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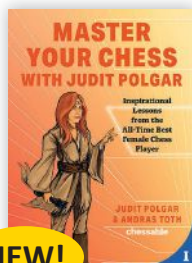


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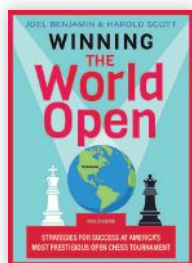
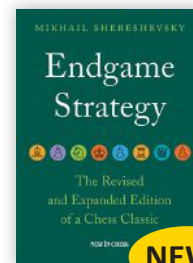


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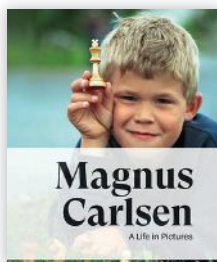


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In this new book, GM Joel Benjamin and Harold Scott present the history of the World Open, from its humble beginnings to the juggernaut it has become today. There are many entertaining stories and scandals that the reader will enjoy. *Winning the World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

A Compact (but Complete) Black Repertoire for Club Players against 1.d4
Michael Prusikin

The Queen's Gambit is easily the most talked-about chess opening since the Netflix series of the same name became a hit. This book explains the ideas and structures of this classic opening for Black and covers every single variation of the Queen's Gambit Declined. Highly accessible for club players!

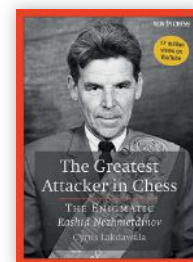


Magnus Carlsen: A Life in Pictures
Jonathan Tisdall

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.

The Greatest Attacker in Chess!
Cyrus Lakdawala

Rashid Nezhmetdinov (1912-1974) played fearless attacking chess. His games, full of tactical pyrotechnics, are his legacy and have reached an ever-growing audience on YouTube with more than 17 million views! In this book, Cyrus Lakdawala shows in more than one hundred impressive and instructive games and positions how Nezhmetdinov bluffed and sacrificed, and how he kept his cool to out-calculate his opponents.

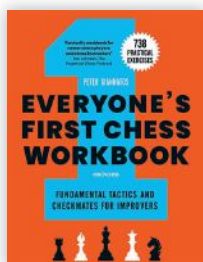
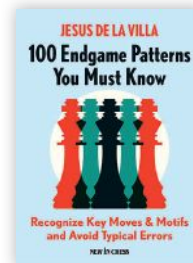


Explains how an Engine can Help Your Chess
Matthew Sadler

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!

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.



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

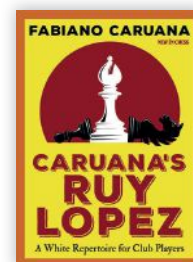
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GM Glenn Flear, Yearbook 141



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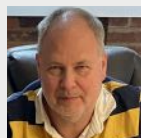


JOHN HARTMANN
(Cover Story, OutFoxxed) is the editor of *Chess Life* and *Chess Life Online*. He was named the 2020 and 2021 Chess Journalist of the Year by the Chess Journalists of America. Away from the keyboard, John is a husband, a father, a coffee snob, a Yankees fan, a Cardiff City Bluebirds supporter, and an occasional presenter for GM Jacob

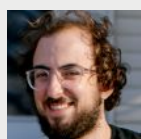
Aagaard's Killer Chess Academy. His next tournament, which will be in the books by the time you read these words, is the ALTO (All Over Twenty One) event at the Charlotte Chess Center and Scholastic Academy. He hopes to play reasonably well. You can find him on Twitter at [@hartmannchess](#).



ALEX KING
(Tarrasch Defense) is a national master, two-time Tennessee state champion, and frequent author for US Chess publications. He teaches chess in Memphis and plays piano in his spare time. For more on Alex, check out his appearance (Episode 97) on Ben Johnson's "Perpetual Chess Podcast."



FM DOUG ECKERT
(Openings for Seniors) was the 1983 and 1984 U.S. Junior Open champion and achieved his FIDE Master title in 1986. Doug also is an international master in correspondence chess and a five-time Missouri State Open champion. Now retired after a long career as a certified public accountant, Eckert has returned to active tournament play as he hunts for his over-the-board international master title.



J.J. LANG
(Amateur Team North) is a graduate student in philosophy and a chess teacher based in Lincoln, Nebraska. Active on chess Twitter, he streams on Twitch as [@chessfeels](#) and tweets under the same moniker. Check out his (with co-host Julia Rios) new "chessfeels" podcast, now available at your favorite source for such things.

ON THE COVER

Our cover, featuring GMs Abhimanyu Mishra (left) and Sam Sevian (right), shows both players at a key moment in their respective careers. Sevian, already one of America's top players, notched a key tournament win in the Spring Classic, while Mishra silenced some doubters with his dominant performance.

PHOTOGRAPH BY CRYSTAL FULLER



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WONDERING WHERE TO FIND US?

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



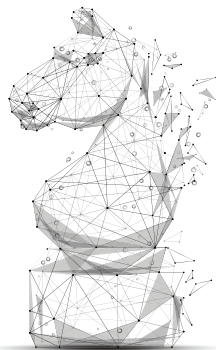
CHESS LIFE ONLINE (CLO) is our news page. Here you'll find the latest information about US Chess events, tournaments both large and small, and features like Wednesday Workouts and our award-winning series of podcasts. uschess.org/news

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

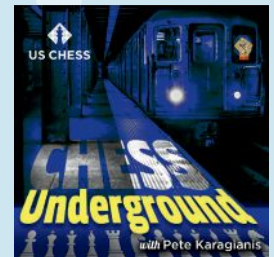
have you swing by and follow us. This is where we plan to share updates on our progress and development as a non-profit, as well as the accomplishments we're most proud of as we go along. linkedin.com/uschess



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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.

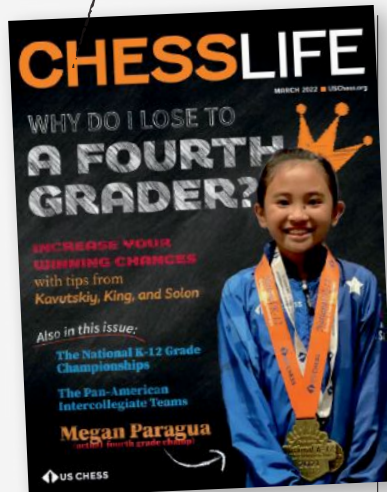
Did you know that there's a new podcast every week from US Chess?

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

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FROM  US CHESS

ILLUSTRATION: SHUTTERSTOCK

Time marching on...



Rea Hayes

Dear Editor:
I just got the March issue, and I just wanted to tell you how touched I was by your piece about Rea Hayes. I am sure I won't be the only one to write to you about it. (I am a historian by training, so I know firsthand the joy of discovering archives like the one you found, but it is a rare gift to be able to write about it so accessibly and movingly.)

May we all do what we can, in the time we have – for our work, for our communities, and for our families.

Jeff Reger
Via email

Instruction!

I was so pleased to find FOUR instruction articles in the March 2022 issue of *Chess Life*!

Ever since we “lost” the instructional articles by GM Lev Alburt, there has been a void for those of us who would like to see more than the one excellent “Solitaire Chess” article by [Bruce] Pandolfini.

I hope this signals inclusion

of more instructional articles in the future, especially those that are useful for those of us at the club level.

Matt Keefe
Via email

John Hartmann responds:

I think it's safe to say that we're trying to bring more of this to the magazine, and that those who share your desires will be pleased by what you see in the months to come. Perhaps even in this issue...

The Bricks

Congratulations on US Chess' move to the vibrant chess community in St. Louis. As a contributor to the “engraved bricks” of the Crossville location, I'm wondering if those will be transplanted to the new home.

Bill Evans
Via email

John Hartmann responds:

As I understand it, the office in Crossville has inquired with local experts on this, and removing the bricks will likely result in many of them breaking. And as we do not yet know where we will be located in St. Louis, it's not clear that we'd have a place to transplant them.

We are, however, trying to figure out a way to honor the donors, as well as the intent behind their donations. Stay tuned.

Our bad...

We managed to forget to note the photographers for our February and March covers.

So, for the record, our February 2022 cover photo was provided courtesy of FIDE and Niki Riga. Our March 2022 cover

photo is by Ana Vivas, with a creative assist from Natasha Roberts. Thanks to all involved for some excellent work!

Welcome Laird!

A hearty hello to Laird Davis, who has joined US Chess as a Member Services Associate.

Laird has been engaged with gaming communities his entire adult life. He appreciates how love for the game can bring people together and looks forward to helping that community

grow. The 2009 Missouri State Champion in cursive handwriting, he enjoys reading, traveling, and playing a variety of tabletop games in his downtime.



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Postcards from the INSIDE

Correspondence chess,
in and out of prison

BY LARRY COX



WHEN THE CORRESPONDENCE Chess Working Group (CCWG) was meeting and evaluating ways to improve US Chess' Correspondence Chess program, one of the topics that came up was how

to improve the pairing of tournament sections, particularly for those incarcerated.

As it stands now, inmates cannot be paired against one another in correspondence tournaments because mail between prisons is not permitted. While we're still working on a solution to that problem, the discussion brought up a question many of us had considered through the years.

To wit: what is it like for correspondence chess players who are incarcerated? What extra hurdles do they face in playing our royal game? So I reached out to Vincent Robledo, who started playing postal chess while incarcerated, and whom I was paired with in a recent event.

Vincent did more than simply answer our questions. He also gave us valuable insights into a number of things we hadn't considered.

In what follows, I've included the results of my interview with Vincent. Some of his answers are paraphrased, and some are direct quotes.

CHESS LIFE: How did you get started playing chess?

VINCENT ROBLEDO: I had a teacher introduce me to the game during a summer recreation event — nothing too complicated, just how the pieces move and basic “death on f2-f7” strategy. Then I got sentenced to four years in prison when I was 16 years old. While I was incarcerated, they sold cheap chess sets in the inmate store. I became obsessed with playing after that.

Did you have access to email and/or the internet while incarcerated?

Email — yes, to a certain extent. You had to sign up for an inmate email service. They charged 25 cents an email. It also wasn't instant because it was held in a server until it was screened by the institution. But there was no internet, so no engines for analysis. Just cold hard calculation... which can be seriously flawed!

Did you have access to opening books or other references?

The library had a couple of chess books. Not every institution has an identical library selection because they rely on donations, but I was lucky enough to get a *Chess Life* magazine and got turned on to GM Jacob Aagaard because of the books they discuss.

You were allowed to purchase your own reading material if you had the money for it. I was fortunate enough to be able to afford a few *Grandmaster Repertoire* books. I focused a lot of my time on GM Boris Avrukh's 1. d4 series and GM Emanuel Berg's French Defense series. Since my release, IM Levy Rozman has convinced me to convert to 1. e4 and the Caro-Kann.

Did you have much time to study or analyze your games?

Plenty.

Could you have your own set in your cell?

Yes. You could purchase sets from the inmate store. I owned three. They were my personal property.

Did you have a roommate? Was he supportive of your hobby, or was he a distraction?

I lived in a dorm with around 30 other men. They were supportive for the most part. I studied about six hours a day. Somebody was always willing to give me a game.

Were there any restrictions on how you sent or received your moves? For instance, most of the inmates I've played use paper and envelopes. Were inmates not allowed to use postcards or were they just not available?

There were no restrictions where I was located. I sent you postcards. They sold them at the inmate store as well. And there were no restrictions on receiving moves where I was at, maybe due to [it being a] medium security [institution].

Were their time restrictions such as "lights out" where you couldn't work on your game?

Yes. It was lights out at 8 or 10 p.m. depending on which dorm you lived in. So I did a lot of mental visualizing and calculating before bed, mostly replaying my losses!

What was the hardest thing about playing postal chess while incarcerated? Did you routinely have delays in sending or getting your chess cards while inside?

All the mail was screened before we got it and before it was sent out. So when I wrote my time [on the postcard] it might have been off by a day or two. If your opponent was trying to get a win off time and not skill, they might try to use that against you. [Sometimes they also] took [the mail] to the wrong housing location. It could be rough sometimes.

Did you need money for stamps, envelopes, etc. or were they provided?

You had to either work in the institution, or have family send you some money. If you were indigent, the state gave you three free envelopes a month.

What was the easiest or best thing about chess while there?

The easiest? Playing the Danish Gambit (1. e4 e5 2. d4 exd4 3. c3 dxc3 4. Bc4) against convicts. LOL — they always want free stuff. About postal chess: the best thing was getting mail. Just getting a reminder [that] somebody out in the free world cared enough to take time to send you something... [that] really brightened my day. It made my time so much easier.

How did being able to play postal chess affect your time there?

In the most positive way. It gave me a deeper insight into the game, [and getting] the mail was a major plus. Most convicts have little or no opening repertoire, so playing with someone who has that kind of knowledge was such a big change, even if it took a week or two to get one move.

Is there anything else you want to tell folks about the experience?

Chess has inspired me to change my life for the better. If it does not help inspire whoever reads this, then I hope you find what will.

At the risk of sounding like an "After School Special," I'd like to make my own version of a public service announcement. Chris Bird, who oversaw US Chess' correspondence chess program until recently, has noted that one of the things that slows correspondence pairings is limiting one's entry to avoid being paired against incarcerated players. Most players report doing so over frustration about the slow transit of moves.

The tradeoff, as Vincent notes above, is that getting mail from the outside can make a positive difference for someone trying to change their life for the better. So, if you're on the fence when you enter correspondence events, please consider allowing your pairings to include incarcerated players.

In closing, I'd like to present a game of Vincent's showing his chess skill. This victory pushed Vincent to 5/6 in Electronic Knights Section 21EN08, qualifying him for the semi-finals.

FRENCH DEFENSE, ADVANCE VARIATION (C02)

Daniel Brenneman
Vincent Robledo
2021 Electronic Knights, 2021
Annotations by John Hartmann

1. e4 e6 2. d4 d5 3. e5 c5 4. c3 Qb6 5. Nf3 Nc6 6. Bd3 Bd7 7. Bc2

Moving off the beaten path. More popular is 7. 0-0, the venerable Milner-Barry Gambit, with the main line running 7. ... cxd4 8. cxd4 (8. Re1!? is the hot new idea in the MBG, playing for development) 8. ... Nxd4 9. Nxd4 Qxd4 10. Nc3.

7. ... cxd4 8. cxd4 Nb4

Opening the c-file and trying to grab the bishop pair.

9. Ba4? Qa6! 10. Bc2

Admitting his mistake, even at the cost of tempi.

Trading the bishops with 10. Bxd7+ Kxd7 leaves White in dire straits — the ... Nb4-d3+ threat, followed by ... Bf8-b4+, is powerful.

10. ... Nxc2+ 11. Qxc2 Rc8 12. Nc3 Bb4 13. Bd2 Bb5

Perhaps 13. ... Ne7 might be more precise.

14. Qb3 Bxc3 15. Bxc3 Ne7 16. Bb4 Bc4

Here Black missed the powerful 16. ... Bd3! with the idea of ... Rc8-c2 next.

17. Qe3 Qb5 18. Ba3 Qd7

The counterintuitive 18. ... Kd7 looks strong, connecting the rooks while also defending the e7-knight.

19. b3 Ba6 20. Ng1?



20. ... Qb5!

Suddenly the white king is in the crosshairs.

21. Ne2 Rc7 22. Bd6 Rc2!

Strong, here or on the previous move. Now Black wins material.

23. 0-0

If 23. Ng3 Nf5! is crushing.

23. ... Rxe2 24. Qg5 Nf5 25. Rac1 Rc2! 26. g4

Of course not 26. Rxc2 Qxf1 mate.

26. ... h6 27. Qf4 Nxd6 28. exd6 0-0 29. h4 Rxa2 30. h5 Qxb3 31. d7 Qh3 32. Rfe1 Bc4 33. Rxe6

One last try to save the game.

33. ... Rxf2!

Stopping all the tricks. If 33. ... fxe6? 34. Qxf8+ Kxf8 35. d8=Q+ Kf7 36. Qd7+ with a repetition.

34. Kxf2 Qh4+ 35. Kg2 fxe6 36. Qd6 Qxg4+ 37. Kh1 Qxh5+ 38. Kg1 Qg5+, White resigned. ♠

Do You Need a Superhero?

BY TOM LANGLAND

DEAR TOURNAMENT DIRECTORS: HOW many times have you been faced with a flustered player upset with your ruling and demanding an appeal of your decision, but you can't put together an appeals committee on site? Or maybe you've been unsure about how to rule on a specific situation you are facing? Don't you wish you could call on a TD Superhero to come to your rescue?

Fear not: US Chess has a team of 10 caped crusaders ready to serve. They are given the exalted title of Special Referee (SR), and they are chartered via Rule 21J in your rulebook.

On a typical weekend, these heroes of the 64 squares are disguised as your normal, everyday, mild-mannered tournament directors. They carry on the common activities of taking results, putting up pairings, and answering (for the millionth time) the start time for the next round.

Their powers did not come from toxic sludge or spider bites; no, they learned "the ways of the 7th Edition" through years of weekly club nights, children's quads, and the occasional state championship tournament.

These "rule warriors" have directed an average of almost 500 tournaments each, endured many hours of sore feet at national events, and are all certified national tournament directors. Most have even earned the exalted title of FIDE International Arbiter.

You should call on these "Guardians of the Rules" when either (a) you cannot gather your own detachment of onsite TDs to shield you as an onsite appeals committee, or (b) those defenders may not have the same impartiality and neutrality as of one of our Superheroes. In fact, your preference should be to use a Special Referee instead, just to

be sure to eliminate the scourge of bias.

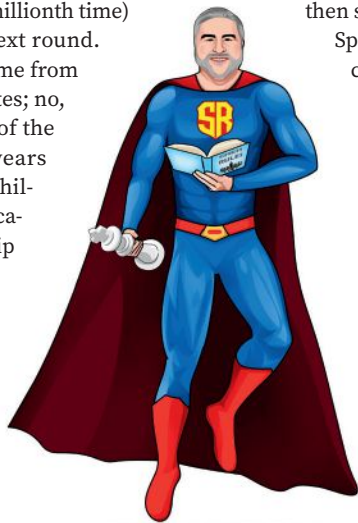
To prepare for your selected protector's arrival by phone, you should be sure all the facts of the case are agreed upon and that you can quickly summarize what the dispute is about. While the players do not necessarily get an automatic right to speak directly to the Super TD, they should be present in just case the Special Referee might need further clarification, since not all of them have the power of telepathy. The player's names should not be revealed to the SR, but simply referred to as White or Black.

Currently our heroes' names and phone numbers can only be revealed (assuming you are a tournament director yourself) by logging into your US Chess dashboard, choosing your cherished affiliate, and then selecting the top secret "List of Special Referees" control switch cleverly hidden amongst the field of ordinary buttons. (We do look forward to making the process easier and clearer on the website soon.)

While Special Referees do not have the power to override an onsite appeals committee, they may refer you to your local constables rather than utilizing their powers. An appeals committee can still defer to using an SR as they may have more experience. Note that a Special Referee (or even an appeals committee) should not be used during a blitz event as it could needlessly delay a tournament.

Besides, by decree of Rule 18 in the chapter on blitz rules, the decisions of the chief tournament director are final.

So: next time you find yourself in a spot of TD trouble, just remember that you can call upon your friendly Special Referee for aid. They are true chess sentinels who believe in Truth, Justice, and the US Chess Way!



Candidates' statements will appear in the April, May, and June issues of *Chess Life*. They are listed in a random order determined by an online random list generator during a video conference call conducted by the Executive Director and observed by an Election Committee member. Ballots with the candidates listed in the same order will be distributed to all registered voting members whose US Chess membership is current as of May 5, 2022 and expires on or after June 30, 2022. The deadline to register to vote is May 1, 2022.

To check if you are currently a registered voter, search for your name among the list of registered voters on the Link to new Registered Voters page (<https://new.uschess.org/registered-voters>). Learn more about being a voting member on this page: <https://new.uschess.org/us-chess-voter-registration>.

To register to vote or alter an existing voter status, log in to *new.uschess.org*. On your profile dashboard under your membership expiration date you will see an invitation to register to vote in the form of a button or you will see that your status is "Active" and whether you have chosen to vote by mail or online. If you would like to change your voting method, click the "Update Registration" button.

Email governance@uschess.org if you have any questions. —Mike Nietman, US Chess Election committee chair

YOUTH CATEGORY

Any Youth category member who wants the May candidates' statements may receive them on request since they do not receive the May issue of *Chess Life*. This applies only to Youth members who will be age 16 or older by June 30, 2022, since otherwise the Youth member will not be receiving a ballot. See the contact information below for Jennifer Pearson.

CALL FOR ADMS

Advance delegate motions (ADMs) for the delegates' meeting at this year's U.S. Open are due before May 23, 2022. They can be faxed to (931) 787-1200; mailed to Jennifer Pearson, c/o US Chess, P.O. Box 3967, Crossville, TN 38557; or emailed to governance@uschess.org.



CHUCK UNRUH

National volunteerism has held a valued place on the US Chess financial teams since 2004. My leadership focus has been on the longer-term financial health of US Chess during a time of extraordinary growth. The teams managing the financial growth of US Chess face challenges but the rewards to the chess community are certainly worth their dedication and time spent.

US Chess retained the original membership model and expanded the mission with the tax status change of 2014. If progress is based on net worth and new programs, US Chess continues to set records for financial performance. I am glad to serve during this time of growth and new opportunities.

Measured change means improving and upgrading the services and social benefits that US Chess brings to support the mission. US Chess continues to refurbish and upgrade information technology that streamlines access to data, on-line memberships sales, accounting, and the ability for staff to telecommute. Today, most US Chess staff provide their services from a home-based office, while membership staff continue to be office-based. The recent decision to move headquarters to St. Louis was in part enabled by the upgrade in information technology. Leadership and management are key to positive outcomes during change.

With your vote of confidence in my re-election, I will continue my financial leadership role in US Chess. Thank you for your past support and vote over the years.



MIKE HOFFPAUIR

Fellow members of US Chess and Chess Enthusiasts,

As I write this note your Delegates have just approved the sale of the U.S. Chess office in Crossville, Tennessee. To some of you I'm sure it seems (almost) like "yesterday" that we moved from New York to Tennessee. As we look back on that period, US Chess owes a lot to two groups of people involved in the decision and move to Rocky Top — those members of the Executive Board who made the courageous choice, and the good citizens of Crossville and the Volunteer State who welcomed us with open arms. While there we transitioned to, and began taking our first steps as, a 501(c)(3) non-profit educational organization. Now, with the upcoming move to St. Louis, we have tremendous opportunities to "spread our wings" and grow in ways we have, thus far, only dreamed about ... and in ways we've not yet conceived.

If I am elected to serve again, this will be my final term on the Executive Board. In the past two years I've watched two new groups of members join the board. All of them are outstanding representatives of our membership. This gives me great confidence that the US Chess Nominating Committee — with the majority of its membership appointed by your delegates — truly has the best interests of our organization and its members (all of you) in mind.

An area of governance I think we need to improve upon is the involvement of younger people. The idea is simple: it's about building for the future of chess. There are at least two ways to make that happen — to dictate it in our bylaws, or

to encourage the state chapters to bring forward those talented young members who are eager to serve as delegates. I strongly prefer the latter option.

As always, if I am elected, I will continue dedicating my energy, enthusiasm, and experience to you. I humbly ask for your vote and, especially, your ideas.

2022 Chess Journalist of America Awards

BY JOSHUA ANDERSON



THE CHESS JOURNALISTS of America once again sends out a call for nominations for the annual Chess Journalists

of America (CJA) awards. The CJA awards recognize the best in all facets of chess journalism, both print and online. The best chess articles, columns, photojournalism, layout, and online writing are honored within their respective categories. Recognized annually by their peers, the public, and members of CJA, the prestigious awards showcase American works published in English between June 1, 2021, and May 31, 2022.

CJA is a not-for-profit organization that encourages and promotes chess journalism. Membership is open to everyone at an annual membership fee of \$10. (Foreign membership is \$15 per year.) Award winners will be presented with online certificates that can be printed and will be acknowledged in CJA's newsletter, *The Chess Journalist*, as well as on the CJA website and social media.

CJA's annual awards are open to anyone. There is an entry fee of \$15 for the first entry — this includes membership or renewal to CJA — and an \$8 fee for each subsequent entry (unless otherwise noted.) State organizations may enter two entries in the Cramer Awards for free. Additional award details can be found online at chessjournalism.org. Interested parties can also contact CJA Awards Committee Chairman Joshua Anderson at joshuamiltonanderson@gmail.com.

Awards winners will be announced first at the annual CJA meeting during the U.S. Open, followed shortly by a complete listing on the CJA website.

Submissions must be made by June 18, 2022.

TOP THREE CATEGORIES

(Open to print or online)

- Chess Journalist of the Year
- Best Story of the Year
- Best Column

BEST CHESS BOOK

- Best Book - Instruction
- Best Book - Other
- Best Self-Published Book

BEST VISUAL ARTS

- Best Photojournalism Article
- Best Single Chess Photo
- Best Art
- Best Single Chess Magazine Cover
- Best Cartoon

BEST PRINT ARTICLES

(Open only to publications)

- Best Regular Newspaper Column
- Best Single Article of Local Interest
- Best Overall Magazine
- Best Feature Article
- Best Interview
- Best Tournament Report - National / International
- Best Tournament Report - State / Local
- Best Club Newsletter
- Best Instructive Lesson
- Best Review
- Best Analysis
- Best Historical Article
- Best Humorous Contribution
- Best Personal Narrative

BEST ONLINE AND SOCIAL MEDIA NEWS AND FEATURES

- Best Interview
- Best Feature Article
- Best Podcast
- Best Single Podcast Episode

- Best Tournament Report - National/International
- Best Tournament Report - State/Local
- Best News
- Best Club Newsletter
- Best Instruction Lesson
- Best Analysis
- Best Humorous Contribution
- Best Historical Article
- Best Personal Narrative
- Best Overall Chess Website
- Best Overall Website Small Organization (*website for group of less than 500*)
- Best Online Blog
- Best Educational Lesson
- Best Online Review
- Best Non-Instructive Chess Video
- Best Twitter Feed
- Best Weekly Video Program
- Best Documentary
- Best Tournament/Match Coverage
- Best Coverage by Mainstream Publication (*free entry*)
- Best Twitch Channel
- Best Instagram Feed

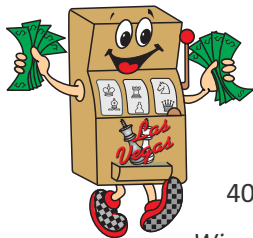
JUNIOR

(Under 20)

- Best Print Article by a Junior
- Best Online Article by a Junior
- Best Personal Narrative by a Junior

SPECIAL ACHIEVEMENT CRAMER AWARDS

- Best State Championship Report
- Best State Tournament Coverage
- Best Scholastic Coverage in State
- Best Overall State Website
- Best State Magazine/Newsletter - Print
- Best State Magazine/Newsletter - Online
- Best Personal Narrative
- Best Photograph



NATIONAL OPEN

JUNE 8-12 (OPEN ONLY), 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

Winner is a US Chess National Champion and receives a replica of the Edmondson Cup

Open Section 9 Rounds in 5 days with **FIDE Norms Possible**

Beginners Section with 3 Schedules of 6 Rounds Each Day at G/30 +5

U.S. WOMEN'S OPEN

WEDNESDAY & THURSDAY JUNE 8-9

\$3,500 GUARANTEED PRIZE FUND

5 Round Swiss ◦ G/90 +30 ◦ US Chess & FIDE Rated

Winner is a US Chess National Champion and receives the Women's Open Cup



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FEDERATION
National Championships



INTERNATIONAL CHESS FESTIVAL

JUNE 8-12, 2022

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Titled Players get Free Diamond Memberships and
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"...I'm a doctor, not a grandmaster!"

The (not-so) surprising link between chess and sci-fi

BY GM ANDY SOLTIS

J

UST BEFORE A NEW YORK Open many moons ago, I gave a simultaneous exhibition in a Manhattan hotel. As I walked around the boards to play my

1. e4s, I noticed an outlier.

Each of my 20 opponents was young except for one gray-haired guy. We exchanged nods. Was he someone I once played in a tournament?

Second time around, he played 1. ... e5. As I replied 2. Nc3, I thought, "No, not a former opponent. But definitely a face I know." Third tour. After his 2. ... Nf6 and my 3. g3 I looked again and thought, "Maybe from TV or movies. Must be an actor."

I walked on and suddenly realized, "Yes, on TV. And from a show I saw more than once."

On the fourth tour he replied 3. ... Nc6, I answered 4. Bg2. Then it struck me: I was playing "Commodore Decker," who helped the Starship Enterprise overcome "The Doomsday Machine" in the original *Star Trek* television series.

"Decker" was veteran actor William Windom. I got to know Bill, a 1500-rated player, over the years and we spoke about the remarkable affinity of chess and science fiction. Many of the giants of sci-fi were avid players, and many avid players love sci-fi.

