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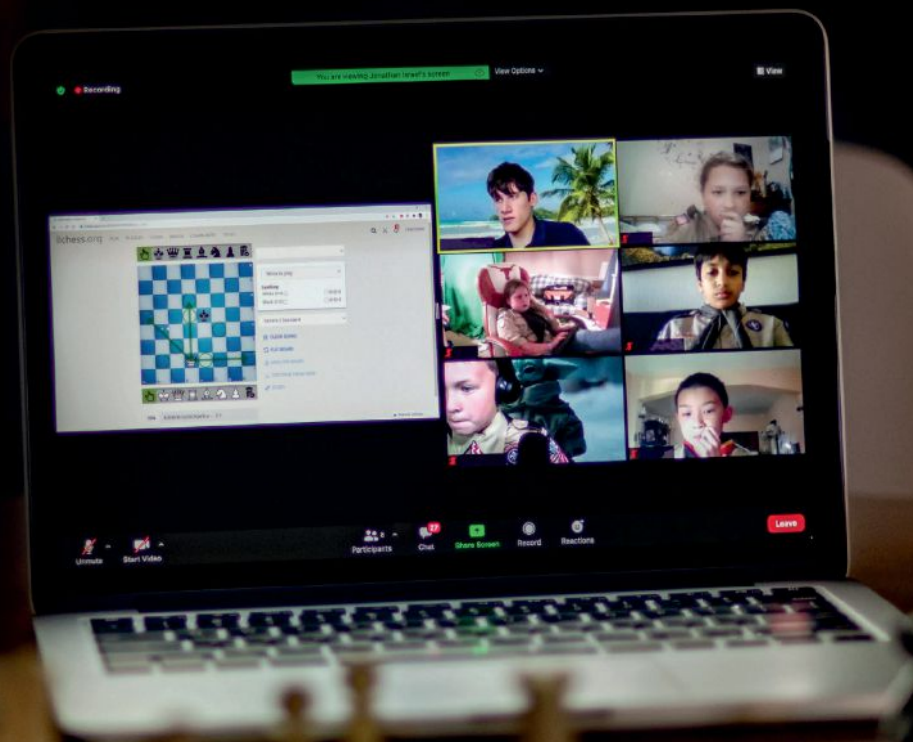
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Chess Life Kids | Vol. 19, No. 1

Chess Life KIDS (USPS 023-567, ISSN: 1932-5894) is published in February, April, June, August, October, and December of every year by US Chess, 333 S. 18th Street, Suite 210, St. Louis, MO 63103. Periodical postage paid at St. Louis, Missouri, and additional mailing offices.

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ON THE COVER

The 2023 K-12 Grade Championships were HUGE! More than 2,300 players from around the country came to Orlando to test their skills, and while not everyone could take home a medal (like our cover subject, Kindergarten champ Mehmet Yilanli!) we know that everyone made memories they'll never forget.

PHOTO: CAROLINE KING / US CHESS



The Alapin

BY JOHN HARTMANN

WHAT TO PLAY against the Sicilian is a difficult question for most players.

There are so many variations, and deciding which to choose can give you a real headache!

One of the goals of our *Chess Life Kids* repertoire is to keep things simple. We want to get to positions where we know the ideas as well as, or better than, our opponents, and we want to avoid memory contests. Of course we want to get good positions as well, but the main goal is to get active games where we can play for a win.

This is why we are recommending the Alapin variation (1. e4 c5 2. c3) against the Sicilian. With 2. c3, White tries to build a big center with 3. d4. Because the variation is not forcing, Black has many ways to continue on the second move, but two are played most often: 2. ... d5 and 2. ... Nf6. Both try to stop White from having that big center.

Both of these moves can also lead to isolated queen's pawn (IQP) positions, and that's another focus of our repertoire. IQPs generally reward knowledge of how to play IQPs, and not specific, move-by-

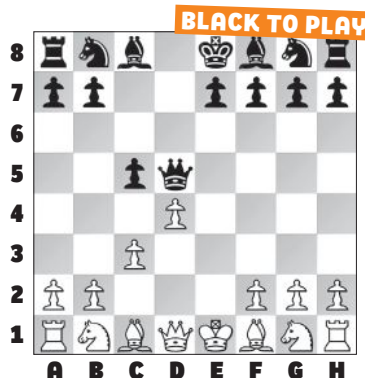
move memorization. The ideas we learn playing IQPs in the Alapin can be applied in many situations, including our recommended lines against the French and Caro-Kann. And Sicilian players may not be as well prepared for the Alapin as they are for the Dragon or Najdorf!

We won't explain all those IQP ideas here, but we will in videos and Lichess studies on the *uschess.org* website. Head to new.uschess.org/clk-opening-project for more, including all the old analysis you may have missed!

Let's dig in to the Alapin!

2. ... d5

1. e4 c5 2. c3 d5 3. exd5 Qxd5 4. d4



4. ... e6

Stronger players prefer this move order as it avoids some lines with d4xc5, which can be troubling if Black has not played ... e7-e6, allowing recapture with the bishop. This is true even when White has to recapture with the king after ... Qd5xd1+ and Ke1xd1. With the queens off, the king is safe in the center.

There are many paths forward for Black. Here are the most important ones.

(a) 4. ... Nf6 5. Nf3 and now (a1) 5. ... Bg4 6. Be2 (6. dxc5!?) 6. ... e6 7. Be3 cxd4 8. cxd4 gives us our standard IQP position.

(a2) 5. ... Bf5 6. Be2 (6. dxc5!?) 6. ... e6 7. 0-0 is nothing to worry about.

(a3) 5. ... e6 6. Be2 transposes to the main line.

(b) Black can capture on d4 right away with 4. ... cxd4 5. cxd4 Nc6 6. Nf3 (note that this position can also come from 2. ... Nc6) 6. ... Bg4 (6. ... e5 7. Nc3 transposes to **line c** below) and now:

(b1) 7. Be2 has a little trap. If Black “wins a pawn” with 7. ... Bxf3 8. Bxf3 Qxd4? White wins a queen with 9. Bxc6+!. Two better options for Black are 7. ... e6 8. 0-0 Nf6 9. Nc3 and 7. ... Nf6 8. Nc3 Qd8? (stronger is 8. ... Qa5 9. Qb3 Bxf3 10. Bxf3 Nxd4 11. Qxb7 Nxf3+ 12. Qxf3 Rc8 13. 0-0) 9. d5! Bxf3 10. Bxf3 Ne5 11. Bf4 Nxf3+ 12. Qxf3 with a great position for White.

(b2) 7. Nc3 is another path. If Black plays 7. ... Bxf3 8. gxf3! Qxd4 9. Qxd4 Nxd4 10. Nb5 is strong for White. The black knight is more likely to be trapped on a1 than the white knight on a8, as White is ahead in development.

(c) 4. ... Nc6 5. Nf3 and now (c1) Here 5. ... Bf5 is tricky, clearing the way for possible

queenside castling. We continue as normal: 6. Be2 cxd4 7. cxd4 and here 7. ... Bxb1 8. Rxb1 has a trap for Black.

If they grab the pawn with 8. ... Qxa2 9. 0-0 then 9. ... Qxb1?? is actually a mistake due to 10. Qb3! when Be2-d3 is threatened. If 10. ... Qf5 11. d5 the knight has no good squares, and the black king is very unsafe!

After the better 7. ... e6 8. Nc3 Bb4 9. 0-0 we reach a decent IQP for White.

(c2) After 5. ... cxd4 6. cxd4 e5 (6. ... Bg4 transposes to **line b**) 7. Nc3 Bb4 8. Bd2 Bxc3 9. Bxc3 e4 10. Ne5 Nxe5 11. dxe5 White has the two bishops and a tiny edge.

(c3) Black can try to pin with 5. ... Bg4 when we play our usual 6. Be2 (6. dxc5!? tries to take advantage of the f8-bishop being locked in, but this takes us away from our standard IQP positions) 6. ... e6 (6. ... cxd4 transposes to **line b**) 7. 0-0 Nf6 and we head for our standard IQP with 8. Be3 (we can also insert 8. h3 Bh5) 8. ... cxd4 9. cxd4 Be7 10. Nc3 Qd6! with a complicated game.

(d) Black can fianchetto with 4. ... g6 5. Nf3 (with the queen on d5, 5. Na3 is a consideration, heading to b5 and potentially c7. Here the play is equal after 5. ... Bg7 6. Nb5 Na6 7. Be3) 5. ... Bg7 6. Be2 cxd4 7. cxd4 and we have reached an IQP where Black has fianchettoed their bishop. Play might continue 7. ... Nf6 8. Nc3 Qd6 9. 0-0 0-0 10. Qb3!? with reasonable chances for both sides.

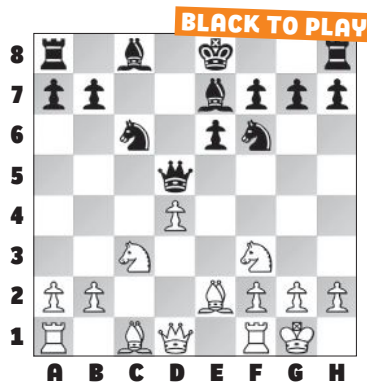
(e) 4. ... e5?! is a bit of a mistake after 5. dxe5 Qxd1+ (if 5. ... Qxe5+ 6. Be2 and White will develop and attack the queen) 6. Kxd1 Nc6 7. Nf3.

5. Nf3 Nf6 6. Be2 Nc6

Here 6. ... Be7 7. 0-0 Nc6 allows

White some more alternatives: (a) 8. Be3 cxd4 9. cxd4 0-0 10. Nc3 is a typical IQP. (b) 8. dxc5!? Bxc5 9. b4 is a bit better for White. (c) 8. c4 changes the structure. White is perhaps a bit better after 8. ... Qd8 9. dxc5 Qxd1 10. Bxd1! Bxc5 11. Nc3.

7. 0-0 cxd4 8. cxd4 Be7 9. Nc3



9. ... Qd6!

While this looks like it invites White to attack the queen, this is the strongest move. It defends the e5-square, and White now struggles a bit for a good plan.

