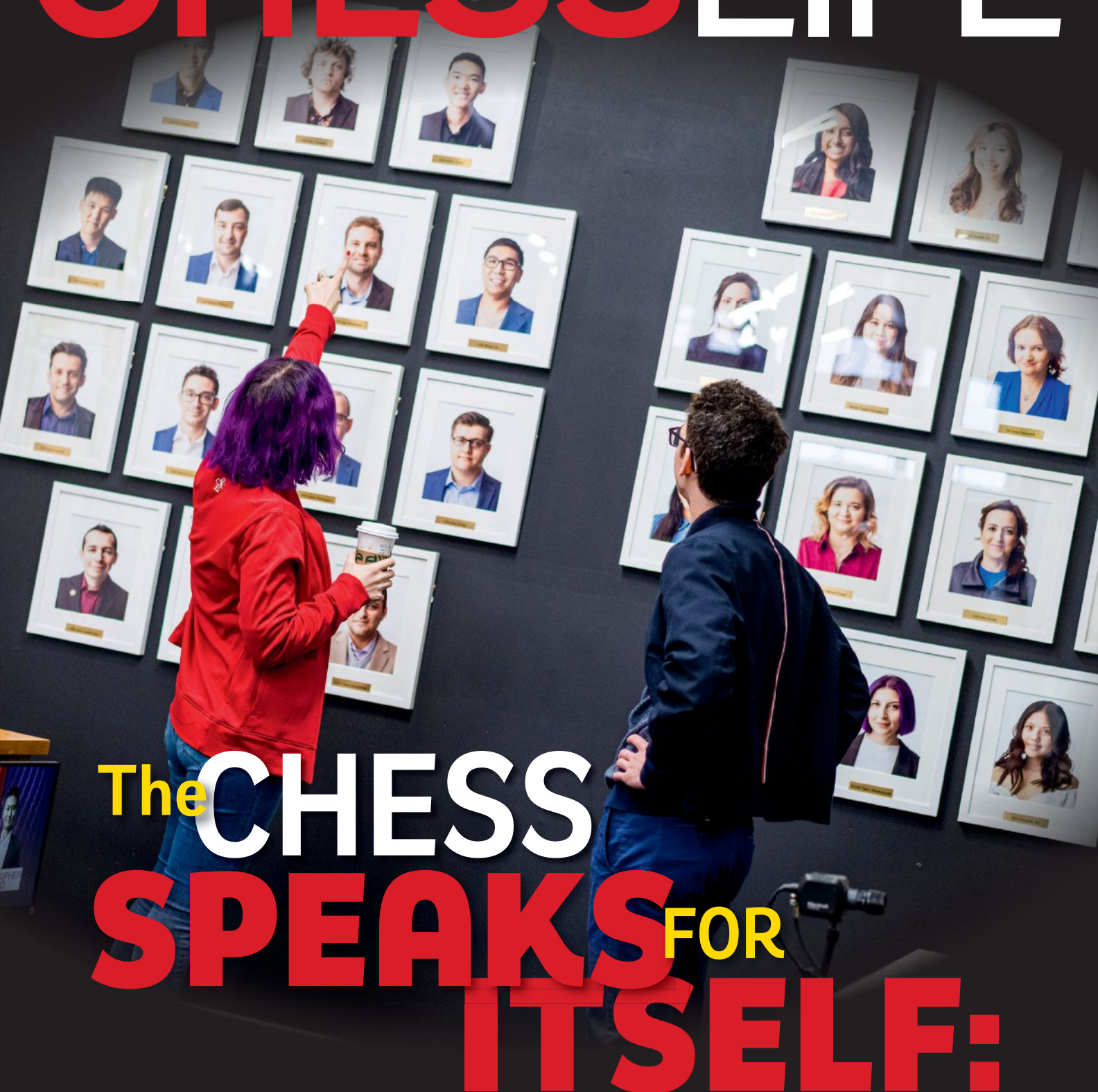
L'AFFAIRE NIEMANN ■ TATEV JOINS *CHESS LIFE* ■ WORLD TEAM

CHESS LIFE



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JANUARY

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All hail our once and current champions!