When the Science Fiction and Fantasy Writers of America began awarding an annual honor to its greatest exponents, they chose the title "grandmaster." The first sci-fi GM, Robert Heinlein, hinted at a link between the game and the genre. "Why do you like to play chess so well?" one of the characters asks in his 1941 story, "They." The answer: "Because it is the only thing in the world where I can see all the factors and understand all the rules."

Several sci-fi GMs made chess a major theme of their stories, as James E. Gunn

did in his "Breaking Point" (available on the internet). Others relaxed with chess, like Ray Bradbury, whose marble chess and checker set was auctioned off for \$1,400 when he died.

The chess/fantasy connection helped Victor Contoski break into professional writing while he was a dangerous opponent in American Swiss tournaments.

NIMZO-INDIAN DEFENSE (E21)

IM Robert Byrne
Victor Contoski
U.S. Open (1), St. Louis, 08.08.1960



BLACK TO MOVE

In this first-round game, Contoski would be close to winning with 25. ... cxd4! 26. exd4 e3, e.g., 27. Rd3? e2 28. Re1 Qc4.

25. ... Bc6 26. Kf2 Qh3? 27. d5! Qf5?? 28. Kg3!

Sudden reversal. Byrne survived this scare and went on to win the tournament.

28. ... Bb7 29. Qxf5 gxf5 30. Kf4 Kg6 31. d6 Ba6 32. Nd5 Bd3 33. Ne7+ Kh7 34. Nxf5

Kg6 35. Rg1 Rxd6 36. Ne7+ Kh7 37. g6+ fxe6 38. Rxe6 Rf8 39. Rg7+ Kh6 40. Nf5, mate.

Contoski became a US Chess life member and later a U.S. correspondence champion. He used his chess experience to write a story, "Von Goom's Gambit." It is set in 2000, when the main character invents an unbeatable opening. He becomes U.S. champion and is headed for the world championship when the leaders of world chess find a simple refutation of the gambit — they shoot Von Goom dead.

Contoski got the story published in *Chess Review* in 1966 and it was repeatedly reprinted in sci-fi books and magazines. He was following in a chess fantasy tradition that dates back at least to 1899, when Ambrose Bierce penned a tale about a pre-computer chess automaton, "Moxon's Master." It becomes enraged when it loses, so it kills the master who invented it.

Chess+sci-fi was still a small literary niche in 1982, when Fred Saberhagen, a 1500-rated player, and his wife Joan, collected several stories, including the tales of Moxon and Van Goom, in their book *Pawn to Infinity*.

One of the other stories, "Unsound Variations," was written by George R. R. Martin, who had been trying to make ends meet as a US Chess tournament director and college English instructor. He went on to a better-paying gig as author of the book that served as the basis for the smash HBO hit *Game of Thrones*.

Another of the *Pawn to Infinity* stories came from the hyper-prolific Fritz Lieber, the only person inducted into both the Science Fiction and Fantasy Hall of Fame and the California Chess Hall of Fame. Lieber wrote several prescient chess stories, including one about a computer winning the

QUIZ FOR MAY

FOR AN OPENING CALLED the “Quiet Game” in Italian, the Giuoco Piano has been pretty noisy. It has overtaken the hoary Ruy Lopez in popularity among the world’s elite, while retaining its predominance in amateur games. This month’s quiz features the sparkling finishes of six recent Giuocos. Your task in each diagram is 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. But (spoiler alert) there is one forced checkmate and at least two other examples in which a queen can be won. For solutions, see Page 59.



PROBLEM 1

GM Amin Tabatabaei
GM Yu Yangyi



WHITE TO MOVE

PROBLEM 2

IM Anatole Vlachos
GM Glenn Flear



BLACK TO MOVE

PROBLEM 3

GM Anish Giri
GM Maxim Matlakov



WHITE TO MOVE

PROBLEM 4

Dey Shahil
FM Ferenc Gombocz



WHITE TO MOVE

PROBLEM 5

GM Mariya Muzychuk
GM Alexandra Kosteniuk



BLACK TO MOVE

PROBLEM 6

GM Alexandre Fier
GM Jergus Pechac



WHITE TO MOVE

world championship, “64 Square Madhouse.”
Here’s a game from a tournament he won.

DUTCH DEFENSE (A96)

Fritz Leiber
Andy Kempner
Santa Monica Open 1958

1. d4 f5 2. g3 Nf6 3. Bg2 e6 4. c4 Be7 5. Nc3 O-O 6. Nh3 d6 7. O-O Nbd7 8. Nf4 Nb6 9. b3 Qe8 10. e4 fxe4 11. Nxe4 c6? 12. Ng5! Bd8 13. Re1 e5 14. dxe5 dxe5 15. Ba3!



15. ... Bc7 16. Bxf8 Kxf8 17. Qc2 g6 18.

19. Qb2 Bf5 20. Qa3+ Kg7 21. Bh3! Bxh3 22. Nfxh3 Kh8 23. Rad1 h6 24. Ne4 Nh5 25. Qc1 g5 26. Qe3 Rf8 27. Nd6 Qg6 28. Qxe5+ Rf6 29. Qe8+, Black resigned.

When a computer did beat a world champion, in the GM Garry Kasparov – Deep Blue match, another US Chess member, Brad Leithauser, covered it for *The New York Times* – while promoting his chess-themed fantasy novel, *Hence*.

Many writers have wondered whether chess is played in outer space. There’s a short story titled “Interplanetary Chess Congress” in the classic Russian satire “The 12 Chairs.” But only Earth-bound chess is played.

However, John M. Faucette used chess in his sci-fi stories, including an unpublished novel, *The Tan Argus III Interstellar Chess Tournament*. In his writer’s bio, he mentioned he once placed third in a Long Island tournament.

There was chess, of the three-dimensional kind, in the original *Star Trek* TV series. GM Magnus Carlsen was offered a part in the 2013 movie *Star Trek Into Darkness* and,

according to Norwegian press accounts, agreed to play a 23rd Century chess master. But he couldn’t get a work permit in time.

Instead, Trekkies had to settle for playing with the various *Star Trek* chess sets, including a 1990 version with Spock as a bishop. Commodore Decker would probably have disapproved.

But the connection between chess and sci-fi can also be tenuous, as Isaac Asimov, another of the rock stars of sci-fi, learned. As a boy he made his own cardboard chess set. He wanted to love the game. But it infuriated him to discover that no matter how much he studied, he still lost. “I was simply the most appallingly bad chess player who ever lived,” he wrote in his last autobiography.

“I was spoiled by my ability to understand instantly, my ability to recall instantly. I expected to see things at once and I refused to accept a situation in which that was not possible.” ♡

Did you know you can read archived copies of “Chess to Enjoy?” Visit the US Chess Digital Archives at uschess.org.



Candidate Hikaru!

After his victory over GM Levon Aronian in the first leg of the 2022 FIDE Grand Prix in Berlin, and his second-place finish behind GM Wesley So in the third leg (seen above; also in Berlin), GM Hikaru Nakamura has clinched an unlikely spot in the 2022 Candidates Tournament.

The 2022 FIDE Grand Prix — see our upcoming June issue for all the details — seated two players in the Candidates on the basis of cumulative Grand Prix points. With 23 points, Nakamura won the series and will now travel to Madrid in June and compete for a shot at the world championship currently held by GM Magnus Carlsen.

Nakamura will be joined in Madrid by GM Richard Rapport, who also qualified via the Grand Prix. Other Candidates include 2021 world championship challenger GM Ian Nepomniachtchi, wildcard GM Teimour Radjabov, 2021 Grand Swiss qualifiers GMs Alireza Firouzja and Fabiano Caruana, and 2021 World Cup winner Jan-Krzysztof Duda.

GM Sergey Karjakin was also to have qualified for the Candidates via his performance at the 2021 World Cup, but his spot appears to have been forfeited after a six-month ban was handed down by the FIDE Ethics committee after his vocal and inflammatory support for Vladimir Putin and the ongoing

Russian attack on Ukraine.

Instead the final Candidates spot is now earmarked for the player with the highest rating as of the May 2022 list. That would be GM Ding Liren, but due to travel restrictions, he had not played the required 30 games in the previous year to be listed as an active player on FIDE's rating list. The Chinese Chess Association has organized three events to allow him to fulfill the requirements, and he has already completed the first of these — a “quadruple GM quad” that he won with a score of 10½/12.

Both *Chess Life* and *Chess Life Online* will have full coverage of the Candidates, with the first round scheduled for June 17.

13-year-old is Idaho Champ!

The April issue of *Northwest Chess* reports that 13-year-old Kaustubh Kodihalli (seen at right) is the 2022 Idaho state champion, finishing with a score of 5½/6 at the Closed state championship (Garden City, ID, February 19-21). This makes him the youngest-ever Idaho champion. Second place went to Josh James Price with five points.

Here's Kodihalli's favorite game from the event.

RUY LOPEZ, BREYER VARIATION (C95)

James Wei (1852)
Kaustubh Kodihalli (1843)
2022 Idaho Ch (4), Garden City,
02.20.2022

1. e4 e5 2. Nf3 Nc6 3. Bb5 a6 4. Ba4 Nf6 5. 0-0 Be7 6. Re1 b5 7. Bb3 0-0 8. h3 d6 9. c3 Nb8 10. d4 Nbd7 11. Nbd2 Bb7 12. Bc2 Re8 13. Nf1 Bf8 14. Ng3 g6 15. a4 exd4 16. cxd4 c5 17. d5 Bg7 18. Bf4 Nb6 19. axb5 axb5 20. Rxa8 Bxa8 21. Qd2 Nc4 22. Qc1 Nd7 23. b3 Nce5 24. Nxe5 Nxe5 25. Qa3 Bb7 26. Qa7 Qc7 27. Qa3



27. ... Bxd5! 28. exd5? Nf3+ 29. gxf3 Rxe1+ 30. Kg2 Ra1 31. Qxa1 Bxa1 32. Ne4 Qb7 33. Bxd6 Qxd5 34. Be7 f5 35. Ng3 Qd2, White resigned.

Putting the icing on the cake, Kodihalli also won the blitz championship with a score of



PHOTOS: WORLD CHESS/FIDE (NAKAMURA, SO), COURTESY NORTHWEST CHESS (COVER)

Right: GM Matthias Bluebaum takes top honors at the EICC, followed by GM Gabriel Sargissian and GM Ivan Saric.

11½/14. James Wei was second with 11 points, while Josh James Price took third with 10½.

Bluebaum wins Euros

The European Individual Championship is one of the most important events on the Continental calendar, and usually one of the strongest. The 2022 edition (Terme Catez, Slovenia, March 27-April 6) was no exception. With 20 seats in the 2023 FIDE World Cup up for grabs, no less than 114 grandmasters and 51 international masters were on hand to try their luck.

When the dust settled, GMs Matthias Bluebaum and Gabriel Sargissian took top honors with 8½/11, with tiebreaks nudging Bluebaum into the top spot on the cross-table. IM Momchil Petkov was the top Junior, while GM Zdenko Kozul won the top Senior prize, and WIM Govhar Beydullayeva took top Female honors.

Bluebaum scored an incredible six wins in a row on his way to victory in Terme Catez. Here are his two most interesting games.

KING'S INDIAN DEFENSE (E61)

GM Matthias Bluebaum (2642)

GM Matej Sebenik (2510)

2022 European Individual (3), Terme Catez, 03.29.2022

1. d4 Nf6 2. c4 g6 3. Nc3 Bg7 4. Nf3 0-0 5. Bg5 c5 6. d5 h6 7. Bh4 d6 8. Nd2 Qb6 9. Qc2 g5 10. Bg3 Nh5 11. e4 f5 12. Be2 Nxc3 13. hxg3 e6 14. Bd3 Qd8 15. dxe6 f4 16. gxf4 gxf4 17. e5 dxe5 18. Nf3 Nc6 19. Nh4 Rf6 20. Qe2 e4 21. Nxe4 Rxe6 22. 0-0-0 Qf8 23. Qh5 Ne5 24. Nf5 Nxd3+ 25. Rxd3 Bxb2+ 26. Kc2 Bg7 27. f3 Ra6 28. Nxc7 Kxc7 29. Qe5+ Kg8 30. Rh4 Be6 31. Nf6+, Black resigned.

GRÜNFELD DEFENSE, EXCHANGE VARIATION (D85)

GM Matthias Bluebaum (2642)

GM Velimir Ivic (2610)

2022 European Individual (5), Terme Catez, 03.31.2022

1. d4 Nf6 2. c4 g6 3. Nc3 d5 4. cxd5 Nxd5 5. e4 Nxc3 6. bxc3 Bg7 7. Nf3 c5 8. Bb5+ Nc6 9. 0-0 0-0 10. Bxc6 bxc6 11. Qc2 cxd4 12.



cx d4 Bg4 13. Ne5 Qxd4 14. Bb2 Qb6 15. Rab1 Bxe5 16. Bxe5 Qa5 17. Bc3 Qc5 18. Qb2 a5 19. Bd4 Qb4 20. Qa1 Qd6 21. Qc3 Be2 22. Rfe1 Bb5 23. a4 Bxa4 24. Bh8 f6



25. e5 Qd8 26. exf6 exf6 27. Rb7 Rf7 28. Rxf7 Kxf7 29. h4 Qd6 30. Qc4+ Kf8 31. Re6 Qd5 32. Rxf6+ Ke7 33. Qe2+ Kd7 34. Qg4+ Ke7 35. Qxa4 Rxh8 36. Rf3 Rd8 37. Qa3+ Ke6 38. Qe3+ Qe5 39. Qb3+ Qd5 40. Qc3 Qd1+ 41. Kh2 Qd4 42. Qb3+ Rd5 43. g3 Qd1 44. Qc3 Rf5 45. Qxc6+ Kf7 46. Qc7+ Kf6 47. Qb6+ Kg7 48. Rxf5 gxf5 49. Qxa5 Qf3 50. Qe5+ Kf7 51. Kg1 h5 52. Kf1 Qd1+ 53. Kg2 Qd3 54. Qf4 Qc2 55. Qf3 Kg6 56. Qd5 Kf6 57. Qd6+ Kf7 58. Qd7+ Kf6 59. Qe8 Qd1 60. Qf8+ Ke6 61. Qg8+ Ke5 62. Qg7+ Ke6 63. Qg6+ Ke7 64. Qxf5, Black resigned.

For more on the event, visit eicc2022.eu.

The Swiss Circuit

Here are Open section winners from recent Swiss events across the country!

19th Southern Class Championship (March 18-20, Orlando, FL): 1st: Andrew Titus, 4/5. 2nd-4th: FM Arvind Jayaraman, Brejesh Chakrabarti, Ryan Hamley, 3½. 203 players, seven sections.

2022 Lone Star Open Championships (March 18-20, Houston, TX): 1st-3rd: GM Arman Mikaelyan, IM Viktor Gazik, Julian Proleiko, 4½/5. 4th-6th: WGM Maili-Jade Ouellet, Arsal Gardezi, Rohit Gundam, 4. 295 players, five sections.

Massachusetts G/60 Championship (March 20, Westford, MA): 1st: IM Denys Shmelov, 4/4. 2nd: Rajesh Shanmugasundaram, 3½. 171 players, six sections.

26th Mid-America Open (March 25-27, St. Louis, MO): 1st-2nd: IMs Harshit Raja and Justus Williams, 4½/5. 3rd-7th: GMs Mikhail Antipov and Alex Fishbein, FMs Spencer Lehrman and Christopher Shen, Aditya Ponukumati, 4. 282 players, six sections.

2022 Cincinnati Open (April 1-4, Blue Ash, OH): 1st-4th: GM Bryan Smith, FMs Jason Wang and Erick Zhao, Braydon Povinelli, 4/5. 5th-7th: IM Yaacov Norowitz, David Alan Justice, James Nguyen, 3½. 228 players, four sections.

New Titles

Congratulations to these new American FIDE title holders, awarded between February 11 and April 7, 2022:

FM: Liulia Cardona, James Canty, Sharvesh Deviprasath, Alice Lee, Waldo Serrano, Rochelle Wu. NA: Douglas Dysart. ♠



One Man's



Tarrasch

The Tarrasch Defense for club players. Part 3 of 6.

BY ALEX KING



W

WELCOME BACK TO MY series on the Tarrasch Defense! In last month's installment, we covered White's "main" main line against the

Tarrasch. This month we will examine lines where White plays the move d4xc5. This can occur as early as move four, but our coverage starts at move nine:

9. dxc5

1. d4 d5 2. c4 e6 3. Nc3 c5 4. cxd5 exd5 5. Nf3 Nc6 6. g3 Nf6 7. Bg2 Be7 8. 0-0 0-0



9. dxc5

An alternative to last month's "main" main line beginning with 9. Bg5.

9. ... Bxc5 10. Bg5

The most natural developing move.

Another important option is 10. Na4 Be7 11. Be3 as recommended by GM Boris Avrukh in the first edition of his influential *Grandmaster Repertoire: 1. d4*. In my experience this line tends to lead to similar posi-

tions to the 9. Bg5 lines covered last month.



POSITION AFTER 11. Be3

Typical play continues 11. ... Re8 12. Rc1 Bg4 13. Nc5 (less effective is 13. Bc5 Bxc5 14. Nxc5 Qb6 with counterplay, while after 13. h3 Bxf3!? 14. Bxf3 Qd7 15. Bg2 Rad8 16. Nc5 Bxc5 17. Bxc5 Ne4 Black's harmonious setup held comfortably in Polugaevsky - Lein, Almaty 1969) 13. ... Bxc5 14. Bxc5 Qd7 15. Re1 Bh3 16. Bh1 Rac8!?, which is an improvement on Avrukh's main line. Black is fully equal and can hope for 17. Nd4? b6! 18. Ba3 Nxd4 19. Qxd4 Rxe2! snatching a free pawn.



POSITION AFTER 10. Bg5

10. ... d4!

A common theme we have already seen in Parts 1 and 2.

11. Bxf6

Or 11. Ne4 Be7 12. Bxf6 Bxf6 13. Rc1 (13. Nxf6+ transposes to below, while 13. b4!? Nxb4 14. Nxf6+ Qxf6 15. Qxd4 is a technical approach by White, aiming to put long-term pressure on Black's queenside majority. After the accurate 15. ... Qe7! Black is objectively fine, and I even have a plus score in online games from here as Black) 13. ... Re8 14. Ne1 Be7! when Black retained the bishop pair and went on to win a masterpiece in Nikolic - Kasparov, Niksic 1983.

11. ... Qxf6



12. Nd5!?

A positional line developed by GM Jan Timman in the late 1970s.

12. Ne4 is half as common in Mega Database, but played just as often in my own experience, probably because it is more

immediately forcing. After 12. ... Qe7 13. Nxc5 Qxc5 14. Rc1 Qb6 15. Qd2 Be6 16. b3 Rad8 17. Rfd1 Rfe8 Black has again achieved a completely harmonious development.

12. ... Qd8 13. Nd2

White has good control of the light squares but Black has various ways to remain solid:

13. ... Re8 14. Rc1 Bf8 15. Nb3 Be6 16. Nf4 Qb6 17. Bxc6 bxc6 18. Qxd4 Bxb3 19. Qxb6 axb6 20. axb3 g5 21. Nh5

This is Glimbrant – Lopez Gonzalez, Sitges 2019, and here the accurate...

21. ... Rxe2 22. Rxc6 Rxb2 23. Rxb6 Ra3
...wins back the pawn, reaching an equal endgame.

THE "SMALL STEP" a2-a3!?

Now we turn our attention to various lines where White employs the subtle move a2-a3!?, which I have termed the "Small Step" as GM Sam Shankland (author of the 2018 pawn-play treatise *Small Steps to Giant Improvement*) recommends the main line in his 2021 Chessable course on 1. d4. To simplify your preparation, I propose a consistent policy of meeting a2-a3 with ... a7-a5:

1. d4 d5 2. c4 e6 3. Nf3 c5



4. cxd5

A modified version of the "Small Step," where White postpones c4xd5, was recommended in the revised edition of GM Boris Avrukh's 1. d4 repertoire books: 4. g3 Nf6 5. Bg2 Nc6 6. 0-0 Be7 7. dxc5 Bxc5 8. a3 a5 9. Nc3 (9. cxd5 exd5 transposes to the main line below – see the note to 9. ... Ne4!?, and after 9. Qc2 d4! Black no longer has to worry about c4xd5 or Nb1-c3) 9. ... 0-0 10. Bg5 d4. Now the paths diverge.

(a) 11. Ne4 Be7 12. Nxf6+ Bxf6 (the riskier 12. ... gxf6! is also playable) 13. Bxf6 Qxf6 14. b4 axb4 15. axb4 Rxa1 16. Qxa1 Nxb4 17. Nxd4 and again Black has achieved a solid

simplification.

(b) 11. Bxf6 Qxf6 12. Ne4 Qe7 13. Nxc5 Qxc5 14. b4! is similar to the 11. Ne4 / 13. b4! line from the previous section. I recommend 14. ... axb4 15. axb4 Rxa1 16. bxc5 Rxd1 17. Rxd1 e5 with a solid position.

Note that lines with White's other "small steps" – 4. e3 and b2-b3 – will be covered in Parts 4 and 5 respectively.

4. ... exd5 5. g3 Nc6 6. Bg2 Nf6 7. 0-0 Be7 8. dxc5 Bxc5 9. a3



9. ... a5

In this specific position you may prefer to explore the alternative 9. ... Ne4! but for consistency's sake I have made 9. ... a5 the main line. But even if you prefer the knight move, you should know 9. ... a5 as well – there are some tricky move orders by White which attempt to circumvent 9. ... Ne4. (See the note to 4. cxd5 with 4. g3 / 9. cxd5 above.)

10. Bg5

The immediate 10. Qc2 gives Black more retreating flexibility: 10. ... Bb6!? 11. Bg5 d4 making it more difficult for White to play Nc3-e4 as in the main line below.

10. ... 0-0 11. Qc2!?

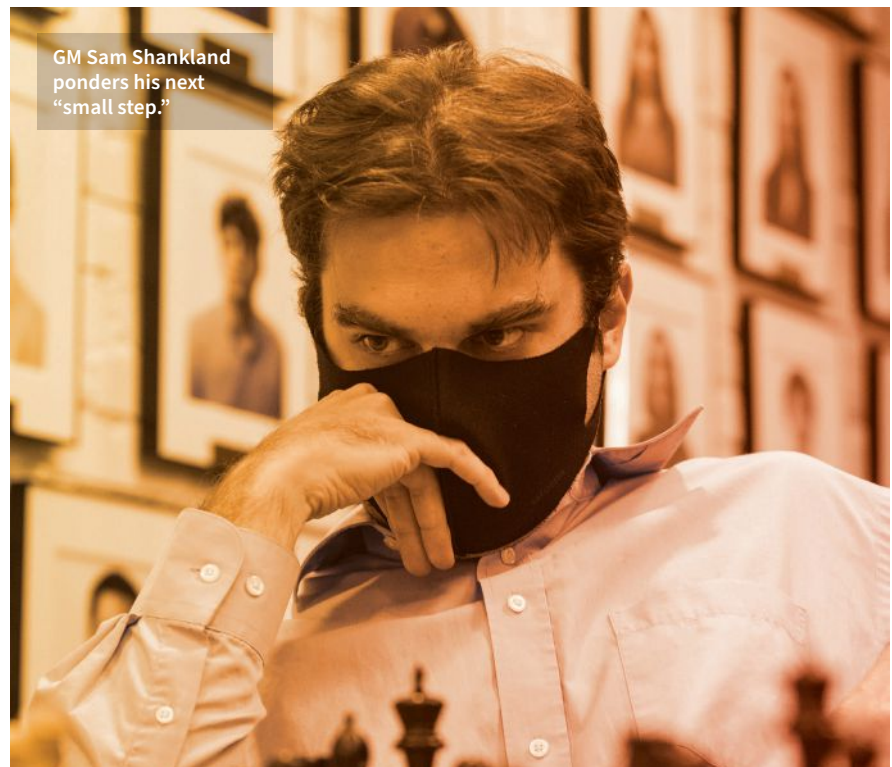
A subtle move order.

The alternative 11. Nc3 d4 leads to the same lines from the previous section with the inclusion of a2-a3 / ... a7-a5, which doesn't make much difference, e.g., 12. Bxf6 Qxf6 13. Ne4 Qe7 14. Nxc5 Qxc5 15. Rc1 Qb6 and already a draw was agreed in Romanishin – Ehlvest, Reykjavik 2010.

11. ... Be7

Now 11. ... Bb6 is less appealing due to 12. Nc3 d4 13. Ne4 preparing to compromise Black's kingside structure.

12. Nc3



Shankland describes this as “awful” for Black, but to me it looks like a relatively normal Tarrasch position, and unless your opponent is Shankland himself, I think you’ll find it perfectly playable. One possible continuation is...

12. ... h6 13. Be3

Now Black can even mix things up with...

13. ... d4!? 14. Rfd1 dxe3 15. Rxd8 exf2+ 16. Kxf2 Ng4+ 17. Ke1 Bxd8

...with dangerous practical compensation.

OTHER d4xc5 LINES

We wrap up this installment with an assortment of lines where White plays d4xc5 earlier in the move order:

1. d4 d5 2. c4 e6



3. Nc3

White can also try to postpone Nb1-c3 or even avoid it entirely: 3. Nf3 c5 4. cxd5 exd5 5. g3 Nc6 6. Bg2 Nf6 7. 0-0 Be7 8. dxc5 Bxc5 9. Qc2 (here 9. Nbd2 0-0 10. Nb3 hopes to reinforce White’s blockade on d4, but this also puts less pressure on Black’s d5-pawn: 10. ... Bb6 11. Nbd4 Re8 12. Be3 and I played the typical positional sacrifice 12. ... Rxe3!! 13. fxe3 Ng4 14. Qd3 Qe7 with strong compensation in Baker – King, Internet 2020) 9. ... Bb6 10. Nc3 0-0 11. Na4. As with many other Tarrasch lines, when White spends multiple tempi to acquire the bishop pair, we can comfortably consolidate our position.



POSITION AFTER 11. Na4

After 11. ... Re8 12. Nxb6 Qxb6 13. Bg5 we reach another novelty recommended in Avrukh’s books, one which a certain anonymous IM has repeatedly played against me in online blitz. I eventually figured out a good solution: 13. ... Ng4!? 14. h3 Nge5 15. Nxe5 Rxe5! 16. Qd2 (or 16. Bf4? Nd4! winning a pawn) 16. ... d4!? with a normal enough Tarrasch middlegame.

3. ... c5



4. cxd5

The immediate 4. cxd5 d4! forces White into an early decision: 5. Nb5 (other moves: 5. Ne4 Nf6 6. Bg5 Na6!?) is at least equal for Black, while 5. Na4!? Bd7 6. b4 is somewhat greedy, and after 6. ... Bxa4!? 7. Qxa4+ Nd7 Black has good compensation) 5. ... Bxc5 and now you should definitely note the trap 6. Bf4? (better is 6. e3 with equality) 6. ... e5! 7. Bxe5 Qa5+! winning material, since 8. Qd2 runs into 8. ... Bb4.

4. ... exd5



5. Nf3

Again 5. dxc5 is met with 5. ... d4! 6. Ne4 (now 6. Nb5?? loses immediately to 6. ... Qa5+, while 6. Na4!? b5! 7. cxb6 e.p. axb6 leaves White’s a4-knight uncomfortable) 6. ... Nc6 7. e3 (7. Nf3 transposes to the main line below) 7. ... Nf6 8. Nxf6+ Qxf6 9. exd4 Qxd4 followed by winning back the c5-pawn.

5. ... Nc6 6. dxc5

In this line White aims to acquire the bishop

pair “for nothing.” But, fond of bishops as I am, I don’t think this line is among Black’s major worries in the Tarrasch.

6. ... d4



7. Na4

Other moves: 7. Ne4 can also be met with 7. ... Bxc5 transposing to our main line. Here again 7. Nb5?? simply loses a piece to 7. ... Qa5+.

7. ... Bxc5!

A neat mini-tactic to regain the pawn.

8. Nxc5 Qa5+ 9. Bd2

The more common and dangerous line, hoping to make use of the bishop pair in the middlegame.

The alternative 9. Qd2 is less risky for both sides: 9. ... Qxc5 and now (a) 10. e3 dxe3 11. Qxe3+ Qxe3+ 12. Bxe3 Nge7 13. Bb5 0-0 14. 0-0 Be6 and a draw was soon agreed in Alekhine – Rubinstein, Hastings 1922, while after (b) 10. a3!? White prepares a pile-up on our IQP. Black should try 10. ... Nge7 11. b4 Qb6 12. Bb2 0-0! sacrificing the pawn for quick development: 13. Bxd4 (13. Nxd4 Rd8 14. e3 Nf5 wins back the pawn immediately) 13. ... Nxd4 14. Qxd4 Nc6! 15. Qb2 a5! and White suffers from backward development and an overextended queenside.

9. ... Qxc5 10. Rc1

Here 10. b4!? Nxb4 11. Rc1 can be met solidly with 11. ... Qd6 12. e3 Ne7 13. Nxd4 0-0 as in Kantor – Kopic, Budapest 2017.

