *Pay-Pal and all Major

CHESSMATE® POCKET & TRAVEL SETS

Perfect chess gifts for the chess lover in your life: The finest magnetic chess sets available. HANDMADE IN THE USA 30-DAY MONEY BACK GUARANTEE! WWW.CHESSMATE.COM Phone: 425.697.4513

Credit Cards accepted. The House of Staunton, Inc.; 1021 Production Court; Suite 100; Madison, AL 35758.

*Website: www.houseofstaunton.com; phone: (256)858-8070; email: sales@houseofstaunton.com

Instruction

YOU'LL SEE REAL PROGRESS BY STUDYING WITH 3-TIME U.S. CHAMP GM LEV ALBURT!

Private lessons (incl. by mail and phone) from \$80/hr. Autographed seven-volume, self-study Comprehensive Chess Course-only \$134 postpaid! P.O. Box 534, Gracie Station, NY, NY 10028. (212) 794-8706.

Wanted

* CHESS-PLAYER SCHOLARS *

in top 10% of high school class with USCF > 2000 and SAT (math + critical reading + writing) > 2150 for possible college scholarships to UMBC. Prof. Alan Sherman, Dept. of Computer Science and Electrical Engineering, Univ. of Maryland, Baltimore County, 21250. sherman@umbc.edu.

Solutions

PAGE 11 CHESS TO ENJOY

PROBLEM 1. 41. h4+ Kh5 42. Rxf5+! gxh5 43. Qxf5+ and mates. Or 42. ... Kg4 43. f3+ Kxg3 44. Rg5+ and mates.

PROBLEM 2. 35. c6! Nxc6 36. Rxc6+, Black resigns (if 36. ... bxc6 37. Rb8 mate). **PROBLEM 3.** 27. ... Nf3+ 28. Kh1

Qa8! and ... Rd5xd1 followed by a discovered check with a knight move. **PROBLEM 4.** 24. Re8+! Kxe8 25. Qg8+ and mates, e.g., 25. ... Ke7 26. Bh4+ or 25. ... Kd7 26. Qxf7+ Kd8

27. Bh4+. **PROBLEM 5.** 33. Rg4+ Rg6 34. h6+! Kxh6 35. Rxg6+ hxg6 36. Qh3+ and now 36. ... Kg5 37. Qh4 mate or

36. ... Kg7 37. Qh8 mate. **PROBLEM 6.** 33. ... Rxb2+! 34. Kxb2 Qxa3+ 35. Kc3 Rcb+ 36. Nc4 d5 37. exd5? Bb4 mate. Or 37. Kd2 dxc4 38. Qb1 c3+ and ... c3-c2, for example.

PAGE 13 MAKE YOUR MOVE

TACTIC 1. 27. ... Rxf3! **28. Qc1** White cannot capture the rook because after 28. exf3 Nxf3+, White will run into a nasty discovered check when the knight moves. **28. ...**