PHOTO: SLCC / C. FULLER

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CONTRIBUTORS



WGM TATEV ABRAHAMYAN (U.S. Women's Championship) is an Armenian-American woman grandmaster. After moving to the United States in 2001, she has been a regular participant in U.S. Women's Championships and a stalwart member of our international teams. Currently she works as the Director of Chess for Bryght Labs in Overland Park, Kansas. While she is no stranger to these pages, this month sees her first regular column for *Chess Life* in print.



GM AWONDER LIANG (U.S. Championship) was born in Madison, Wisconsin in 2003, and has lived there his whole life. He currently attends the University of Chicago. He is a two-time World Youth chess champion, as well as creator and keeper of many youth chess records. He is the second youngest U.S. player ever to achieve the International Master title, and the third youngest to achieve the GM title.



IM JOHN DONALDSON (World Team Championship) is the author of more than 30 books, including his newest title, *Bobby Fischer and His World*. He is an accomplished chess coach, historian, and journalist, and he has served as captain of U.S. international teams across three decades. His work as team captain earned him FIDE's Botvinnik Award in 2019. Donaldson served as Director of the Mechanics' Institute Chess Club from 1998 through his retirement in 2019, and he helps to administer the Samford Fellowship, awarded annually to some of America's most promising chess talents. Current projects include continued research into the life and games of Bobby Fischer, and collection of the games of GM Jim Tarjan.

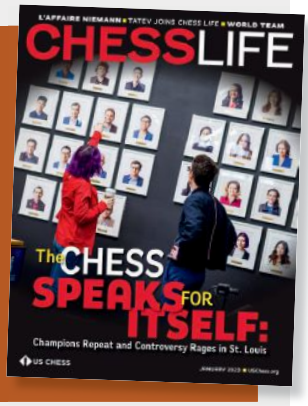


JOHN HARTMANN (Niemann Controversy) is the editor of *Chess Life* and *Chess Life Online*, and a two-time winner of the Chess Journalist of the Year award from the Chess Journalists of America. Recently he has become fascinated by typography, but fear not: he will not experiment here. Find him on Twitter at *@hartmannchess* if you are interested and so inclined.

ON THE **COVER**

The 2022 U.S. Championships had a bit of everything — brilliant games, intense competition — but there's no denying the cloud that hung over the event due to ongoing chess gossip. Our cover shows that even the top players aren't above a little chatter.

PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY **SLCC / LENNART OOTES**



US CHESS

EDITORIAL

CHESS LIFE/CLO EDITOR **John Hartmann** *(john.hartmann@uschess.org)*
ART DIRECTOR **Natasha Roberts**
PUBLICATIONS EDITOR **Melinda Matthews**
GRAPHICS ASSISTANT **Nicole Esaltare**
TECHNICAL EDITOR **IM Ron Burnett**

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

INQUIRIES

Communications and press inquiries: Dan Lucas at *dlucas@uschess.org* ■ Letters to the editor: *letters@uschess.org* ■ Advertising and TLA inquiries or TLA display ads: Melinda Matthews at *mmatthews@uschess.org* ■ To join US Chess or enter a tournament directed by US Chess, go to *uschess.org* or call 1-800-903-USCF (8723) ■ Change of address: *addresschange@uschess.org* ■ Tournament Director Certification information: *tdcert-group@uschess.org* ■ Staff contact information: *new.uschess.org/about* ■ Please submit all other inquiries to: *feedback@uschess.org*, (314) 661-9500

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US CHESS ONLINE

WONDERING WHERE TO FIND US?