10. ... Qb6 11. e3 Nf6!?

Since White is not currently threatening to win the d4-pawn.

12. Bc4 dxe3 13. Bxe3 Qb4+ 14. Bd2!?

Still avoiding a trade of queens.

14. ... Qe7+ 15. Be2 0-0 16. 0-0 Be6

White does indeed have the bishop pair “for nothing,” but Black managed to hold firm in Wojtaszek – Nisipeanu, Dortmund 2019. ♠

Openings

for



Seniors



... and adult improvers too!

BY FM DOUG ECKERT



T

WO UNDENIABLE trends have taken root in modern chess: there is the problem of information overload, which is only

increasing; and players who are stronger at a much younger age.

For most senior players, this situation is quite daunting. Facing a professionally coached youngster with a sound opening repertoire and lightning-fast accurate tactical skills feels like mission impossible. The modern training tools and online coaching available to these youngsters did not exist when we were coming up.

In this, and in the following occasional pieces in these pages, I want to try to answer some questions for us “grown” folks. Among them: Can you still improve your rating? Where do you start? How do you go about the process?

This month’s article will focus on openings. But before we begin, take a second and answer a few more questions.

- What is your objective? Is the goal to improve 100 rating points, to achieve expert or perhaps even master?
- What is your style of play?
- How much time do you have to invest?
- How much money do you have to invest?
- Should you have a professional coach?
- What tools should you be using: books, ChessBase, Chessable, or all of the above?

The first issue is determining your objective and what is realistic. If you are relatively new to chess, rapid advancement can be expected. If you have been playing for 20+ years, a goal of a 100 to 200 rating point improvement should be a realistic objective.

If you are 2000+ and want to make master, this is realistic, but the subtleties to be added to your game are much more difficult to master than when going from 1600 to 1800. Accordingly, the time requirement is also going to be much higher.

Understanding one’s style of play is very important in choosing an opening repertoire. For simplicity’s sake, I like to break players down into a couple of basic styles. Strategic players generally like pawn tension in the center, which requires subtle judgments to favorably resolve that tension. Static players generally like fixed pawn structures where the importance lies with improving the pieces.

Within each of these categories, a player can either be a positional player or a tactician. Karpov is the quintessential positional static player, while Kasparov is the quintessential strategic tactician.

What does this mean for building an opening repertoire? The more subtle the positional ideas, the higher the information requirements. With the more tactical repertoire, both the information requirement and the memorization requirement are increased. The latter, in particular, is harder as we get older.

An example of a “strategic and tactical” repertoire choice is playing the Open Sicilian for both White and Black. Black has many

choices of variations to choose from, and the knowledge required is expansive. It is hard for even professional players to keep up with the latest theory, much less memorize it.

If you are a static and tactical player, the simplest opening to play is the London System as White. In many variations, the pawn structures are stable, White gains space and simply looks to improve the placement of his pieces. Players at the highest levels are playing this opening successfully, particularly in rapid events.

The key point is that it is important to be true to yourself when choosing your repertoire. It is nearly impossible to master all styles of play. Let me offer my own example here: How have I grappled with this truth for myself?

At this point in time, most of my play consists of IM norm events, where players have time to prepare deeply. I also play some small Swisses with mostly masters, as well as the open sections of the Continental Chess events. Most of my opponents are rated in the 2200 to 2500 range.

I consider myself to be a strategic positional player — think of GM Lajos Portisch as an example of this approach to chess. I started off playing the English as White with g2-g3, along and the Najdorf and Grünfeld as Black. When I started playing players higher than 2400, the Black openings ran into all sorts of trouble. All of these players had very sharp lines prepared that required absolute precision. Therefore I switched to 1. ... e5 and the Nimzo / Ragozin complex as Black.

Both of these choices were intended to solidify my repertoire. However, the infor-

mation required to play 1. ... e5 is actually larger than the Sicilian. While the Nimzo / Ragozin is noted for its solidity, it also has many subtleties as well as a significant number of sharp lines. Recently, I have lost five games in a row with the Ragozin, which is indicative that the line may not suit my style overall. The following are a few examples from my experience with the Ragozin — the good, the bad, and the ugly.

QUEEN'S GAMBIT, RAGOZIN VARIATION (D39)

FM Dagur Ragnarsson (2400)

FM Doug Eckert (2139)

Montreal Winter (3), Montreal, 03.03.2020

1. d4 Nf6 2. c4 e6 3. Nf3 d5 4. Nc3 Bb4 5. Bg5 dxc4 6. e4 b5 7. a4 c5 8. axb5 cxd4 9. Bxf6 Qxf6 10. Qxd4



While still theory, this position is unpleasant for Black. Black is playing for a draw, and I resigned at move 37.

This was the first of five straight losses with the Ragozin for me. After reviewing my games, I decided to not play 6. ... b5 in the next event, but the more solid 5. ... h6.

QUEEN'S GAMBIT, RAGOZIN VARIATION (D38)

IM Srivatshav Rahul (2466)

FM Doug Eckert (2206)

New York Winter IM-C (2), New York, 01.14.2022

1. d4 Nf6 2. c4 e6 3. Nf3 d5 4. Nc3 Bb4 5. Bg5 h6 6. Bxf6 Qxf6 7. e3 0-0 8. Rc1 dxc4 9. Bxc4 c5 10. dxc5 Bxc5?!

Things would have been equal after the subtle 10. ... Nd7 11. c6 (or 11. 0-0 Nxc5 12.

Nb5 Rd8!?) following Anand) 11. ... bxc6. Because I was not familiar with this position, I did not understand that Black could take on the isolated pawn in this static position.

11. Qc2 Nc6 12. Ne4 Bb4+

It's equal after 12. ... Qe7.

13. Ke2 Qe7?



I understood what was coming — g2-g4 with that big juicy hook sitting on h6. Here I had a long think: do I play 13. ... Qe7 or 13. ... Qg6?

In this position I clearly remember thinking, "I couldn't have done anything that wrong yet, could I? Why risk the exposed queen on g6?" Whoops. After resigning on move 23, this was loss four of five.

13. ... Qg6! was, of course, equal.

A few rounds later, the next guy was ready for me.

Below: FM Doug Eckert in his home office near St. Louis.

7. e5 h6 8. Bd2?! Bxc3 9. bxc3 Nd5 10. Be2?!
Preferable is 10. a4 b4 although Black is better.

10. ... Nd7?! 11. 0-0?! N7b6



Strategically, the game is over. White's a2-a4 pawn break is eliminated, Black castles queenside and then builds an attack on the White king with impunity. White resigned after Black's 57th move.

Let's fast forward to 2022.

QUEEN'S GAMBIT, RAGOZIN VARIATION (D39)

WIM Gabriela Antova (2288)

FM Doug Eckert (2206)

CCCSA Holiday IM (5), Charlotte, 12.21.2021



PHOTO: COURTESY SUBJECT

QUEEN’S GAMBIT, RAGOZIN VARIATION (D38)

FM Joseph Zeltsan (2325)

FM Doug Eckert (2206)

New York Winter IM-C (8), New York, 01.17.2022

1. d4 Nf6 2. c4 e6 3. Nf3 d5 4. Nc3 Bb4 5. Bg5 h6 6. Bd2

The analogous 4. e3 0-0 5. Bd2 or 4. Bd2 are recently popular against the Nimzo-Indian. The added idea for White here is the hook on h6.

6. ... c5 7. a3 Bxc3 8. Bxc3 Ne4 9. Qc2 Nxc3 10. Qxc3 cxd4 11. Qxd4 0-0 12. e3 Nc6 13. Qc3 dxc4 14. Bxc4



Stockfish will tell you this is 0.00, and objectively, it's probably equal. However, it is very annoying to play as Black. The position is cramped, and it's definitely practically simpler to play for White. After a long battle where Black resigned before making his 78th move, this was loss number five.

My opponents in these games hit a weak point in my repertoire. They were able to obtain static positions (where I am less strong) with one-sided play, even if those positions are not theoretically better for White. In light of this knowledge, I have three choices: I can fix the repertoire, get better at static positions (this is probably necessary anyway), or change the repertoire.

Let's change topic a bit. Some of the questions listed above involve my investment (temporal and financial), the possible need for a coach, and consideration of what materials to use in my study. How do these figure into my thinking?

I do not have a full-time coach. Given my recent results, that is likely a mistake. I wasn't objective enough to avoid losing five straight games in the same opening. A coach should be able to provide objectivity, efficiency in study, and also help to round out your game. But a coach is the most expensive piece of the improvement puzzle.

Personally, I definitely need to rethink my not having a direct personal trainer if I want to improve. The demands of going it alone are very high.

What about books? For those of us that grew up on them, it is hard to give them up. But there is really no substitute for having ChessBase and a good reference database. The Week in Chess is a free site for weekly database updates, and correspondence games can be downloaded from the ICCF website with a free membership. The two best engines, Stockfish and Leela, are also free. Stockfish runs on any computer, while Leela requires a strong graphics card for optimal use. The professionals use both to generate ideas, while for the rest of us, the level of analysis provided by Stockfish is sufficient.

So, what does all this have to do with being a senior or a younger "adult improver?" There's no way around it. As we age, our memory is significantly worse than that of the younger generation. Today's youth are able to agilely shift openings to surprise their next opponents. For older adults, it is almost impossible to accomplish that. The information is simply overwhelming.

In the games above, I played the strategically oriented 5. ... dxc4 which worked well in several games. Then my opponents hit upon the correct response, preventing me from obtaining the complicated strategic positions I wanted. When I tried to nimbly move to 5. ... h6 like the younger generation, I was not able to memorize the lines or get all of the subtleties down in sufficient time. I also failed to objectively determine whether

the positions themselves were ones that I either liked or could play well.

The objective is to work out an opening repertoire that fits your style, and to understand both the strategic elements and the tactics that generally flow from those positions. That puts us in the best position to win games even against higher rated opponents.

At a minimum, the basic lines from the repertoire should be entered into ChessBase and checked with an engine. Some games from strong grandmasters should be added to the file, providing examples of how the positions are played, and how the games were won or lost.

Books can provide ideas. I particularly like books that use complete games as the basis of their recommended repertoires. It is easy to pull the games into ChessBase and analyze with an engine. Note that it is still important to pull up reference games at key junctures to see if strong players are playing alternative moves. If they are, these require further investigation.

Finally, new tools like Chessable can be very useful in forming a repertoire. I like to use it in various positions I am struggling with to see if I can figure out the moves while looking at the board. But it's not a perfect solution — the problem is that if you find a better move than what is given in the repertoire, there is no way to alter the purchased book to retain your annotations.

I hope this article has provided some useful tips regarding how to put together a repertoire. If the reader can learn from my mistakes, the pain I felt after making them will be somewhat redeemed! ♡

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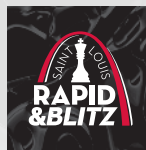
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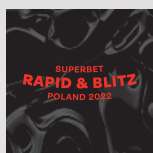
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5.4	Opening Ceremony	5.10	Rest Day
5.5	Round 1	5.11	Round 6
5.6	Round 2	5.12	Round 7
5.7	Round 3	5.13	Round 8
5.8	Round 4	5.14	Round 9
5.9	Round 5		Playoff
			Closing Ceremony



SAINT LOUIS RAPID & BLITZ, USA AUGUST 25 – 30, 2022

8.25	Opening Ceremony	8.29	Blitz Day 1
8.26	Rapid Day 1	8.30	Blitz Day 2
8.27	Rapid Day 2		Playoff
8.28	Rapid Day 3		Closing Ceremony



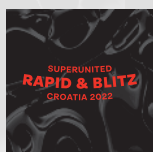
SUPERBET RAPID & BLITZ POLAND MAY 18 – 23, 2022

5.18	Opening Ceremony	5.22	Blitz Day 1
5.19	Rapid Day 1	5.23	Blitz Day 2
5.20	Rapid Day 2		Playoff
5.21	Rapid Day 3		Closing Ceremony



SINQUEFIELD CUP, SAINT LOUIS, MO, USA SEPTEMBER 1 – 13, 2022

9.1	Opening Ceremony	9.8	Round 6
9.2	Round 1	9.9	Round 7
9.3	Round 2	9.10	Round 8
9.4	Round 3	9.11	Round 9 Playoff
9.5	Round 4	9.12	GCT Playoff
9.6	Round 5		Closing Ceremony
9.7	Rest Day	9.13	Ultimate Moves Exhibition Event



SUPERUNITED RAPID & BLITZ CROATIA JULY 19 – 24, 2022

7.19	Opening Ceremony	7.23	Blitz Day 1
7.20	Rapid Day 1	7.24	Blitz Day 2
7.21	Rapid Day 2		Playoff
7.22	Rapid Day 3		Closing Ceremony



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Balancing Act

UChicago B wins the 2022 U.S. Amateur Team North.

BY J.J. LANG



OVER A BREEZY PRESIDENTS DAY WEEKEND, 332 CHESS players formed 79 teams in Schaumburg, Illinois for the 2022 U.S. Amateur Team North (USATN), the first in-person iteration since the record-breaking, pre-pandemic showing in 2020.

Considering the state of the world, this well-above-average attendance was inspiring and an encouraging reminder of the power of the chess boom we are experiencing. As always, the story of the weekend was one of vibrant tomfoolery, replete with jokey names, silly costumes, and the joy of watching several generations of chess players, from unflappable seasoned vets to fidgety first-timers, all

sharing in a special annual tradition.

The action on the boards was far from amateur hour and maybe a little less warm and fuzzy.

The main point of contention at the USATN was between local teams from the storied University of Chicago: UChicago A and UChicago B. Lettering aside, their primary distinction was their approach to their rosters.

Per USATN rules, a 4-player team's average rating must be *below 2200*. UChicago A fielded a strong and balanced team, with an impressive average rating of 2195. UChicago B employed a different strategy, fielding not one, but *two* grandmasters for their top boards, and a *FM* on board three. Now you may be saying, "Well, J.J., who could possibly be on board four to keep their average under 2200?" That would be Brian Hu, provisionally rated 812 at the start of USATN, his second-ever US Chess rated tournament.

UChicago A

FM Kapil Chandran	2445
Christoph Eichinger	2252
Dylan Sunjic	2151
Oliver Heggli-Nonay	1934

UChicago B

GM Awonder Liang	2701
GM Praveen Balakrishnan	2604
FM William Graif	2338
Brian Hu	812

PHOTO: MATT ZATKOFF

With UChicago B's rating averaging a mere 2113, these killer Bs floated like a butterfly behind a half-dozen other groups in the pre-tournament standings. It was an open question whether the imbalanced makeup of these Bs could sting against teams with four players rated above 2000.

Their strategy seemed precarious. All it would take would be one freak loss from a titled player to blow the race wide open. And it did. In the second round, team "Trix-R4Kids" came through on board three with Ekansh Mehrorta (1909) pulling a 429-point upset over Graif.

By round four, non-collegiate super team "dreamy knights," captained by Iowan masters Joseph Wan and James Neal, slowed down UChicago A thanks to wins on boards three and four by Shreya Mangalam and Aria Hoelsey.

Going into the fifth and final round, local high schoolers "GM Wannabes" were the only team with a perfect score, making them favorites to win.

Wannabes top board Nicholas Ladan was in fine form, holding off an all-in attack from fellow local Michael Auger in the fourth round.

GRÜNFELD DEFENSE, FIANCHETTO VARIATION (D79)

Nicholas Ladan (2256)

Michael Auger (2250)

2022 US Amateur Team North (4),
02.20.2022

1. d4 Nf6 2. c4 g6 3. g3 c6 4. Bg2 d5 5. Nf3 Bg7 6. 0-0 0-0 7. cxd5 cxd5 8. Nc3 Ne4 9. Ng5?!

An unnecessarily provocative move that allows Black to take control of the situation in the center.

The most common move is 9. Ne5 where after 9. ... Nxc3 10. bxc3 Nc6 11. Nxc6 bxc6 12. Qa4 Qb6 the position is equal. White's other main choice is 9. Qb3 Nc6 10. e3 Nxc3 11. Qxc3 Bf5 but there's no advantage here.

9. ... f5 10. Qb3 e6 11. Nf3

This move doubles down on White's indecisive play, although perhaps Ladan is also waiting to discover whether Auger's teammates will force him to play for more than a draw.

After 11. Ngxe4 fxe4 White can keep the possibility of dynamics alive by preparing the f2-f3 break in the future.

11. ... Nc6 12. Rd1 Na5 13. Qc2 Bd7 14. Bf4 Rc8 15. Rac1 g5!

Auger plays principled chess, viewing the closed, stable center as an opportunity to start pushing directly against White's king.

16. Be5 Bh6 17. e3 Nc4 18. Qe2 g4 19. Ne1



19. ... Nxf2!?

A difficult move to resist, but it is not the clearest path to the advantage.

I'd prefer 19. ... Nxe5! 20. dxe5 Bg7 when White would suffer from an unpleasant position after either 21. Nxe4 dxe4 or 21. Nd3 Nxc3 22. Rxc3 Rxc3 23. bxc3 Qc7 where the g2-bishop is caged and White's dark-squared pawns are vulnerable.

20. Kxf2 Bxe3+ 21. Qxe3

Worse is 21. Kf1 Qg5 22. Nd3?! Nxe5.

21. ... Nxe3 22. Kxe3 f4+ 23. gxf4 Qh4 24. Nd3!

A deceptively strong move that begins to coordinate White's pieces, demonstrating the safety of the king on the e3-square.

24. ... Qxh2 25. Rg1 Qg3+ 26. Kd2 Rxc3?!

This does not work, but Black had run out of time to coordinate pieces before White's king found safety.

27. Rxc3 Rf5 28. Rcc1 Bb5?!

Black's only chance here was 28. ... Qh2 with the threat of ... h7-h5 to follow.

29. Be4

Lucky for him, Ladan saw this in advance.

29. ... Qh2+ 30. Rg2 Qh3 31. Rh1! Kf8

32. Rxh3 gxh3 33. Rh2 dxe4 34. Nf2 Bf1

35. Nxe4 Bg2 36. Ng5 h6 37. Nxf3, Black resigned.

It was up to UChicago A to slow the Wannabes down for either UChicago team to have a chance. They needed a win to secure a shared first place, and appeared to be on track to deliver, with FM Kapil Chandran and Christoph Eichenger winning on the top two boards.

Chandran conducted a remarkable attack in an unusual Ruy Lopez Exchange where Ladan, as Black, chose to keep queens on the board but could not get his counterplay to materialize in time.

RUY LOPEZ, EXCHANGE VARIATION (C68)

FM Kapil Chandran (2445)

Nicholas Ladan (2256)

2022 US Amateur Team North (5),
02.20.2022

1. e4 e5 2. Nf3 Nc6 3. Bb5 a6 4. Bxc6 dxc6 5. 0-0 Qf6 6. d4 exd4 7. Bg5 Qe6

This move is less accurate than the standard 7. ... Qd6 as it allows White to centralize the queen, preserving hopes for an attack rather than trading into an endgame.

8. Qxd4 Bd7 9. c4

Simple development with 9. Nc3 may be preferable.

9. ... f6 10. Bf4 c5 11. Qd3 0-0-0 12. Nc3 g5 13. Bg3 Ne7 14. Rfe1



14. ... Rg8

It would be more accurate to begin with 14. ... h5! 15. Nd5 (the alternative 15. h4 g4 16. Nd2 Ng6 followed by ... Bf8-d6 would pinpoint White's weakened kingside) 15. ... Nxd5 16. cxd5 Qf7 and Black has attacking chances.

15. Nd5 Nxd5 16. cxd5 Qb6 17. Nd2

If 17. e5 f5! 18. Qc2 (18. e6? Bxe6 19. d6 Bxd6 20. Rxe6 f4!) 18. ... f4 19. e6 Be8! 20. e7 Bxe7 21. Rxe7 fxg3 22. hxg3 Bg6 the position is unclear.

17. ... h5!?

What a difference a few tempi make. With the queen further from the kingside and the white pieces closer to the queenside, this attack is too slow.

Grabbing the pawn with 17. ... Qxb2 gives White good play after 18. a4! (worse is 18.

Nc4 Qd4 19. Qxd4 cxd4 20. Rec1 Kb8 21. Rab1 and now 21. ... b5!?) 18. ... Qd4 19. Qxd4 cxd4 20. Rec1 c5 21. Nb3!

18. Nc4 Qb5



19. f3

White missed the neat shot 19. b4! (with the idea of a2-a4 on the next move) 19. ... Qxb4 (19. ... cxb4 20. a4 bxa3 e.p. 21. Rec1) 20. Reb1 Qa4 21. d6! and the attack should crash through.

19. ... h4 20. Bf2 h3 21. g4!

Wonderful prophylaxis: there is no way for Black to exploit the b8-h2 diagonal, so it is not actually a weakness.

Equally strong would have been 21. a4 Qb4 22. Reb1! Bxa4 23. b3 Be8 24. Ra5! and now Bf2-e1 wins heavy material.

21. ... Be8 22. Rec1 Bd6 23. a4 Qd7 24. b4 Bf4 25. Be3 f5 26. gxf5 Bh5 27. bxc5 Qg7 28. c6

White's attack gets there first.

28. ... Bxh2+ 29. Kxh2 g4 30. cxb7+ Kd7 31. Bf4 g3+ 32. Kg1 Bxf3 33. Qxf3 Qd4+ 34. Qe3 Qh8 35. Ne5+, Black resigned.

Eichenger likewise began with an overwhelming position shortly out of the Black side of a Closed Sicilian. After missing a few chances to clarify, he gave Gupta chances to clinch the entire event with a draw, but eventually Eichinger pushed through.

SICILIAN DEFENSE, CLOSED VARIATION (B23)

Aditya Gupta (2208)

Christoph Eichinger (2252)

2022 US Amateur Team North (5),

02.20.2022

Annotations by Christoph Eichinger

1. e4 c5 2. Nc3 e6 3. Nge2 a6 4. g3 b5 5. Bg2 Bb7 6. 0-0 Qc7 7. d3 d6 8. Be3 Nf6 9. h3 Nc6 10. a3 Be7

In the Closed Sicilian, White is typically looking to attack on the kingside, while Black seeks counterplay on the queenside and/or in the center.

11. f4 0-0 12. g4 Rfe8 13. g5 Nd7 14. Qd2 Bf8 15. h4

White should have played 15. f5 Nde5 16. Nf4 Rad8 and now a more principled continuation would be 17. Qf2 as the h4-square would still be vacant for the queen to enter the attack.

15. ... Rac8 16. Bf2 Ne7 17. Ng3 d5



18. f5?

Better was 18. e5 Nb6 19. h5 d4 20. Nce4 Nf5 when the battle over central squares should lead to dynamic equality.

18. ... d4!

This intermediate move was probably missed by my opponent. It enables Black to open the h1-a8 diagonal, which leaves the white king very vulnerable.

19. Nce2 exf5 20. exf5

To limit the damage, it might have been preferable to try 20. h5 fxe4 21. Nxe4 Nd5.

20. ... Bxg2 21. Kxg2 Qc6+ 22. Kh3 Ne5 23. Ng1?

This makes White's life even harder.

23. ... Qd7 24. Rae1 Nxf5 25. Nxf5 Qxf5+ 26. Kg2 Ng4 27. c3 Qd5+

After playing well up until here, I miss several opportunities to end the game quickly. The game continuation does not spoil anything, but I missed the very natural 27. ... Bd6 (which, frustratingly, I actually spent quite some time!) 28. Rxe8+ (or 28. Bxd4 Qd5+ 29. Kh3 Rxe1 30. Rxe1 cxd4 31. Kxg4 f5+ 32. gxf6 e.p. [32. Kh5 g6+ 33. Kh6 Bf8 mate] 32. ... h5+ 33. Kh3 Qh1+ 34. Qh2 Qxh2 mate) 28. ... Rxe8 29. Bxd4 Qd5+ 30. Kh3 cxd4 31. Kxg4. I calculated to this position, but I did not see one of the straightforward knockouts like 31. ... Re3 with mate soon to follow.

28. Nf3 Nxf2

Another way to capitalize on Black's overwhelming position would be 28. ... Ne5 29. Qe2 dxc3 30. bxc3 Re6 31. Qe4 Nxd3 32. Qxd5 Nf4+ 33. Kg3 Nxd5

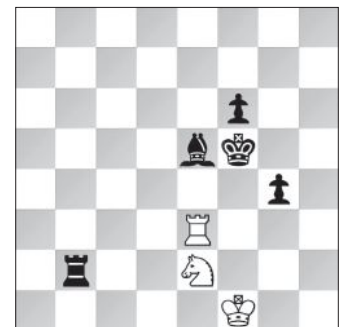
29. Kxf2 dxc3 30. bxc3 Bd6 31. c4 Qf5 32. Rg1 Bf4 33. Rxe8+ Rxe8 34. Re1 Rd8 35. Qe2 g6 36. cxb5 axb5

It would have been better to keep the queens on with 36. ... Qh3 37. Rg1 (37. bxa6 Bg3+) 37. ... axb5.

37. Qe4 Qxe4 38. Rxe4 Bd6

This endgame should be technically winning for Black, but it still requires some care. Winning another pawn immediately with 38. ... Bc1 was more precise: 39. a4 bxa4 40. Rxa4 Rxd3.

39. Re2 Ra8 40. Rb2 Rxa3 41. Rxb5 Rxd3 42. Ke2 Rd5 43. Nd2 Rd4 44. Nf3 Rb4 45. Ra5 Kg7 46. Ra6 Bg3 47. Rc6 Bxh4 48. Rxc5 Bg3 49. Ra5 h6 50. Ra7 Bf4 51. gxh6+ Bxh6 52. Kd3 Rb3+ 53. Ke2 Rb2+ 54. Kd3 Rb3+ 55. Ke2 Bf4 56. Nd4 Re3+ 57. Kf1 Re4 58. Ne2 Be5 59. Rb7 g5 60. Kf2 Kg6 61. Rb3 f6 62. Rd3 Ra4 63. Rb3 g4 64. Rd3 Kg5 65. Kg2 Ra2 66. Re3 Kf5 67. Kf1 Ra1+ 68. Kg2 Rb1 69. Kf2 Rb2 70. Kf1



70. ... Bf4

I played this move with the intention of pushing the white rook away, but completely missed White's reply. Instead, 70. ... Ra2 71. Kg2 Kg5 72. Kf1 Ra5 73. Kg2 f5 would have saved my team colleagues and me some nerves.

71. Nd4+

This move came as a cold shower. At first glance it looks like White wins the g4-pawn, thereby holding a draw. Only after internally cursing myself for a minute I realized that Black has a tactical resource to save the win.

71. ... Kg6! 72. Re4 Be5 73. Nc6

The point here is that Black has 73. Rxd4+ Kh5 74. Re4 Rb4 to bail him out!

73. ... Kf5 74. Re1 Rb5 75. Ne7+ Kg5 76. Nc6 Rc5 77. Nd8 Kf5 78. Nf7 Rd5 79. Nh6+ Kg5 80. Ng8 Rd7 81. Rc1 f5 82. Re1 Kf4 83. Kg2 Rd2+ 84. Kh1 Kg3 85. Re3+ Kf2 86. Rxe5 Rd1+ 87. Kh2 g3+ 88. Kh3 Rh1, mate.

The Wannabes did not “wanna be” rolled over, and they bounced back to salvage a draw on the bottom boards. When the dust settled, the Chicago collegians held the high schoolers to a half-point. But in doing so, cleared the way for their classmates on UChicago B to catch the Wannabes.

The final round saw UChicago B pitted against the dreamy knights. With the white pieces, Balakrishnan’s clutch victory over Neal was a one-sided affair.

QUEEN’S GAMBIT, CATALAN OPENING (E04)

GM Praveen Balakrishnan (2604)

James Neal (2207)

2022 US Amateur Team North (5),

02.20.2022

1. Nf3 d5 2. d4 e6 3. c4 Nf6 4. g3 dxc4 5. Bg2 Nc6 6. 0-0 a6 7. e3 Rb8 8. Nfd2 Bd7 9. Nxc4 b5 10. Ncd2

Up until this point, the game has been following Leko - Karpov, Moscow (blitz) 2007, when the former world champion preferred 10. ... Nb4.

10. ... Bd6 11. Nc3 0-0 12. Nde4 Nxe4 13. Nxe4 Ne7 14. Qc2 b4 15. b3 Bb5 16. Rd1 Nd5 17. Bb2 Nf6?!

Black’s position shifts from solidity into passivity almost imperceptibly. The committal 17. ... f5 18. Nc5 Qe7 would dare White to push e3-e4, creating imbalances and an open file for the black pieces to find counterplay.

18. Nc5 Qe7 19. Nd3 Nd7 20. Rac1 Rfc8 21. Nc5 Rd8 22. Nb7 Rdc8 23. Nxd6 Qxd6 24. e4

The thematic break 24. d5 was also playable immediately. After 24. ... e5 25. Be4 Nf6 26. Bf5 Rd8 White can dominate the center with 27. e4.