Ref8 29. Qc4+ Or 29. b3 R8f7 30. Qd1 R3f6 31. Qc1 Qa6 and Black is winning. **29. ... Kh8 30. Rh5 R3f6 31. Rh4 Qd7** and **White resigned**, there was no good way for White to untangle from Black's pressure on the f-file and numerous other threats such as 32. Kg2 (32. Qc3 Nh3+ wins material) 32. ... Qf5 33. Qc1 Ne4 34. Bg1 Qg6, threatening f1 and g3. Goryachkina - Oparin, FIDE Grand Swiss (Riga) 2021. **TACTIC 2. 12. Qd2!** White prepares to get the king out of the e-file while preventing Black from capturing on e7 due to back rank mate. Note that if White retreats to a3 with the bishop, he would be losing: 12. Ba3?? Nc6! 13. Qd2 (White will not survive after 13. Nbd4 either, e.g. 13. ... Bg4! 14. f3! Nxd4 15. cxd4 Qh4+ 16. g3 Qf6 17. fxg4 Bxd4, etc.) 13. ... Bg4 14. 0-0-0 (giving up the piece to get the king to safety, whereas 14. Nbc1 Rad8 does not work for White, e.g., 15. Qc2 Bf5 16. Qa4 Qg5 17. f4 Qh4+ 18. g3 Qg4 19. Qb5 Qf3 and Black breaks decisively through) 14. ... Bxe2 15. Bxe2 Rxe2 16. Qd3 h6 17. Rd2 Rae8 with an overwhelming advantage for Black. **12. ... h6** Part of the point behind White's previous move is also revealed after 12. ... Nc6 when White has 13. Qg5, forcing a queen exchange, leaving White winning. **13. 0-0-0! Nc6 14. Nf4** and **Black resigned** as he will likely have to exchange queens to avoid further material losses, for instance, 14. Nf4 Qg4 15. Be2 Qf5 16. Bd3 Qd7 17. Bc5 Ne5 18. Bc2 and White is easily winning. Jobava - Moussard, FIDE Grand Swiss (Riga) 2021. **TACTIC 3. 34. ... Ba3!** This sacrifice draws parallels to the classic endgame pearl Topalov - Shirov, Linares 1998. The point behind the move is to remove the b2-pawn to clear the path for the c- and d-pawns to move forward together. **35. Kg2** White wants to use the king to help stop the pawns. If White captures the bishop, 35. bxa3 then 35. ... c3 leaves White in a position where the pawns cannot be stopped. Also 35. Rb1 Bxb2 36. Rxb2 c3; and 35. Ra1 Bxb2 36. Rxa7 d2 37. b6 Bd4 wins for Black. **35. ... Bxb2 36. hxg6 hxg6 37. Kf3 Bd4!** Black stops the White's king approach of the pawns. If Black does not use this measure, White gets away with a draw, for instance, 37. ... c3 38. Ke3 c2 39. Kxd3 c1=Q 40. Rxc1 Bxc1 41. Kd4 Kf7 42. Kxd5 Ke7 43. Ke4 Bb2 44. g4 Ba1 45. f5 g5 46. Kd5 Bb2 47. e6 and neither side can win. **38. Rd1 c3 39. Rxd3 c2** and **White resigned**. J. Van Foreest - Hovhannisyán, FIDE Grand Swiss (Riga) 2021. **TACTIC 4. 26. Be6!** Blocking the path of the defender on b6, forcing Black's king to fend for himself. **26. ... Kh7** Moving the king to g8 does not help either: 26. ... Kg8 27. Rg1+ (or 27. Qxh6 fxe6 28. Rg1+ Kf7 29. Rg7+ Ke8 30. Qg6+ Rf7 31. Qxf7 mate) 27. ... Kh7 28. Rg7+ Kxg7 29. Nf5+ Kf6 30. Qxh6+ Ke5 31. Re1+ with mate. **27. Bf5+** Or 27. Rf6 Nxf6 28. Bf5+ Kg7 29. Rg1+ and game over. **27. ... Kh8 28. Ne6!** The second piece goes to e6 and Black no longer has ... Kh7 available. **28. ... d4+** With the knight on d4 gone, this advance is now possible. **29. Kh2 Qd6+ 30. Kh3!** The only square that works for White **30. ... Bg2+** Desperate but necessary. **31. Qxg2 fxe6 32. Qg6!** and **Black resigned**. A possible continuation was 32. Qg6 Rxf5 33. Rxf5 Qe7 34. Rh5 Nf6 35. Rxf6+ Nh7 36. Rxf7+ Qxh7 37. Qf6+, winning the rook on d8. Gunina - Hoang Thanh Trang, FIDE Grand Swiss Women (Riga) 2021. **TACTIC 5. 24. e5!** Opening the path of the c2-bishop to hit h7. However, before it can play a role some additional precise moves need to be played. **24. ... dxe5 25. Bf5!** This is the