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

CHESS LIFE ONLINE

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

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

FACEBOOK All our chess news is shared here as it happens, along with more general updates about our organization and the social purpose of our 501(c)(3) mission. Think of it as a mixture of news and outreach. **facebook.com/uschess**



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

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

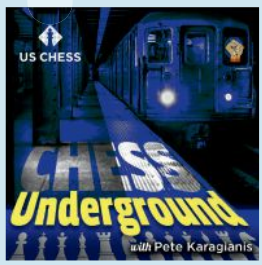
INSTAGRAM Follow US Chess on Instagram for photos and fun from US Chess events and personalities. **instagram.com/us_chess**

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









Is it Tuesday? Then it's *podcast* Tuesday.

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

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

PODCASTS FROM US CHESS

ILLUSTRATION: SHUTTERSTOCK

Taking our medicine



Photo phollies

I enjoyed your November article "Fun in The Sun," regarding the 2022 Invitationals at Rancho Mirage. But the picture of the Irwin group (page 29) was taken from behind, unlike all the other groups. I know the backs of our heads are very distinguished looking, but, perhaps next year you might show us from the front. We're not that scary.

Richard Hobbs
via email

I enjoyed the articles and games in the November issue about the U.S. Open and invitationals. But you used professional group pictures for four of the invitationals and then for the Seniors, you used a picture showing the backs of everyone's head. Why didn't you use this group picture that we all posed for after the reception?

Jason Braun
via email

John Hartmann responds:
When we were going through our photos for the November issue, we thought the alternative shot — the one of the Irwin informational meeting — was interesting, and provided a nice contrast to the four staged photos of the juniors. I still think it's interesting, but I definitely understand the criticism raised here. We'll keep it in mind for next year.

Spelling is Hard

I understand that spelling of names is not crucial to chess reporting, but to misspell Moradiabadi on the cover [see closeup at right — *ed.*] of the November *Chess Life*?!?!?! Thankfully, it was correct in the remainder of the issue. An opening error, but an improved middlegame!

Sam Naylor
via email

John Hartmann responds:
Yep. We blew it. The cover lines are one of the last things we decide on, and in this case, the "b" and the "d" looked just enough alike to fool us when proofing. We'll do better in the future, and our apologies to Elshan!

Kings Right Redux

Regarding the interesting "Kings Right" chess variant where both kings are to their queens' rights:

Before anything else, I would like several first-class chess engines running at full power to ensure that there isn't a forced win from the git-go. It seems unlikely, but let's check, okay?

If there is no forced win in the Kings Right chess variant, maybe Chess 960 should be Chess 961?

Lewis Jenkins
via email

Morabiabadi earns U.S. Championship seat

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US CHESS TRUST

"Sharing chess, one story at a time."

The story behind *Chess Connections*.

BY **DAVIS ZONG**



CHESS CONNECTIONS IS A flexible, dedicated, and inclusive publication founded by IM Justin Wang in Spring 2021 to "promote chess in underprivileged communities, provide school-aged chess players a platform to write articles of their own, and build stronger chess communities by sharing experiences, knowledge, and information." Having recently published its seventh (Fall 2022) issue, *Chess Connections* has grown substantially, thanks to numerous new writers providing fresh content for each issue. In fact, the magazine's length has grown to 78 pages, more than twice as long as its first publication.

One of my favorite parts of *Chess Connections* is conducting the featured interview with a top player. In past issues, we have interviewed WGM Thalia Cervantes Landeiro, GM Awonder Liang, GM Darwin Yang, GM Joshua Sheng, IM Annie Wang, WGM Jennifer Yu, and GM Andrew Tang. Preparing for these interviews is a group effort.

Before each interview, the core team members meet on Zoom to outline questions. We want to make each interview unique, but keep a general structure, so we conduct some research to create both general and tailored questions for each featured person. For example, for our interview with GM Joshua Sheng, who achieved his final GM norm in 2021, WIM Ellen Wang and I learned that Sheng had published *Mastering Chess Logic,* a book that seeks to unravel the complicated thinking processes of strong players and present them in simpler terms. We made sure to ask Sheng about what inspired him to write his book and to explain the importance of logic.