24. ... c6 25. Qd2 h6 26. Qe3 Re8 27. e5 Qc7 28. a4 bxa3 e.p. 29. Bxa3 Qb7 30. Be4 f5

This move was Black’s last chance of achieving counterplay on the kingside, but after...

31. exf6 e.p.

... his position is frozen.

31. ... Nxf6 32. Bg2 Qf7 33. Re1 Nd5 34.

Qd2 Rbd8 35. Re5 Rd7 36. Rce1 Nc7 37. Bc5 Kh8 38. R1e4 Qg6 39. Bf3 Qh7 40. Re1 Qd3 41. Qxd3, Black resigned.

This, along with Graif’s win over Mangalam on board three, looked like it would close the book on any dreams of Wannabe upsets, as long as Liang could hold a draw as Black.

After Liang saw his advantage drift away following a few inaccuracies, a draw appeared to be the most likely result. That is, until he pulled out one of those last-minute saves that always seem to show up for GMs, but not the rest of us.

LONDON SYSTEM (A48)

Joseph Wan (2294)

GM Awonder Liang (2701)

2022 US Amateur Team North (5),

02.20.2022

Annotations by GM Awonder Liang

1. d4 Nf6 2. Bf4 g6 3. e3 Bg7 4. Nf3 0-0 5.

Be2 c5 6. 0-0 d6 7. h3 Qb6 8. Nc3 a6?

A very strange oversight. How could I miss 8. ... Qxb2 9. Nb5 Na6 10. Rb1 Qxa2 11. Ra1 Qd5 with an advantage to Black? The answer, of course, was that it wasn’t even calculated...

9. Rb1 cxd4 10. exd4 Qc7 11. Re1?!

Better was 11. a4!

11. ... b5 12. a3 Nbd7 13. Bd3 Nb6 14. Ne4 Bb7 15. Bh2?!

It’s not clear what the bishop is doing on this diagonal.

15. ... Rfe8 16. c3 Bc6

An alternative is 16. ... Bxe4 17. Bxe4 Nxe4 18. Rxe4 e5 with the edge to Black.

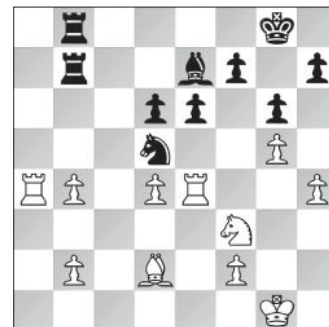
17. Qe2 Qb7 18. Nxf6+ Bxf6 19. Be4 Bxe4 20. Qxe4 Qxe4 21. Rxe4 a5 22. Rbe1 Red8 Prophylaxis against Re4xe7, but perhaps unnecessary.

I think 22. ... Rec8! was preferable, i.e., 23. Rxe7 Bxe7 24. Rxe7 Nd5 25. Rd7 b4 26. axb4 axb4 27. Bxd6 bxc3 28. bxc3 Rd8 29. Rxd8+ Rxd8 30. c4 Rxd6 31. cxd5 Rxd5. It’s hard to say if such a position is won or not, but it was probably better than the game

23. Bf4 b4 24. axb4 axb4 25. cxb4 Nd5 26. Bd2 Rab8?!

Right square, wrong rook: preferable was 26. ... Rdb8 27. g4 e6 28. g5 Be7 29. Rc1 Nxb4 with advantage.

27. g4 e6 28. g5 Be7 29. Ra1 Rd7 30. Ra4 Rdb7 31. h4



With a few inaccuracies, Black’s advantage has started to dwindle.

31. ... Kf8 32. Kf1 Nb6 33. Ra6 Nc4? 34.

Bc3 d5 35. Rf4 Ke8 36. b3 Nd6 37. Ne5

My opponent offered a draw with this move, which I declined without a thought. Only afterwards did I realize that White has Nd3-c5, when there is no reason he is worse at all.

37. ... Rc8 38. Be1 Nf5 39. Nd3 h6 40. gxh6

Here 40. Rxf5 gxf5 41. gxh6 Bxh4 42. Nc5 Rbb8 43. Ra7 would have led to a complicated position, but it’s still probably drawn. Black has to watch out for 43. ... Bg5? (43. ... Kf8 44. Nd7+ Kg8 45. Nxb8 Rxb8 is roughly equal) 44. Bd2!.

40. ... Nxh6 41. Kg2 Nf5 42. Kh3 Rc2 43.

Ra8+ Bd8 44. Ne5 Ke7 45. Nxf7 Bc7

Another path was 45. ... Kxf7 46. Rxd8 Rc1 47. Bd2 Rh1+ 48. Kg2 Rxh4 49. Rxh4 Nxh4+ 50. Kf1 Nf3 51. Ke2 Nxd4+. This, too, is probably drawn.

46. Ne5 Bxe5 47. dxe5 d4 48. Rh8 Rb5 49. Rh7+ Kf8 50. Re4

This is a very difficult position to make progress in. Just as in round three, I had a massive time advantage in a dead drawn position, and had to look for any trick to keep the game going...

50. ... Kg8?!

Other ideas: 50. ... d3 51. Rc4 Ne7 52. Rh8+ Kg7 53. Rd8 Rd5 54. Rxd5 Nxd5 55. Rxc2 dxc2 56. Bd2 would lead to a straightforward draw, while after 50. ... Rd5 51. b5! Rxb5 52. Kg4 Rxb3 53. Kg5 Black even risks something here.

51. Ra7 Kf8

Admitting to the mistake.

52. Kg4 d3 53. Kg5?!

A good move, to be sure, but impractical with one minute on the clock. White should have considered 53. Rc4 Rxc4+ 54. bxc4 Rxe5 55. Bc3 Re4+ (this was the idea of provoking

THE FAT CAT CHESS CLUB

BY AVI SCHNEIDER



▶ **OUTLANDISH COSTUMES. UNUSUAL openings.** A perplexing array of eccentric characters.

That's Fat Cat Chess in a nutshell.

Teammates flew in from Las Vegas, New Orleans, New York City, and St. Louis to represent Fat Cat Chess in the Open and U1600 sections of the U.S. Amateur Team North, winning the U1800 team prize in the Open section and taking two board prizes in the U1600.

The Fat Cat Chess Club was founded in 2019 at the Cellar Dog (then the Fat Cat) on 75 Christopher Street in New York.

Avi Schneider, seen above in full Fat Cat garb, recruited the first Fat Cat members: Andy came from the Marshall Chess Club. Simcha haunted the Chess Forum near Washington Square. Lee was found solving a chess puzzle on the subway.

With this founding squad in place, the lively atmosphere and incessant banter attracted new Cats. Growing week after week, the club began to bloom.

Until March 20, 2020, that is, when Gov-



ernor Cuomo announced his executive PAUSE order for New York in response to the rapidly spreading COVID-19 pandemic.

Stuck at home, we craved entertainment and stimulation. So the Fat Cat Chess Club moved online, and on Sunday, March 29 — just nine days after lockdown began — the first Fat Cat Arena was held on *lichess.org*.

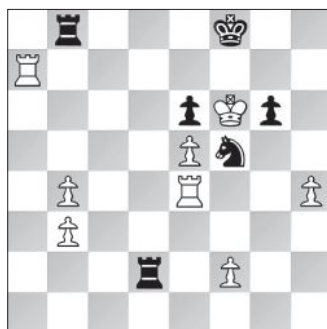
The online club thrived. By September 2020 Chicago blitz legend and reigning King Kat Tom Murphy was a regular competitor in our tournaments.

Bound by their love for chess, their strong camaraderie, and a post-vaccine lust for adventure, the Fat Cats made their way to Schaumburg, proving once more the power of chess to bring people together.

Visit fatcatcchess.org to join in the fun!

Kh3-g4, but in truth it's not very impressive) 56. Kg5 Rxc4 57. Bf6 and a perpetual is imminent.

53. ... d2 54. Bxd2 Rxd2 55. Kf6 Rb8



56. Rc4??

After 56. Rf4 Kg8 57. Kxg6 Re8 58. b5 Black has too few pawns to have any advantage,

but I would have continued trying!

56. ... Rxf2!

Suddenly, the white king is caught in a net. A strange turn of events.

57. Kxg6

Or 57. Kxe6 Re8+ 58. Kd5 Ne3+.

57. ... Ne7+ 58. Kg5 Kf7 59. Rf4+ Rxf4 60. Kxf4 Rxb4+ 61. Kg5 Rb5 62. Kf4 Rxb3 63. h5 Rb4+ 64. Kf3 Rh4 65. Ra6 Rxh5 66. Ke4 Rh4+ 67. Kf3 Nd5 68. Rc6 Rf4+, White resigned.

Although Hoesley leveraged her 1200-point rating edge over Hu for a board four win, UChicago B was ultimately victorious, scoring 3-1, and tying the Wannabes at 4½/5 and edging them out on tiebreaks.

Whether an upset or a cause to be upset,

UChicago B finished atop the standings thanks to 5-0 performances and board prizes from GM Awonder Liang and GM Praveen Balakrishnan on boards one and two.

FM William Graif, the 2019 Canadian Junior Champion, clinched a number of matches with a 4-1 performance on board three. On board four, 812-rated Brian Hu picked up a hard-earned 116 rating points with a 1-4 performance.

I was impressed by the significant number of traveling teams from other midwestern universities. The University of Illinois sent two teams from Champaign-Urbana, and Washington University sent two more from St. Louis. There were also teams from Oberlin, Northern Illinois and, get this, *five* teams from Purdue.

My own team had the (mis)fortune of playing Purdue's A squad in the second round, losing 2½-1½ in large part due to my opponent Andrew Bernal fighting through my unorthodox opening choice (and a 170-point rating gap) to thoroughly earn the win.

LONDON SYSTEM, JOBAVA VARIATION (D00)

Jonathan J. Lang (2093)

Andrew Bernal (1919)

2022 US Amateur Team North (2), 02.19.2022

1. d4 Nf6 2. Bf4

I was delighted to hear my opponent laugh to himself after playing this move. I figured he expected a dull game. At the very least, my Jobava London made him exercise his mind a bit more than the traditional variations.

2. ... d5 3. Nc3 a6 4. e3 Bf5 5. Nf3 h6 6. Ne5 e6 7. g4 Bh7 8. h4 Nbd7 9. Nd3?!

It would be more consistent to play 9. g5 although after 9. ... Nxe5 none of White's captures go anywhere. Best is admitting equality with 10. Bxe5 Nd7 11. Bf4 hxg5 12. Bxg5 Nf6 13. Bd3.

9. ... Ne4!?



Black had an opportunity to seize the center with 9. ... c5!? but 10. dxc5 Nxc5 11. Nxc5 Bxc5 12. Be5 offered mutual chances.

10. f3?

This is a complete misdiagnosis of the position. After 10. Nxe4 Bxe4 11. f3 Bh7 12. Qd2 c5 we would reach a similar variation to 9. ... c5 with an extra tempo for White.

10. ... Nxc3 11. bxc3 Be7 12. Bg3 0-0 13. Nf4 c5 14. Qd2 cxd4 15. cxd4 Rc8 16. Bd3 Nb6 17. Bxh7+ Kxh7 18. Qd3+

White would have had better practical chances after 18. g5 but Black had again planned the excellent 18. ... Kh8! preparing ... Nb6-c4 and seizing the initiative despite the artificial weakness of his kingside.

18. ... Kh8 19. Rb1 Na4 20. Rb3?!

An odd mutual oversight: we both thought that 20. Rxb7 was not in the spirit of the position during the game. But afterwards I found nothing better than mutual chances after 20. ... Rc3 21. Qxa6 Rxc2 22. 0-0 Rxa2 23. Rc1.

20. ... Qa5+



21. Kf2?

My last chance to salvage anything required finding the subtle 21. Kf1! Rc3 22. Qe2 b5 because 23. Be1 would be available here, but not with my king on f2.

21. ... Rc3 22. Rxc3 Qxc3 23. Rb1 b5 24. Ne2 Qc6 25. g5 Bd6 26. gxh6 Bxg3+ 27. Nxb3 gxh6 28. e4 Qc3 29. exd5 exd5 30. Nf5

In time trouble, activating the rook with 30. Re1 (or 30. Qxc3 Nxc3 and then 31. Re1) would have provided better chances to save the match. Instead I activating the knight to go after a pawn that Black realized was poisoned.

30. ... Qxd3 31. cxd3 Nc3 32. Rc1? b4! 33. a3 a5 34. axb4 axb4 35. Nxh6?? f5, White resigned.

The amateur spirit of the tournament was in full effect, with psychedelic costumes (see the sidebar on the previous page ~ed.) and team names ranging from timely to irreverent.

First, we had the fan-favorite names like “The Socially Isolated Pawns,” who also managed to win clear first with a 5-0 score in the U1600 section. Some of the high school teams chose to take the opportunity for inside jokes.

Barely a week off their Illinois state chess championship, Stevenson High School registered under the name “44-24,” a not-so-subtle nod to their victory over rivals Barrington, or, as they appeared on the cross-table, the “3x State Champions...almost.” This referred not to their failure as a three-peat, but their success at *almost* getting to the top spot three years in a row.

While the rest of us will wait for next year (and can only hope that Liang and Balakrishnan graduate a year or two early), UChicago B is off to the semi-finals against the other amateur directionals.

This may some ruffle feathers in the East, where there is a rule preventing teams from having a more than 1000-point differential between boards three and four.

While this rule is logical for preserving the amateur spirit of the event, my own sense throughout the weekend was that many players were excited to get paired

against grandmasters (“And I almost had him, too!” declared local blitz legend Tom Murphy, referring to his round one encounter against Liang), and the true camaraderie of the various college teams added to the feel of a weekend designed to bring out the team spirit in chess.

So, is UChicago B’s victory a story of a group of come-from-behind plucky underdogs, or of a rule-skirting super-team?

Quite frankly: who cares!

Perhaps a team of three titled players who did not know each other would compromise the feel of this event, but instead we saw something different. What we witnessed was two teams of local college players who seemed to genuinely enjoy spending the weekend together, sharing their love of the game.

While I can’t imagine calling UChicago B’s victory an “upset,” I also can’t imagine being critical of two young grandmasters who chose to put in a full weekend of entertaining chess for a pair of \$50 Amazon gift cards and a chance to hang out with their friends.

Sounds like a bunch of amateurs to me. ♠

Read about the USATS in our April issue, while the East and West will be covered in upcoming issues of *Chess Life!*

2022 U.S. AMATEUR TEAM NORTH CHESS CHAMPIONSHIP AT A GLANCE

FEBRUARY 18-20, 2022 | SCHAUMBERG, IL

TEAM

1ST: UChicago B (GM Awonder Liang, GM Praveen Balakrishnan, FM William Graif, Brian Hu), 4½/5. **2ND:** GM Wannabes (Nicholas Ladan, Aditya Gupta, Elijah Platnick, Ryan Barretto), 4½. **3RD:** UChicago A (FM Kapil Chandran, Christoph Eichinger, Dylan Sunjic, Oliver Heggli-Nonay), 4. **U2000:** Insert Name Here (Kevin Ho, Vikram Dara, Mihir Bafna, Nikhil Sivakumar), 3½. **U1800:** FatCat: King Kat Champion (Tom Murphy, Terrence Aguinaldo, Avi Schneider, Alladin Al-Haddad) 3. **COLLEGE:** A Splash of Champaign (Deniz Gulecyuz, Rishi Narayanan, Andrei Skorobogatykh, Abhyudhaya Venkat), 3½. **HIGH SCHOOL:** 44-24 (Rohit Guha, Eduard Danilyan, Fredrich Yuan, Ashley Yan), 3. **SENIOR:** Sudden Death (we hope not) (Lawrence Cohen, Dusan Tutush, Christopher Baumgartner, Joshua Flores), 2½. **JUNIOR:** 3x State Champions... almost (Shreyas Reddy, Carter Whaley, Ethan Gagliano, James Zhang) 3. **FEMALE:** HERd Immunity (Natalie Wisniowski, Aradh Kaur, Radhika Gupta, Jind Kaur), 2½. **MIXED DOUBLES:** dreamy knights (Joseph Wan, James Neal, Shreya Mangalam, Aria Hoesley) 3½.

INDIVIDUAL

BOARD 1: GM Awonder Liang, 5. **BOARD 2:** GM Praveen Balakrishnan, 5. **BOARD 3:** Fredrich Yuan, 5. **BOARD 4:** Abhyudhaya Venkat, 4½. **ALTERNATE:** Scott Matthew Escalera, 2½.

For complete results, visit chessweekend.com

The Future... is

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Sevian and Mishra win at the 2022 Spring Classic.

BY **JOHN HARTMANN**

ANNOTATIONS BY **GMS HUNGASKI,
LENDERMAN, MISHRA,
MORADIABADI, AND SWIERCZ**

P

PEOPLE PLAY CHESS FOR many reasons. Some do it for the competition; others, for the camaraderie. At its root, a chess game is a dialogical creation of two partners at one time and one “place.” Played over-the-board or over the internet, chess is, by its very nature, a social game.

That community is what COVID took from us, for a time.

And that sense of community, that pleasure in another’s presence... that is what we are beginning to reclaim now.



The 2019 Winter Chess Classic (November 10-18, 2019) was one of the last regular grandmaster events held at the Saint Louis Chess Club before the emergence of the COVID-19

pandemic. Just two more tournaments took place before everything shut down: the 2019 Saint Louis Invitationals (November 21-26) and the 2020 Cairns Cup (February 6-17, 2020), by which time the storm clouds were clearly already on the horizon.

Chess may be a refuge from “real life,” but the chess world could do no more to escape the ravages of COVID than anyone else. With the virus racing around the globe, over-the-board chess largely halted from the amateur ranks all the way through the world’s elite. The 2020 U.S. Championship was forced online, as was the Saint Louis Rapid and Blitz and the Champions 9LX.

With the miraculous availability of vaccines came hope. After a spike in early 2021, the spring and summer saw a lull in positivity rates, and what we later realized was a “false spring” for normality. The 2021 U.S. Championships — Junior, Senior, Open, and Women’s — were held in person, albeit under heavy restriction. No spectators were permitted, and everyone had to wear masks. Still, despite the difficulties and the ever-present fear of transmission, it felt like things were headed in the right direction.

And then came Delta.

And then, Omicron.

I needn’t tell you what the Omicron variant did to this country, nor what it is doing to the world. We saw peak infection rates of 800,000 a day. Nearly one million Americans have died from the virus as I write these words, an unfathomable number that does little to tell the real, human toll this pandemic has wrought across the globe.



I visited the 2022 Spring Classic on my way home from Crossville, after helping to sort through the US Chess library with IM John Donaldson. My side trip had many causes: the desire to visit with current and potential authors, the hope of seeing some good chess, the need for this work-from-home fellow to get out of his basement. At root, it was a need for sociality — a hunger to be with other chess people — that prompted me to make the trip.

I was in attendance for the third and fourth rounds of the Spring Classic, spending most of my days at the club. I was reminded that Central West End is a “target rich environment” for chess fans. You run into people you know (or know about) at every turn: GM Alex Lenderman in the lounge of the new AC Hotel, IM Eric Rosen playing scrabble with Young-Kyu Yoo (IM Christopher Yoo’s father), GM Dariusz Swiercz passing through security on his



▲ GM Abhimanyu Mishra

GM Samuel Sevian ▼





way upstairs to the playing hall.

Attendance was slight on those blustery March days, and some precautions were still in place. Spectators (save the occasional visiting journalist) were barred from the hall, and masks were still required.

But I felt excitement filter through the room as IA Mike Kummer gave broad hints to the players that the mask policy might soon be rescinded. (Masks were indeed made optional after round five, in light of new directives from city government.) I watched post-mortems take place, albeit with plexiglass barriers, and I saw friends of the club like GM Var Akobian come by to kibitz and cajole.

This edition of the Spring Classic consisted of two separate round-robins: the A Group, with an average FIDE rating of 2642, and the B Group, which clocked in at an average of 2513 FIDE. The A Group featured a number of U.S. Championship regulars along with some of the strongest local college students. The B Group featured

a diverse range of competitors, including the oldest player in the field (GM Elshan Moradiabadi) and the two youngest (GM Abhimanyu Mishra and IM Christopher Yoo).

With three wins in the first five rounds, GM Ray Robson grabbed the A Group by the scruff of the neck and appeared to be in the driver's seat. But 21-year-old GM Sam Sevian picked up his pace after four initial draws, overtaking Robson both in their game and on the crosstable in round eight. This left Sevian tied with the steady GM Illia Nyzylyk at 5½/8 heading into the final day of action. After both players drew in round nine, they contested a rapid playoff the next day, with Sevian coming out on top.

The drama came slightly earlier in the B Group, where GM and Mizzou student Christopher Repka burst out to an early lead with four consecutive victories in the first four rounds. Nipping at his heels were Mishra (age 13) and Yoo (age 15), both a point behind the leader after five rounds of play. Yoo fell to Repka in round seven, while Mishra defeated Repka in round eight and Yoo in round nine to end in first place with an impressive 7/9, including six and a half points in the final seven rounds.



Looking at it now, the obvious story of the 2022 Spring Classic is the tournament victories for Sevian and Mishra, two of the leading hopes for American chess along with Yoo and GM Hans Niemann, among others. For Sevian, this is perhaps his most notable result to date, and one certainly can say the same for Mishra.

But there is another story here, one that would not be obvious to anyone just watching the livestream.

The Spring Classic represented another step back towards normalcy for the Saint Louis Chess Club. True, these were not the first big over-the-board events since COVID, but I think that the Classics are staff favorites precisely because they fly a bit under the radar. Without throngs of people trying to catch a glimpse of Fabiano, Hikaru, or Wesley, the feeling was more of a reunion, a bringing together of old heads and friendly locals, leavened with no small number of up-and-comers trying to take them all down.

Acknowledging that I do not and cannot know what the future will bring — hello, Omicron variants BA.2 and XE — the 2022 Spring Classic felt like an important step towards a future that is not “post-COVID,” whatever that might be, but one that brings us into a state of co-existence with the virus.

As for me, what I felt most of all was

inspiration. Time for this aging gunslinger to sharpen up his tactics and get back in the game.

GAMES FROM THE 2022 SPRING CLASSIC

GIUOCO PIANO (C54)

GM Mikhail Antipov (2615)

GM Dariusz Swiercz (2656)

Spring Chess Classic A (3), St. Louis, 03.04.2022

Annotations by GM Dariusz Swiercz

After an upsetting loss the day before, I wanted to strike back, but I also wanted to avoid a huge theoretical clash. So I went for a playable position, hoping for a long game.

1. e4 e5 2. Nf3 Nc6 3. Bc4 Bc5 4. d3 Nf6
5. 0-0 d6 6. c3 a6 7. a4 h6 8. Nbd2 Ba7 9.
Re1 Be6



Repeating a line that I played in the first round against GM Kamil Dragun. Black goes for a position with doubled pawns on e6 and e5, with the idea of making use of the f-file for counterplay. As we'll see, this strategy proved really successful in this game!

10. Bxe6 fxe6 11. b4 0-0 12. h3

My opponent played this move (which transposes back into well-known positions) quickly, clearly having prepared well for the game. I was not fully sure which plan I should choose.

12. ... Nh5

A logical move, going for ... Nh5-f4 ideas. 12. ... Ne7 is possible too, bringing the knight to the kingside.

13. Nf1 Qf6 14. Ra2!

A typical move in such positions — from the a2-square, the rook secures in advance the soft f2-pawn.

14. ... Ne7

New, although it had been tried in correspondence play. I intend to bring my knight to g6 and only then play ... Nh5-f4, where Bc1xf4 can be met by another knight landing on f4. However, it is a little bit too slow. Perhaps best was 14. ... Nf4 directly.

15. N1h2 Ng6 16. Ng4

This tempo-gaining move is the most logical, but White had other options as well.

During the game I was slightly worried about 16. d4 at first, as Nh2-g4 is still in reserve. But now 16. ... Qf7!? is good, preparing to drop a knight on f4, or just the more solid ... Nh5-f6. Now after 17. Ng4 Black can play either 17. ... Nh4!? leading to a complicated play, or the simple 17. ... Nf6 which is similar to what happened in the game.

However, the next day Mikhail told me that 16. Kh1!? was very interesting, with the point being that after 16. ... Nh4? (16. ... Qf7 is better but now White can play 17. g3 with some edge as Black's knight cannot access the f4-square) 17. Ng1!! is suddenly extremely strong, as the threat of g2-g3 is really serious and the knight on f4 is nearly trapped!

16. ... Qe7 17. d4 Nf6

Happily trading the active knight on g4.

18. Nxg6+ Qxf6 19. Be3

I think that White is slightly better here but Black's position is very solid and the open f-file should give me decent counterplay.

19. ... Rf7!?

Following the plan!

20. Rd2

More worrisome was 20. b5!. I cannot trade pawns on b5 due to the ensuing pin, but I think that my position would be quite OK after 20. ... exd4 21. cxd4 Raf8 22. bxa6 bxa6; however, my queenside pawn structure would be worse than in the game.

20. ... exd4 21. cxd4 Raf8 22. Nh2

(see diagram top of next column)

In this position I went slightly wrong.

22. ... Ne7!?

I had a bunch of ideas in my mind connected with this move, e.g., ... Ne7-c6!?, ... d6-d5 followed by ... Ne7-f5, or even ... Qf6-g6. But



it looks somewhat unnatural, and there was something better.

I should have played 22. ... Nf4!. It was my main idea since bringing the knight to g6, but I missed one important detail in my thinking process. After 23. Bxf4 Qxf4 24. Nf3 I thought my a7-bishop was bad and that White could neutralize Black's play on the kingside, but I missed a very strong idea: 24. ... e5! and now White cannot play 25. dxe5? due to 25. ... Qg3!! with crushing pressure on the kingside. Instead 25. Ree2 must be played, but after 25. ... exd4 26. Nxd4 Qe5 the a7-bishop is pretty strong.

23. b5?!

Slightly mistimed — now I can take on b5 and, unlike after 20. b5!, there is no pin! 23. Qg4 was slightly better for White.

23. ... axb5 24. axb5 Bb6

Now the b5-pawn becomes a potential weakness while my queenside is very well guarded.

25. Ra2 Qg6 26. Qg4 d5 27. Qxg6?!

I was really happy to see this. I was worried about 27. e5!?! but after 27. ... Qd3! 28. Qxe6 Bxd4! 29. Rd2 Qc3!! Black tactically maintains the material balance with an unclear position.

27. Nf3 is quite testing too. After 27. ... Qxg4 28. hxg4 dxe4 29. Ne5 White wins an Exchange, but 29. ... Nd5! 30. Nxf7 Kxf7 gives Black sufficient compensation.

27. ... Nxg6 28. e5 Nh4!

Actively rerouting the knight to the f5-square.

29. Rb1 Nf5 30. Nf3 g5 31. Rb4 Kg7 32. Nh2 Kg6 33. Rba4 Kg7

Around here we were both getting low on time so, not seeing anything better, I decided to play a waiting move and see what he did in response. I thought the position was equal and a draw would be a normal result.

34. g3 Kg6



PHOTO: COURTESY SLCC / C. FULLER

35. Ng4?!

Full of ambition, my opponent decided to play on. The idea of bringing the knight to f6 definitely looks appealing.

35. ... Nxe3!

A strong move, after which Black takes over the initiative.

36. Nxe3

Note that after 36. fxe3? Rf3! 37. Kg2 h5 the e3-pawn falls.

36. ... h5! 37. Kg2 Rf3 38. Rd2 h4!?

Aggressive, provoking a weakening of White's position, but also giving away the g4-square. With this move I sensed that I could play for a win, and that it was my opponent who needed to be more careful.

39. Ng4?

A major mistake — now, I can go after his b5-pawn! 39. Re2 was a good move, supporting the knight and keeping the game equal.

39. ... hxg3?!

Careless, spoiling my advantage right before the time control. 39. ... Rb3! immediately was much stronger as I keep the kingside relatively closed and White does not have counterplay like in the game.

40. fxg3 Rb3 41. Nf6 Rxb5 42. h4!

GM Elshan Moradiabadi ▼



Accentuating my weak king and White's strong knight.

42. ... Ra5

The inclusion of 42. ... gxh4 43. gxh4 does not give Black anything. In fact, it only further weakens my king.

43. h5+ Kh6 44. Rb4?!

A strange decision as his rook is misplaced on b4. Instead 44. Rxa5 Bxa5 45. Ra2 was equal thanks to White's activity.

44. ... Rfa8! 45. Kh3 Ra4?!

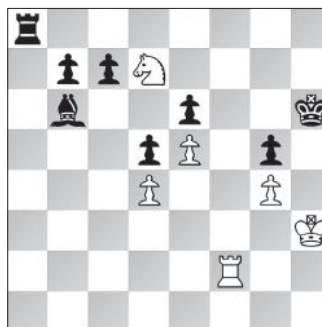
I tried going after the weak d4-pawn, but I underestimated my opponent's counterplay. 45. ... Ra3! was strong, keeping all rooks on the board and trying to double on the third rank to pressure the g3-pawn. Black has decent winning chances.