precision I was talking about in the previous comment. If White plays 25. Nd5?? right away, Black has the devastatingly strong 25. ... Bxf2+! 26. Qxf2 Qxf2+ 27. Kxf2 Rxc2+ and Black is winning. **25. ... Rce8** Or 25. ... Rc6 26. Nd5! and White is winning. **26. Nd5!** Black loses material because 26. ... Nxd5 is met with 27. Qxh7+ with mate to follow. **26. ... Bxf2+ 27. Qxf2 Nxd5 28. Rxd5 Qxf2+ 29. Kxf2** Black has three pawns for the piece, but the knight is poorly placed, making it really difficult for Black to stay in the game. **29. ... Nc4?!** Or 29. ... f6 30. Be4 Rc7 31. h4 and White has a decisive advantage. **30. b3 Na5** Or 30. ... Nb6 31. Rd6 and Black loses one of his pawns. **31. Bd7 Rd8 32. Nxe5 Nxb3 33. Red1 Rf8** Or 33. ... Na5 34. Bxb5 Rxd5 35. Rxd5 g6 36. Bxa6 and White is winning rather easily. **34. Nc6 Re4 35. Rb1** The knight is trapped and **Black resigned**. Navara - Sethuraman, FIDE Grand Swiss (Riga) 2021. **TACTIC 6. 27. ... Kh8!** White's threat is Nc6-e7+ and that is also the answer to 27. ... Rc8, when it wins the rook, and to 27. ... Re8 and 27. ... e3 when it allows a perpetual check after 28. Ne7+ Kh8 29. Nxc6+. But with the text move, Black prepares to play these moves without allowing the check. **28. Re7** White cannot simply play 28. Ne7 because it relinquishes control over the b8-square: 28. ... Rb8+ 29. Kc1 Bb2+ 30. Kd1 Bf6 31. Nxc6+ Kg8 32. Kc1 Bb2+ 33. Kd1 Ba3 and Black wins, in fact, White gets checkmated by force here. **28. ... Rc8!** Black's point: the knight is forced away, allowing Black access to the b-file. **29. g5!?** e3! Of course, Black cannot capture the knight right away: 29. ... Rxc6 30. Rf8 mate. **30. Rxe3** Black threatened to play ... e3-e2, winning a rook, so White had no choice. **30. ... Rxc6 31. Re8+ Kh7 32. Rf7+ Bg7 33. c3** Or 33. Re7 Rh1+ with mate to follow. **33. ... Rb6+! 34. Kc1 Rbb2 35. Re7 Rbg2!** and **White resigned**. Ganguly - Swiercz, FIDE Grand Swiss (Riga) 2021. **TACTIC 7. 23. Rxe7** White can also choose a different move order to start with: 23. Nh6+ Kh8 24. Rxe7, however, it is what follows that matters. **23. ... Qxe7 24. Nh6+ Kh8 25. Nf5** The dual threat to the queen and the mate on g7 dictates Black's answer. **25. ... Qf6 26. Be5 Qg6 27. Bxg7+ Kg8** Has Black survived? **28. Bf6** Nope! 28. Ne7+ Kxg7 29. Nxc6+ hxg6 or more convincingly 28. Qe5 which threatens mate on e7, also both win for White. **28. ... Qxg3 29. Nh6 mate** Or 29. Ne7 mate. A beautiful mate. Movsesian - L.Van Foreest, FIDE Grand Swiss (Riga) 2021. **TACTIC 8. 29. Nc6!** White threatens the queen on e5 which has to stay on the diagonal to prevent White playing Qe7-f6+ followed by Qf6-g7 mate. Black cannot capture the knight because of Qe7xf8+ with mate. But Black has a nasty looking check available: **29. ... Nd3+ 30. Kd2** If 30. cxd3 then 30. ... Rxc6+ 31. Kb1 Rfc8 is okay for Black, e.g., 32. Qxf7 Rc1+ 33. Rxc1 Rxc1+ 34. Kxc1 Qe1+ 35. Kc2 Qe2+ 36. Kc1 (but not 36. Kb3?? Qd1 mate) 36. ... Qe1+ with a draw by perpetual check. **30. ... Qxb2 31. Rd4** White can also win with 31. Nd4 Rxc2+ (or 31. ... Qc3+ 32. Ke2 Rg8 33. Qf6+ Kh7 34. Qxf7+ Kh8 35. Qf6+ Kh7 36. Qe7+ Kh8 37. h7 and Black can resign) 32. Ke3 Re2+ 33. Nxe2 and Black has no counterplay left. **31. ... Rg8 32. Qf6+ Kh7 33. Qxf7+ Kh8 34. Qf6+ Kh7 35. Qe7+ Kh8 36. h7** Just like in the previous note, Black is now lost. **36. ... Qc3+ 37. Ke2 Qxc2+ 38. Ke3** and **Black resigned**. Ponkratov - Zvjaginsev, FIDE Grand Swiss (Riga) 2021. **TACTIC 9. 24. Nf5!** Rce8 The natural response. It seems difficult