The safer-looking 9. ... Qd8 is played two-thirds of the time, but this move is passive. White can get a good position with 10. Be3 0-0 11. Ne5 White has more space and slightly better pieces. If 11. ... Nxe5?! (alternatives include 11. ... Nb4 12. Bf3 Nbd5 and 11. ... Bd7 12. Rc1) 12. dxe5 Nd5 13. Nxd5 exd5 14. f4 and now Black has the isolated d-pawn.

Note that 9. ... Qa5 lacks a point in this position, as there is no pin on the c3-knight.

10. Nb5

Attacking the queen. We can also play 10. Be3 0-0 with a typical IQP, while 10. a3 may be a useful waiting move, stopping ... Nc6-b4 and looking to expand on the queenside with b2-b4.

10. ... Qd8

You may think the queen moving twice is a waste of time for Black, but it's not. White's idea is Nc3-b5 followed by Bc1-f4, attacking the c7 square, but as Black has ... Nf6-d5, there's never a chance to play Nb5-c7+ forking the king and rook. So the knight will have to move back from b5 to c3 to get back into the game — especially after a useful ... a7-a6 for Black — meaning that both sides lose tempi in this position!

11. Bf4

Another idea is 11. Re1 0-0 12. Ne5 Nd5 (not 12. ... Nxe5?! 13. dxe5 Nd5 14. Bd3 stirring up trouble on the kingside) 13. Bf3 Bd7 14. Bxd5 exd5 15. Nc3 with equality.

11. ... Nd5 12. Bg3 0-0

The position is equal.

2. ... Nf6

1. e4 c5 2. c3 Nf6 3. e5 Nd5 4. d4 cxd4

Black can hold off on capturing on d4 with:

(a) 4. ... e6 5. Nf3 cxd4 6. cxd4 d6 7. Bc4 Be7 8. 0-0 0-0 9. Qe2! (9. Nc3?! allows Black to trade pieces, which is good when you have a cramped position) and White will complete development with a good position due to the extra space. Black has options here:

(a1) 9. ... Nc6 10. Nc3 Nxc3 11. bxc3 dxe5 (11. ... d5? 12. Bd3 with initiative) 12. dxe5 Qa5! (12. ... b6?! 13. Qe4 Bb7 14. Bd3 g6 15. Bh6 with initiative) 13. Bd3 (13. Qe4 Qa4! pins the bishop) 13. ... Rd8 14. Bd2 with complex play.

(a2) 9. ... b6 10. Rd1 (one of the points of Qd1-e2 is to put the rook here) 10. ... Bb7 11. Bxd5 Bxd5 12. Nc3 with a slight advantage for White.

(a3) 9. ... Bd7 10. Nc3 Nxc3 11.

bxc3 Bc6 12. exd6 Bxd6 13. Ne5 is fine for White.

(b) Black can also play 4. ... d6 when 5. Nf3 cxd4 6. Bc4 (6. cxd4 Nc6 7. Bc4 Nb6 8. Bb3 dxe5 9. d5 transposes to a well-known pawn sacrifice with lots of theory) 6. ... Nb6 7. Bb3 Nc6 8. exd6 Qxd6 9. 0-0 is our main line.

5. Nf3 Nc6

Of course (a) 5. ... dxc3?? loses a piece to 6. Qxd5, while (b) 5. ... e6 6. cxd4 d6 (6. ... b6 is another possibility) 7. Bc4 transposes to **line a, 4. ... e6**.

6. Bc4 Nb6

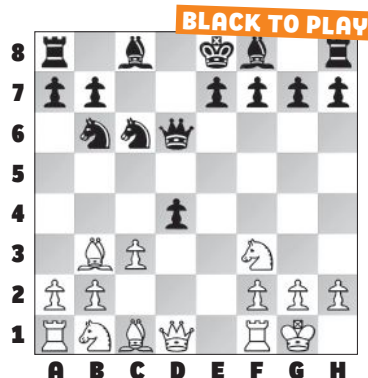
Here 6. ... e6 7. cxd4 is similar to the ... e7-e6 lines, which are relatively good for White. Play can continue 7. ... Nb6 8. Bb3 d6 9. Qe2! defending the e5-pawn and avoiding any queen trades.

7. Bb3 d5

Of course 7. ... d6 8. exd6 transposes to the main line.

Taking the pawn with 7. ... dxc3?! gives White a good game after 8. Nxc3 d6 9. 0-0 and now Black's best bet is to play 9. ... e6 (both 9. ... dxe5? and 9. ... Nxe5? 10. Nxe5! are bad) although White still has a big advantage.

8. exd6 e.p. Qxd6 9. 0-0



9. ... Be6

Almost universal in master games, but at the club / improver level, many moves are played.

(a) 9. ... Bg4 appears in a quarter of club player games on Lichess, but this is a mistake! White gets the advantage with 10. Bxf7+! Kxf7 11. Ng5+ Kg8 12. Qxg4.

(b) 9. ... e6 10. cxd4 is a good IQP.

(c) 9. ... Bf5 10. Nxd4 Nxd4 11. cxd4 e6 12. Nc3 is nice for White. It's not clear what the bishop is doing on f5.

(d) 9. ... g6?! ignores the pressure on f7. White can play 10. Ng5 (10. Na3 with the idea of Na3-b5 is also an option) 10. ... e6 11. Ne4 Qd8 12. Re1 with a slight advantage due to the weakened dark squares around the black king.

(e) 9. ... dxc3 10. Nxc3 Qxd1 11. Rxd1 and White's development is compensation for the pawn, with the c7- and f7-squares being targets for tactics. A sample line is 11. ... Bg4 12. Nb5! Rc8 13.

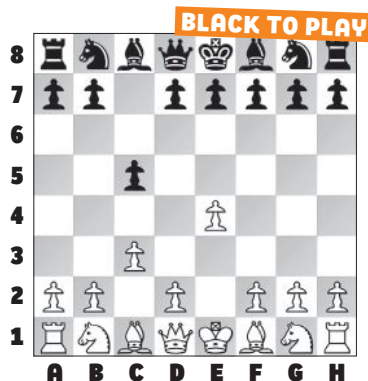
Be3, threatening to play Nb5xa7 followed by Be3xb6.

10. Bxe6 Qxe6 11. Nxd4 Nxd4 12. Qxd4 Rd8

The position is equal, but there are enough imbalances to play for a win.

MOVE TWO ALTERNATIVES

1. e4 c5 2. c3



2. ... Nc6

The Lichess database shows this as one of the most frequently played options. This may be because of transpositions, but it also might be a pre-move in blitz. There are plenty of other options to consider.

(a) 2. ... e5 resembles a king's pawn opening. Our knowledge of the Two Knights will help here. After 3. Nf3 Nc6 4. Bc4:

(a1) 4. ... Be7 5. d4 cxd4 6. cxd4 exd4 7. 0-0

(a2) 4. ... Qc7 and now 5. Ng5 Nd8 (this is why Black played 4. ... Qc7!) 6. 0-0 Be7 7. d3 with the idea of f2-f4 next.

(a3) 4. ... Nf6 5. Ng5 d5 6. exd5 Nxd5 7. Qh5 (7. Nxf7?! should be resisted, as the c3-pawn means that Nb1-c3 is not available to pressure the d5-knight) 7. ... g6 8. Qf3 Qxg5 9. Bxd5 Nd8 10. 0-0 with the initiative.

(b) 2. ... e6 3. d4 d5 (3. ... cxd4 4. cxd4 gives White that big center) 4. exd5 (4. e5 is possible if you play the Advance Variation) 4. ... Qxd5 (4. ... exd5 gives White the option to give Black an IQP) 5. Nf3 we transpose to our 2. ... d5 lines.

(c) 2. ... g6 3. d4 cxd4 4. cxd4 d5 5. e5 Bg7 6. Nc3 f6 7. Nf3 and Black is cramped.

(d) 2. ... d6 3. d4 Nf6 4. Bd3 g6 5. Nf3 Bg7 6. 0-0 Bg4 (if 6. ... 0-0 7. h3! stopping ... Bc8-g4) 7. Nbd2 cxd4 8. cxd4 Nc6 9. h3 Bxf3 10. Nxf3 is slightly better for White.

3. d4 cxd4 4. cxd4 d5

Black is in big trouble after 4. ... g6? 5. d5 Ne5?? 6. f4.

5. exd5

Also playable is 5. e5 Bf5 6. Nc3.

5. ... Qxd5 6. Nf3

And we transpose to 2. ... d5, 4. ... cxd4 lines. ♠

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MAIN EVENT

6-SS, G/90,d5

Friday April 12

2:30 PM Opening Ceremony

3:00 PM Round 1

Saturday April 13

10:00 AM Round 2

2:30 PM Round 3

6:30 PM Round 4

Sunday April 14

9:00 AM Round 5

1:00 PM Round 6

5:00 PM Awards Ceremony

ENTRY FEE

\$90 by 3/4, \$110 by 4/1, \$120 by 4/11, \$135 on-site.

SIDE EVENTS

Bughouse Tournament

Fri. April 12 11:00 AM

Entry fee: \$50 by 4/1, \$60 after 4/1 and on-site.

Blitz Tournament (G/5,d0)

Fri. April 12 7:00 PM

Entry fee: \$40 by 4/1, \$50 after 4/1 and on-site.



SECTION/AWARDS

Age as of 1/1/2024

Under 8 top 15 individuals
top 500 – 799, top U500, top 6 schools

Under 10 top 15 individuals
top 700 – 999, top U700, top 6 schools

Under 12 top 15 individuals
top 900 – 1199, top U900, top 6 schools

Under 14 top 15 individuals
top 1100 – 1399, top U1100, top 4 schools

Under 16 top 8 individuals
top 1300 – 1599, top U1300, top 3 schools

Under 18 top 8 individuals,
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What Type of Chess Player are YOU?

BY AL LAWRENCE

HAVE YOU PLAYED one of the “9 Types of Chess Players” in Alice Chovanec’s comic on page 10 of this issue? If you’re not one of the nine, what drawing would you make for you? Alice says she is not one of those nine types. So what type is she?

Well, she’s a twin. But her twin sister Rachel prefers figure skating to chess. Her teenage brother William sometimes plays violin duets with her. We can tell from her comics that Alice is a keen observer of people. But Alice is also a chess champ with both national and international credentials.