Prior to these interviews, many of these top players were merely names to me. I might have seen them once or twice on the top boards of an open tournament or said "Hi" to them while waiting for pairings, but I'd never had involved discussions with them. It has been an honor talking to these players face-to-face and sharing in-depth conversations about our common interests. The interviews in which I've participated — Sheng with Ellen, and GMs Darwin Yang and Awonder Liang with Justin — were all originally scheduled for half an hour, but the enthusiasm of the young grandmasters often extended the time to almost an hour. Even though some of the interview questions were the same for everyone, the responses were still vastly different — each player had their own inspirational advice to offer!

For example, when we asked Liang to explain "the differences between studying chess and studying other things," he responded that chess players should understand that it takes a lot of discipline to spend so many years on chess, so they know in a unique way what it means to be good at something. In Liang's words, "The world is yours. You can do whatever you like and be quite successful at that." When asked what he liked most about chess, Yang said that it was the journey. "There's just so much room for creativity, learning, and discovery. I think it covers a lot of what life is about in a way: just preparing, thinking about it, taking it seriously, dealing with your emotions." Messages like these are inspirational to our enthusiastic readers.

I started writing for *Chess Connections* when Justin asked me to submit an article about an interesting chess experience. Having recently played a blitz game against GM Leinier Dominguez Perez — a player whose FIDE rating has placed him as high as number 10 in the world — I was happy to comply. I analyzed a complicated missed draw in the middlegame as well as the brilliant finishing combination, a bolt from

the blue that the grandmaster unleashed against me. My article appeared in *Chess Connection's* first issue — a whopping 34 pages long, with articles spanning topics from stalemate puzzles to chess psychology, all written by chess enthusiasts like me. The diverse format continues today: in a typical read, you will find content that ranges from a jolly chess poem to a focused study on a particular motif.

This content diversity is due, in part, to the diversity and uniqueness of our writers. Anyone can write for *Chess Connections*. The magazine has published articles written by players of all ages and ratings. After their first article, many of our contributing writers stay on to become staff writers, writing articles multiple times a year.

No matter how intriguing or well thought out, all articles go through an organized editing process to ensure that they are presented in the best way possible in the final publication. When I suggest revisions to an article, I try to read from the perspective of our typical audience member: a chess enthusiast, a club player, or a curious young kid introduced to chess in an after-school program. I ask myself questions such as, "Does this article make me want to play chess more, maybe jump into a game right now? Can I visualize these moves clearly or do I need to go through the hustle of setting up a physical board? Would a friend who is not into chess be inspired to try it out after reading the article?" Amazingly, most of the articles have been great at stimulating the reader's creative mind — I often embark on a chess study session right after I finish editing!

One of the first writers that I worked with during an editing process was Roger Zhang. He has since written multiple articles for the magazine and is now a staff writer. In the Spring 2022 issue, Roger wrote about his experience at the U.S. Amateur Team East (USATE), a fun six-round tournament where teams of four players with average ratings below 2200 compete.

I enjoyed reading through his article, and his game annotations were detailed and engaging. To format articles in a more audience-friendly way, I encourage writers to add intermediate boards between long variations and explain their thought processes behind certain decisions and tactics. Sometimes, if a section is particularly interesting, I challenge writers to elaborate and provide even more of their exciting experiences and commentary.

As an editor, another important task is to encourage new people to write for the magazine. Jack Levine, a friend who attends Hunter College High School with me, is an enthusiastic blitz player who enjoys sharing his experiences during our weekly school club meets. He was equally excited when I told him about *Chess Connections* and agreed to write an article.

In his first piece, "Mind Games in Chess: Mikhail Tal," Jack provided examples of how "The Magician from Riga" (a nickname for Mikhail Tal) used psychological tricks like jokes or oversized sunglasses to intimidate his opponents and gain an advantage. For example, when Bobby Fischer showed his intended next move to Tal, hoping to gauge his reaction, Tal — who knew that Fischer's intended move was the best one — walked away. He came back laughing after cracking a joke with Tigran Petrosian in order to throw the 15-year Fischer off guard.