to expect the level of trouble that Black is already in, for instance, 24. ... Rxe3 25. Qxe3 (threatening Nf5-e7+) 25. ... Rf8 26. Nxe6+! gxe6 27. Qxe6 f5 28. Bb3+ and Black will get mated rather quickly. Black's best try apparently is 24. ... Bb5! when 25. Rd2! Rxe3 26. Qxe3 (threatening Nf5-e7+ as well as Nf5xh6+) 26. ... Ne5 27. Rd5! g6 (or 27. ... Qxc2 28. Qxe5 f6 29. Qg3 and Black can resign) 28. Nxe6+ Kg7 29. Nf5+! gxf5 30. Rxb5 Qc3 31. Qxc3 Rxc3 32. Bxf5 and White has an extra pawn and clearly better chances in the endgame. **25. Qc3!** White pins the e5-rook, because of the mate on g7, and the c6-bishop because of the unprotected queen on c7. **25. ... Nf6** If 25. ... Nc5 then White has 26. Rg3! Ne6 27. Rd6! Rxf5 28. Rxc6 and White is winning. **26. Rg3! Nh5** Or 26. ... g6 27. Nxe6+ Kg7 28. Nxf7! Kxf7 29. Bxg6+ Kf8 30. Bxe8 Nxe8 31. Rc1 and White is winning. **27. Rg4! Kf8** Black has no good options, e.g., 27. ... Kh8 28. Rc4 Rc5 29. Rxc5 bxc5 30. Qxc5, when White threatens Nf5-d4, hitting simultaneously loose pieces on c6 and h5. **28. Rc4!** Attacking the pinned bishop. **28. ... Rc8** Or 28. ... R5e6 29. Nd4. **29. Rd6!** White's pieces work wonderfully together to exploit Black's problems. **29. ... Re6 30. Rxe6 fxe6 31. Qa3+** and **Black resigned** because White will deliver a nasty check on either d6 or e7, depending on where Black's king goes. Sarana - Praggnanandhaa, FIDE Grand Swiss (Riga) 2021.

PAGE 49 ABCS OF CHESS

PROBLEM 1. Mating net: Black mates with 1. ... Qxf2+ 2. Qxf2 (or 2. Kh1 Qxf1 mate) 2. ... Re1 mate. **PROBLEM 2. Mating net:** Black mates in two: 1. ... Qb1+ 2. Rxb1 Nc2 mate. **PROBLEM 3. Mating net:** Black mates in two: 1. ... Rf1+ 2. Bxf1 Qxf1 mate. **PROBLEM 4. Mating net:** Black mates in two: 1. ... Qe3+ 2. Kxe3 Ng4 mate. **PROBLEM 5. Mating net:** Black mates in two: 1. ... Rf1+ 2. Kh2 g3 mate. **PROBLEM 6. Mating net:** Black mates in two: 1. ... Qxh3+ 2. gxh3 Bf3 mate.