You’ll find her name on *seven* of the “Top 100 Rated” lists published monthly by US Chess. Alice is just 10 years old, but her name appears well up on the list for all girls under 21. And she’s on the top lists for girls her age as well as the combined top list for both boys *and* girls. But she doesn’t keep track of lists. She just loves to play chess!

“My dad thought that chess would be interesting to me,” Alice said. Her father Patrick didn’t know much about chess, but he saw that Alice liked to work

puzzles. So before she had even started kindergarten, he showed her how the pieces move. His reward: Alice was beating him soon after she began kindergarten! She attends The Anderson School in New York City. Anderson offers chess to grades kindergarten through third grade. She played in her first tournaments there.

Alice improved quickly, notching up a series of impressive victories. She became the 2019 New York State Girls K-1 champion and even earned second place in the U08 Girls section of the 2021 North American Youth Chess Championships. She also was a key teammate in leading Anderson School to the third-grade national championship at the 2021 National K-12 Grade Championships. Last year, Alice again helped bring Anderson another national elementary championship in the K-6 section, even though she was still in the fourth grade.

US Chess invited Alice to represent the USA at the 2022 World Cadet Chess Championship in Batumi, Georgia. “It was quite a journey to get there,” Alice said. “We changed flights in Istanbul, Turkey, and stayed overnight

at the airport hotel there.” She enjoyed “the opportunity to play with girls from so many other countries and even trade little souvenirs with them. I really hope to get more chances to represent the USA abroad in chess.”

Until the third grade, Alice had played only in school tournaments with other kids. But she was just eight years old when she walked into the New Jersey Open, one of America’s strongest and largest state championships. This was a different world than school chess. *Two hundred* serious chess players, mostly adults, bustled around to find their assigned boards. There were even famous grandmasters in the crowd waiting to play. “It was pretty scary at first,” Alice said. At school tournaments, even the longest games can last about two hours. But at the New Jersey Open,



“Her last-round game lasted more than four hours,” her mom Frances said. “I went to find her because I thought she had fainted!” Mom found Alice calmly concentrating on her game. She scored well in her first leap into the adult chess world, a world she needed to learn to navigate to keep improving.

Alice looks up to GM Irina Krush, eight-time U.S. Women’s champ. She takes once-a-week chess lessons online with a private coach, going over her tournament games. Here’s one of her favorites.

SICILIAN DEFENSE (B42)

Robert Forney (2000)

Alice Chovanec (1866)

Pittsburgh Open U2100 (1), 07.22.2023

Annotations by Chovanec

1. e4 c5 2. Nf3 e6 3. d4 cxd4 4. Nxd4 a6 5. Bd3 Qc7 6. Qe2 d6 7. c4 Nf6 8. Nc3 Nc6 9. Nxc6 bxc6 10. 0-0 g6 11. f4 Bg7 12. f5 0-0 13. Bg5 Bb7 14. c5 h6 15. Bh4 g5 16. Bg3 e5 17. cxd6 Qxd6 18. Kh1 Rfd8 19. Rfd1 Qe7 20. Rac1 Rac8 21. Bxa6 Bxa6 22. Qxa6 Nh5 23. Nd5 Qe8 24. Nb6 Rb8 25. a4 f6 26. Bf2 Nf4 27. Qc4+ Kh7 28. a5 Qh5 29. Nd7 Rxb2 30. Nxf6+? This is a mistake. He forgot that after ... Bg7xf6 the rook is protected!

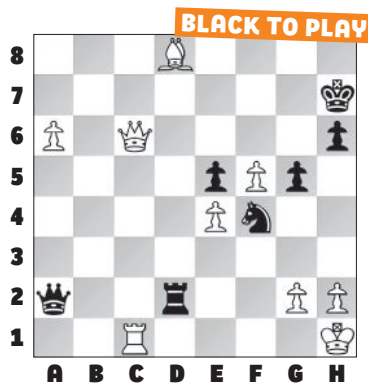
30. ... Bxf6 31. Rxd8 Bxd8 32. Qxc6 Qf7 33. Bb6?? Rd2 34. a6 Qa2 Now there is only one move to save the position. Luckily, my opponent didn’t find it!

35. Bxd8

(see diagram top of next column)

It’s equal and complex after 35. Bf2!. Now the finish is pretty.

35. ... Rd1+ 36. Rxd1 Qxg2, mate.



Alice’s chess goal is to earn the National Master title by someday getting her rating up to 2200. But she has lots of other interests and doesn’t spend too much time studying or playing chess at home. Her tournament games are her “practice!” She’s on a basketball team and plays violin in the InterSchool Orchestras of New York. She loves to read lots of things, including comics. And she loves to draw! She’s working on a sequel to this month’s comic: “9 Types of Chess Parents.” Can you suggest some of those “types?” Alice has lots of time to decide

Left: At chess camp! Above: Playing the 2022 World Youth Cadet. Right: Making moves on the court!



what she'll do as an adult. But she thinks she might want to be a writer. Perhaps she'll combine

her drawing and writing talents to author a graphic novel, like the ones she loves to read. If you ever

get to play her, be careful not to be an annoying type. Alice may decide to make a comic about you! ♠

<p>Disclaimer: I am not depicted here ☺</p>	<h2>The 9 Types of Chess Players</h2>	<p>By Alice Chovanec</p>
<h3>The Blitzer</h3>	<h3>The Sloth</h3>	<h3>The Intimidator</h3>
<h3>The Distracted</h3>	<h3>The Snoozer</h3>	<h3>The Dasher</h3>
<h3>The Cranky</h3>	<h3>The Snacker</h3>	<h3>The Emotional</h3>
<p>Inspired by Matt Groening's work.</p>		<p>TO BE CONTINUED...</p>



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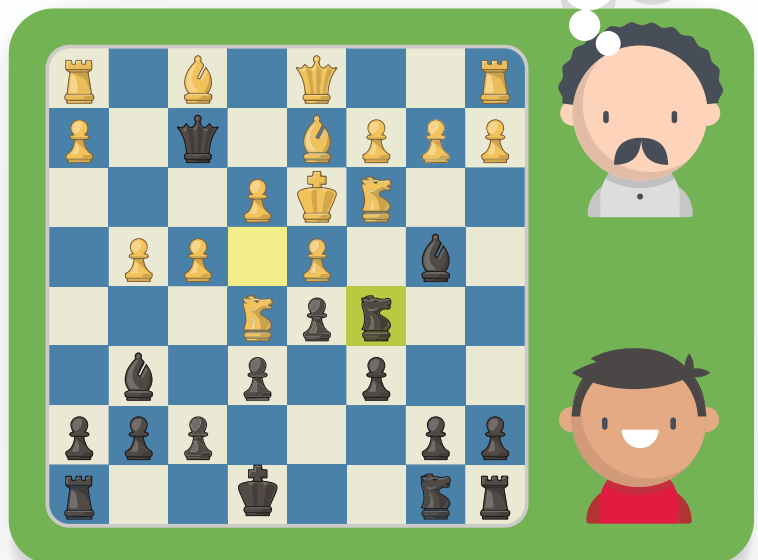
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THE CHESS COMMUNITY

LOOKING BACK AFTER THE K-12 GRADE CHAMPIONSHIPS

BY NATE SHUMAN

I'M ON THE plane, heading home after competing at my last National K-12 Grade Championships in Orlando, Florida. My team, The Dalton School, won the 12th Grade Championship, its 11th national grade title. Looking back at my 13 years of scholastic chess, however, it's not the trophies or celebrations I remember — it's the hard work, the friendships, and

community relationships that have helped me grow most.

I fell in love with chess in all of its complexity at Dalton. Under the guidance of David MacEnulty and WIM Beatriz Marinello, its infinite possibilities began to reveal themselves to me and my fellow teammates. More than 70 Dalton players, from age five to 18, filled our team room this year in Orlando, and with our parents and coaches, it felt like a warm chess village.

New York City has a vibrant scholastic chess community. My chess friends and I have grown up together, at camps, tournaments, and Nationals. I remember moves and games, but more than that, I remember eating homemade dumplings, pierogies, and samosas made by chess parents from all over the world. I remember classrooms turned into team rooms where coaches

and older teammates would review games between rounds, celebrating our wins, consoling our losses, and sometimes just throwing a ball around to help us reset our brains.

I remember magical blitz and bughouse sessions, played with friends and foes from around the country, going deep into the night at Nationals. Over the years I bonded with some of my strongest peers, including titled players like IM Gus Huston, my Dalton teammate. I played on World Youth teams in South Africa and Greece, and at the U.S. Chess School in St. Louis, rigorous study and intense blitz were capped off with a cannonball contest in the hotel pool.

Because a game of chess is contested between two players, it's



Left: Ryan Peterson, Gus Huston, and Nate Shuman with their team trophy. Right: A young Nate representing Team USA!





easy to overlook the relationships that develop in chess. Coaches and players come to know each other over time, supporting each other when it's needed most. Learning how to be a good mentor, teammate, and friend inspired me to start a chess peer mentorship program at our school, now with more than 60 participants. I think it's vital for older players to guide the younger ones at scholastic clubs and schools, creating a community that focuses on belonging and not just results.

The mental side of chess is also often overlooked. Finding joy in the game, and in the learning process, is really important. I have found that mindfulness and meditation have helped me better my results and manage my stress, so I created a program called Mindmates to help other players with the mental side of our game, and I have presented my ideas to students and coaches across New York. My chess journey did more than teach me chess; it sparked an intellectual curiosity that led me beyond the squares on the board.

What we learn playing chess

Top: Nate at the U.S. Chess School at the 2016 World Championship, and playing at the World Cadets. Right: Scenes from the 2023 K-12.

extends into our lives. One of my closest mentors, Russ Makofsky, has taught me this. He leads the Impact Coaching Network, which coaches hundreds of players in New York City, but he uses chess to create community and lift people up. His Gift of Chess program works to bring chess sets to underserved communities around the world.