Fischer originally planned to play the best move, but he was influenced by Tal's unexpected reaction and subsequently changed his move, thereby losing the game. Stories like these provide valuable lessons because they demonstrate how chess can sometimes be played beyond the board. With his unique ability to analyze the psychology behind the seemingly technical aspects of chess, Jack is now also a staff writer for the magazine.

After the interview, drafts, and edits are completed, the articles move to the design phase, where members of our design team use Canva to lay out the magazine, adding their artistic flair to its pages. It is always a proud moment when the magazine is published and we can send it to our writers and other friends in celebration, spreading the love of chess to enthusiasts wherever they might be.

Our goal is to continue sharing our chess experiences. We hope to ignite the chess spark in more people, and we welcome them to our community as we embark on this amazing journey together.

FOR MORE:

***CHESS CONNECTIONS* WAS founded by IM Justin Wang, who remains the Editor in Chief. He is supported by a team of editors, designers, and writers, including Olivia Coward, Jerry Chang, Lulu Huang, Jack Levine, Anjali Lodh, Roger Shi, WIM Ellen Wang, Roger Zhang, and Davis Zong. Check out their finished products at *chessconnections.org*.**



Davis Zong


WIM Ellen Wang


IM Justin Wang

PHOTOS: COURTESY SUBJECT (ZONG), SLCC / C. FULLER (E. WANG), SLCC / A.FULLER (J. WANG)

IN PASSING



Tania Kranich-Ritter

1944-2022

BY **FM MARK RITTER**

ANASTASIA "TANIA" KRANICH-RITTER of Tampa, Florida, passed away on October 14, 2022, at age 77.

Born in Athens, Greece, Tania had a chess career with many branches and achievements. Her chess origin story is unique: today 10-year-old experts are not uncommon, but Tania didn't even learn how to play chess until she was in her early 30s! At that time — the late 1970s — the American chess landscape was very different. There was no scholastic chess at all, and you could count the number of female masters not on one hand, but on one finger! (Diane Savereide was, I believe, the only U.S. woman rated above 2200).

After playing regularly at the Nassau Chess Club on Long Island and in other big events in New York, Tania brought her rating close to 2100 and was consistently one of the top 25 ranked women in the country. It was around this time that she won the New York State women's championship.

A respected and formidable opponent, as shown by the many master scalps she collected, Tania definitely preferred the tactical side of chess above the other aspects, and she exhibited a real intuitive flair for dynamic attacking play. Witness this fireworks display against an experienced master. Can you guess that her favorite players were Morphy and Tal?

KING'S GAMBIT DECLINED, FALKBEER GAMBIT (C32)

Eric Cooke
Tania Kranich
New York Open, 1985

1. e4 e5 2. f4 d5 3. exd5 e4 4. d3 exd3 5. Qxd3 Nf6 6. c4 Bc5 7. Nc3 0–0 8. h3 Re8+ 9. Be2 Nc6 10. Bd2 Nd4 11. 0–0–0 Bf5 12. Qg3 c6 13. dxc6 Qa5 14. Rf1 Nb3+ 15. Kd1 Nxd2 16. b4 Qxb4 17. a3 Qb2 18. cxb7 Rab8 19. Na4 Qc2+ 20. Ke1 Qc1, mate.

In the mid-1980s Tania became president of the strong Freeport Chess Club, where many of the best players from Long Island also played each week. She organized two memorable simultaneous exhibitions. Ex-World Champion Boris Spassky came in 1984 and was a tremendous success in every way. Tania played in the simul and achieved a draw with the jovial Spassky.

The next year, she brought in Susan Polgar, who was then only 16 years old and already one of the top-rated female players in the world. I recall how, at dinner after the simul, Susan told us that her (then unknown) six-year-old sister, Judit, was even more talented than she was. We all scoffed, of course!