CHESS LIFE USPS # 102-840 (ISSN 0197-260X). Volume 77 No. 2. PRINTED IN THE USA. Chess Life, formerly Chess Life & Review, is published monthly by the United States Chess Federation, 137 Obrien Dr., Crossville, TN 38557-3967. Chess Life & Review and Chess Life remain the property of USCF. Annual subscription (without membership): \$72. Periodical postage paid at Crossville, TN 38557-3967 and additional mailing offices. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Chess Life (USCF), PO Box 3967, Crossville, Tennessee 38557-3967. Entire contents ©2020 by the United States Chess Federation. All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means electronic, mechanical, photocopying, or otherwise without the prior written permission of USCF. Note: Unsolicited materials are submitted at the sender's risk and Chess Life accepts no responsibility for them. Materials will not be returned unless accompanied by appropriate postage and packaging. Address all submissions to Chess Life, PO Box 3967, Crossville, TN 38557-3967. The opinions expressed are strictly those of the contributors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the United States Chess Federation. Send all address changes to: U.S. Chess, Membership Services, PO Box 3967, Crossville, Tennessee 38557-3967. Include your USCF I.D. number and a recent mailing label if possible. This information may be e-mailed to addresschange@uschess.org. Please give us eight weeks advance notice. PUBLICATIONS MAIL AGREEMENT NO. 41473530 RETURN UNDELIVERABLE CANADIAN ADDRESSES TO EXPRESS MESSENGER INTERNATIONAL P.O. BOX 25058 LONDON BRC, ONTARIO, CANADA N6C 6A8

MY BEST MOVE

1ST LT. EIGEN WANG, USAF

2019 U.S. ARMED FORCES
CHAMPION

A

AFTER THE 2020 NATO Championship was canceled due to the COVID-19 pandemic, I was excited to play in the 2021 NATO Championship in Blankenberge,

Belgium. This tournament was an opportunity for the members of the U.S. Armed Forces chess team to return to a game we all love, and in a very competitive setting.

My first NATO Chess Championship was in 2019 in Berlin, Germany. I placed second, becoming the first American to medal in the NATO Championship. I was eager to repeat, and perhaps surpass, my accomplishment two years prior.

I began playing in chess tournaments in elementary school. I always looked forward to facing the toughest competition available. Playing chess helped me realize my desire to be the best at whatever I set my mind to. My drive to win sometimes made my growth in chess seem like a blur, as I often lost sight of the milestones I had crossed while striving for more success.

Representing the United States military in the NATO Championship was a great opportunity for me to establish a legacy for the U.S. military in this game we all love.

MORE THAN MEETS THE EYE

Eigen Wang (2216)

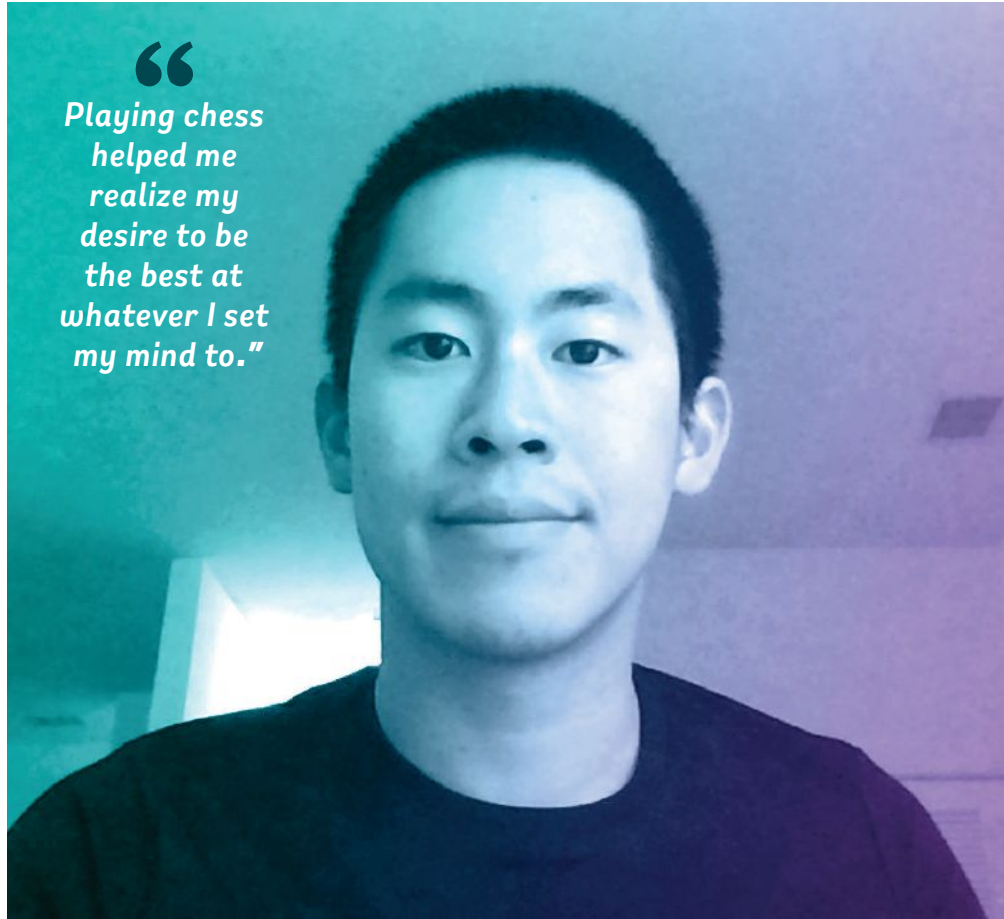
Ekaterini Pavlidou (2161)