46. Rxa4 Rxa4 47. Rf2! Ra8

My king can end up in serious danger so I decided to drop back my rook instead of grabbing the pawn: after 47. ... Rxd4 48. Ra2! followed by Ra2-a8 White keeps an active balance.

48. Nd7

This move nearly forces a draw, although there was nothing wrong with 48. Rd2 either.

48. ... Kxh5 49. g4+ Kh6

A critical position. I expected the game to end with a draw in short order, but the unexpected happened.

50. Nf8??

Mikhail plays for a win, but he missed my reply. 50. Nxb6 was an immediate draw after 50. ... cxb6 51. Rf6+ Kg7 52. Rxe6 Ra4 53. Rxb6 Rxd4 54. Rxb7+.

50. ... Rxf8!

I had to give up the Exchange as the knight was causing too much damage. Now I collect the pawns on d4 and e5, giving me renewed winning chances. The alternative 50. ... Kg7

51. Nxe6+ Kg8 52. Rf6 looks tricky for Black.

51. Rxf8 Bxd4 52. Re8 Kg7

Slightly more accurate was 52. ... Kg6 White cannot play Re8-e7 with check and Re8xe6 is forced, transposing back to the game.

53. Re7+ Kg6 54. Rxe6+?!

Capturing the wrong pawn! 54. Rxc7 was right and after 54. ... Bxe5 55. Rxb7 Bf4 I thought I had decent winning chances, but the truth was that it is just a draw: 56. Kg2 Kf6 57. Rb5 Ke5 58. Rb6 and it is not possible for Black to make progress.

54. ... Kf7 55. Rf6+ Ke7 56. Rf5??

The last, and fatal, mistake. With 56. Rg6! my opponent should have saved the game, even though things get really tactical and White needs to be extremely precise. The difference between this move and the text is that now my king can reach the e6-square.

56. ... Be3!

Now the game is over. The g5-pawn is defended, the king comes to e6, and the queen-side pawns are rolling forward.

57. Kg3 Ke6 58. Kf3 Bf4 59. Ke2 b5 60.

Kd3 c5 61. Kc2 c4 62. Rf6+ Kxe5 63. Rb6 Ke4 64. Rxb5 d4 65. Rc5 c3 66. Rc8 Kf3 67. Kd3 Be3, White resigned.

As the g4-pawn falls and then my g-pawn goes forward, my opponent resigned.

QUEEN'S GAMBIT, SEMI-SLAV VARIATION (D30)

IM Semen Khanin (2509)

GM Abhimanyu Mishra (2505)

Spring Chess Classic B (4), St. Louis, 03.05.2022

Annotations by GM Abhimanyu Mishra

1. d4 d5 2. c4 c6 3. Nf3 Nf6 4. e3 e6 5. Qc2 Nbd7 6. b3 b6 7. Bb2 Bb7 8. Nbd2 Be7 9. Bd3 dxc4 10. bxc4 c5 11. 0-0 cxd4 12. exd4 0-0

After a relatively unambitious opening by White, we get a complex hanging pawns structure.

13. Rfe1

Another option was 13. Ne5, when Black maintains relative equality after the simple 13. ... h6. Note that if 13. ... Nxe5? 14. dxe5 and White wins the h7-pawn.

13. ... Rc8

Activating the a8-rook and putting some slight pressure on the c4-pawn.

14. Qb3 Qc7 15. Rac1 Rfe8

Preventing any dreams of d4-d5 somewhere.

16. Bb1 Bf8!

This is a very standard regrouping in this structure. From the g7-square, the bishop defends the king and exerts pressure on the white center.

17. a4 g6 18. Ba2?!

Somewhat mysterious, as it misplaces the bishop. But it was not easy to come up with a plan for White here.

Perhaps White should have tried 18. h3 Bg7 19. Rcd1 with near equality.

18. ... Bg7 19. h3 Bc6

Just slowly improving my pieces. Nothing much is going on, so both sides should make minor improvements to their positions.

20. Bc3 a5!?

This is a double-edged positional decision. From one point of view, I prevent White's plan of a4-a5, but I also weaken the b5-square and b6-pawn.

21. Rb1?



Missing my reply. Better was 21. Bb2 with an equal position.

21. ... Nd5!

Black activates his passive knight, almost out of nowhere!

22. Ba1?

Giving the knight the b4-square was not wise.

22. Ne4 was the best choice but the ending after 22. ... Nxc3 23. Nxc3 Bxf3 24. Nb5 Qf4 25. Qxf3 Qxf3 26. gxf3 Bf8 does not look appetizing at all for White, who has a bad a2-bishop and a shattered kingside pawn structure.

22. ... Nb4

Black now has the threat of 23. ... Nxa2 24. Qxa2 Bxf3, after which 25. Nxf3 is impossible due to the hanging c4-pawn.

23. Rbc1 e5!

White is very uncoordinated. Therefore, it is the correct time to open the center.

24. Nxe5

After 24. d5 Nc5 25. Qa3 Bxa4 Black is up a clean pawn and winning.

24. ... Nxe5 25. dxe5 Bxe5?!

Imprecise, but it gets the job done.

25. ... Rcd8! was a bit stronger as here ... Nb4-d3 is very difficult (if not impossible) to prevent and 26. Rcd1 Bxe5 is an improved version of the game as Black's ... Rc8-d8 is much more beneficial than White's Rc1-d1.

26. Bxe5 Rxe5 27. Bb1 Rce8

The most natural move, forcing White to make a concession on the e-file.

28. Nf3

Here 28. Rxe5 Qxe5 is also winning for Black due to his better pawn structure and greater piece activity.

28. ... Rxe1+ 29. Rxe1 Rxe1+ 30. Nxe1 Qd7!?

Threatening ... Bc6xa4 and ... Qd7-d2 simultaneously.

31. Qe3 Qe8!



There's no hope in the endgame for White — the passed-a-pawn would decide the game in Black's favor.

32. Qc3 Bxa4 33. Nf3 Qe2

Threatening ... Qe2-d1+. The b1-bishop has no squares.

34. Kh2

After 34. Qf6 Qd1+ 35. Kh2 Qxb1 36. Qd8+ Kg7 37. Qd4+ f6 the checks run out.

34. ... Qxf2

Picking up another pawn.

35. Qf6 Bc6

Now ... Bc6xf3 is an unstoppable threat.

36. Qe5

If 36. Qd8+ Kg7 shatters White's hopes.

36. ... Bxf3 37. Qe8+ Kg7 38. Qe5+ f6 39. Qc7+ Kh6 40. Qf4+ Kh5, White resigned.

White has no more meaningful checks, so he resigned because after 41. Qxf3 then 41. ... Qxf3 42. gxf3 a4 wins for Black. There is no stopping ... a4-a3-a2 winning the bishop. A very smooth win with the black pieces!

QUEEN'S GAMBIT, VIENNA VARIATION (D24)

GM Arman Mikaelyan (2497)

GM Elshan Moradiabadi (2540)

Spring Chess Classic B (4), St. Louis, 03.05.2022

Annotations by GM Elshan Moradiabadi

I came to this game with one strategy: I wanted to provoke my opponent into a fight. As you will see, I succeeded a little bit too much in this!

1. d4 Nf6 2. c4 e6 3. Nf3 d5 4. Nc3 dxc4

I play this on and off, so it did not come as a surprise to my opponent.

5. e4 Bb4 6. Bxc4

A topical pawn sacrifice in the Vienna.

6. ... Nxe4 7. 0-0 Nf6!?

I started becoming interested in this move after I watched a game between Mamedyarov and Caruana.

8. Qa4+ Nc6 9. Ne5 a5!?

Caruana's choice 9. ... Rb8 (Mamedyarov – Caruana, Germany 2019) is also playable, but it is not something I feel totally comfortable playing over the board.

10. Nxc6 bxc6 11. Qxc6+ Bd7 12. Qf3 0-0 13. Bg5

I faced 13. Bf4 in a correspondence game, and the game was quickly drawn after 13. ... a4 14. Be5 Bd6 15. Rad1 Qe7 16. Rfe1 Rab8 17. Re2 Rb6 18. Qg3 Rfb8 19. Rdd2 h6 20. f4 (Ristea – Moradiabadi, ICCF 2021). After moves like ... Rb6-c6, provoking b2-b3, it is hard to imagine that White can make much progress.

13. ... h6 14. Bf4

14. Bh4 is another try, which I will probably face the next time someone tries to take me down in this line!

14. ... Bd6

Following the same setup from my correspondence game.

15. Be5 a4 16. Rad1 Rb8 17. Qe2 Bc6 18. f4 Qe7?!

This is the beginning of a hallucination.

An interesting continuation is 18. ... Nd5 leading to a crazy draw, but Black has more than one way to equalize. 19. f5 a3!? (after 19. ... Nxc3 20. bxc3 exf5 21. Rxf5 Bd7 22. Rf3 Bg4 23. Rxf7 Bxe2 24. Rxc7+ Kh8 25. Rg8+ Kh7 it's a draw.) 20. Bxd5 Bxd5 21. Nxd5 exd5 22. bxa3 f6 and Black is just fine.

19. Rd3 Rfd8?!

The hallucination continues.

20. Rg3 Bxe5??



And now Black is dead lost.

21. fxe5 Ne8

For some reason I thought I could play 21. ... Rxd4 and after 22. exf6 Qc5 I thought I was winning. But once I played my 20th move, I realized that after 21. ... Rxd4 White has 22. Rxc7+! winning on the spot. After the game the engine pointed out my second mistake: after 22. ... Qc5 White can win with 23. Rxc7+! Kh8 24. Rf2!.

22. Rf4!

White gradually builds his attack. Black has no counterplay and is completely lost.

22. ... Rd7 23. Rfg4?!

Here 23. a3! followed by h2-h3 would have put an end to all the tricks Black had in this game. But I kept on trying to make life as hard for my opponent as I could.

23. ... Qb4?

Sliding back into a losing position again. During the game 23. ... g6 24. Rxc6+ fxc6 25. Rxc6+ Ng7 26. Bxe6+ Kh7 27. Bxd7 Bxd7 28. Rf6 looked dead lost to me, but the engines think that Black can "easily" hold with the ... Bd7-f5-Bg6 plan. What can I say? That was not my evaluation!

24. b3?

Now Black is back. Instead 24. h3! Qxb2 25.

Qe3 would have sealed the deal.

24. ... axb3 25. axb3 Ra8 26. h3 Ra1+ 27. Kh2 Qa3!

White missed this move. His idea to play Qe2-e3 is now strongly met with ... Qa3-c1.

28. d5!?

Judging by my opponent's body language, and considering the lines I was looking at, it seems that we both thought we each had the initiative. The following tragicomedy is a result of our mutual misevaluations of the position!

28. ... Qc1 29. Re3



29. ... h5?!

The first blunder. I had to find 29. ... g5! to stay alive. It restricts the white king and frees the g7-square for the e8-knight, i.e., 30. dxc6 (not 30. dxe6?? Qg1+ 31. Kg3 Ng7 and Black wins) 30. ... Rd2 and compared to the actual game you can see why this works now: 31. Qf1 Qxf1 32. Bxf1 Rxf1 33. Rb4 Kf8 34. Rb8 Ke7 35. b4 Rff2 36. Rg3 Rf5 37. Re3 with equality. The move I played is simply a waste of a full tempi.

30. Rd4??

Repaying my mistake with one in kind. The right way was 30. dxe6! when 30. ... Rd2 does not work due to 31. exf7+ Kf8 32. e6! and Black is mated. During the game I thought that I was being smart because after 32. fxe8=Q+ I saw that after 32. ... Kxe8 33. Rxc7 Qg1+ (or 33. ... Rxe2 34. Rg8+ Ke7 35. Rg7+ with a draw by repetition) 34. Kg3 Qxc7+ 35. Qxc2 Rxc2+ 36. Kh4 Rxc7 I get a pleasant endgame.

30. ... Qg1+ 31. Kg3 g5!

Finally one of us does the right thing!

32. Ne4?

White is losing, but this only exacerbates his problems.

32. ... Ng7 33. Nf6+ Kf8 34. Bd3



34. ... Rxd5?!

Sadly, I only saw the correct 34. ... Ra2 right after I played my move. The idea is 35. Qxa2 (or 35. Nxd7+ Bxd7 36. Qxa2 Qxe3+ 37. Kh2 Qxe5+ 38. Kh1 Qxd4 winning) 35. ... Qxe3+ 36. Kh2 Qxe5+ 37. Kh1 Qxf6. Instead, the dual effects of my self-criticism and time pressure led me to start making poor moves as we approached the time control.

35. Rxd5 Bxd5 36. Qd2 c5

Black is still winning, but inside I was raging about my missed opportunity on move 34.

37. Nh7+ Ke7??

There goes the win.

38. Re2 h4+ 39. Kg4 Qd4+ 40. Kxg5 Rf1

At least the final move before time control was accurate. White's king is awkwardly placed, but he needs to make a leap of faith and push on to the h6-square. Then a series of trades would lead to a manageable endgame for White.

41. Nf6?

Starting up another set of blunders after the end of time pressure. It might be practically uncomfortable after 41. Kh6 Nf5+ 42. Bxf5 Qxd2+ 43. Rxd2 Rxf5 44. Rc2! Rxe5 45. Rxc5 Rf5 46. b4 but White had the worst behind him.

41. ... Rxf6

What else?

42. exf6+ Qxf6+ 43. Kg4 Qd4+ 44. Kg5 Qf6+?! 45. Kg4 Qd4+ 46. Kg5

(see diagram next page)

46. ... Qf6+?!, draw.

We both thought this was a draw. Oh, the fog of war!

46. ... f5?? was my initial intention, but luckily I realized that White has 47. Qb2 after which Black is lost!

Instead 46. ... e5! was the way to go. After 47. Qe3 Ne6+ 48. Kh6 Bxb3 49. Bf5 Bc4 50. Re1 Kf6 an unpleasant ending is waiting for



White after ... Qd4xe3. Overall, this was not a quality game, but it helped me understand some of my greatest fears when I play chess. I think I am ready to work on them!

GIUOCO PIANO (C54)

GM Alexander Lenderman (2600)

GM Samuel Sevian (2684)

Spring Chess Classic A (5), St. Louis, 03.06.03.2022

Annotations by GM Elshan Moradiabadi

Lenderman is not a 1. e4 player. I think his choice of opening relied entirely on the fact that Sevian hardly deviates from responding with 1. ... e5.

1. e4 e5 2. Nf3 Nc6 3. Bc4 Bc5 4. c3 Nf6 5. d3 d6 6. 0-0 a6 7. a4

This move soared in popularity after Anand successfully employed it at the 2016 Candidates tournament.

7. ... Ba7 8. Re1

Here 8. h3 h6 forces White into playing Bc1-e3, as ... g7-g5-g4 is an annoying plan to face.

8. ... Ng4!?

With this move Sevian decides to test the depth of Lenderman's knowledge.

9. Re2

Now 9. Rf1 would have been an interesting psychological ploy: does Black play ... Ng4-f6 or continue with castling?

(see diagram top of next column)

9. ... Qf6?

An objectively risky move, but only if White knows how to handle it.

10. Nbd2

Lenderman takes a less principled path. Instead, I think the correct answer is 10. b4! Qg6! (10. ... 0-0? was tried in Antipov - Adhiban, Moscow 2019, but White can improve on Antipov's play there: 11. h3 Nh6



12. b5! axb5? 13. Bg5! the power of threats! 13. ... Qg6 14. axb5 Bxf2+ 15. Rxf2 Rxa1 16. bxc6 bxc6 17. Be7! and White wins material) 11. Nbd2 0-0 12. Nf1 Be6!? (12. ... Kh8 as in Libisewski - Moroni, Stockholm 2018, and also the Antipov game by transposition; here I suggest 13. h3!) 13. Bb3 f5? (Too aggressive. 13. ... Bxb3 14. Qxb3 Qe6 would probably suffice for equality) 14. exf5 Rxf5 and White had a significant edge in Brodsky - Swiercz, Greensboro 2019.

10. ... g5!?

Sharp, but not risky at all.

11. d4!

Lenderman correctly counters in the center.

11. ... Rg8

Engines do not like this move, but Sevian follows Mamedyarov's path, relying on having more knowledge of the position than his opponent. Stockfish prefers 11. ... Bd7 or 11. ... Qg7.

12. b4!

Lenderman does not get rattled and finds the best move.

Jakovenko tried 12. Nf1?! exd4 13. e5 dxe5 14. cxd4 Kf8? (14. ... Be6! with an edge) 15. h3 Nxd4 16. Nxd4 Bxd4 17. hxg4 Bxg4 18. Be3! and was rewarded with victory in Jakovenko - Mamedyarov, Jerusalem 2019.

12. ... Nd8

Logical, but it does not work because of its timing.

(see diagram top of next column)

13. Nf1!?

This is a bit slow.

After 13. b5! Ne6 14. Bd5! exd4 15. e5! dxe5 16. Ne4 Qd8 17. c4! Rb8 18. h3 Nf6 19. Nxe5 White is completely winning. Of course, this is another engine-manufactured line that is impossible to humans to fathom unless they have prior knowledge of this idea (b4-b5 and Bc4-d5).



▲ GM Samuel Sevian



13. ... Ne6 14. Ne3?

Throwing away all of White's initiative. Alex should have tried 14. h3 Nh6 15. dxe5 dxe5 16. Qd5 g4 (16. ... Nf4 17. Bxf4 gxf4 18. Kh2 Qg6 looks scary but after 19. g3 it looks completely winning for White.) 17. Qxe5 Qxe5 18. Nxe5 Ng5 19. Kh2 gxh3 20. gxh3 and Black's pieces are more awkward than active.

14. ... Nf4?

Another oversight in a complex position. 14. ... Nxe3 15. Bxe3 g4 was required.

15. Rd2?

The correct 15. Nd5! would have put White back on a winning path: 15. ... Nxd5 (after 15. ... Nxe2+ 16. Qxe2 Qd8 17. b5 axb5 18. axb5 Be6 19. h3 Nh6 20. Bxg5! is crushing) 16. Bxd5 c6 17. Bc4 Nh6 18. b5 g4 19. Ne1 and White's attack on the queenside is far more effective than Black's on the kingside.

15. ... Nxe3 16. fxe3 g4!

From this point forward, Sevian shows an engine-like choice of plan. His execution, on the other hand, is naturally not as ruthless as his choice of plan. None of us can match the engines in these kinds of positions.

17. Ng5 Nh3+ 18. Nxh3 gxh3 19. Raa2 Qh6

Here 19. ... Bg4 may be better, but the game continuation still puts Black on the right path.

20. Rf2 Be6 21. Bxe6?!

A step too far. Now Black has a growing initiative. The right way was 21. Bd5 0-0-0 22. b5 a5 23. g3 when White keeps the d8-rook at bay.

21. ... fxe6 22. g3 0-0-0 23. Qf1



23. ... Rdf8?!

The right plan, but not the best move order. Black should have started with 23. ... Kb8 24. Rf7 Qg6 25. b5 h5.

24. b5

After 24. Rxf8+ Rxf8 25. Rf2 the placement of the king on c8 gives White's queen enough activity to maintain the balance: 25. ... Rxf2 26. Kxf2! d5 27. Ke2 dxe4 28. Qf7 and Black needs to bail out with a queen trade.

24. ... a5 25. Rae2?

Wasting time. White should have tried with Rf2xf8+ and Re2-f2, when he had enough time to save the day due to Black's back-rank issues.

25. ... Kb8?

Right plan, wrong execution. Correct was 25. ... Re8! 26. Rf6 Qh5 and after consolidating with ... Ba7-b6 and ... Kc8-b8-a7, Black opens up the center and plays for the win.

26. Bd2?

An additional loss of time. Now Black has the chance to achieve the optimal set up, after which ... h5-h4 is impossible to meet.

With 26. Rxf8+ Rxf8 27. Rf2 Rxf2 28. Kxf2 Bb6 29. Ke2 Qg6 30. Qf3 d5 31. dxe5 dxe4 32. Qf8+ Ka7 33. Qf4 Bc5 Black is better but it is hard to show how he can make progress.

26. ... Bb6! 27. Bc1 Ka7

Strong prophylaxis. The king is entirely safe.

28. Bd2 Kb8 29. Bc1 Ka7 30. Bd2 Qh5

Black has many choices here. This works well enough.

31. Bc1 Qg4 32. Ra2 Rxf2 33. Rxf2 h5!

White's position begins to disintegrate in just a few moves.



34. Qe2 Qg6

Of course 34. ... Qxe4 was also good.

35. Qf3 h4 36. Bd2 exd4!

Straightforward. Just open the game and see how weak White's king is.

37. cxd4 e5 38. Kh1 exd4 39. exd4 hxg3

40. hxg3 Qxg3, White resigned.

White is not going to get mated, but he will lose most of his pawns. This was not Sevian's best game in this event, but it marked an important turning point, giving him his first victory and putting him on the right path to win the A group.

QUEEN'S INDIAN DEFENSE (BY TRANSPOSITION) (E14)

GM Alex Lenderman (2600)

GM Kamil Dragun (2586)

Spring Chess Classic A (6), 03.07.2022

Annotations by GM Alex Lenderman

After a very difficult start in the tournament,

Saint Louis Spring Classic A

ST. LOUIS, MARCH 2-10, 2022

			1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
1	GM Samuel Sevian	2684	*	½	½	1	1	½	½	1	½	½	6/9
2	GM Illia Nyzhnyk	2674	½	*	½	½	1	1	½	½	1	½	6/9
3	GM Dariusz Swiercz	2656	½	½	*	½	½	0	1	1	½	1	5½/9
4	GM Ray Robson	2676	0	½	½	*	½	½	½	1	1	1	5½/9
5	GM Aram Hakobyan	2601	0	0	½	½	*	1	1	½	1	½	5/9
6	GM Jeffery Xiong	2686	½	0	1	½	0	*	½	½	1	1	5/9
7	GM Hans Niemann	2642	½	½	0	½	0	½	*	1	0	1	4/9
8	GM Alex Lenderman	2600	0	½	0	0	½	½	0	*	1	½	3/9
9	GM Kamil Dragun	2590	½	0	½	0	0	0	1	0	*	1	3/9
10	GM Mikhail Antipov	2615	½	½	0	0	½	0	0	½	0	*	2/9

sitting at 1/5 and having lost two games in a row, I just wanted to focus on thinking positively for this game. I decided to treat it like the first round of a brand-new four round tournament where I would just try to play a good game.

1. Nf3 d5 2. e3

This is one of my pet systems that I like to play when I am looking for an interesting fight.

2. ... Nf6 3. c4 e6 4. Nc3 Be7 5. b3 0-0 6. Bb2 b6 7. cxd5 exd5 8. d4 Bb7 9. Bd3

I've also had experience with 9. g3 here.

9. ... Nbd7 10. 0-0 a6 11. Ne2

I could also have tried 11. Ne5 and if 11. ... Nxe5? 12. dxe5 Nd7 13. f4 gives me a significant advantage.

11. ... Re8 12. Ng3 Bd6

A very interesting idea, trying to induce Ng3-f5 first, and then playing ... g7-g6 to regain the tempo by attacking the knight on f5.

13. Nf5 Bf8 14. Ne5

The typical way to fight for initiative here.

14. ... g6 15. Ng3 Ne4 16. Qc2 Nxc3 17. hxg3 Nxe5?!

A better alternative for Black was 17. ... Bg7 18. f4 c5.

18. dxe5 Bg7 19. f4 c5 20. Qf2 Rc8 21. Rad1 Rc7 22. g4

Going for the initiative.

22. ... Qe7 23. g5?!

So tempting, but it would have been better to play something prophylactic against ... c5-c4 first, not allowing the pawn to get to c3 where it would block my bishop.

Perhaps 23. Be2 c4 24. Bd4 or 23. Bc2 c4 (23. ... b5 24. g5 a5) 24. Bd4 are wiser.

23. ... c4 24. Bc2 c3 25. Bc1 b5 26. Qg3



Preparing Kg1-f2, Rf1-h1, and Qg3-h4. Note that I couldn't play 26. Qh4? immediately due to 26. ... h6. And now comes the critical moment where my opponent panicked a bit.

26. ... Bc8?

Here my opponent decided to sacrifice the d5-pawn in order to try to bring his bishop into defense. Why doesn't this positional pawn sacrifice work so well? The d-pawn is not only an important central pawn, but on d5, it prevents me from playing e3-e4, keeping my c1-bishop obstructed. Now I do more than win a pawn — it helped bolster my center and, most importantly, activated

my bad bishop on c1. That was a big relief for me.

Both 26. ... Bf8 27. Kf2 a5 28. Rh1 b4 29. Qh3 h5 30. gxh6 e.p. a4 and 26. ... b4 27. Kf2 Qe6 28. Rh1 Rc5! (28. ... Bc8!? 29. Qh4 h5 30. gxh6 e.p. Bf8 31. g4 Kh7) 29. Qh4 Ra5 were some options for Black. Giving up the h7-pawn wasn't the end of the world, and counterplay is available thanks to the powerful c3-pawn, and my c1-bishop being restricted.

27. Rxd5 b4 28. e4 Rd7 29. Rfd1 Red8 30. Be3 Bb7?!

Not the most tenacious. 30. ... Qe6 would still require overcoming a number of technical difficulties to convert. But my opponent was also getting low on time.

31. Bc5! Rxd5 32. Rxd5 Qc7 33. Rxd8+ Qxd8 34. Qd3!



Forcing a transposition into a winning endgame — not only because I'm up a pawn, but more importantly, because my king will be able to become an asset rather than a

Saint Louis Spring Classic B

ST. LOUIS, MARCH 2-10, 2022

			1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
1	GM Abhimanyu Mishra	2505	*	1	0	½	1	1	½	1	1	1	7/9
2	GM Christopher Repka	2508	0	*	1	½	1	1	0	½	1	1	6/9
3	GM Cemil Can Ali Marandi	2524	1	0	*	1	0	0	½	½	½	1	4½/9
4	GM Elshan Moradiabadi	2540	½	½	0	*	½	0	1	½	1	½	4½/9
5	GM Christopher Yoo	2514	0	0	1	½	*	1	½	½	0	1	4½/9
6	IM Semen Khanin	2509	0	0	1	1	0	*	½	½	1	½	4½/9
7	GM Titas Stremavicius	2520	½	1	½	0	½	½	*	0	½	0	3½/9
8	GM Arman Mikaelyan	2497	0	½	½	½	½	½	1	*	0	0	3½/9
9	GM Harshit Raja	2482	0	0	½	0	1	0	½	1	*	½	3½/9
10	GM Robert Hungaski	2537	0	0	0	½	0	½	1	1	½	*	3½/9

liability. Without the queens it can become active in the center. Meanwhile, Black's "safe" king will now become a liability as it is hard to activate it.

34. ... Qxd3 35. Bxd3 a5 36. Bb6

Winning a second pawn. 36. Kf2 was also possible: 36. ... Bf8 (36. ... Bc6 37. Ke3) 37. Bxf8 Kxf8 38. Ke3 winning.

36. ... h6 37. Bxa5 Bf8 38. gxh6 Bc5+ 39. Kh2 Kh7 40. Bc7 Ba6 41. Bc2

The last important accurate move.

41. ... Kxh6 42. Bd6 Be3 43. g3 g5 44. f5, Black resigned.

Here my opponent resigned in a hopeless endgame. I was happy with getting at least one win in a difficult tournament where things weren't going my way.

FRENCH DEFENSE, STEINITZ VARIATION (C11)

GM Semen Khanin (2509)

GM Robert Hungaski (2554)

Spring Chess Classic B (9), St. Louis, 03.10.2022

Annotations by GM Robert Hungaski

Having made some poor decisions throughout the event, I chose this long theoretical line to keep me in line in the hopes of getting a reasonable position out of the opening. Often when having a bad event, it's useful to have opening theory "carry you."

- 1. e4 e6 2. d4 d5 3. Nc3 Nf6 4. e5 Nfd7 5. f4 c5 6. Nf3 Nc6 7. Be3 cxd4 8. Nxd4 Qb6 9. Qd2 Qxb2 10. Rb1 Qa3 11. Bb5 Nxd4 12. Bxd4 a6 13. Bxd7+ Bxd7 14. Rb3**

Better than 14. Rxb7?! Bb4.

14. ... Qe7

Avoiding the "Botez Gambit" with 14. ... Qa5?? 15. Bb6.

15. Rxb7 Rc8!?

The new trend in the line. Black's plan is simple: get the bishop to c5, castle and bring pressure along the c-file. White's plan is also quite simple: play f4-f5 and mate the black king! Both 15. ... Qh4+ and 15. ... Qd8 are also known to theory.

16. 0-0

Nepomniachtchi has tried 16. f5 exf5 17. 0-0 with compensation for the pawn.

16. ... Qd8



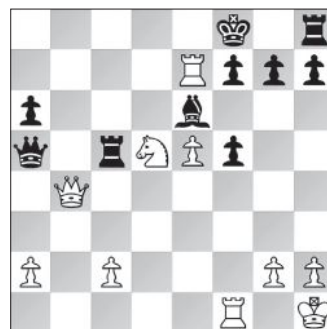
17. Kh1

There have been a number of moves tried in this position.