With both of us playing each week at Nassau, Tania and I finally crossed swords a number of times. I had my hands full in every game due to her sharp and inventive play. Soon we realized that we were much better mates off the board than on it.

Tania and I moved to Tampa, Florida, in 2001 to begin new careers as professional chess coaches. With her usual 100% dedication, Tania became a US Chess Level 4 coach, and she was a popular and successful scholastic coach at a high-profile elementary school. In 2004, we shared the Florida Chess Association Coach of the Year title. But Tania's biggest coaching successes were still to come.

At the 2005 K-12 Grade Nationals in Orlando, Tania coached her fifth-grade class all the way to a national title! It was the first time that a Florida public school class had won a national championship. Tania started teaching a sixth grade after-school chess class at Liberty Middle School in 2007. Just one year later, her team won their only national championship at the 2008 K-12s. Throughout her chess coaching, Tania introduced the game to hundreds of children. I am sure the ripples of her influence will continue for a long time to come.

Never one to rest on her laurels, Tania became a certified tournament director. She started a weekly scholastics club and ran US Chess rated tournaments throughout the school year. Together she and I conducted a celebrated summer chess camp for a number of years. When the COVID-19 pandemic arrived, we both realized it was time to close shop and retire. But chess was never far away. During the last two years, while struggling with major health issues, Tania still enjoyed devoting time each day to solving tactical puzzles on-line.

Cäissa owes Tania much gratitude, although she and I always felt the opposite. It was through chess that we met and became life-mates, spending 38 wonderful years together. For that I will be forever grateful.

PHOTO: COURTESY MARK RITTER

The 2023 Scholar Chess Player Awards

IF YOU ARE A HIGH SCHOOL JUNIOR OR SENIOR LOOKING FOR SCHOLARSHIP MONEY, READ ON!

If you are a current US Chess member, you are eligible to apply for one of the following two awards:

- 2023 National Scholar Chess Player Award — total of five $1,500 scholarships awarded.
- 2023 The Scholar Chess Player Ambassador Award for players rated under 2000 — total of one $1,500 scholarship awarded.

To be considered for these awards, you must show that you have met the following criteria:

- You played in at least 25 regular-rated US Chess or FIDE games held from dates January 1, 2022 through December 31, 2022. Games with a time control less than G/30,d0 do not count toward the 25 game requirement.
- You have shown outstanding achievement in academics and chess.
- You have completed at least one year of chess-related community service since you started the ninth grade.
- You can demonstrate in an essay (of 500 words or less) how your being selected as a 2022 Scholar Chess Player enables you to further your education, improve your chess, and continue contributing to the chess community for the next five years of your life.
- For the Scholar Chess Player Ambassador: You have shown outstanding community service and leadership by being an exemplary ambassador of the game of chess.

The scholarships are provided by the U.S. Chess Trust, with a generous supporting contribution from the National Scholastic Chess Foundation (NSCF), to recognize and encourage outstanding high school students who promote a positive image of chess. Previous recipients of this award are not eligible.

Applications should be submitted via the online form at ***new.uschess.org/news/2023-scholar-chess-player-awards***. Documents (.docx, .pdf and other usual extensions) can be uploaded to your application there.

Your completed application must include the following:

- Submitted application form via the online form.
- Your uploaded high school transcripts showing all courses and grades.
- Your SAT or ACT scores.
- Evidence, listed in the form or uploaded separately, that you have played at least 25 US Chess or FIDE qualifying rated games held from dates January 1, 2022 through December 31, 2022.
- A list and brief description of your best chess accomplishments.
- Examples of your chess-related community service since ninth grade or later.
- A letter of recommendation from a teacher in a current or former school you have attended in ninth, 10th, 11th, or 12th grade.
- A letter of recommendation from a chess coach or tournament director.
- A letter of support from someone other than a parent or guardian, bearing witness to the nature, duration, and impact of your chess-related community service. We also encourage you to submit newspaper articles or web-based stories as evidence.
- Your essay uploaded in the application form of no more than 500 words describing how your being recognized as a Scholar Chess Player would help you continue contributing to the greater US Chess community over the next five years.
- A recent color photograph of yourself, either a headshot or full-length.