NATO Championship (5), Belgium,
10.14.2021



WHITE TO MOVE

“
Playing chess
helped me
realize my
desire to be
the best at
whatever I set
my mind to.”



White is up a pawn, but the queenside pawns are restricted and the white pieces do not appear to have much scope, while Black seems very coordinated. Black's only apparent weakness, the pawn on d6, is pressured only by the bishop on b4.

18. f4!

This is **MY BEST MOVE!** White creates some initiative on the kingside, and the idea is not obvious at first glance. This move takes advantage of the fact that after 18. ... exf4 19. Qxf4, Black loses the Exchange because of Bb4xd6.

18. ... e4

Black closes the f-file, eliminating possible ideas like 18. ... Bg6 19. fxe5 Nxe5 20. Rxf6. However, the closing of the center ensures that White can launch a kingside attack while Black is without counterplay.

19. g4!

The position has transformed. White went from converting a difficult extra pawn to storming the enemy king.

19. ... Bg6 20. Kh1 Qb6 21. Qg3 Nc5 22. Bc3 Nfd7 23. f5 Bh7 24. g5 hxg5 25. Qxg5 f6 26. Qh5 Rf7 27. Rf4 Re8 28. Rh4 Nf8 29. Rg1 Ree7 30. Qh6 Nd3 31. Bxd3 exd3 32. Bxf6 Qxe3 33. Bxg7 Qxg1+ 34. Kxg1 Rxf7+ 35. Kf1 Ref7 36. Rh5 and Black resigned later in time trouble.

Unfortunately, I scored below my goal, finishing 14th overall in the individual standings. The U.S. team finished fifth, which was admirable given the competition. We were happy to represent our country as a team in this annual tournament.

My co-workers are supportive of me playing on the U.S. Armed Forces team, which means a great deal to me. I received a warm welcome home back at work, consisting of a poster signed by several co-workers and balloons covering my desk. ♡

You can read archival copies of "My Best Move" on [uschess.org](https://www.uschess.org), click on "Chess Life Magazine," and then "Archives."

PHOTO: COURTESY OF SUBJECT



US CHESS
FEDERATION SALES

The United States' Largest Chess Specialty Retailer

888.51.CHESS (512.4377) ★

www.USCFSales.com

SQUARE OFF PRO CHESS COMPUTER

**WORLD'S FIRST EVER
ROLLABLE E-CHESSBOARD**

Requires a Smart Phone to use



**BACK
IN
STOCK**

Introducing the world's first ever rollable electronic chess board! A smart chess board that is not only AI enabled and globally connected, but is completely rollable, making it the perfect travel chess set. It even comes with interactive, embedded lights to further enhance your experience on the board. With one-tap smartphone connectivity, you can play against the built-in highly adaptive AI or against players from across the world (Internet Connection Required). This tournament-sized (2.0" Squares) is ideal for chess students and professionals alike! Estimated Performance Rating is 3300 ELO.

What's in the box:

- E-Chessboard with Magnetic sensors
- Embedded Interactive Lights
- 34 Weighted Chess pieces
- Integrated rechargeable battery
- USB-C charging cable



CPU-SO-004
\$269.95



SQUARE OFF GRAND KINGDOM



It is a handcrafted chessboard with rosewood finish, powered by robotics and artificial intelligence. It is the most evolved and connected chess experience ever.