Everyone is equal at the board, and that's one of the beautiful things about chess. We learn that our actions have consequences. We learn to trust our creativity, to rely on our friends and teammates, and

to give back to our communities. All this from a board game! I will be forever grateful to all



PHOTOS: COURTESY NATE SHUMAN (TOP), US CHESS / CAROLINE KING (KRUSH, BLITZ)



those who have helped me grow in chess — my parents, my coaches, and my friends, of course, but also the tournament directors and staff who put on events like the K-12s. This game has provided me lifelong memories and shaped my values, making me who I am today. ♠

2023 K-12 GRADE CHAMPIONSHIPS AT A GLANCE

ORLANDO, FLORIDA | DECEMBER 15-17, 2023

INDIVIDUAL WINNERS:

12th Grade: IM Max Lu (CT), IM-elect Gus Huston (NY), 6½/7. **11th Grade:** Avi Kaplan (IL), 6½/7. **10th Grade:** CM Marvin Gao (FL), FM Bach Ngo (FL), 6/7. **9th Grade:** IM-Elect Brewington Hardaway (NY), Aiden Reiss (NY), FM Erick Zhao (PA), 6/7. **8th Grade:** Eric Liu, 6½/7. **7th Grade:** Aditeya Das (NY), Andrew Jiang (GA), Bobby Qian (NJ), Vihaan Saxena (NJ), Alexander Sukhiashvili (NJ), 6/7. **6th Grade:** Kyle Wang (TX), 7/7. **5th Grade:** Kyle Dong (NJ), WIM Megan Paragua (NY), Yuvraj Sawhney (CA), Phineas Weingarten (NY), Tariq Yue (PA), Derek Zhang (NY), Glenn Zhang (CA), 6/7. **4th Grade:** Santhosh Ayyappan (NJ), Linxi Zhu (NY), 6½/7. **3rd Grade:** Sasha Schaefer (NY), 6½/7. **2nd Grade:** Samanyu Alluri (MA), Sriansh Katta (NC), 6½/7. **1st Grade:** Mustafa Muhammad (NC), Darren Wu (NY), 6½/7. **Kindergarten:** Mehmet Yilanli (OH), 7/7.

TEAM WINNERS:

12th Grade: Dalton (NY), 17. **11th Grade:** Columbia Grammar & Prep (NY), 16. **10th Grade:** American Heritage (FL), 15½. **9th Grade:** Columbia Grammar & Prep (NY), 16. **8th Grade:** Hunter College (NY), 15. **7th Grade:** Millburn Middle School (NJ), 17. **6th Grade:** Collegiate School (NY), 15½. **5th Grade:** Speyer (NY), 16. **4th Grade:** Speyer (NY), 16½. **3rd Grade:** Oak Hill (FL), 17½. **2nd Grade:** Speyer (NY), 16½. **1st Grade:** Oak Hall (FL), 14. **Kindergarten:** Oak Hall (FL), 14½.

For complete results, visit www.uschess.org/results/2023/k12/

Tactics Tune-Up

This month's Tactics Tuneup features games from the 2023 K-12 Grade Championships that took place in December. In the first four positions, you have to deliver mate in two or three moves. For the final five positions, you have to find the best move, and that could mean winning material, starting an attack, or finding a defense. Good luck! Answers on page 23.

1. WHITE TO PLAY

MATE IN TWO

2. WHITE TO PLAY

MATE IN TWO

3. WHITE TO PLAY

MATE IN TWO

4. BLACK TO PLAY

MATE IN THREE

5. WHITE TO PLAY

FIND THE BEST MOVE

6. WHITE TO PLAY

FIND THE BEST MOVE

7. BLACK TO PLAY

FIND THE BEST MOVE

8. WHITE TO PLAY

FIND THE BEST MOVE

9. BLACK TO PLAY

FIND THE BEST MOVE



Get TUF!

BY TIM MCGREW

IN THE FIRST column in this series, we started learning simple thinking technique that can help us to reduce our blunders and take advantage of our opportunities — the system of “TUF” chess, where we identify Threats, Undefended pieces, and Forcing moves. We started with threats, because a chess player who cannot see incoming threats will not be able to survive for very long. This time, we’re moving on to the next stage, which can help us with both defense and offense.

Most chess games are lost because someone drops material. Below the 1000 level, this happens quite often. Popular Youtube streamer WFM Anna Cramling has a great video on “the secret to stop blundering your pieces,” which comes down to this one point: *keep your pieces defended!*

UPS

We start with a drill that you can use on literally any chess position: the **Undefended Piece Scan**, or **UPS**. Pick a diagram

(start with any diagram in this issue of *Chess Life for Kids*, if you want to) and identify every undefended piece or pawn in your opponent’s position. If you are reading a paper copy and don’t mind marking it up, you can use a pencil to circle each one. You might also circle your opponent’s king — it turns out that knowing where the king is can help us to see our own tactical opportunities.

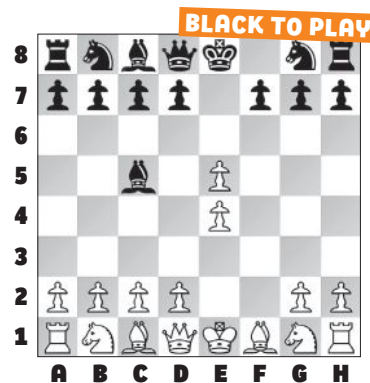
In the starting position of a game, the only things that show up on a UPS are the rooks in the corners. They are undefended, but they are also unattacked, so it might seem pointless to take notice of them. But a fair amount of opening theory is built around the vulnerability of those rooks. Let’s see some examples!

THE KING’S GAMBIT

The King’s Gambit is a wild, wonderful opening that was a huge focus of opening theory in the era of Anderssen and Morphy.

After **1. e4 e5 2. f4**, Black can play the developing move **2. ... Bc5**, but only because of that rook on h1.

It might seem like Black has forgotten her center pawn, but actually she is quite safe for the moment. After **3. fxe5??**, all sorts of alarms are going off in the White position: his king is exposed, his h1-rook is undefended, and his e-pawns (both of them!) are also showing up on the scanner.



Small wonder that Black has a shot here: **3. ... Qh4+!** wins a piece immediately, since White has to block it with **4. g3**, allowing **4. ... Qxe4+** and **5. ... Qxh1**. (Question: if White meets 3. ... Qh4+ with 4. Ke2 instead, what happens?)

So after 2. ... Bc5, White almost always plays 3. Nf3, stopping checks on h4. The vulnerability of the h1-rook limits his choices.

THE QUEEN’S GAMBIT

Over on the other side of the board, White can also offer a temporary pawn sacrifice for the sake of central control with **1. d4 d5 2. c4**. Black has to be somewhat careful here. For example, let’s do a UPS after **1. d4 d5 2. c4 dxc4 3. e3 b5? 4. a4 c6 5. axb5 cxb5**.



Black's b5-pawn shows up, and so do both rooks. It turns out that one of those rooks is now exposed, immobile, and very difficult to cover. With **6. Qf3!** White forces Black to give up at least a piece.

THE JOBAVA LONDON

After **1. d4 Nf6 2. Nc3 d5 3. Bf4!?**, one of the first things Black has to realize is that his rook on a8 is a potential target. In the line **3. ... c5 4. e3 cxd4 5. exd4**, Black has played the terrible blunder **5. ... Nc6??** in over 35,000 online games among strong players.



With **6. Nb5!**, White picks up material because Black has to shed several pawns to stop himself from losing a rook to **7. Nc7+**. (For you overly clever readers who have noticed that Black can also meet **6. Nb5** with **6. ... Kd7**, you are welcome to try to survive after **7. Bc7 Qe8 8.**

Nf3. Aren't you sorry you asked?) Instead Black should content himself with something like **5. ... a6** instead. It's all about that undefended rook on a8.

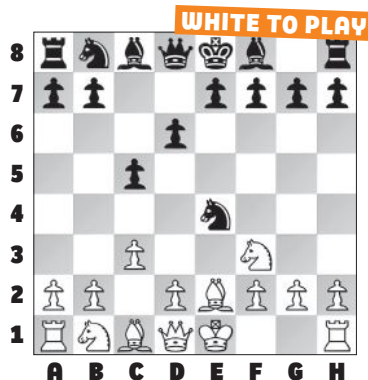
I showed this trap — just this one — to some of my chess students and sent them off to experiment with it. The following week, I asked them how it went. "I won a lot of rooks!" was the response I received from several of them.

UPS is useful across all kinds of positions. For example...

SICILIAN DEFENSE

When I was growing up in northeastern Pennsylvania, good players were hard to find. But my parents discovered that there was a young woman from Ukraine, a former girls' champion of Kyiv, who lived near enough that we were able to get together at a local library to play one another. Here is a story that she told me.

One of her young friends was paired against an adult, and the game started off **1. e4 c5 2. Nf3 d6 3. c3 Nf6 4. Be2**. The adult playing Black figured that the little girl had blundered a pawn and heedlessly snapped it off with **4. ... Nxe4??**.



Of course, if you do a UPS, you will notice that the knight is now

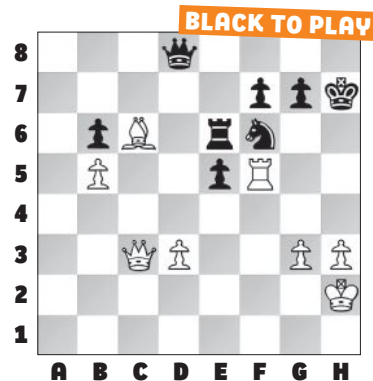
undefended. If you remember to include the location of Black's king in your scan, you will almost certainly spot **5. Qa4+** picking up the knight with a fork.

And my Ukrainian friend? She is now a master. (Hi Irene!)

BEYOND THE OPENING

Staying aware of your undefended pieces isn't just about openings, and it isn't something that only amateurs need. In his book *How Chess Games are Won and Lost*, Danish GM Lars Bo Hansen gives his own version of Cramling's advice in the form of the acronym KAPP, or *Keep All Pieces Protected*. He tells the following story.

In 2008, he had this position as Black against IM Csaba Berczes and was just trying to make a few moves in order to reach move 40, at which point he would get extra time added to his clock.



Here, a calm move like **... Qd8-d6** would be perfectly safe. But without thinking much about it, Hansen picked up his queen and dropped her on an undefended square with **35. ... Qc7??**. Can you see what White played now?