The critical test revolves around preventing Black's ... Bf8-c5 idea: 17. Qe3!? Rc4 18. Rfb1 (18. f5 Qc8 19. Rfb1 Rxd4 20. Rb8 Bc5 21. Rxc8+ Bxc8) 18. ... Be7 19. f5 Bg5 (19. ... exf5 20. Nxd5; 19. ... Bc8 20. Ra7 Bg5 21. Qf2 0-0 22. f6) 20. Qd3 0-0 (20. ... exf5 21. Nxd5) and the position is unclear. Black makes it out of the opening in one piece, but White retains some pressure.

Other options include 17. Qf2 Rxc3 18. Bxc3 Qc8 19. Rb3 Ba4 and 17. Nd1 Bc5 18. Ne3 0-0.

17. ... Bc5 18. Bxc5 Rxc5 19. f5 exf5 20. Nxd5 Be6 21. Re7+ Kf8 22. Qb4 Qa5?



A tricky move, somewhat speculating on my opponent's time trouble.

Black would have been fine after 22. ... Bxd5! 23. Qxc5 Qxe7 (23. ... Bxg2+!? 24. Kxg2 Qxe7 25. Qc8+ Qe8 26. Qxf5 Qc6+ is slightly better for White) 24. Qxd5 g6 with equality; but definitely not 22. ... Rxd5? 23. Rxe6+ Kg8 24. Rd6 Rxd6 25. exd6 and White wins.

23. Qb8+!!

A powerful in-between move that displaces the black rook, making the sacrifice on f7 nearly devastating. Let's look at a few other moves:

(a) Here 23. Rxf7+? immediately is too hasty: after 23. ... Kxf7 24. Qb7+ Kg8 (24. ... Kg6? 25. Nf4+ Kh6 26. Qf3+- with mate to follow) 25. Ne7+ Kf8 26. Nxf5 Rc7 White surprisingly does not have any good discoveries and remains down a rook.

(b) 23. Rd7 is met with 23. ... g5!.

(c) 23. Ra7? Qxb4 24. Ra8+ (24. Nxb4 g5) 24. ... Rc8 25. Rxc8+ Bxc8 26. Nxb4 g5! and Black is for choice.

(d) After the mistaken 23. Qxa5? Rxa5 White's queenside is falling apart.

23. ... Rc8 24. Rxf7+!

◀ **GM Abhimanyu Mishra and IM Christopher Yoo**



PHOTO: COURTESY SLCC / A. FULLER

Better than 24. Qd6 Qxd5 25. Rxe6+ Qxd6 26. Rxd6 Ke7 with a level position.

24. ... Kxf7 25. Qb7+

Now the king cannot retreat to g8 because of the knight fork on e7.

25. ... Rc7

The only defense. Black manages to cut his losses down to a pawn, which will be difficult for White to mobilize due to the queenside weaknesses. Other moves lose: (a) 25. ... Kg6? 26. Nf4+ Kh6 27. Qf3; (b) 25. ... Kf8? 26. Qe7+; and (c) 25. ... Kg8? 26. Ne7+ Kf8 27. Nxc8.

26. Nxc7 Qxe5 27. Nd5+

Perhaps stronger is 27. Nxe6+ Kxe6 28. Qxa6+ Kf7.

27. ... Kg6 28. Nf4+ Kf6 29. Qb4?!

White prepares Rf1-e1 and an attack along the dark squares, but he misses an important resource based on his back rank weakness. Better is 29. h3! giving luft.

29. ... Rb8 30. Qd2 Bxa2!

Now Black is back in the game!

31. Nd3

Not 31. Re1? Qxe1+ 32. Qxe1 Rb1.

31. ... Qd4 32. c3

Black has counterplay after 32. Qa5 Bd5 33. Qxa6+ Rb6 34. Qc8 Be4 with very active pieces.

32. ... Qd6 33. c4 Rb3!

Now the game simplifies and dwindles into a draw. Black might be up a pawn, but the king is too exposed to actually make use of it.

34. Qxa2 Rxd3 35. Qf2 g6 36. c5 Qd4 37. Qe2 Qe3 38. Qb2+ Kg5 39. c6 Rc3 40. Qb7 Rc1 41. Qxa6 Qf4 42. Kg1 Qd4+ 43. Kh1 Qa4 44. Qe2 Rxf1+ 45. Qxf1 Qxc6 46. h3 f4 47. Qd1 h5 48. Qd3 Qf6 49. Qe4 Kh6 50. Kh2 g5 51. Qe2 Qd6 52. Kh1 Qf6 53. Kh2 g4 54. hxg4 Qh4+ 55. Kg1 Qxg4 56. Qe5 h4 57. Qh8+ Kg5 58. Qg7+ Kh5 59. Qh7+ Kg5, draw.

**FRENCH DEFENSE,
TARRASCH VARIATION (C06)**

GM Abhimanyu Mishra (2505)

IM Christopher Yoo (2534)

**Spring Chess Classic B (9), St. Louis,
03.12.2022**

Annotations by GM Abhimanyu Mishra

1. e4 e6 2. d4 d5 3. Nd2 Be7!?

This move is a bit rare. 3. ... c5, 3. ... Nf6, and 3. ... dxe4 are the main lines, but of course this is a playable move.

4. Ngf3 Nf6 5. e5 Nfd7 6. Bd3 c5 7. c3 Nc6 8. 0-0 g5

Immediately starting counterplay. Black's plan involves a timely ... g5-g4 (perhaps after ... h7-h5) after which he forces the f3-knight to move, leaving the d4-pawn hanging.

9. Nb1!

Uncommon, but the idea is very simple: White does not care about the tempi wasted and wants to play Bc1-e3 to defend d4.

9. ... b6?!

I don't think mixing plans — allowing White to maintain control over the d4-square after playing the committal move 8. ... g5 — is correct.

Note that 9. ... g4 does not win a pawn as after 10. Ne1 cxd4 11. cxd4 Nxd4 the g4-pawn hangs. 9. ... Qb6!? was an interesting move, pressuring the d4-pawn and preventing Bc1-e3.

10. Be3 Bb7 11. a3

Intending b2-b4 to gain some space on the queenside. 11. Ne1!? was another possibility, intending f2-f4.

11. ... c4

Here 11. ... g4 12. Ne1 h5 13. b4!? (or 13. f3!?) is slightly better for White.

12. Bc2 h5



13. Ne1?!

It was better to wait for ... g5-g4 before moving the knight, as in that case, White would force Black to waste a tempo with the pawn push.

For that reason 13. Qe2! g4 14. Nfd2 was better. The knight pressures the queenside from this square. After 14. ... Qc7 15. a4!? (followed by b2-b3) is good for White.

13. ... Qc7 14. f4 gxf4?



▲ GM Robert Hungaski

Now the f7-pawn is a permanent weakness.

In this position 14. ... g4! was a much better choice as the f7-square remains safer: 15. f5 0-0-0 16. Nd2 and now Black even has the surprising sacrifice 16. ... Ndx5!?. 17. dxe5 Qxe5 18. Bf4 Qg7 with compensation due to his very strong center pawns and the lack of coordination between the white pieces.

15. Bxf4!

Capturing with the rook is the wrong way to go: 15. Rxf4? lets Black get rid of his weakness via 15. ... f5! 16. exf6 e.p. Nxf6 with a slight edge.

15. ... 0-0-0 16. Nd2 Rdf8 17. Qe2

Simply activating my pieces.

17. ... f6

A desperate attempt to trade the f7-pawn, but it does not work. Admittedly 17. ... Kb8 18. Nef3 Qd8 19. Qe3 didn't look appetizing either.

18. exf6 Bd6 19. Bxd6

If 19. g3? Black breaks with 19. ... e5! and is not much worse anymore.

19. ... Qxd6 20. Nef3

Activating my knight, discouraging ... e6-e5, and preparing Ra1-e1/Nf3-g5 next.

20. ... Rxf6 21. Ng5

Threatening Ng5-f7 and pressuring the e6-pawn. Now Black has not just one but two weak pawns on e6 and h5.



▲ ▼ How do GMs blow off steam? More chess!



Also winning was 21. Rae1 simply preventing ... e6-e5, leaving Black with some bad pieces on the queenside. I preferred my game continuation as ... e6-e5 never seemed to work for tactical reasons.

21. ... Qe7



22. Ndf3?!

I missed the stronger 22. h4!, which is an improved version of the game continuation because White doesn't waste two tempi moving the knight! Now 22. ... e5 still loses to 23. Bf5 because of the pressure on the black center: 23. ... e4 24. Bxd7+ Kxd7 25. Rxf6 Qxf6 26. Rf1 Qg6 27. Rf7+ Kc8 28. Qf2 and White is winning.

22. ... Re8

Now 22. ... e5! was Black's chance to break out, as there is no Bc2-f5. After 23. dxe5 Nxe5 24. Nxe5 Nxe5 25. Bf5+ Kb8 26. Rae1 White is much better, but the game goes on and Black can dream about an eventual ... d5-d4.

23. h4!

Solidifying my g5-knight. I disliked 23. Rae1 due to the fact that after 23. ... e5 24. dxe5 (note that after 24. Nxe5? Ncxe5 25. dxe5 Rxf1+ the g5-knight hangs) 24. ... Ncxe5 25. Nxe5 Qc5+ 26. Qe3 Rxe5 27. Qxc5+ bxc5 I thought this position would be a bit difficult to win in my over-the-board calculations.

23. ... Qd6

If 23. ... e5 I could now play 24. Nxe5! and I do not have to worry about the g5-knight hanging. After 24. ... Ncxe5 25. Rxf6 Qxf6 26. Rf1! is an important extra tempo. White is winning here due to the h5-pawn weakness and the fact that Black did not get his desired counterplay after the ... e6-e5 break.

24. Nd2!

Attacking the h5-pawn.

24. ... e5 25. Bf5!

The d7-knight seemed like a good defender of the center/kingside, so I decided to trade it off.

25. ... Rff8

The alternative 25. ... Kc7 26. Qxh5 Ref8 27. Bxd7 was also just winning for White.

26. Bxd7+ Kxd7

White also wins after 26. ... Qxd7 27. Rxf8 Rxf8 28. dxe5.

27. Qxh5 Rxf1+ 28. Rxf1 exd4 29. cxd4



29. ... b5

This loses without a fight. Black had to try 29. ... Nxd4 but I had seen that after 30. Qg4+ Ne6 31. h5 (Playing for fancy tactics with 31. Nde4 is also possible, though less convincing. After 31. ... dxe4 32. Rd1 Bd5 33. Nxe4 Qf4 34. Rxd5+ Kc6 Black should lose but is clearly much more active) 31. ... Kc7 32. Nf7 the h-pawn is unstoppable. White wins.

30. Ndf3

The b7-bishop is a terrible piece, and White is up a clean pawn.

30. ... Qe7 31. Re1

Winning material now.

31. ... Qxe1+

Or 31. ... Qf8 32. Qg4+ Kc7 33. Ne6+.

32. Nxe1 Rxe1+ 33. Kf2 Re8

Worse is 33. ... Rb1 34. Qh7+.

34. Qf7+ Re7 35. Qxd5+ Kc8 36. Qf5+ Kc7

37. Qf4+ Kc8 38. Ne4 Nd8 39. Nd6+ Kd7

40. Nf5 Rf7 41. g4 Nc6 42. d5 Ne7 43.

Qd6+ Ke8 44. Qb8+ Nc8 45. Kg3 a5 46.

Nd6+, Black resigned.

This win gave me clear first place! ♠

Did you catch John Hartmann's tweetstorm from the Spring Classic? Relive round four at tinyurl.com/springclassicrd4

OUT

New Orleans legend Jude Acers teaches Jamie Foxx a lesson.

BY **JOHN HARTMANN**

FOXXED



IT'S CLEAR THAT JAMIE Foxx is a very talented man, the winner of an Academy Award for his portrayal of Ray Charles

(himself a chess player) and a Grammy Award for his song “Blame It.”

At the chessboard, well, let’s say that his career is still on the rise.

Or so says Jude Acers.

Every chess fan who visits New Orleans knows to visit Decatur Street in the French Quarter. There, on a table just outside a praline shop called Southern Candymakers, Acers holds court daily, playing games with all comers for a small fee.

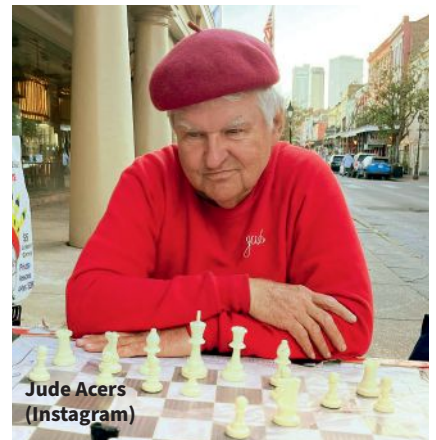
Early in the evening of April 6 — Jude’s

birthday — Jamie Foxx came by to try his hand against the master. Not for a film or a show, but just for love of the game.

At first it was just Foxx and a few friends, but soon, people realized who was playing, and a crowd formed to witness history.

Our man Herb Leonard (IG: @phototy-peproductions) was on-hand to take these photos of a truly historic matchup. No report of the final result has trickled out, although, as our game fragment shows, Jude had the upper hand in at least one of the games.

In an email to *Chess Life*, Acers lauded Foxx for his playing potential — “[he] would beat about 95 percent of all players... at very least 2000 ELO if he gets serious” — and for his generosity. Apparently Foxx tips *very* well.



Jude Acers (Instagram)

CROWD PLEASER

Jude Acers
 Jamie Foxx
 New Orleans (informal), 04.06.2022



BLACK TO MOVE

Judging by the photographic evidence, Foxx was on move here, and correctly decided on **1. ... Nb4** to save his knight. Unfortunately, we do not know what Acers played in response, but it’s clear that Black is in trouble. ♡

MAKE → YOUR → MOVE

BY FM CARSTEN HANSEN

THIS MONTH'S PUZZLES ARE FROM ALL TAKEN FROM A variety of recent over-the-board tournaments.

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. Solutions are on page 59. ♣

TACTIC I.



WHITE TO MOVE

TACTIC II.



WHITE TO MOVE

TACTIC III.



WHITE TO MOVE

TACTIC IV.



WHITE TO MOVE

TACTIC V.



WHITE TO MOVE

TACTIC VI.



BLACK TO MOVE

TACTIC VII.



WHITE TO MOVE

TACTIC VIII.



BLACK TO MOVE

TACTIC IX.



BLACK TO MOVE

- Position 1: MISSING PROTECTORS
- Position 2: LOOSE PIECES DROP OFF
- Position 3: WHEN THE DEFENDERS ARE GONE

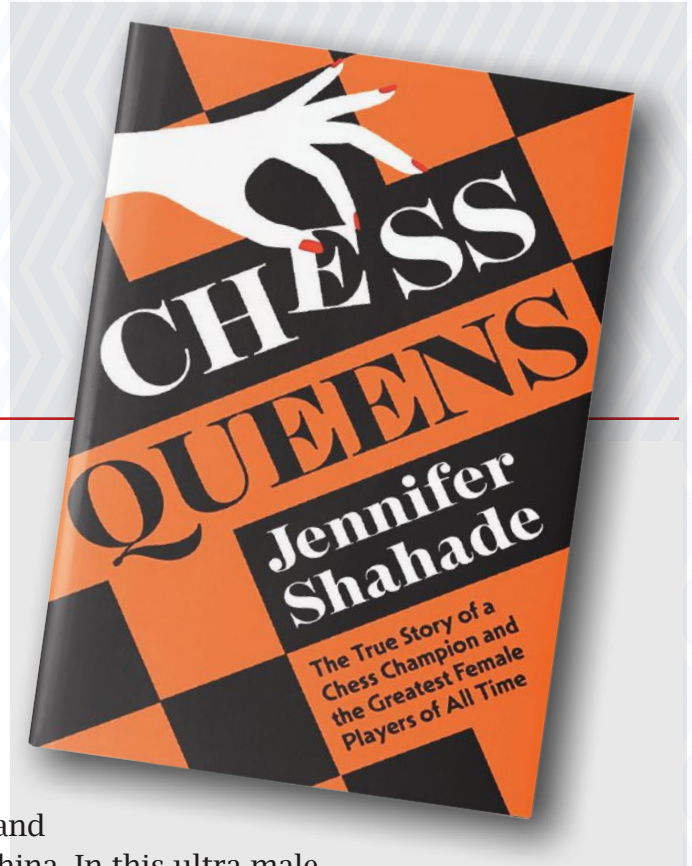
- Position 4: TOO MANY JOBS
- Position 5: BRINGING THE FORCES ALONG
- Position 6: CREATE A PIN

- Position 7: BLOCK TO OPEN
- Position 8: THE RIGHT HOLES
- Position 9: JUST ENOUGH HOLES

CHESS QUEENS

B01540B **\$28.95**

For fans of *The Queen's Gambit*, this is the real life story of a female chess champion travelling the world to compete in a male-dominated sport with the most famous players of all time. Jennifer Shahade, a two-time US women's chess champion, spent her teens and twenties travelling the world playing chess. Tournaments have taken her from Istanbul to Moscow, and introduced her to players from Zambia to China. In this ultra male-dominated sport, Jennifer found shocking sexism, as well as an incredible history of the top female players that has often been ignored. But she also found friendships, feminism and hope.



Maria Konnikova

Poker Champion & Best-selling Author of "The Biggest Bluff"

"Jennifer Shahade is a brilliant, insightful thinker who never fails to entertain and engage. She's even made me want to learn to play chess – something I swore I'd never do. Jennifer is a true role model"

Alexandra Botez

Content Creator & Chess Master

"Jennifer's book gives readers an insider look into the complex realities of being a female chess player, while also showcasing the badass women knocking down these barriers. Highly recommended!"

Angela Saini

Author of "Inferior" and "Superior"

"Amazing. I was transfixed throughout, and learned so much. Chess Queens is an astoundingly intimate, thoughtful and inspirational book by a person who has seen it all from the inside."

Yoko Ono

Artist, Singer, Songwriter and Activist

"The fascinating true stories of the lives of champion chess players. All women should take up the challenge and pick up a board!"

Chessic Words, Classic Sacs

Making stock sacrifices part of your arsenal.

BY BRUCE PANDOLFINI

G

M BOBBY FISCHER FAMOUSLY said (wrote), “Sac, Sac, Mate!” to describe how he generally proceeded against the Sicilian Dragon. While

Fischer may not have used those actual words — Larry Evans possibly massaged them a bit in *My 60 Memorable Games* — its spirit is understood. Certain kinds of winning attacks may require several sacrifices in series. Sacrificial attacks typically rely on forcing checks. But it’s also not uncommon that such forcing sequences are setup by non-checking sacrifices.

In this month’s game, played in an offhand way between E. E. Book and Vigge Ingerslev (Black) in Gothenburg in 1929, the opening proceeds in an unorthodox manner, with White surrendering a pawn for attack. Suddenly, with White’s bishops aimed at Black’s kingside, a surprise, non-checking piece offering introduces something like a “sac, sac, mate” conclusion. The game began as a French Defense:

FRENCH DEFENSE, TWO KNIGHTS VARIATION (C00)

Eero Einar Book
Vigge Ingerslev
Gothenburg, 1929

1. e4 e6

(see diagram top of next column)

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.**

2. Nf3 **Par Score 5**
White doesn’t have to play 2. d4, but you may accept **full credit** for that as well as for 2. d3, 2. Nc3, or 2. Qe2.

2. ... **d5**
This is one of the aims behind the French Defense: Black gets to assail White’s center immediately. The main drawback is the obstruction of the light-squared bishop.**

3. Nc3 **Par Score 5**
Another developing move. Accept **full credit** for 3. exd5 or 3. e5.

3. ... **Bb4**
Black activates the bishop. Also worthy of consideration was 3. ... Nf6.**

4. Bd3 **Par Score 5**
Certainly an unusual placement, in front of the d-pawn. You may accept **full credit** for 4. exd5, 4. e5, or even 4. a3, when 4. ... Bxc3 5. dxc3 dxe4 6. Qxd8+ Kxd8 7. Ng5 gets the

pawn back (1 bonus point).

4. ... **c5**
With White’s d-pawn temporarily obstructed, Black mobilizes his pawns for central attack.**

5. a3 **Par Score 5**
White puts the question to the bishop. After 5. ... Bxc3 6. dxc3 dxe4 7. Bxe4 Qxd1+ 8. Kxd1 Nf6 9. Bd3, chances are about even.

5. ... **Ba5**
For now, Black keeps the dark-squared bishop.**

6. b4 **Par Score 5**
White sacrifices a pawn to open lines for an unclear attack. You may accept **full credit** for either 6. exd5 or 6. Bb5+.

6. ... **ccb4**
There’s no forbidding reason Black shouldn’t take the pawn.**

7. axb4 **Par Score 5**

7. ... **Bxb4 ****

8. Bb2 **Par Score 5**
This is the natural deployment here. If 8. 0-0, play might continue 8. ... Bxc3 9. dxc3 dxe4 10. Bxe4 Qxd1 11. Rxd1 Nf6.

8. ... **Ne7**
Black plays to shield the e-file and the a3-f8 diagonal. But 8. ... Nf6 was more active and slightly preferable.**

9. 0-0 **Par Score 5**
To make things happen, White needs to get his king to safety and complete development.

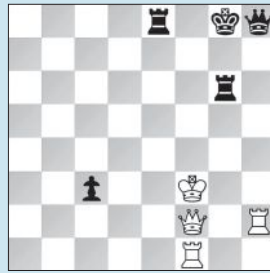
ABCS OF CHESS

▶ THESE PROBLEMS ARE ALL related to key positions in this month's game. In each case, Black is to move. Solutions are on page 59.

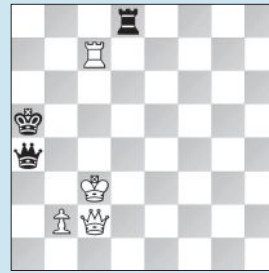
THINK OF AN ATTACKING PATTERN you'd like to gain greater facility over. You might, for instance, be interested in the "classic bishop sacrifice" at h2/h7 against the castled king's position. Then find a computerized database of chess games and get ready for a deep search. Analyze all the examples and watch your overall competence with such material improve.



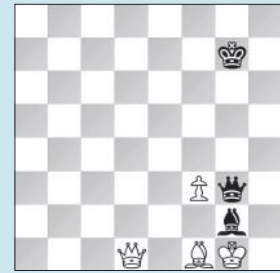
PROBLEM 1
Mating net



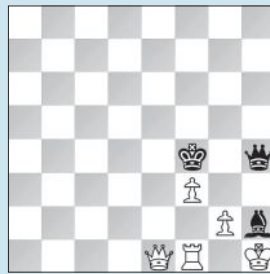
PROBLEM 2
Mating net



PROBLEM 3
Mating net



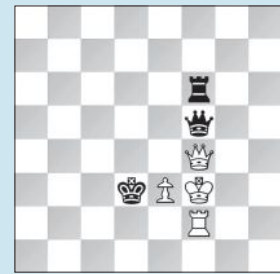
PROBLEM 4
Mating net



PROBLEM 5
Mating net



PROBLEM 6
Mating net



9. ... **0-0**
Even though White's bishops loom in the background, Black is okay.**

10. **Re1** **Par Score 5**
White places his rook on a useful file.

10. ... **b6**
This was probably not right. More logical was 10. ... Nbc6, waiting to see what to do with the bishop on c8.**

11. **exd5** **Par Score 5**
Book opens the center, striving to activate his pieces.

11. ... **Nxd5**
It's normal to offer piece trades to blunt enemy aggression.**

12. **Nxd5** **Par Score 5**
White obliges, his bishops aiming imperiously at the Black heartland.

12. ... **exd5**
Chances are about even, with White seemingly having enough for the pawn.**

13. **Nd4** **Par Score 5**
The blockading knight looks good. But you may accept **full credit** for 13. Ra4, when 13. ... Nc6 loses material to 14. Bb5 (**1 bonus point**).

13. ... **Bb7**
Not to suggest overusing the queen, but 13. ... Qg5 provided more resilience.**

14. **Re3** **Par Score 5**
Consistent with a kingside buildup, but more potent was 14. Nf5 (**1 bonus point**), when 14. ... f6 is met by 15. Qg4.

14. ... **Nd7**
Black's kingside remains vulnerable. It looks ugly, but a better defensive try was 14. ... g6.**

15. **Nc6** **Par Score 7**
A cute setup sacrifice, but unnecessary. You may accept **full credit** for 15. Bxh7+.

15. ... **Bxc6**
What's a knight among friends?**

16. **Bxh7+** **Par Score 6**
It's not exactly the same thing, but echoing Fischer's advice, White sics to get rid of the opposing h-pawn.

16. ... **Kxh7**
On 16. ... Kh8, White has several winning moves, including 17. Qh5 and 17. Bxg7+.**

17. **Qh5+** **Par Score 5**
With this check, White's queen gets into place.

17. ... **Kg8****

18. **Bxg7** **Par Score 6**
Time for the second sac, which some might describe as falling into the "two-bishop sacrifice" category. There remains no black pawn cover on the g- and h-files.

18. ... **Kxg7**
If 18. ... f5, White wins with 19. Bh6, 19. Qg6, or 19. Rg3.**

19. **Rg3+** **Par Score 5**

19. ... **Kf6**
White now has a couple of strong moves at his disposal. One in particular forces a speedy end.**

20. **Re1** **Par Score 6**
Intelligent use of the queen-rook, cutting off the opposing king's escape. White threatens two mates, 21. Qf3 mate and 21. Qg5 mate. Since Black can only delay the inevitable, he resigned.

20. ... **Black resigned. ♠**

Test yourself against past rounds of "Solitaire Chess" via the US Chess Digital archives. Visit uschess.org to check them out!

The Jobava London

Theory marches on – and authors do their part!

BY IM JOHN WATSON

C

ONTINUING WITH LAST month's examination of opening theory in ebooks, I want to look at some products covering the Jobava London System,

a White repertoire involving the moves 1. d4, 2. Nc3, and 3. Bf4. This has become a popular way for White to play, largely without needing massive preparation, similar to what is offered by the London proper (Bc1-f4 without Nb1-c3). At least six recent electronic products address the Jobava in detail, three from White's point of view and three from Black's. Given all this interest, it's remarkable that 2. Nc3 was considered a marginal and even anti-positional move for most of chess history. It is now played by the world's elite and creates fresh and interesting play.

IM Elisabeth Paehtz has been the leading German woman player for about 20 years

now. She won the German Championship in 1999 at age 14, became a WGM in 2001, and ultimately won her third GM norm in November 2021. (The title awaits FIDE confirmation at time of writing.) Now she has produced a video, *Attacking with the Jobava London System*, for ChessBase, which runs for six hours and, like other ChessBase ebooks, includes a PGN file with all the analysis. Another video series with an attractive White repertoire is GM Simon Williams' *The Jobava London System* for Chessable. Williams tends to pick more dynamic (and therefore riskier) lines with a heavy dose of tactical themes.

Black generally chooses one of two major defensive systems against the Jobava: one is a fianchetto with ... g7-g6 (most often with ... Ng8-f6 and ... d7-d5, although some authors consider ... d7-d6 as well) and the other is with ... d7-d5 and other developing moves such as ... Ng8-f6, ... Bc8-f5, and ... e7-e6 or ... c7-c6. Let's take a look at what happens when after 1. d4 d5 2. Nc3 Nf3 3. Bf4, Black plays the solid 3. ... c6, preventing Nc3-b5 and keeping options open. Right away the two repertoires deviate. Paehtz recommends 4. Qd2, and if Black tries to develop by 4. ... Bf5 before playing ... e7-e6, 5. f3 has ideas of chasing the bishop with g2-g4 and h2-h4. Then 5. ... h6 6. g4 Bh7 7. e3 e6 8. h4 can follow.

This is a typical modern strategy in many openings, gaining space by playing a number of non-developing flank pawn moves. Formerly condemned, we find some version of this policy in nearly every opening these days. Black should counter on the queenside: 8. ... Nbd7 9. 0-0-0 b5 10. Kb1 Nb6 (10. ... b4 11. Na4 Qa5 12. b3 Nb6 13. Nb2! Qa3 14. Bd3 with a clear positional edge) 11. Bd3 Nc4 (after 11. ... b4 12. Nce2 Nc4 13. Qc1, Paehtz points out that Black's attack is very slow while White has the promising Ng1-h3 and g4-g5 in store; I think that Black might also consider 11. ... a5!?) 12. Bxc4 bxc4 13. Nge2 and White intends g4-g5 and e3-e4 next.

In response to 3. ... c6, Williams prefers 4. e3 Bf5 (he meets 4. ... g6 with the typically aggressive 5. Be2 Bg7 6. h4!, e.g., 6. ... h5 7. Nf3 Bg4 8. Ne5 Bxe2 9. Qxe2 Nbd7 10. 0-0-0) 5. f3 e6 6. g4 Bg6 7. h4 h6 8. Bd3 Bxd3 9. Qxd3, again with space and more freedom. Both White approaches leave plenty of play on the board.