It allows you to play chess with anyone across the globe on a real board while the opponent's pieces move automatically. You can also play chess against the board's AI which has 20 difficulty levels. Square Off boards also allow you to play chess with players on Chess.com and Lichess.

The Grand Kingdom Sets come with an exclusive Live Streaming feature. You can stream live matches on the board as the pieces move automatically.



CPU-SO-002
\$549.95



Free Ground Shipping On All Orders Over \$100.00
Excludes Clearance, Shopworn and Items Otherwise Marked

NATIONAL OPEN U.S. WOMEN'S OPEN



US CHESS
FEDERATION



JUNE 8 – 12, 2022

INTERNATIONAL CHESS FESTIVAL



NATIONAL OPEN

JUNE 8–12, 9–12, 10–12, OR 11–12

\$100,000 GUARANTEED PRIZE FUND

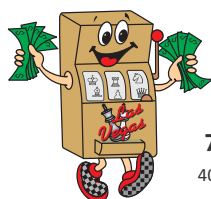
7 Rounds (Open 9) ◦ 8 Sections ◦ Top 3 FIDE Rated

40/90, SD/30 +30 ◦ 3-day rounds 1–2 G/60 +10 ◦ 2-day rounds 1–4 G/30 +5

Beginners Section with 3 Schedules of 6 Rounds Each Day

Open Section 9 Rounds in 5 days with **FIDE Norms Possible**

Winner is a US Chess National Champion and receives a replica of the Edmondson Cup



U.S. WOMEN'S OPEN

WEDNESDAY & THURSDAY JUNE 8–9

\$3,500 GUARANTEED PRIZE FUND

5 Round Swiss ◦ FIDE Rated ◦ G/90 +30

Winner is a US Chess National Champion and receives the Women's Open Cup



WALTER BROWNE MEMORIAL NATIONAL OPEN BLITZ CHAMPIONSHIP

SUNDAY JUNE 12 AT 10:30 P.M.

\$3,600 GUARANTEED PRIZE FUND

6 Double Round Swiss ◦ G/3 +2

US Chess & FIDE Blitz Rated

Winner receives a replica of the Walter Shawn Browne Cup

INTERNATIONAL YOUTH CHAMPIONSHIP

JUNE 11–12

6 Round Swiss ◦ 4 Sections by Age and Rating

Dozens of Individual & Team Trophies

Chess Merchandise Prizes Awarded in Each Section



www.VegasChessFestival.com



Grandmaster Simuls

OPEN TO ALL

THURSDAY 3:00 P.M.

OPEN TO AGE 14 & UNDER

SATURDAY 7:00 P.M.

Grandmaster Chess Camp

FOR ALL AGES

THURSDAY 10 A.M. – 6:00 P.M.

BLITZ & ACTION TOURNAMENTS

ACTION QUADS

THURSDAY 2:00 P.M.

YOUTH BLITZ (AGE 14 & UNDER)

FRIDAY 6:30 P.M.

8 PLAYER BLITZ SECTIONALS

FRIDAY MIDNIGHT

10-12 PLAYER BLITZ SECTIONALS

SATURDAY 10:30 P.M.

Free Lectures & Analysis

THURSDAY – SUNDAY

Youth Side Events (age 14 & under)

TROPHY TOURNAMENT

FRIDAY 10:00 A.M.

YOUTH BLITZ

FRIDAY 6:30 P.M.

PUZZLE SOLVING COMPETITION

SATURDAY 6:00 P.M.

YOUTH SIMUL

SATURDAY 7:00 P.M.

Poker Tournament

NO LIMIT HOLD'EM

MONDAY 11:00 A.M.



WESTGATE
LAS VEGAS

A short walk from The Strip with a convenient **on-site monorail station** for easy access to the rest of The Strip. Call 800-732-7117 and use group code **SVCF2R** for the lowest rates or reserve online at VegasChessFestival.com/hotel.

Win Free Hotel Stay During Chess Festival - reserve your room early for a chance to win your stay for free. Earlier reservations have more chances to win!

Safety protocols or government regulations may require us to restrict spectators, limit attendance, or cancel some side events. Check our website for the latest information.