After **36. Rxf6!** Black cannot recapture the lost piece, since then **37. Be4+** will pick off that undefended queen. ♠

Puzzle Me THIS



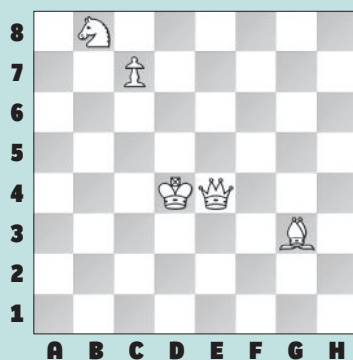
Puzzle Me THAT

BY JEFF COAKLEY



Hey, kids! Here's a riddle. *Why did the zebras cross the road?* Perhaps it was so they could bring you these new puzzles. As usual, there is a little bit of this and a little bit of that. Some of the problems have special rules. Others are the standard kind of positions that might happen in your own games. Good luck!

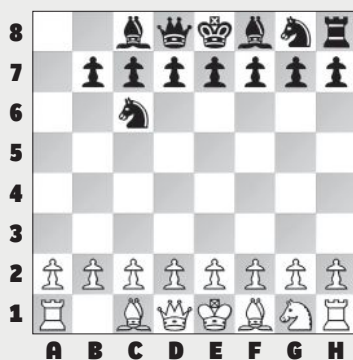
1. TRIPLE LOYD



Place the black king on the board so that:

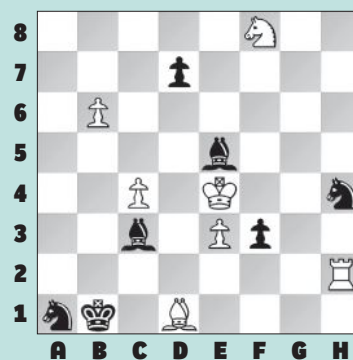
- (a) Black is in checkmate.
- (b) Black is in stalemate.
- (c) White has mate in one.

2. PROOF GAME



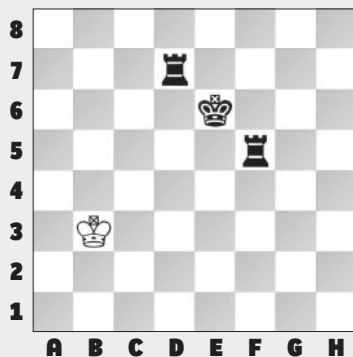
This position was reached after Black's fourth turn. What were the moves?

3. MAZE RACE



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

4. INVERTED LOYD



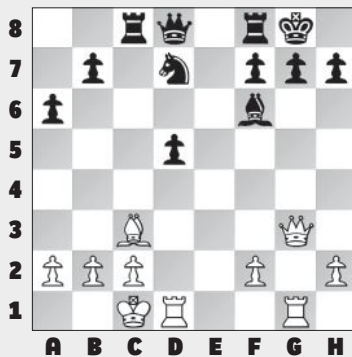
Add a white rook and two bishops so that White has mate in one.

5. SERIES-MATE IN 12



White plays 12 moves in a row to checkmate Black. Only the final move may give check. Captures are allowed. Black does not get a turn. White may not place their own king in check, even if they get it out of check on the next move.

6. MATE IN 5



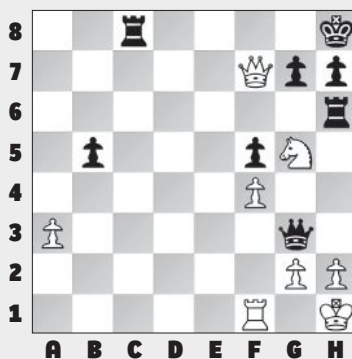
White to play. Mate in five.

7. COMBO



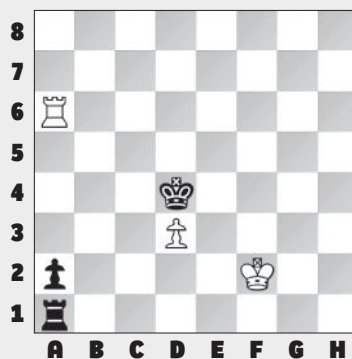
White to play and win material.

8. DEFENSE



White to play and not lose.

9. ENDGAME



White to play and draw.

10. SYNTHETIC GAME

Make up a game in which Black wins on the fourth move with 4. ... Ng4 mate.

ANSWERS:

Riddle) Because that's where their path led! **1)** A. Kd6, mate. B. Kc8, stalemate. C. Ka7, allowing 1. c8=N mate. **2)** 1. Na3 a5 2. Nc4 Ra6 3. Nxa5 Rc6 4. Nxc6 Nxc6. To make the puzzle harder, put the white e-pawn on e3 and the black knight back on b8. Then ask how the position was reached after Black's fifth turn. Same answer plus 5. e3 Nb8. **3)** The rook is fastest. The knight is slowest. Here are the lines: Rh2-h1-g1-g5-h5-h7-e7-e8-c8-c5-b5xb1 (11 moves), Bd1-a4-

b5-a6-b7-d5-f7-h5-g4-h3-f1-d3xb1 (12), Nb8-a6-c5-d3-f2-g4-h6-g8-e7-c8-a7-b5-a3xb1 (13). **4)** Add Re1 Be2 Be7 for 1. Bc4 mate. The power of double check. **5)** 1. Ke3 (The king begins by unpinning himself.) 2. e5 3. Kf4 (Then he unpins again.) 4. exd6 5. dxe7 6. Kxf5 7. Kxe6 8. Kxd5 9. Ke6 10. d5 11. d6 12. d7 mate. The fabulous two pawn checkmate. **6)** **1. Qxg7+ Bxg7 2. Rxg7+ Kh8 3. Rg8+ Double check! 3. ... Kxg8 4. Rg1+ Qg5+ 5. Rxg5 mate.** The final sequence with a rook sacrifice on

the g8-square is called "Pillsbury's mate," named for American grandmaster Harry Pillsbury (1872-1906). Note that White is losing after **1. Bxf6? Qxf6. 7)** Material is even. Black has a knight and two pawns for a rook. White wins the black knight with a *skewer* tactic.

1. Rxf6 Kxf6 2. Qh8+ Ke6 3. Qxb2 If Black avoids the skewer with **1. ... Rxa2**, White plays **2. Qf3. 8)** Black is up the Exchange and threatens 1. ... Qxh2 mate. White survives by winning back the Exchange with a queen sacrifice and knight fork.

1. Qe8+ Rxe8 2. Nf7+ Kg8 3. Nxb6+ Taking the black rook unpins the white h-pawn. After **3. ... gxh6 4. hxg3**, the position is equal. Black is winning after other first moves.

For example, **1. Nf3? Qxf4** or **1. h3? Rf6! 2. Qd5 Rcf8 3. Qxb5 h6 4. Nf3 Qxf4. 9)** In rook endings, an extra pawn does not always win.

Here, defending the d-pawn is not important. Black threatens 1. ... Rh1 followed by promoting their pawn, as 2. Rxa2 loses to the skewer 2. ... Rh2+ 3. Kf3 Rxa2. Avoiding the skewer by **1. Kg2** is the only way to draw! After **1. ... Kxd3**, White keeps their rook on the a-file and their king on g2 or h2. Then Black can make no progress. If the black king defends the pawn, the white rook checks him away. For example, **2. Ra8 Kc3 3. Kh2 Kb2 4. Rb8+ Ka3 5. Ra8+ Kb2 6. Rb8+ Kc2 7. Ra8!**. Other first moves by White lose. 1. Ra3? and 1. Ke2? are met by 1. ... Rh1. And 1. Rd6+ Kc5 2. Ra6 Rh1 is no better. The trickiest line is 1. Ra4+? when Black wins by 1. ... Kc3! 2. Kg2 Kb3. Instead, 1. ... Kxd3? would only draw after 2. Kg2. Note that 1. Kf3? loses to 1. ... Rf1+ 2. Ke2 a1=Q. **10)** **1. f4 Nf6 2. Kf2 b6 3. g3 Bb7 4. Qe1 Ng4 mate.** The moves by both sides can be played in different orders. 1. ... Nh6 and/or 2. ... b5 are also possible. ♠

CHESS ADVENTURES

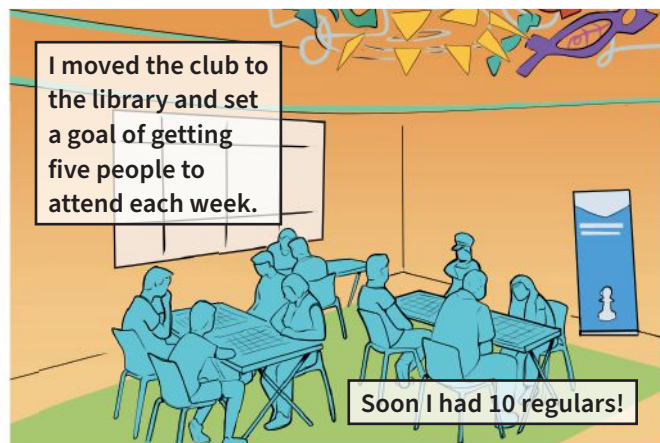
WITH EVELYN MILLS

Fairbanks, Alaska isn't a hotbed of chess activity. So, when I wanted to play chess, I found a local club.



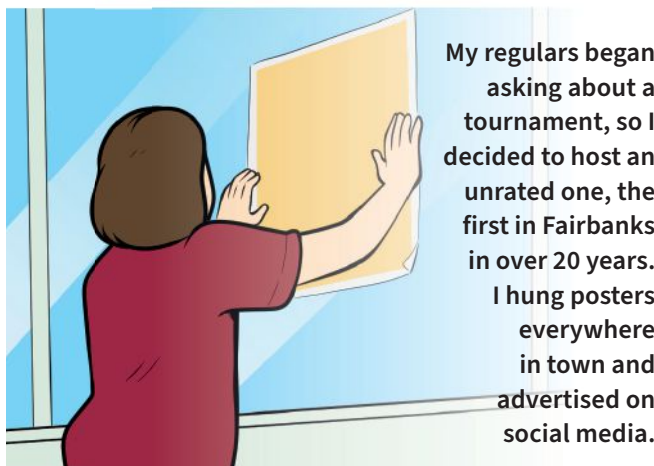
The organizer, who ran the club from his rock-climbing gym, soon wanted to step away and asked me to take over.

I took over the club because I wanted have people to play chess with.