The defenses with ... g7-g6 are important because so many players like to play the King's Indian versus anything 'irregular.' I think the Jobava System is particularly fun to play against KID and Grünfeld move orders. GM Abhijeet Gupta recommends the Jobava versus both in his *Play the London System* ebook for Modern Chess. Here's a sample with his comments:

1. d4 Nf6 2. Bf4 g6 3. Nc3 Bg7

If Black waits to fianchetto the bishop with something like 3. ... d6 4. e4 c6 5. Qd2 b5 6. Bd3 Nbd7 7. Nf3 Bg7 8. Bh6 0-0 9. Bxg7 Kxg7 10. a4 b4 11. Ne2 a5 12. Ng3 Gupta write that "the advance h2-h4-h5 followed by Qd2-g5 is a huge threat now. Additionally, White can always switch to queenside play with c2-c3."

4. e4 d6 5. Qd2 c6

Castling here may be a mistake. After 5. ...





0-0 6. Bh6 e5 7. Bxg7 Kxg7 8. f3 Nc6 9. Nge2 Gupta rightly says that “this is supposed to be the dream KID / Saemisch variation for White. Our idea is simple: 0-0-0 and roll the pawns on the kingside.”

6. Bh6 Bxh6 7. Qxh6 Qa5 8. Bd3 b5 (alternatives: 8. ... c5, 8. ... Nbd7) **9. Nf3 b4 10. Ne2 Ba6 11. 0-0 Bxd3 12. cxd3 Nbd7 13. Rfe1 Qh5 14. Qd2 Qb5 15. Ng3 0-0 16. e5** White has a winning attack here, for example, 16. ... dxe5 17. dxe5 Ne8 18. Qh6 f6 19. exf6 exf6 20. Re7.

Williams has a unique anti-Grünfeld setup. As always, he charges ahead with h4-h5 when possible:

1. d4 Nf6 2. Nc3 d5 3. Bf4 g6 4. e3 Bg7 5. h4 This is in the spirit of the latest fashion in the KID, i.e., 1 d4 Nf6 2 c4 g6 3 h4!?

5. ... 0-0? I think this is already a mistake, and one worth remembering. Better options include 5. ... h5, 5. ... c5 and 5. ... c6. Williams gives 5. ... h6 6. Nf3 c5 7. Nb5 Na6 8. c3 with an decent edge for White.

6. h5! Nxf5 7. Rxh5! gxf5 8. Qxh5



Black's extra Exchange is irrelevant. White has a terrific attack here:

8. ... Nd7 Also depressing is 8. ... e6 9. Qh2 Nc6 10. 0-0-0 f5 11. Nf3.

9. Qh2 c6 10. Bd3 Nf6 11. Nf3 Bg4 12. Ne5 Bh5 13. Bxh7+ Kxh7 14. g4 Threatening g4-g5. Black is in trouble.

Paehtz offers a more positional approach to the same problem:

1. d4 d5 2. Nc3 Nf6 3. Bf4 g6 4. Qd2 c6 5. f3 Bg7 6. e4 0-0! Safer and more solid is 6. ... Be6, but it's worth seeing how easily White can get the initiative in these lines.

7. e5! Nfd7 Not 7. ... Nh5? 8. Be3 and White plays g2-g4 next.

8. 0-0-0 Now White has h4-h5 after all.

8. ... c5 9. dxc5 e6 10. h4 Nxe5 11. h5 Nbc6 12. hxg6 fxg6 Definitely not 12. ... hxg6?? 13. Bh6.

13. Bh6 Qf6 14. Bxg7 Qxg7 15. Nh3 Or, alternatively, 15. f4 Nd7 16. Nf3 Nxc5 17. Bb5. In both cases White has a clear positional advantage.

Of course it's not always so easy, and players are busy coming up with counter-schemes for Black. Here's Gawain Jones' suggestion for the second player in his new King's Indian Defense series for Chessable:

1. d4 Nf6 2. Nc3 d5 3. Bf4 g6 4. e3 Bg7 5. h4 h5 6. Nf3 0-0 7. Be2 c5 8. dxc5

After 8. Nb5 cxd4! 9. Nc7 (Jones: “White can win the rook, but our central play will be too powerful. 9. exd4 Nc6 10. Nc7 Rb8 11. Nb5 It looks like White has managed his draw. 11. ... Bf5! But we can sacrifice the Exchange. 12. Bxb8 Qxb8 In return for the small material investment we have a lot of squares. White regrets including h2-h4 as now [the g4-square] will be a great spot for our knight.”) 9. ... Ng4 10. Nxa8 e5 the knight is stuck on a8 and the f4-bishop lacks prospects.

8. ... Qa5 9. 0-0 Qxc5 10. Nb5 a6 11. Nc7 Ra7 12. a3 Williams' repertoire move, after which he likes White. Instead, 12. Nb5 axb5! 13. Bxb8 was played in Naiditsch – Carlsen, Baden-

Baden 2017, when Jones recommends 13. ... Ra4! with the threat ... Nf6-g4 and ... e7-e5, saying “White is solid but our position is more dynamic.”



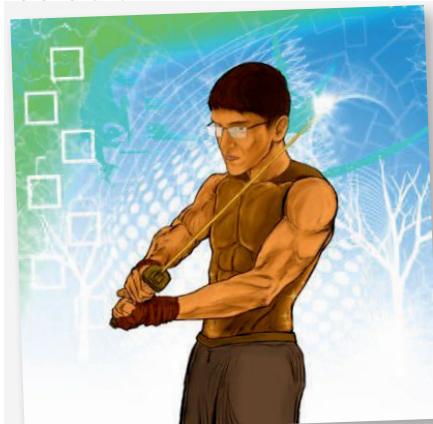
12. ... Bf5! The advantage of having the last word! Jones pored over Williams' recommended lines here and found this improvement over 12...b6?!

13. Nd4 Bg4 14. f3 Bd7 Jones: “White now needs to be careful with his offside knight on c7.” Here's his main line, in which White barely survives with only moves:

15. Nb3! Qc6 16. Nd4 Qb6 Here White has to be very careful. Best is 17. Qd2! Nc6 18. Nxc6 Qxc6 (18. ... Bxc6 19. a4 a5 20. c3 Rc8 21. Qd4 Nd7 22. Qxb6 Nxb6 23. Nb5 Raa8 with equality) 19. Qd4 b6 20. Nxa6 Rxa6 21. Bxa6 b5 22. Bxb5 Qxb5 23. a4 Qa6 with an equal position.

Let's look at a final variation that has been recommended for Black in two recent Chessable repertoires: GM Surya Ganguly's *Lifetime Repertoires Nimzo-Indian/Ragozin* (reviewed last month) and GM Sahaj Grover's and Abhijeet Gupta's *The Cheeky Chigorin*.

GM Mircea Parligras shows the strength of the Benoni!





GM Gawain Jones defends the KID in two Chessable courses

In addition, GM Mircea Parligras analyzes it in his latest Benoni repertoire for Modern Chess.

1. d4 d5 2. Nc3 Nf6 3. Bf4 c5

This is only the fifth most popular move in my database, but Paehtz admits that 3. ... c5 is a good choice for Black. I like it. Her main line goes:

4. e3 cxd4

Here 4. ... a6 5 dxc5 Nc6 has been played by Carlsen and Duda, among others. One main line goes 6. a3 e5 7. Bg5 d4 (7. ... Be6) 8. Ne4 Bf5 (8. ... Qd5!? 9. Nxf6+ gxf6 10. Bxf6 Rg8 is unclear) 9. Bxf6 gxf6 10. Qf3 Bxe4 11. Qxe4 Bxc5 12. 0-0-0 Qb6 13. Nf3 dxe3 (Tang – Carlsen, Lichess 2021) and here 14. fxe3! Bxe3+ 15. Kb1 Bd4 16. Nxd4 Nxd4 17. c3 Ne6 18. Bc4 Rd8 is slightly in White's favor.

5. exd4 a6

This most popular move is doing well, and

here 5. ... Bg4 also seems to equalize. In practice, the latter has even achieved a performance rating advantage so far. One example: 6. f3 Bd7 7. Bd3 Nc6 8. Nge2 Nb4 9. a3 Nxd3+ 10. Qxd3 e6 (Jobava – Navara, Chess24, 2021) and here Paehtz recommends 11. h4! Be7 12. h5 with a double-edged game.

6. Nf3

The alternative 6. Bd3 Nc6 7. Nge2 e6 has equalized in numerous games.

6. ... Nc6 7. Ne5

The standard move. Parligras shows that Black can simplify following 7. Be2 Bg4 8. 0-0 e6 9. Ne5 Bxe2 10. Nxe2 Bd6 11. c3 Bxe5 12. Bxe5 (12. dxe5 Nh5) 12. ... Nxe5 13. dxe5 Nd7 with equality.

7. ... Bd7

Or 7. ... e6 8. Nxc6 bxc6 9. Na4 Bd6 10. Bxd6 Qxd6 11. Bd3, and if Black so desires, he can equalize with 11. ... e5 (11. ... a5 has the idea ... Bc8-a6 and if 12. Qe2?? Qb4+ is trouble) 12. dxe5 Qxe5+ 13. Qe2 Qxe2+ 14. Kxe2. Black can choose between 14. ... Be6, 14. ... a5, or even 14. ... Kd8 with the idea ... Kd8-c7.

8. g4!?



The most enterprising move, at any rate. One way to meet 8. g3 is 8. ... e6 9. Bg2 Nxe5 10. dxe5 Ng8 11. 0-0 Ne7 12. Re1 Ng6.

8. ... e6

Now 8. ... h6! is a good alternative, but 8. ... Nxe5 9. dxe5 Nxe4 10. Bg2! favors White, as does 8. ... g6 9. f3! Bg7 10. Qd2.

9. g5 Ne4!?

Theory and practice have recently moved towards 9. ... Nxe5! 10. Bxe5 Ng8 (10. ... Ne4 11. Nxe4 dxe4 12. Bg2 is equal) 11. h4 (11. Qh5? Ne7 12. Bd3 Nc6 13. g6? Nxe5 14. dxe5 was Artemiev – Ding, Chess24, 2021, and here 14. ... fxg6! 15. Bxg6+ hxg6 16. Qxh8 d4 gives Black too much attack, even after 17. Ne4 Bc6 18. Nd6+ Kd7 19. Rg1 Qa5+) 11. ... h6 12. Qh5 Ne7 13. Bd3 Nc6 with equality.

10. Nxe4 dxe4 11. Nxd7 Qxd7 12. c3

White has slightly better chances in this position.

Every one of these ebooks does a responsible job with the Jobava London System, and as we go to press, no less than GM Hans Niemann has just released a Lifetime Repertoire on the Jobava with Chessable! It's clear that Jobava's brainchild leads to a wide variety of unbalanced positions with no definite solution.

The upshot? All indications point to the fact that we'll be testing these variations well into the future, and that serious players will need to be well prepared for them in practice. ♠

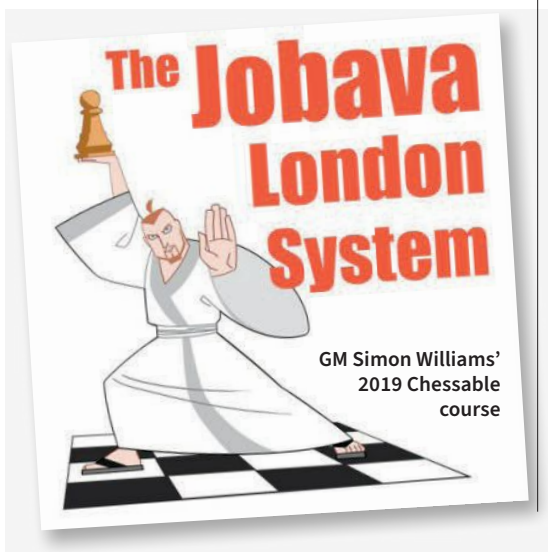
Gupta, Abhijeet. Play the London System. Modern Chess, 2022. Two hours of video plus .pgn database. Available at modern-chess.com, €35.00.

Jones, Gawain. Lifetime Repertoires: King's Indian Defense, Parts 1 and 2. Chessable, 2021. Paid video: 33+ hours (Part 1), 37+ hours (Part 2). Available at chessable.com, \$49.99 (analysis only) or \$299.98 (with video) each part.

Paehtz, Elizabeth. Attacking with the Jobava London System. ChessBase, 2021. Six hours of video plus .pgn database. (Available from uscf-sales.com, product code WIN0631CB, \$33.95.)

Parligras, Mircea. Lifetime Repertoires: Modern Benoni. Chessable, 2021. Paid video: 33 hours and 47 minutes. Available from chessable.com, \$49.99 (analysis only) or \$299.98 (with video).

Williams, Simon. The Jobava London System. Chessable, 2019. Paid video: 10+ hours. Available from chessable.com, \$29.99 (analysis only) or \$129.98 (with video).



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 May 31, 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 USCHESS.ORG Effective with the November 2020 *Chess Life*, we have removed the National Events and Bids page that has traditionally been part of our TLA section. This information continues to be available here: new.uschess.org/national-events-calendar

For complete details on individual events, please visit [new.uschess.org/node/\[TLA ID\]](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 • HERITAGE EVENT • JUNIOR GRAND PRIX

2022 National Elementary (K-6) Championships

MAY 13-15, 2022, OHIO

Event site: Greater Columbus Convention Center Address: 400 North High Street, Columbus, OH 43215 Overall prize fund: n/a GP Points: n/a FIDE Rated: N Handicap accessible: Y Residency restriction: N Organizer: Boyd Reed Email: nationalevents@uschess.org Phone: 931-787-2244 Website: <http://www.uschess.org/tournaments/2022/elem> TLA ID: 32594

NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP EVENT • HERITAGE EVENT

2022 US Amateur East Championship

MAY 28-30, 2022, NEW JERSEY

Event site: Hyatt Morristown Address: 3 Speedwell Ave., Morristown, NJ 07960 Overall prize fund: n/a GP Points: n/a FIDE Rated: N Handicap accessible: N Residency restriction: N Organizer: Aaron Kiedes Email: akiedes@gmail.com Phone: n/a Website: <http://www.njscf.org> TLA ID: 33045

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@chessgmail.com Phone: 702-930-9550 Website: <https://vegaschessfestival.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@chessgmail.com Phone: 702-930-9550 Website: <https://vegaschessfestival.com> TLA ID: 32321

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

122nd Annual United States Open Chess Championship

JULY 30-AUGUST 7, 2022, CALIFORNIA

Event site: Westin Mission Hills Golf Resort & Spa Address: 371333 Dinah Shore Drive, Rancho Mirage, CA 92270 Overall prize fund: \$50,000 GP Points: 300 FIDE Rated: N Handicap accessible: Y Residency restriction: N Organizer: Boyd Reed Email: nationalevents@uschess.org Phone: 931-787-1234 Website: <http://www.uschess.org/tournaments/2022/usopen> TLA ID: 33031

Grand Prix

The Grand Prix continues in 2022. For information visit new.uschess.org/us-chess-grand-prix-program.

GRAND PRIX • ENHANCED GRAND PRIX • JUNIOR GRAND PRIX

2nd annual Niagara Falls Open

MAY 13-15, 2022, NEW YORK

Event site: Sheraton Niagara Falls Address: 300 3rd St., Niagara Falls, NY 14303 Overall prize fund: \$12,000 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: 32660

GRAND PRIX

2022 John Hurt Memorial

MAY 14, 2022, TENNESSEE

Event site: Memphis Chess Club Address: 195 Madison Ave Suite 101, Memphis, TN 38103 Overall prize fund: \$1,350 GP Points: 6 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: 32900

GRAND PRIX

The INDY \$3500!

MAY 14, 2022, INDIANA

Event site: Christ United Methodist Church Address: 8540 US-31 S., Indianapolis, IN 46227 Overall prize fund: \$3,500 GP Points: 15 FIDE Rated: N Handicap accessible: Y Residency restriction: N Organizer: BC Chess Club Email: bcchessclubindy@gmail.com Phone: 3172866183 Website: <https://www.facebook.com/indychessfun/> TLA ID: 33122

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

GRAND PRIX • ENHANCED GRAND PRIX • JUNIOR GRAND PRIX

9th Cherry Blossom Classic

MAY 26-30, 2022, VIRGINIA

Event site: Washington Dulles Airport Marriott Address: 45020 Aviation Dr., Dulles, VA 20166 Overall prize fund: \$20,000 GP Points: 200 FIDE Rated: Y Handicap accessible: N Residency restriction: N Organizer: Anand Dommalapati Email: cbc2022@capitalareachess.com Phone: 7036275314 Website: <http://www.cherryblossomchess.com> TLA ID: 32735

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

77th Annual Texas State and Amateur

MAY 27-30, 2022, TEXAS

Event site: Doubletree by Hilton DFW Airport North Address: 4441 W. John Carpenter Fwy, Irving, TX 75063 Overall prize fund: \$4,600 GP Points: 40 FIDE Rated: Y Handicap accessible: N Residency restriction: N Organizer: Luis Salinas Email: info@dallaschess.com Phone: 2146329000 Website: <http://www.dallaschess.com> TLA ID: 32357

HERITAGE EVENT • GRAND PRIX • JUNIOR GRAND PRIX

42nd Annual Lina Grumette Memorial Day Classic

MAY 28-30, 2022, CALIFORNIA, SOUTHERN

Event site: Townplace Suites Marriott Address: 10336 Richardson Street, Loma Linda, CA 92354 Overall prize fund: \$10,000 b/200 GP Points: 40 FIDE Rated: Y Handicap accessible: N Residency restriction: N Organizer: Southern California Chess Federation Email: garden902aol.com Phone: 951-505-1064 Website: <http://www.schess.com> TLA ID: 32894

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

90th Massachusetts Open

MAY 28-30, 2022, MASSACHUSETTS

Event site: Westford Regency Inn & Conference Center Address: 219 Littleton Road, Westford MA 01886 Overall prize fund: \$7,500 GP Points: 40 FIDE Rated: Y 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: 32895

GRAND PRIX • ENHANCED GRAND PRIX

9th annual Chicago Open Blitz

MAY 29, 2022, ILLINOIS

Event site: Westin Chicago North Shore Hotel Address: 601 North Milwaukee Ave., Wheeling, IL 60090 Overall prize fund: \$2,500 GP Points: 30 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: 32588

GRAND PRIX

CFCC 2022 Sunshine Open & Scholastic

JUNE 3-5, 2022, FLORIDA

Event site: Holiday Inn Resort Lake Buena Vista Address: 13351 State Road 535, Orlando, Florida 32821 Overall prize fund: \$8,500 GP Points: 20 FIDE Rated: N Handicap accessible: Y Residency restriction: N Organizer: Central Florida Chess Club Email: info@centralflchess.org Phone: (407) 312-6237 Website: <https://www.centralflchess.org> TLA ID: 33157

GRAND PRIX • ENHANCED GRAND PRIX • JUNIOR GRAND PRIX

Orchard Lake XXIV

JUNE 4 2022, NORTH CAROLINA

Event site: Orchard Lake Campground Address: 460 Orchard Lake Rd., Saluda, NC 28773 Overall prize fund: \$900 b/50 GP Points: 10 FIDE Rated: Y Handicap accessible: N Residency restriction: N Organizer: Kevin J Hyde Email: chess@achievementtesting.info Phone: n/a Website: <https://achievementtesting.info/chess> TLA ID: 32549

GRAND PRIX

Rea Hayes Open Chess Tournament

JUNE 4 2022, TENNESSEE

Event site: Chattanooga Christian School Address: 3354 Charger Dr., Chattanooga, TN 37409 Overall

PLEASE NOTE DEADLINE FOR PRINT TLA SUBMISSIONS

TLAs appearing in *Chess Life* must be uploaded online on the 10th, two months prior to the issue cover date in which the ad is to appear. (For example, October TLAs must be uploaded no later than August 10th.) TLAs uploaded past this deadline cannot be published without special approval by US Chess.

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.

prize fund: \$1,000 GP Points: 6 FIDE Rated: N Handicap accessible: Y Residency restriction: N Organizer: Mike Bacon Email: mibacon@ccsk12.com Phone: 4234325176 Website: n/a TLA ID: 33146

GRAND PRIX • ENHANCED GRAND PRIX

2022 DFW FIDE Premier 4
JUNE 10-12 2022, TEXAS

Event site: Doubletree by Hilton DFW Airport North 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: 2146329000 Website: <http://www.dallaschess.com/> TLA ID: 32574

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

27th annual Northeast Open
JUNE 10-12 2022, CONNECTICUT

Event site: Stamford Hotel (formerly Sheraton) Address: 700 Main St, Stamford, CT 06901 Overall prize fund: \$15,000 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: 32950

GRAND PRIX • ENHANCED GRAND PRIX • JUNIOR GRAND PRIX

Cleveland Open
JUNE 10-12 2022, OHIO

Event site: Crowne Plaza Cleveland Airport Address: 7230 Engle Road, Middleburg Heights OH 44130 Overall prize fund: \$15,000 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: 32990

GRAND PRIX • ENHANCED GRAND PRIX • JUNIOR GRAND PRIX

Midwest Chess Congress
JUNE 17-19 2022, IOWA

Event site: Ramada Tropics Resort & Conference Center Address: 5000 Merle Hay Road (near I-80 & I-35), Des Moines IA 50322 Overall prize fund: \$10,000 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: 32992

GRAND PRIX

David Kernell Memorial
JUNE 18, 2022, TENNESSEE

Event site: Memphis Chess Club Address: 195 Madison Ave Suite 101, Memphis, TN 38103 Overall prize fund: \$2,000 GP Points: 6 FIDE Rated: N Handicap accessible: Y Residency restriction: N Organizer: Memphis Chess Club Email: info@memphischessclub.com Phone: 7318685755 Website: <http://www.memphischessclub.com/> TLA ID: 32924

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

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

ENHANCED GRAND PRIX • GRAND PRIX • JUNIOR GRAND PRIX • ENHANCED GRAND PRIX • JUNIOR GRAND PRIX

11th annual World Open Women's Championship
JUNE 29-30, 2022, PENNSYLVANIA

Event site: Philadelphia Sheraton Downtown Address: 201 North 17th St, Philadelphia, PA 19103 Overall prize fund: \$2,000 GP Points: 30 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: 32615

GRAND PRIX • ENHANCED GRAND PRIX

11th annual Game/7 Blitz Championship
JUNE 30, 2022, PENNSYLVANIA

Event site: Philadelphia Sheraton Downtown Address: 201 North 17th St, Philadelphia, PA 19103 Overall prize fund: \$1,500 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: 32631

HERITAGE EVENT • GRAND PRIX

Pacific Southwest Open
JULY 2-4, 2022, CALIFORNIA, SOUTHERN

Event site: Hilton Irvine/Orange County Airport Address: 18880 MacArthur Blvd Irvine CA 92612 Overall prize fund: \$10,000 GP Points: 80 FIDE Rated: N Handicap accessible: Y Residency restriction: N Organizer: Chuck Ensey Email: chucnglo@aol.com Phone: 858-432-8006 Website: <http://www.schess.com> TLA ID: 32775

HERITAGE EVENT • GRAND PRIX

45th Annual Green Bay Open
JULY 2-3, 2022, WISCONSIN

Event site: Radisson Hotel & Conference Center Address: 2040 Airport Dr., Green Bay, WI 54313 Overall prize fund: \$2,500 GP Points: 15 FIDE Rated: N Handicap accessible: Y Residency restriction: N Organizer: Luke A. Ludwig Email: lukeludwig@aol.com Phone: 9204659859 Website: n/a TLA ID: 33175

GRAND PRIX

24th Annual Sacramento Chess Championship
JULY 2-4, 2022, CALIFORNIA, NORTHERN

Event site: Holiday Inn Express & Suites Address: 2224 Auburn Blvd., Sacramento, CA 95821 Overall prize fund: \$8,600 GP Points: 15 FIDE Rated: Y Handicap accessible: Y Residency restriction: N Organizer: John P. McCumiskey Email: sacto@chessglobal.net Phone: 916-524-9479 Website: <http://sacramentochessclub.org> TLA ID: 33486

HERITAGE EVENT • GRAND PRIX • ENHANCED GRAND PRIX

30th annual World Open Game/10 Championship
JULY 3, 2022, PENNSYLVANIA

Event site: Philadelphia Sheraton Downtown Address: 201 North 17th St, Philadelphia, PA 19103 Overall prize fund: \$2,200 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: 32633

HERITAGE EVENT • GRAND PRIX • ENHANCED GRAND PRIX

33rd annual World Open Blitz Championship
JULY 4, 2022, PENNSYLVANIA

Event site: Philadelphia Sheraton Downtown Address: 201 North 17th St, Philadelphia, PA 19103 Overall prize fund: \$3,000 GP Points: 30 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: 32632

GRAND PRIX • ENHANCED GRAND PRIX • JUNIOR GRAND PRIX

15th annual Chicago Class
JULY 15-17, 2022, ILLINOIS

Event site: Westin Chicago North Shore Hotel Address: 601 N Milwaukee Avenue, Wheeling IL 60090 Overall prize fund: \$30,000 GP Points: 150 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: 32928

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

26th annual Pacific Coast Open
JULY 15-17, 2022, CALIFORNIA, SOUTHERN

Event site: To be announced, visit chessevents.us Address: n/a Overall prize fund: \$25,000 GP Points: 150 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: 33003

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

30th annual Southern Open
JULY 22-24, FLORIDA

Event site: Wyndham Orlando Resort Address: 8001 International Drive, Orlando, FL 32819 Overall prize fund: \$20,000 GP Points: 150 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: 32940

GRAND PRIX • ENHANCED GRAND PRIX • JUNIOR GRAND PRIX

23rd annual Pittsburgh Open
JULY 22-24, PENNSYLVANIA

Event site: Doubletree Green Tree Address: 500 Mansfield Ave (near I-376 Exit 67), Pittsburgh 152052 Overall prize fund: \$13,000 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: 33004

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

52nd annual Continental Open
JULY 27-31, MASSACHUSETTS

Event site: Sturbridge Host Hotel Address: 366 Main St (Rt 20 West), Sturbridge MA 01566 (I-84 Exit 3, near I-90 Overall prize fund: \$35,000 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: 32986

ENHANCED GRAND PRIX • JUNIOR GRAND PRIX

9th Annual Washington International
AUGUST 13-17, MARYLAND

Event site: Rockville Hilton Address: 1750 Rockville Pike, Rockville, Maryland 20852 Overall prize fund: \$26,725 GP Points: 200 FIDE Rated: Y Handicap accessible: N Residency restriction: N Organizer: Michael Regan Email: mregan@stsci.edu Phone: 410-419-5130 Website: <https://mdchess.com> TLA ID: 32910

GRAND PRIX • ENHANCED GRAND PRIX • JUNIOR GRAND PRIX

12th annual Central California Open
AUGUST 19-21, CALIFORNIA, NORTHERN

Event site: Doubletree Hotel Address: 2233 Ventura St, Fresno CA 93710 Overall prize fund: \$10,000 GP Points: 100 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: 33310

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

54th annual Atlantic Open
AUGUST 26-28, VIRGINIA

Event site: Hyatt Regency Crystal City at Reagan National Airport Address: 2799 Richmond Highway, Arlington VA 22202 Overall prize fund: \$30,000 GP Points: 150 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: 33304

Online

Chicago Action on ICC
MAY 21, 2022

Event site: Internet Chess Club Address: playcca.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: 4124365558 Website: <http://www.chessevents.us> TLA ID: 33308

3rd annual CCA June Open
JUNE 4, 2022

Event site: Internet Chess Club Address: playcca.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: 33309

Regional

ALABAMA

DECEMBER 31, 2021-ONGOING ON SUNDAY, THURSDAY, AND SATURDAY

Weekly and Monthly Rated Chess at Memphis Chess Club (TN)

See Tennessee.

MAY 14, 2022

2022 John Hurt Memorial (TN)

See Grand Prix.

JUNE 3-5, 2022

CFCC 2022 Sunshine Open & Scholastic (FL)

See Grand Prix or www.centralflchess.org.

JUNE 18, 2022

David Kernell Memorial (TN)

See Grand Prix.

ARIZONA

MAY 28, 2022

MDC Scholastics (CA-S)

See California.

MAY 28-30, 2022

42nd Annual Lina Grumette Memorial Day Classic (CA-S)

See Grand Prix.

JUNE 8-9, 2022

2022 U.S. Women's Open (NV)

See National Events.

JUNE 8-12, 2022

2022 National Open (NV)

See National Events.

JULY 15-17, 2022

26th annual Pacific Coast Open (CA-S)

See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

ARKANSAS

DECEMBER 31, 2021-ONGOING ON SUNDAY, THURSDAY, AND SATURDAY

Weekly and Monthly Rated Chess at Memphis Chess Club (TN)

See Tennessee.

MAY 14, 2022

2022 John Hurt Memorial (TN)

See Grand Prix.