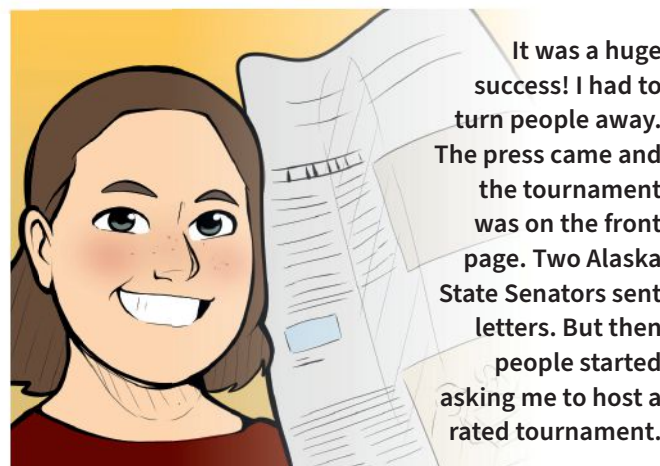


I moved the club to the library and set a goal of getting five people to attend each week.

Soon I had 10 regulars!



My regulars began asking about a tournament, so I decided to host an unrated one, the first in Fairbanks in over 20 years. I hung posters everywhere in town and advertised on social media.



It was a huge success! I had to turn people away. The press came and the tournament was on the front page. Two Alaska State Senators sent letters. But then people started asking me to host a rated tournament.



It took a lot of work, but on the 2023 National Chess Day, I hosted the first rated tournament in Fairbanks since 2006. Some really cool things happened that day.

Megan Chen became the first woman to play a rated tournament in all 50 states.

A reporter from the local newspaper stopped by.

State Senator Kawasaki made the ceremonial first move.

ART BY NICOLAS BARRIOS

TOURNAMENT LIFE ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Executive Board authorizes a temporary change in the US Chess Grand Prix (GP) rules for the period March 4, 2020 through February 29, 2024 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. Please refer to the Tournament Life Announcement section in *Chess Life* for more information.

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

Nationals

NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP EVENT

2024 US Amateur Team North FEBRUARY 16-18, 2024, ILLINOIS

Event site: Hyatt Regency Schaumburg Address: 1800 E. Golf Rd., Schaumburg, IL 60173 Overall prize fund: See TLA GP Points: n/a FIDE Rated: N Handicap accessible: N Residency restriction: N Organizer: Chess Weekend Email: glenn@chessweekend.com Phone: n/a Website: <https://www.chessweekend.com/> TLA ID: 40220

HERITAGE EVENT

World Amateur Team & U.S. Team East FEBRUARY 17-19, 2024, NEW JERSEY

Event site: Parsippany Hilton Address: 1 Hilton Ct., Parsippany, NJ 07054 Overall prize fund: n/a GP Points: n/a FIDE Rated: N Handicap accessible: Y Residency restriction: N Organizer: New Jersey Chess Federation Email: esdoyle@aol.com Phone: [703-989-6867](tel:703-989-6867) Website: <https://njsc.org/> TLA ID: 39739

NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP EVENT

2024 KCF All-Girls National Championships APRIL 12-14, 2024, ILLINOIS

Event site: Hyatt Regency McCormick Place Address: 2233 S MLK Dr, Chicago, IL 60616 Overall prize fund: n/a GP Points: n/a FIDE Rated: N Handicap accessible: Y Residency restriction: N Organizer: Kasparov Chess Foundation & Renaissance Knights Email: david.heiser@renaissanceknights.org Phone: n/a Website: <http://allgirls.rknights.org/> TLA ID: 40277

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

2024 National Open JUNE 5-9, 2024, NEVADA

Event site: Flamingo Las Vegas Hotel & Casino Address: 3555 Las Vegas Blvd S Las Vegas NV 89109 Overall prize fund: \$125,000 GP Points: 200 FIDE Rated: Y Handicap accessible: Y Residency restriction: N Organizer: Vegas Chess Festivals Email: vegaschess@

gmail.com Phone: 702-930-9550 Website: <https://vegaschessfestival.com/> TLA ID: 41728

Grand Prix

The Grand Prix continues in 2024. For information visit new.uschess.org/us-chess-grand-prix-program.

GRAND PRIX • ENHANCED GRAND PRIX

Annual Super Bowl Pre-game Chess FEBRUARY 11, 2024, NEW JERSEY

Event site: South Jersey Innovation Center Address: 498 Kings Hwy, Suite 102, Cherry Hill, NJ 08034 Overall prize fund: \$3,700 GP Points: 30 FIDE Rated: N Handicap accessible: Y Residency restriction: N Organizer: South Jersey Innovation Center Email: dov@incentr.com Phone: 703-989-6867 Website: <https://form.jotform.com/233096747880165> TLA ID: 40956

GRAND PRIX • ENHANCED GRAND PRIX

Southwest Class Blitz Championship FEBRUARY 18, 2024, TEXAS

Event site: Westin Dallas Fort Worth Airport Address: 4545 W John Carpenter Fwy, Irving TX 75063 Overall prize fund: \$500 GP Points: 10 FIDE Rated: N Handicap accessible: Y Residency restriction: N Organizer: Continental Chess Association Email: director@chess.us Phone: [3023124526](tel:3023124526) Website: <http://www.chesstour.com/> TLA ID: 41455

GRAND PRIX • ENHANCED GRAND PRIX • JUNIOR GRAND PRIX

8th annual George Washington Open FEBRUARY 23-25, 2024, VIRGINIA

Event site: Washington Dulles Marriott Address: 45020 Aviation Dr, Dulles VA 20166 Overall prize fund: \$17,000 GP Points: 120 FIDE Rated: Y Handicap accessible: Y Residency restriction: N Organizer: Continental Chess Association Email: director@chess.us Phone: [412-908-0286](tel:412-908-0286) Website: <http://www.chessevents.us> TLA ID: 40252

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

31st annual Western Class Championships MARCH 1-3, 2024, CALIFORNIA, S.

Event site: Hilton Orange County Airport Address: 18800 Macarthur Blvd, Irvine CA 92612 Overall prize fund:

\$20,000 GP Points: 120 FIDE Rated: Y Handicap accessible: Y Residency restriction: N Organizer: Continental Chess Association Email: director@chess.us Phone: [3023124526](tel:3023124526) Website: <http://www.chessevents.us> TLA ID: 40212

GRAND PRIX • ENHANCED GRAND PRIX

Western Class Blitz Championships MARCH 2, 2024, CALIFORNIA, S.

Event site: Hilton Orange County Airport Address: 18800 Macarthur Blvd, Irvine CA 92612 Overall prize fund: \$500 GP Points: 120 FIDE Rated: N Handicap accessible: Y Residency restriction: N Organizer: Continental Chess Association Email: director@chess.us Phone: [3023124526](tel:3023124526) Website: <http://www.chesstour.com/> TLA ID: 41474

GRAND PRIX • STATE CHAMPIONSHIP EVENT

Delaware State Open Championship MARCH 9-10, 2024

Event site: Ramada Inn Address: 260 Chapman Road, Newark DE 19702 Overall prize fund: \$3,800 GP Points: 10 FIDE Rated: N Handicap accessible: Y Residency restriction: N Organizer: Delaware Chess Association Email: daocanandjohn@aol.com Phone: 3023124526 Website: <http://Delawarechessassociation.org> TLA ID: 41065

GRAND PRIX • ENHANCED GRAND PRIX

21st annual Southern Class Championships MARCH 15-17, 2024, FLORIDA

Event site: Wyndham Orlando Resort Address: 8001 International Drive, Orlando 32819 Overall prize fund: \$17,000 GP Points: 80 FIDE Rated: Y Handicap accessible: Y Residency restriction: N Organizer: Continental Chess Association Email: director@chess.us Phone: [3023124526](tel:3023124526) Website: <http://www.chesstour.com/> TLA ID: 40675

GRAND PRIX • STATE CHAMPIONSHIP EVENT

2024 Pennsylvania Quick Chess Championship MARCH 15, 2024, PENNSYLVANIA

Event site: Red Lion Hotel Harrisburg Hershey Address: 4751 Lindle Road, Harrisburg, PA 17111 Overall prize fund: \$750 GP Points: 6 FIDE Rated: N Handicap accessible: Y Residency restriction: N Organizer: Tom Martinak Email: martinak_tom_m@hotmail.com Phone: 412-908-0286 Website: <http://pscfchess.org/pscholasticchamp> TLA ID: 41575

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

28th Annual Mid-America Open MARCH 22-24, 2024, MISSOURI

Event site: Clayton Plaza Hotel St. Louis-Clayton Address: 7750 Carondelet Ave., St. Louis MO 63105 Overall prize fund: \$20,000 GP Points: 120 FIDE Rated: Y Handicap accessible: Y Residency restriction: N Organizer: Continental Chess Association Email: director@chess.us Phone: [412-908-0286](tel:412-908-0286) Website: <http://www.chesstour.com/> TLA ID: 40663

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

16th Annual Open At Foxwoods MARCH 27-31, 2024, CONNECTICUT

Event site: Foxwoods Resort Casino And Hotel Address: Rt 2, Mashantucket CT 06339 Overall prize fund: \$60,000 GP Points: 200 FIDE Rated: Y Handicap accessible: N Residency restriction: N Organizer: Continental Chess Association Email: director@chess.us Phone: [3023124526](tel:3023124526) Website: <http://www.chesstour.com/> TLA ID: 40673

GRAND PRIX • JUNIOR GRAND PRIX

5th Colonial Open MARCH 28-31, 2024, VIRGINIA

Event site: Washington Dulles Airport Marriott Address: 45020 Aviation Dr., Dulles, VA 20166 Overall prize fund:

\$16,000 GP Points: 120 FIDE Rated: Y Handicap accessible: N Residency restriction: N Organizer: Anand Dommalapati Email: co2024@capitalareachess.com Phone: 703-627-5314 Website: <https://www.capitalareachess.com/colonialopen> TLA ID: 41614

GRAND PRIX • STATE CHAMPIONSHIP EVENT

PA State Game/29 Championship - West MARCH 30, 2024, PENNSYLVANIA

Event site: William Pitt Union, Univ. of Pittsburgh Address: Univ. of Pittsburgh, 5th Ave. & Bigelow Blvd., Pittsburgh PA 15213 Overall prize fund: \$690 GP Points: 6 FIDE Rated: N Handicap accessible: Y Residency restriction: N Organizer: Tom Martinak Email: martinak_tom_m@hotmail.com Phone: 412-908-0286 Website: <http://www.pscfchess.org/clearinghouse/> TLA ID: 40872

GRAND PRIX

2024 Sheridan Wyoming Open MAY 4-5, 2024, WYOMING

Event site: Ramada Plaza Conference Center Address: 1809 Sugarland Dr, Sheridan, WY 82801 Overall prize fund: \$8,500 GP Points: 100 FIDE Rated: N Handicap accessible: Y Residency restriction: N Organizer: Brian Kuehl Email: admin@sheridanchess.com Phone: 202-679-6779 Website: <http://www.SheridanChess.com> TLA ID: 41258

JUNIOR GRAND PRIX

17th Annual Philadelphia International JUNE 27-JULY 1, 2024, PENNSYLVANIA

Event site: Philadelphia Sheraton Downtown Hotel Address: 201 North 17th Street, Philadelphia, PA 19103 Overall prize fund: \$20,000 GP Points: 200 FIDE Rated: Y Handicap accessible: Y Residency restriction: N Organizer: Continental Chess Association Email: director@chess.us Phone: [412-908-0286](tel:412-908-0286) Website: <http://www.chesstour.com/> TLA ID: 41569

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

52nd Annual World Open, top 6 sections JULY 3-7, 2024, PENNSYLVANIA

Event site: Philadelphia Sheraton Downtown Hotel Address: 201 North 17th Street, Philadelphia, PA 19103 Overall prize fund: \$208,000 GP Points: 300 FIDE Rated: Y Handicap accessible: Y Residency restriction: N Organizer: Continental Chess Association Email: director@chess.us Phone: [412-908-0286](tel:412-908-0286) Website: <http://www.chesstour.com/> TLA ID: 41566

Regional

CALIFORNIA

STATE CHAMPIONSHIP EVENT

MARCH 9-10, 2024

CalChess Super States Champions League: KG, K-5, & K-12

Event site: Sonesta San Jose (North Milpitas) Address: 777 Bellow Dr., Milpitas, CA 95035 Overall prize fund: n/a GP Points: n/a FIDE Rated: N Handicap accessible: Y Residency restriction: N Organizer: BayAreaChess Email: events@bayareachess.com Phone: 408.409.6596 (voicemail/text only) Website: <http://bayareachess.com/calchess/> TLA ID: 41031

MARCH 28-31, 2024

5th Colonial Open (VA)

See Grand Prix.

PLEASE NOTE

DEADLINE FOR PRINT TLA SUBMISSIONS

TLAs appearing in *Chess Life Kids* must be uploaded online on the 10th, two months prior to the issue cover date in which the ad is to appear. (For example, October TLAs must be uploaded no later than August 10th.) TLAs uploaded past this deadline cannot be published without special approval by US Chess.



📍 COLORADO

MAY 4-5, 2024

2024 Sheridan Wyoming Open (WY)
See Grand Prix.

📍 CONNECTICUT

MARCH 28-31, 2024

5th Colonial Open (VA)
See Grand Prix.

📍 DELAWARE

MARCH 9-10, 2024

Delaware State Open Championship (DE)
See Grand Prix.

MARCH 28-31, 2024

5th Colonial Open (VA)
See Grand Prix.

📍 DIST. OF COLUMBIA

MARCH 28-31, 2024

5th Colonial Open (VA)
See Grand Prix.

📍 FLORIDA

MARCH 28-31, 2024

5th Colonial Open (VA)
See Grand Prix.

📍 GEORGIA

APRIL 8, 2023-ONGOING MONTHLY

Pizza Scholastic

Event site: The Boardroom **Address:** 1675 Peachtree Pkwy, Suite 180, Cumming Georgia 30041 **Overall prize fund:** n/a **GP Points:** n/a **FIDE Rated:** N **Handicap accessible:** Y **Residency restriction:** N **Organizer:** ThinkChess, LLC **Email:** info@mythinkchess.com **Phone:** 770.744.8595 **Website:** <https://mythinkchess.com/> **TLA ID:** 37216

MARCH 28-31, 2024

5th Colonial Open (VA)
See Grand Prix.

📍 IDAHO

MAY 4-5, 2024

2024 Sheridan Wyoming Open (WY)
See Grand Prix.

📍 ILLINOIS

STATE CHAMPIONSHIP EVENT

MARCH 8-10, 2024

2024 Illinois K-8 Chess Championship

Event site: Hyatt Regency Schaumburg **Address:** 1800 E. Golf Rd., Schaumburg, IL 60173 **Overall prize fund:** n/a **GP Points:** n/a **FIDE Rated:** N **Handicap accessible:** N **Residency restriction:** N **Organizer:** Chess Weekend **Email:** glenn@chessweekend.com **Phone:** n/a **Website:** <https://www.chessweekend.com/> **TLA ID:** 40221

MARCH 22-24, 2024

28th Annual Mid-America Open (MO)
See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

APRIL 20, 2024

Chicago Wolves Scholastic & Open

Event site: Allstate Arena Skyline Room **Address:** 10351 Lunt Ave, Rosemont, IL 60018 **Overall prize fund:** n/a **GP Points:** n/a **FIDE Rated:** N **Handicap accessible:** N **Residency restriction:** N **Organizer:** David Heiser **Email:** david.heiser@renaissanceknights.org **Phone:** n/a **Website:** <http://rknights.org/wolves/> **TLA ID:** 41548

📍 INDIANA

MARCH 22-24, 2024

28th Annual Mid-America Open (MO)
See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

📍 MARYLAND

MARYLAND CHESS TOURNAMENTS (NORTH PENN CHESS CLUB)

Maryland Chess runs 21+ annual K-12 tournaments every other Saturday from September through June & 12+ annual 1-day or multi-day open tournaments for adults & K-12 players on weekends. See www.MDChess.org for tournament announcements, registration for tournaments, updated wallcharts, live standings, signup for K-12 & open e-newsletters, lists of coaches & clubs, camp announcements, & news. K-12 MD players who compete in the Varsity section (for players rated 1600+) of 1 of 8+ annual MD-Sweet-16 Qualifiers can qualify for the \$48,000+ scholarship to the University of Maryland, Baltimore County awarded annually. UMBC is a perennial top-10 contender for the collegiate national chess championship.

FEBRUARY 10, 2024

MCA Baltimore County Quads for K-12

Event site: Jewish Community Center of Greater Baltimore **Address:** 3506 Gwynnbrook Ave, Suite 148, Owings Mills, MD 21117 **Overall prize fund:** n/a **GP Points:** n/a **FIDE Rated:** N **Handicap accessible:** N **Residency restriction:** N **Organizer:** Magnus Chess Academy **Email:** diyanshu@chessacademy.com **Phone:** n/a **Website:** <https://chessacademy.com/tournaments> **TLA ID:** 39042

MARCH 9-10, 2024

Delaware State Open Championship (DE)

See Grand Prix.

MARCH 28-31, 2024

5th Colonial Open (VA)
See Grand Prix.

📍 MASSACHUSETTS

MARCH 28-31, 2024

5th Colonial Open (VA)
See Grand Prix.

📍 MICHIGAN

MARCH 28-31, 2024

5th Colonial Open (VA)
See Grand Prix.

APRIL 12-14, 2024

2024 KCF All-Girls National Championships (IL)

See National Events.

📍 MISSOURI

MARCH 22-24, 2024

28th Annual Mid-America Open (MO)
See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

📍 MONTANA

MAY 4-5, 2024

2024 Sheridan Wyoming Open (WY)
See Grand Prix.

📍 NEBRASKA

MAY 4-5, 2024

2024 Sheridan Wyoming Open (WY)
See Grand Prix.

📍 NEW HAMPSHIRE

MARCH 28-31, 2024

5th Colonial Open (VA)
See Grand Prix.

📍 NEW JERSEY

FEBRUARY 11, 2024

Annual Super Bowl Pre-game Chess (NJ)

See Grand Prix.

FEBRUARY 24, 2024

King's Chess Club Youth/Young Adult Quads

Event site: Grace Church Bethlehem Campus **Address:** 758 Route 10, Randolph, NJ 07869 **Overall**

prize fund: n/a **GP Points:** n/a **FIDE Rated:** N **Handicap accessible:** Y **Residency restriction:** N **Organizer:** Bob McAdams **Email:** fambright@optonline.net **Phone:** 9736943988 **Website:** n/a **TLA ID:** 41621

STATE CHAMPIONSHIP EVENT

FEBRUARY 25, 2024

2024 NJ Elementary and Junior High School Championships

Event site: Brookdale Community College - Student Life Center **Address:** Arena Dr (Park in lot #7), Lincroft, NJ 07738 **Overall prize fund:** n/a **GP Points:** n/a **FIDE Rated:** N **Handicap accessible:** Y **Residency restriction:** N **Organizer:** New Jersey State Chess Federation **Email:** tournaments.njstc@gmail.com **Phone:** n/a **Website:** <https://njstc.org> **TLA ID:** 40213

MARCH 9-10, 2024

Delaware State Open Championship (DE)

See Grand Prix.

MARCH 28-31, 2024

5th Colonial Open (VA)
See Grand Prix.

📍 NEW YORK

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

MARCH 9-10, 2024

56th annual New York State Scholastic Championships

Event site: Saratoga City Center, Hilton and Court-yard **Address:** various locations, Saratoga Springs, NY **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:** director@chess.us **Website:** <http://www.chessevents.us> **TLA ID:** 40245

MARCH 28-31, 2024

5th Colonial Open (VA)
See Grand Prix.

📍 NORTH CAROLINA

FEBRUARY 16-19, 2024

ChessKid National Festival

Event site: Charlotte Convention Center **Address:** 501 S College St, Charlotte, NC 28202 **Overall prize fund:** See TLA **GP Points:** n/a **FIDE Rated:** N **Handicap accessible:** Y **Residency restriction:** N **Organizer:** Charlotte Chess Center & ChessKid **Email:** nationalfest@chesskid.com **Phone:** n/a **Website:** <https://www.chesskid.com/events/national-chess-festival> **TLA ID:** 40877

MARCH 28-31, 2024

5th Colonial Open (VA)
See Grand Prix.

📍 OHIO

MARCH 22-24, 2024

28th Annual Mid-America Open (MO)
See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

MARCH 28-31, 2024

5th Colonial Open (VA)
See Grand Prix.