JUNE 18, 2022

David Kernell Memorial (TN)

See Grand Prix.

CALIFORNIA

SEPTEMBER 19, 2021-ONGOING

PCC LBX Hangar Sunday Action

Event site: LBX Hangar Building (inside and out) **Address:** 4150 McGowan 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

MAY 26-30, 2022

31st annual Chicago Open (IL)

See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

MAY 28, 2022

MDC Scholastics

Event site: Towneplace Suites Marriott **Address:** 10336 Richardson Street, Loma Linda, CA 92354 **Overall prize fund:** Trophies **GP Points:** n/a **FIDE Rated:** N **Handicap accessible:** N **Residency restriction:** N **Organizer:** Southern California Chess Federation **Email:** garden909aol.com **Phone:** 951-505-1064 **Website:** <http://www.sccchess.com> **TLA ID:** 32896

MAY 30, 2022

MDC Action Swiss

Event site: Towneplace Suites Marriott **Address:** 10336 Richardson Street, Loma Linda, CA 92354 **Overall prize fund:** \$500 b/40 **GP Points:** n/a **FIDE Rated:** N **Handicap accessible:** N **Residency restriction:** N **Organizer:** Southern California Chess Federation **Email:** garden909aol.com **Phone:** 951-505-1064 **Website:** <http://www.sccchess.com> **TLA ID:** 32898

JUNE 8-9, 2022

2022 U.S. Women's Open (NV)

See National Events.

JUNE 8-12, 2022

2022 National Open (NV)

See National Events.

JUNE 29-JULY 4, 2022

50th annual World Open (PA)

See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

JULY 15-17, 2022

26th annual Pacific Coast Open (CA-S)

See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

AUGUST 19-21, 2022

12th annual Central California Open (CA-N)

See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

COLORADO

JUNE 8-9, 2022

2022 U.S. Women's Open (NV)

See National Events.

CONNECTICUT

MAY 20-22, 2022

ICC NYC Scholastics: Chess Festival and Championship

See New York or chessclub.com/icnyc.

MAY 26-30, 2022

9th Cherry Blossom Classic (VA)

See Grand Prix.

JUNE 10-12, 2022

27th annual Northeast Open (CT)

See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

JUNE 29-JULY 4, 2022

50th annual World Open (PA)

See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

JULY 27-31, 2022

52nd annual Continental Open (MA)

See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

DELAWARE

MAY 20-22, 2022

ICC NYC Scholastics: Chess Festival

and Championship

See New York or chessclub.com/icnyc.

MAY 26-30, 2022

9th Cherry Blossom Classic (VA)

See Grand Prix.

JUNE 29-JULY 4, 2022

50th annual World Open (PA)

See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

DIST. OF COLUMBIA

MAY 26-30, 2022

9th Cherry Blossom Classic (VA)

See Grand Prix.

FLORIDA

MAY 26-30, 2022

9th Cherry Blossom Classic (VA)

See Grand Prix.

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.

JULY 22-24, 2022

30th annual Southern Open (FL)

See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

GEORGIA

MAY 26-30, 2022

9th Cherry Blossom Classic (VA)

See Grand Prix.

JUNE 3-5, 2022

CFCC 2022 Sunshine Open &

Continental Chess OTB Tournament Schedule

See www.chessevents.us for details, possible changes, other events

NIAGARA FALLS OPEN, May 13-15 or 14-15, Sheraton Hotel, next to Seneca Casino. \$12,000 guaranteed prizes.

CHICAGO OPEN, Memorial Day weekend, May 26-30, 27-30, 28-30 or 29-30, Westin Chicago North Shore Hotel. GM & IM norms possible in 9 round Open Section, other sections are 7 rounds. \$100,000 guaranteed prizes. Top 3 sections are FIDE rated.

CHICAGO FIDE UNDER 2200, May 29-30. FIDE rated, \$1000 guaranteed prizes

NORTHEAST OPEN, June 10-12 or 11-12, Stamford, CT. \$15,000 guaranteed.

CLEVELAND OPEN, June 10-12 or 11-12. \$15,000 guaranteed.

MIDWEST CHESS CONGRESS, June 17-19 or 18-19, Des Moines, Iowa. \$10,000 guaranteed.

WORLD OPEN IN PHILADELPHIA: 9 rounds, \$225,000 guaranteed. GM & IM norms possible, top 3 sections are FIDE rated. June 30-July 4, July 1-4, 2-4 or June 29-July 4.

WORLD OPEN SIDE EVENTS:

June 23-24: World Open Under 13 Champ, Senior Amateur, & FIDE U2200.

June 24-26 or 25-26: Philadelphia Open. \$15,000 guaranteed prizes.

June 24-28: Philadelphia International. \$22,000 guaranteed prizes.

June 27-29. World Open Amateur, \$5000 guar.

June 29-30: World Open FIDE U2400.

June 29-30: World Open Women's Champ.

June 30: World Open G/7 Blitz.

July 3: World Open G/10.

July 4: World Open Blitz Championship.

CHICAGO CLASS, July 15-17 or 16-17. \$30,000 guaranteed prizes.

PACIFIC COAST OPEN: July 15-17 or 16-17. See chessevents.us for location.

SOUTHERN OPEN: July 22-24 or 23-24.

PITTSBURGH OPEN: July 22-24 or 23-24.

CONTINENTAL OPEN: July 27-31, 28-31, 29-31 or 30-31, \$35,000 guaranteed prizes.:

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.

Scholastic (FL)

See Grand Prix or www.centralflchess.org.

JUNE 29-JULY 4, 2022

50th annual World Open (PA)
See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

HAWAII

JUNE 8-12, 2022

2022 National Open (NV)
See National Events.

IDAHO

JUNE 8-12, 2022

2022 National Open (NV)
See National Events.

ILLINOIS

MAY 26-30, 2022

9th Cherry Blossom Classic (VA)
See Grand Prix.

MAY 26-30, 2022

31st annual Chicago Open (IL)
See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

MAY 29, 2022

9th annual Chicago Open Blitz (IL)
See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

MAY 29-30, 2022

Chicago FIDE U2200
Event site: Westin Chicago North Shore Hotel Address: 601 North Milwaukee Ave., Wheeling, IL 60090

Overall prize fund: \$1,000 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: 32662

JUNE 8-12, 2022

2022 National Open (NV)
See National Events.

JUNE 17-19, 2022

Midwest Chess Congress (IA)
See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

JUNE 29-JULY 4, 2022

50th annual World Open (PA)
See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

JULY 15-17, 2022

15th annual Chicago Class (IL)
See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

INDIANA

MAY 26-30, 2022

31st annual Chicago Open (IL)
See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

MAY 29, 2022

9th annual Chicago Open Blitz (IL)
See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

MAY 29-30, 2022

Chicago FIDE U2200 (IL)
See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

JULY 15-17, 2022

15th annual Chicago Class (IL)
See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

IOWA

MAY 26-30, 2022

31st annual Chicago Open (IL)
See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

JUNE 17-19, 2022

Midwest Chess Congress (IA)
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.

MAY 14, 2022

2022 John Hurt Memorial (TN)
See Grand Prix.

JUNE 18, 2022

David Kernell Memorial (TN)
See Grand Prix.

MARYLAND

MARYLAND CHESS TOURNAMENTS (NORTH PENN CHESS CLUB)

Maryland Chess runs 21+ annual K-12 tournaments every other Saturday from September through June & 12+ annual 1-day or multi-day open tournaments for adults & K-12 players on weekends. See www.MD-Chess.org for tournament announcements, registration for tournaments, updated wallcharts, live standings, signup for K-12 & open e-newsletters, lists of coaches & clubs, camp announcements, & news. K-12 MD players who compete in the Varsity section (for

players rated 1600+) of 1 of 8+ annual MD-Sweet-16 Qualifiers can qualify for the \$48,000+ scholarship to the University of Maryland, Baltimore County awarded annually. UMBC is a perennial top-10 contender for the collegiate national chess championship.

MAY 26-30, 2022

9th Cherry Blossom Classic (VA)
See Grand Prix.

JUNE 23-24, 2022

14th annual World Open Under 13 (PA)
See Pennsylvania or chessevents.us.

JUNE 23-24, 2022

12th annual World Open Senior Amateur (PA)
See Pennsylvania or chessevents.us.

JUNE 23-24, 2022

World Open FIDE Under 2200 (PA)
See Pennsylvania 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 27-29, 2022

World Open Amateur (PA)
See Pennsylvania or chessevents.us.

JUNE 29-30, 2022

World Open FIDE U2400 (PA)
See Pennsylvania or chessevents.us.

JUNE 29-JULY 4, 2022

50th annual World Open (PA)
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. **Covid Vaccination** not required.

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: \$1000-500-300-200-150-150-100-100-100, unrated limit \$200.

FIDE ratings used for Open, May official USCF for others. Unofficial web ratings usually used if otherwise unrated.

If post-event OTB or online regular rating posted 5/24/21-5/24/22 or current official online rating is 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: \$227 at chessaction.com 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.

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.

JULY 3, 2022

30th annual World Open Game/10 Championship (PA)
See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

JULY 4, 2022

33rd annual World Open Blitz Championship (PA)
See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

JULY 22-24, 2022

23rd annual Pittsburgh Open (PA)
See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

JULY 27-31, 2022

52nd annual Continental Open (MA)
See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

AUGUST 26-28, 2022

4th annual Atlantic Open (VA)
See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

📍 NORTH CAROLINA

MAY 26-30, 2022

9th Cherry Blossom Classic (VA)
See Grand Prix.

MAY 26-30, 2022

31st annual Chicago Open (IL)
See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

JUNE 27-29, 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.

📍 OHIO

MAY 13-15, 2022

2nd annual Niagara Falls Open (NY)
See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

MAY 26-30, 2022

9th Cherry Blossom Classic (VA)
See Grand Prix.

MAY 26-30, 2022

31st annual Chicago Open (IL)
See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

JUNE 10-12, 2022

Cleveland Open (OH)
See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

JULY 22-24, 2022

23rd annual Pittsburgh Open (PA)
See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

📍 OREGON

JUNE 8-9, 2022

2022 U.S. Women's Open (NV)
See National Events.

JUNE 8-12, 2022

2022 National Open (NV)
See National Events.

JULY 22-24, 2022

30th annual Southern Open (FL)
See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

📍 PENNSYLVANIA

North Penn Chess Club

Main & Richardson - St. John's UCC, 500 West Main St., Lansdale, PA 19446. See www.northpennchessclub.org for schedules & info or 215-699-8418

MAY 13-15, 2022

2nd annual Niagara Falls Open (NY)
See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

MAY 20-22, 2022

ICC NYC Scholastics: Chess Festival and Championship
See New York or chessclub.com/iccnyc.

MAY 26-30, 2022

9th Cherry Blossom Classic (VA)
See Grand Prix.

MAY 26-30, 2022

31st annual Chicago Open (IL)
See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

JUNE 10-12, 2022

Cleveland Open (OH)
See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

JUNE 23-24, 2022

14th annual World Open Under 13
Event site: Sheraton Philadelphia Downtown Address: 201 North 17th St, Philadelphia, PA 19103 Overall prize fund: n/a GP Points: n/a 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: 32608

JUNE 23-24, 2022

12th annual World Open Senior Amateur
Event site: Sheraton Philadelphia Downtown Address: 201 North 17th St, Philadelphia, PA 19103 Overall prize fund: \$1,000 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: 32609

JUNE 23-24, 2022

World Open FIDE Under 2200
Event site: Philadelphia Sheraton Downtown Address: 201 North 17th St, Philadelphia, PA 19103 Overall prize fund: \$2,000 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: 32610

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 27-29, 2022

World Open Amateur
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

JUNE 29-30, 2022

World Open FIDE U2400
Event site: Philadelphia Sheraton Downtown Address: 201 North 17th St, Philadelphia, PA 19103 Overall prize fund: \$2,000 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: 32614

JUNE 29-30, 2022

11th annual World Open Women's Championship (PA)
See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

JUNE 29-JULY 4, 2022

50th annual World Open (PA)
See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

JUNE 30, 2022

11th annual Game/7 Blitz Championship (PA)
See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

JULY 3, 2022

30th annual World Open Game/10 Championship (PA)
See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

JULY 4, 2022

33rd annual World Open Blitz Championship (PA)
See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

JULY 22-24, 2022

23rd annual Pittsburgh Open (PA)
See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

AUGUST 26-28, 2022

4th annual Atlantic Open (VA)
See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

📍 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 3810 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

MAY 26-30, 2022

9th Cherry Blossom Classic (VA)
See Grand Prix.

📍 TEXAS

MAY 26-30, 2022

9th Cherry Blossom Classic (VA)
See Grand Prix.

MAY 26-30, 2022

31st annual Chicago Open (IL)
See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

JUNE 3-5, 2022

CFCC 2022 Sunshine Open & Scholastic (FL)
See Grand Prix or www.centraflchess.org.

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.

JUNE 8-12, 2022

2022 National Open (NV)
See National Events.

📍 VIRGINIA

MAY 26-30, 2022

9th Cherry Blossom Classic (VA)
See Grand Prix.

JUNE 3-5, 2022

2022 Virginia Senior Open
Event site: Marriott Washington-Dulles Airport Address: 45020 Aviation Drive, Dulles, VA 20166 Overall prize fund: \$2,000 GP Points: n/a FIDE Rated: Y Handicap accessible: Y Residency restriction: N Organizer: Virginia Chess Federation Email: mhoffpauir@aol.com Phone: 7578464805 Website: <http://www.vachess.org> TLA ID: 33050

JUNE 23-24, 2022

14th annual World Open Under 13 (PA)
See Pennsylvania or chessevents.us.

JUNE 23-24, 2022

12th annual World Open Senior Amateur (PA)
See Pennsylvania or chessevents.us.

JUNE 23-24, 2022

World Open FIDE Under 2200 (PA)
See Pennsylvania 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 27-29, 2022

World Open Amateur (PA)
See Pennsylvania or chessevents.us.

JUNE 29-30, 2022

World Open FIDE U2400 (PA)
See Pennsylvania or chessevents.us.

JUNE 29-JULY 4, 2022

50th annual World Open (PA)
See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

AUGUST 26-28, 2022

4th annual Atlantic Open (VA)
See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

📍 WASHINGTON

JUNE 8-9, 2022

2022 U.S. Women's Open (NV)
See National Events.

JUNE 8-12, 2022

2022 National Open (NV)
See National Events.

JULY 15-17, 2022

26th annual Pacific Coast Open (CA-S)
See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

📍 WEST VIRGINIA

MAY 26-30, 2022

9th Cherry Blossom Classic (VA)
See Grand Prix.

📍 WISCONSIN

MAY 26-30, 2022

31st annual Chicago Open (IL)
See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

MAY 29, 2022

9th annual Chicago Open Blitz (IL)
See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

MAY 29-30, 2022

Chicago FIDE U2200 (IL)
See Illinois or chessevents.us.

JULY 15-17, 2022

15th annual Chicago Class (IL)
See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

ADVERTISE WITH US CHESS

Want to know more?
For more information and rates, see new.uschess.org/about/advertise/



THANK YOU TO OUR BENEFACTORS



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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



\$100,000 GUARANTEED PRIZE FUND



NATIONAL OPEN

JUNE 8-12 (OPEN ONLY), 9-12, 10-12, OR 11-12

7 Round Swiss (Open 9) • 8 Sections
Top 3 FIDE Rated • Norms Possible

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 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 8-9

5 Round Swiss • US Chess & FIDE Rated
Game/90 +30

Winner is a US Chess National Champion and receives the Women's Open Cup



INTERNATIONAL CHESS FESTIVAL

JUNE 8-12, 2022

The Chess Vacation of the Year!

www.VegasChessFestival.com



US CHESS
FEDERATION
National Championships

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 _____

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 Palciauskas ICCF EF: \$5
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PAGE 13 CHESS TO ENJOY

PROBLEM 1. 37. b6! leads to mate (the threat is Qe5-f5 mate). **PROBLEM 2.** 30. ... Kd7! and ... Rg8-a8 wins the queen. **PROBLEM 3.** 34. Nd6! cxd6 35. Qh7! threatens Qh7-h8 mate. **PROBLEM 4.** White needs to check with his bishop. One idea is 36. Qd5 followed by 37. Bd4+! cxd4 38. Qxd4+ Kg8 39. h7+. Also possible is 36. b3, as in the game, prepares Be3-c1-b2+. **PROBLEM 5.** 32. ... Bg8! threatens both 33. ... Bc4+ and 33. ... Bd5 followed by 34. ... e3. For example, 33. b3 Bd5 34. Qg1 Nh3 35. Qh1 Nhf2 and wins. **PROBLEM 6.** 24. Rdh1 Rh8 (else 25. Rh7 mate) 25 Bg8! threatens Qb3-f7 mate.

PAGE 44 MAKE YOUR MOVE

TACTIC 1. 28. Qxh7+! Kxh7 Black could, of course, survive a bit longer with 28. ... Kf8 but realizes that the game is hopelessly lost and lets White checkmate him. **29. Rh4+ Kg8 30. Rh8 mate** A standard checkmating pattern. Pakleza – Bromann, Icelandic Team ch 2022. **TACTIC 2.** 20. e5! and **Black resigned** as he realized that he would lose material after 20. e5! Bxe5 21. b4 (or 21. Ne7+ Kh8 22. b4 which leads to the same position) 21. ... Ne4 22. Ne7+ Kg7 23. Nc6 and Black loses one of his unprotected pieces. Nabaty – Globus, Israeli Team ch 2022. **TACTIC 3.** 20. Bxa6! White rips Black's king shelter apart. **20. ... Ne4** The alternatives do not work for Black either, for instance, 20. ... bxa6 21. Rb3+! Bxb3 (both 21. ... Qb5 and 21. ... Bb5 also run into 22. Nc6+) 22. Nc6+ Kc8 23. Nxe5 Rxd1+ 24. Qxd1 Rd8 25. Qe2 and White is winning and similarly so after 20. ... Qe4 21. Qg3+ e5 22. f3 Qf4 23. Qxf4 exf4 24. Bc4. **21. Rc4 Qa5 22. Qa3** Several other moves win as well, for example 22. Bxb7 and 22. b3. **22. ... Qxa6 23. Rxa4 Qb6 24. Ra8+ Kc7 25. Qe7+ Rd7 26. Nxe6+ Qxe6 27. Rxd7+ Qxd7 28. Qxd7+ Kxd7 29. Rxh8** and Black resigned. Rathanel – Bhakti, Budapest 2022. **TACTIC 4.** 18. a5! Qxa5 Not taking the pawn also leads to a decisive advantage for White: 18. ... Qd6 19. Ne2! (19. Bb7 is also possible but less precise as the bishop is poorly placed on a6) 19. ... e5 (or 19. ... h6 20. Rfd1 Qe7 21. Qxa6) 20. Ng3 Qe6 21. Rfd1 Qxc4 22. Rxc4 Rfe8 23. Ne4 Be7 24. Nxf6+ Nxf6 25. Be2 and Black loses at least one of his pawns on the queenside; or 18. ... Qa7 19. Nc6 Qc7 20. Bxf6 gxf6 21. Ne7+ and White is winning material. **19. Nc6!** In the game, White played the less accurate **19. Ra1? Qc7?** (19. ... Qb6! 20. Rxa6 Ne5! would have been fine for Black) **20. Qxa6 Ne5 21. Rfc1 Qb8 22. Be2 Neg4 23. g3 e5 24. Nf5 g6 25. Nh6+ Nxh6 26. Qxf6 Bd6 27. Rxc8 Rxc8 28. Bc4 Qc7 29. Rd1**, and Black resigned. Manolache – Grigore, Romanian Rapid ch, 2022. **19. ... Qb6 20. Bd4! Rxc6** Or 20. ... Bxd4 21. Ne7+ and White is winning. **21. Bxc6 Bxd4 22. Qxd4 Qxd4 23. exd4** and White is winning. **TACTIC 5.** 25. Nd6+! Kxa8 Or 25. ... Kc7 26. Ra7+ Qxa7 (26. ... Kb6 27. Qa6 mate) 27. Nb5+ and Black is lost. **26. Qf3+ Qc6 27. Ra1+ and Black resigned** else he would get mated. Kamalidenova – Lodicci, Cattolica 2022. **TACTIC 6.** 10. ... Nf4! **11. Qe3** After 11. Qd1, Black wins after 11. ... Nxc2 12. Kxc2 Qg5+ and Black is forcing mate. **11. ... Nxc2 12. Kxc2 Qh4** Exploiting the pin to launch a decisive attack. **13. h3 Bf4!**

This is more accurate than the continuation chosen by Black in the game: **13. ... g5?! 14. Ne4??** (White should have played 14. Rg1 0-0-0 15. d3 g4 16. hxg4 Qxg4+ 17. Kf1 Qxf3 with a clear advantage for Black) **14. ... Bxe4 15. Bxh8 g4 16. Rh1 Bxf3+ 17. Kg1 0-0-0 18. Be5 Rg8 19. Bxd6 cxd6 20. Rh2 gxh3+ 21. Kf1 Qg4 22. Qc3+ Kb8 23. Rh1 Qg2+ and White resigned** before getting mated. Psyk – Szpar, Polish Rapid Team ch 2022. **14. Qc5 Qf6! 15. Ne4 Qg6+ 16. Ng3 h5** and Black wins back the material back with interest. **TACTIC 7.** 21. Bd4! This is the same theme as we saw earlier in puzzle #4. In the game, White played less accurately **21. e3?! Rc7 22. Rfd1 Rac7? 23. Rxc5 Ndx5 24. Be5 Nc3??** (24. ... h6 25. Bxc7 Rxc7 would have been okay for Black; now, on the other hand, White is winning) **25. Bxc7 Qxb5 26. axb5** and, losing material, **Black resigned.** Manea – Nastore Romanian Rapid ch 2022. **21. ... Bxd4?! Or 21. ... Qxb5 22. axb5 Bf8 23. Nxa7** and White's strong passed b-pawn will win the game for White in the long run. **22. Ne7! Kf8 23. Rxc8+ Rxc8 24. Nxc8** and White is winning. **TACTIC 8.** 14. ... Qb8!! A nasty move that threatens ... Qb8-b4+ and ... Rf8-c8. **15. Qc3 Ne4!!** A very unpleasant surprise for White. **16. Qxb2 Or 16. Qa5 Rc8 17. f3 Nc3 18. g3 e4! 19. fxe4 Nf6! 20. e5 Nfe4!! 21. d6 Rxa2!** and Black's attack crashes through. **16. ... Qb4+** Now, White's king is being pulled out in the open. **17. Kd1 Nc3+ 18. Ke1 Ne4+ 19. Kd1 Nxf2+ 20. Kc2 Rc8+ 21. Nc5 Qa4+! 22. Kd2 Nxc5 23. dxc5 Qa5+!** The only move that wins. **24. Ke3 Or 24. Qc3 Ne4+**, forking the king and queen. **24. ... Qxc5+ 25. Kd2 Ne4+ 26. Kd3 Qxd5+ 27. Ke3 Rc3+** Strictly speaking 27. ... Qc5+ is more accurate forcing mate faster, but, of course, the text move suffices. **28. Qxc3 Nxc3 29. Kf2 Qd4+** and **White resigned.** A beautifully conducted attack by Black. Zakhartsov – Subelj, Novi Sad 2022. **TACTIC 9.** 17. ... Nb4!! In the game Black instead went for **17. ... Ng4+??** (an interesting attempt, but also one that is not difficult to refute) **18. fxg4 Bxd4+ 19. Nf3 Bxe3+ 20. Qxe3 Rxf3+ 21. Kxf3 Rf8+ 22. Nf5 Nc5 23. h6 exf5 24. hxg7 fxg4+ 25. Kxg4 Rd8 26. Rxh7 Kxh7 27. Rh1+ Kg8 28. Rh8+ Kf7 29. Qf4+ Kxg7 30. Qe5+ and Black resigned.** Prraneeth – Seres, Budapest 2022. **18. cxb4** After the alternatives, Black is better in spectacular fashion: 18. Kg2 Nf5 19. Nxf5 Nd3 20. Qd1 Bxg5 21. Bxg5 Rxf5 22. Be3 Qxb2 and Black has enough counterplay for the sacrificed piece, whereas 18. Qg1 is met by 18. ... Ng4+! (now this works) 19. fxg4 Bxd4+ 20. Ke2 Bxe3 21. Qxe3 Qxe3+ 22. Kxe3 Nc2+ 23. Ke2 Nxa1 24. Rxa1 Rf4 and Black is clearly better in the endgame. **18. ... Bxd4! 19. Bxd4 Or 19. gxh6 Bxe3+ 20. Kg2 Qxb4** and Black has a decisive advantage. **19. ... Qxd4+ 20. Kg2 Nf5** and Black has excellent compensation for the sacrificed piece.

PAGE 47 ABCS OF CHESS

PROBLEM 1. Mating net: It is mate by 1. ... Qf6 mate. **PROBLEM 2. Mating net:** Black mates with 1. ... Qb4 mate. **PROBLEM 3. Mating net:** Black mates in two: 1. ... Bxf3+ 2. Bg2 Qxg2 mate. **PROBLEM 4. Mating net:** Black mates by 1. ... Bg3+ 2. Kg1 Qh2 mate. **PROBLEM 5. Mating net:** Black mates immediately: 1. ... Na3 mate. **PROBLEM 6. Mating net:** Black mates in one: 1. ... Qh3 mate.

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MY BEST MOVE

MIKE KUMMER

INTERNATIONAL ARBITER,
HYPE MAN, WORLD CHESS
CHAMPION

M

MY CHESS CAREER STARTED during my sophomore year at Bishop DuBourg High School in St. Louis. In my senior year — on a touch move technicality — I defeated “the fiercest man in the cowboy hat” to become the 1998 Missouri Scholastic State Champion! Later, in 2007, my fellow Bishop DuBourg alum Rex Sinquefield and Dr. Jeanne Sinquefield founded the Saint Louis Chess Club. Executive Director Tony Rich graciously let me start on day one and it’s been off to the races!

And what an absolute joy it has been for me, getting to spend countless hours at the ultimate chess playground.

Among my very favorite moments in St. Louis: directing well over 1,000 tourneys, winning the 2019 PRO Chess League World Championship in San Francisco as Manager of the Saint Louis Arch Bishops, getting to know all the wonderful people in the chess world, and starring in YouTube videos. I couldn’t have had more fun if I’d tried!

Now for My Best Move: it was the third round of the 2011 August Knights. Before the game, my opponent boasted about his stupendous victory against the colossal GM Nigel Short in a simul while utilizing the Kan variation of the Sicilian. Well, I thought, there goes my prep.

SICILIAN DEFENSE, ALAPIN VARIATION (B22)

Mike Kummer (1792)

Tim Nesham (1822)

August Knights (3), St. Louis, 08.17.2011

1. e4 c5 2. c3

Not 2. Nf3, obviously.

2. ... Nf6 3. e5 Nd5 4. Bc4 Nb6 5. b3

I didn’t want to retreat.

5. ... Nxc4 6. bxc4 Nc6 7. f4 d6 8. d4 dxe5

9. d5 Na5 10. fxe5 e6 11. Nf3 b5 12. cxb5



“

I couldn’t have had more fun if I’d tried!”

exd5 13. Bg5 Qd7 14. 0-0 Qe6



I wrote his move down and then did a double-take, thinking to myself, “that can’t be good.” Sure enough, 10 seconds later, I found **MY BEST MOVE** and had so much fun sticking it on the board.

15. Bd8!! Nc4

If 15. ... Kxd8 then 16. Ng5 is crushing.

16. Ng5 Qd7 17. Nxf7 Ne3 18. Qf3 Nxf1 19. Nxb8 Qf5 20. Bg5?

I couldn’t resist putting my bishop *en prise* again. Best is 20. Qxf1.

20. ... Qxf3

If 20. ... Qxg5? 21. Qf7+ Kd8 22. Qxf8+ Kd7 23. Qxf1.

21. gxf3 Bh3 22. Na3 c4 23. Nc2 Bc5+ 24. Nd4 Kf8 25. e6 Kg8 26. Nf7 h6 27. Bf4 g5 28. Bxg5

Obviously 28. Nxb6+ is crushing.

28. ... Bxd4+

Never capture a pinned piece.

29. cxd4 hxg5 30. Nxe5 Nd2 31. Nxe3 Nxf3+ 32. Kf2 Nxd4 33. Rd1 Rf8+ 34. Ke3 Nf5+ 35. Kf4 d4 36. Rg1+ Kh8 37. Ke5 d3 38. Nf4 Nh4 39. e7 Rc8??

39. ... Re8 is better but still losing. Now I calculate the win.

40. Ng6+ Nxg6+ 41. Rxe6 d2 42. Rd6 Re8 43. Rxd2!

So much glory!

43. ... Rxe7+ 44. Kd4 Rd7+ 45. Kc3 Rc7 46. Rd4 Rc5 47. a4 Rh5 48. h4 a6 49. Kxc4 axb5+ 50. axb5 Kg8 51. Rf4 Re5 52. b6, **Black resigned.** ♠



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