📍 PENNSYLVANIA

North Penn Chess Club

Main & Richardson - St. John's UCC, 500 West Main St., Lansdale, PA 19446. See www.northpennchessclub.org for schedules & info or 215-699-8418

FEBRUARY 11, 2024

Annual Super Bowl Pre-game Chess (NJ)

See Grand Prix.

MARCH 9-10, 2024

Delaware State Open Championship (DE)

See Grand Prix.

STATE CHAMPIONSHIP EVENT • HERITAGE EVENT

MARCH 16-17, 2024

2024 Pennsylvania State Scholastic Championships

Event site: Red Lion Hotel Harrisburg Hershey **Address:** 4751 Lindle Road, Harrisburg, PA 17111 **Overall**

prize fund: n/a **GP Points:** n/a **FIDE Rated:** N **Handicap accessible:** Y **Residency restriction:** N **Organizer:** Tom Martinak **Email:** dmartinak_tom_m@hotmail.com **Phone:** 412-908-0286 **Website:** <http://pscdchess.org/pascholasticchamp/> **TLA ID:** 41578

MARCH 28-31, 2024

5th Colonial Open (VA)
See Grand Prix.

JUNIOR GRAND PRIX

52nd Annual World Open, Under 1200 and Under 1000 Sections

JUNE 28-30, 2024, PENNSYLVANIA

Event site: Philadelphia Sheraton Downtown Hotel **Address:** 201 North 17th Street, Philadelphia, PA 19103 **Overall prize fund:** \$17,000 **GP Points:** n/a **FIDE Rated:** N **Handicap accessible:** Y **Residency restriction:** N **Organizer:** Continental Chess Association **Email:** director@chess.us **Phone:** director@chess.us **Website:** <http://www.chesstour.com> **TLA ID:** 41567

📍 SOUTH CAROLINA

MARCH 28-31, 2024

5th Colonial Open (VA)
See Grand Prix.

📍 SOUTH DAKOTA

MAY 4-5, 2024

2024 Sheridan Wyoming Open (WY)
See Grand Prix.

📍 TENNESSEE

MARCH 22-24, 2024

28th Annual Mid-America Open (MO)
See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

📍 TEXAS

FEBRUARY 18, 2024

Southwest Class Blitz Championship (TX)

See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

STATE CHAMPIONSHIP EVENT • JUNIOR GRAND PRIX

MARCH 1-3, 2024

2024 North/Central Texas State Scholastic Championships

Event site: Houston Marriott Westchase **Address:** 2900 Briarpark Dr, Houston, TX 77042 **Overall prize fund:** n/a **GP Points:** n/a **FIDE Rated:** N **Handicap accessible:** Y **Residency restriction:** Y **Organizer:** Barbara Swafford **Email:** info@dallaschess.com **Phone:** 214-533-0061 **Website:** <http://dallaschess.com/2024Texas-Scholastic/index.htm> **TLA ID:** 41619

MARCH 22-24, 2024

28th Annual Mid-America Open (MO)
See Grand Prix or chessevents.us.

📍 UTAH

MAY 4-5, 2024

2024 Sheridan Wyoming Open (WY)
See Grand Prix.

📍 VIRGINIA

FEBRUARY 3, 2024

MCA Arlington Quads for K-12

Event site: Unitarian Universalist Church of Arlington **Address:** 4444 Arlington Boulevard, Arlington, VA 22204 **Overall prize fund:** n/a **GP Points:** n/a **FIDE Rated:** N **Handicap accessible:** N **Residency restriction:** N **Organizer:** Magnus Chess Academy **Email:** diyanshu@chessacademy.com **Phone:** n/a **Website:** <https://chessacademy.com/tournaments> **TLA ID:** 39037

FEBRUARY 24, 2024

MCA Fairfax County Quads for K-12

Event site: Pozez Jewish Community Center of Northern Virginia **Address:** 8900 Little River Turnpike, Fairfax, VA 22031 **Overall prize fund:** n/a **GP Points:** n/a **FIDE Rated:** N **Handicap accessible:** N **Residency restriction:** N **Organizer:** Magnus Chess Academy **Email:** diyanshu@chessacademy.com **Phone:** n/a **Website:** <https://chessacademy.com/tournaments> **TLA ID:** 39032

STATE CHAMPIONSHIP EVENT

MARCH 9-10, 2024

2024 Virginia Scholastic Championships

Event site: William Fleming High School Address: 3649 Ferncliff Ave. NW, Roanoke, VA 24017 Overall prize fund: n/a GP Points: n/a FIDE Rated: N Handicap accessible: Y Residency restriction: Y Organizer: Mike Hoffpauir, NTD/IA Email: mhoffpauir@aol.com Phone: 757-846-4805 Website: http://www.vachess.org TLA ID: 41767

MARCH 23, 2024

MCA Arlington Quads for K-12

Event site: Unitarian Universalist Church of Arlington Address: 4444 Arlington Boulevard, Arlington, VA 22204 Overall prize fund: n/a GP Points: n/a FIDE Rated: N Handicap accessible: N Residency restriction: N Organizer: Magnus Chess Academy Email: divyanshu@chessacademy.com Phone: n/a Website: https://chessacademy.com/tournaments TLA ID: 39038

MARCH 28-31, 2024

5th Colonial Open (VA)

See Grand Prix.

WEST VIRGINIA

MARCH 28-31, 2024

5th Colonial Open (VA)

See Grand Prix.

WISCONSIN

HERITAGE EVENT

FEBRUARY 24, 2024

Waukesha Memorial (42nd Annual)

Event site: Country Inn & Suites Address: 1250

South Moorland RD (do not confuse with Moreland RD which is 2 miles further west, Exit 301 AB from I-94), Brookfield, WI 53005 Overall prize fund: n/a GP Points: n/a FIDE Rated: N Handicap accessible: Y Residency restriction: N Organizer: Waukesha Chess Club Email: jnickell@wi.rr.com Phone: 262.544.6266 Website: https://www.waukeshachessclub.com TLA ID: 40895

WYOMING

MAY 4-5, 2024

2024 Sheridan Wyoming Open (WY)

See Grand Prix.

Solutions

PAGE 15 TEST YOUR TACTICS

(1) The queen delivers mate after **33. Qg6+ Kf8 34. Qf7 mate.** (Zhu – Zhang, K-12 Grade Championships, 2023). (2) White forced resignation with **33. Qg8+!** due to 33. ... Rxc8 34. Nxf7 mate. (Hyatt – Baalla, K-12 Grade Championships, 2023.) (3) It's mate in two with **28. Qd6+ Ke8** Or 28. ... Qe7 29. Qxe7 mate. **29. Nxc7 mate.** (Anandh – Kumar, K-12 Grade Championships, 2023) (4) Black

to mate in three with the pretty **43. ... Rf2+ 44. Kg5 f6+! 45. Kh4 Rh2 mate** returning to the same square! (Jin – Muthukumar, K-12 Grade Championships, 2023) (5) White removes the guard with the cunning **26. f5!** and the knight cannot be defended. White got a big advantage after **26. ... Qa6 27. Qxg4** (Katta – Xin, K-12 Grade Championships, 2023) (6) The king lacks escape squares. This is a signal that there might be a tactic! White found the winning **11. Ne6!** attacking the queen and threatening a fork on c7. **11. ... Bxd5** If 11. ... Qb8 12. Ndc7+. Note that taking the knight leads to mate after 11. ... fxe6 12. Qh5+ g6 13. Qxg6 mate. **12. Nxd8 hxc5 13. Qxd5 Rxd8** and White is up a lot of material. (Wang – Ji, K-12 Grade Championships, 2023) (7) **27. ... b5!** Removing a defender! White tried to hang on with **28. Rc5 Rxd4 29. Rxb5?** (better was 29. Rxd4 Rxd4 30. Rxb5 Bxe4 31.

Bxe4 Rxe4 32. Rb3 when Black is still winning, but it requires good technique!) but after **29. ... Rxd1 30. Nxd1 Ba6!** Black wins easily. (Nemiroff – M. Paragua, K-12 Grade Championships, 2023) (8) White would like to take the rook on e7, but the nasty threat of ... Qb6xb2 mate prevents it. Unless... **37. Nc6+!** Now Black must recapture or allow the knight to take the rook. All three continuations are losing. **37. ... Qxc6** Here 37. ... bxc6 is worse, allowing 38. Qxe7+. **38. Qxe7** and White is up an Exchange. (Qian – Javeri, K-12 Grade Championships, 2023) (9) It would be nice to drop a knight on e3, forking the rook and queen. How can Black get there? **20. ... Ng4+! 21. Kg3** Much worse is 21. hxc4 Qxc4 mate. **21. ... Ne3 22. Qd3** Or 22. Bxe7 Nxc2 23. Rac1 Ne3. **22. ... Nxf1+ 23. Rxf1** and Black is up the Exchange. (Manchanda – Jani, K-12 Grade Championships, 2023)

JANUARY 16, 2024

BY JJ LANG

Chess Life Kids Online presents “Tactics Tuesday,” featuring a new, printable worksheet with exercises for beginner and intermediate chess players every Tuesday. The problems always come from recent games, such as these exercises from the 2023 K-12 Grade Championships in Orlando. These worksheets are a great way for you or your students to stay sharp!



1. WHITE TO PLAY

2. WHITE TO PLAY

3. WHITE TO PLAY

SOLUTIONS

1) Another stylish mate in two! Always calculate those forcing moves, even if they lose material. **28. Qf8+ Rxf8 29. Rxf8 mate.** (Zhou – Maddipati, Orlando, 2023) **2) 28. Rh8+** A nice deflection. The

queen hangs after 28. ... Nxc8, but the rook on d8 hangs after the king moves. **Black resigned.** (Lyon Martinez – Trey, Orlando, 2023) **3) 52. Rxb4** Removing the defender! **52. ... Rxe6** The point was 52. ... axb4 53. Rxd6 and White

is winning. **53. Rb8+** An important intermezzo, which is easy to overlook. Note that 53. fxe6 axb4 54. d6 also wins. After **53. ... Re8 54. Rxe8+ Kf7 55. d6 Rxc6+ 56. Bxc6 a4 57. d7, Black resigned.** (Reiss – Yao, Orlando, 2023)



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