The deadline for submitting the application is ***March 1st, 2023 at 11:59PM PT***. Incomplete applications will not be reviewed by the selection committee.

PHOTO: COURTESY SUBJECT

Joshua Lawson Joins US Chess



US CHESS IS PLEASED TO WELCOME Joshua Lawson to its team as a new Member Services Associate.

Joshua has been an active tournament player since he was 12 years old. He has achieved a 2100+ rating.

He loves chess because of its unforgiving nature and because it makes you think outside of the box. Critical moments are faced when critical decisions must be made and one bad move can nullify all of the good ones.

Outside of chess, he enjoys traveling (he has been to over 10 countries), working out, attending baseball games, festivals, and concerts. One of his fondest travel memories was visiting Amsterdam in 2019 and seeing the Max Euwe Chess Club. Being in the presence of such chess history was an incredible memory he'll never forget.

Joshua's favorite chess quote is, "I don't believe in psychology, I believe in good moves." (Bobby Fischer)

Joshua earned a Bachelor of Science degree from the University of North Carolina Greensboro in Kinesiology.

Fair is Fair

How Should We Break Ties?

BY **GM ANDY SOLTIS**

IMAGINE THAT YOU ARE the tournament director in this situation:

The last round is over. Two players have tied for first prize. One of them is rated 50 points higher than the other. You want to break the tie in the fairest way possible and give the lower-rated player a reasonable chance in a playoff.

If no one wins the playoff, the cash prize will be split. This tournament's rules allow you to choose among three tie break formats:

- (a) A one-game playoff, or
- (b) A two-game match, with the players alternating colors, or
- (c) A four-game match, with alternating colors.

But, Madame Tournament Director, before you choose among the three, let me complicate your life. This tournament has an unusual rule. The higher-rated player would get White in format (a).

Yes, I know this sounds unfair. Why should the stronger guy get to make the first move in the only game?

Yet when I asked a sampling of players — of various ratings, ages and levels of tournament activity — half said the most favorable format to the higher rated player was actually (c).

There is no clearly correct answer. Mathematic analysis indicates (c) and (a) both favor the stronger player, to roughly the same degree. Yet no one I polled considered (c) unfair.

For many of us, tiebreaking is pretty arcane stuff. One playoff format seems pretty much the same as another. We take notice of tiebreak rules only when there is controversy — such as when GM Magnus Carlsen denounced what he called the "completely idiotic" rules at the 2021 World Rapid Championship.

But playoffs are increasingly popular and we should pay more attention to fairness. So what exactly do we mean by "fair"?

In a match, we feel "fair" is when each player has White as often as he does Black. Making the first move is such an advantage that a game can resemble a pro tennis match. The player who gets to serve will win most often.

One of the most thrilling playoffs ever seemed like a Wimbledon final:

SICILIAN DEFENSE, ROSSOLIMO VARIATION (B30)

GM Fabiano Caruana
GM Magnus Carlsen
Clutch Chess Showdown finals (11), *chess24.com*, 06.14.2020

1. e4 c5 2. Nf3 Nc6 3. Bb5 e5 4. 0-0 Bd6 5. c3 a6 6. Ba4 b5 7. Bc2 Nge7 8. d3 Ng6 9. Be3

GM Fabiano Caruana had to win this game, with his last White, to save the playoff. If Magnus Carlsen broke his serve by drawing, he would win the $50,000 match.

9. ... 0-0 10. Nbd2 Be7 11. Bb3 d6 12. Bd5 Qe8 13. d4! exd4 14. cxd4 Rb8 15. Rc1

But Caruana had found a flaw in Carlsen's strange-looking 4. ... Bd6. Black was weak on the c-file.

15. ... Nb4 16. dxc5 dxc5 17. Bxc5 Nxd5 18. exd5 Bxc5 19. Rxc5 Bb7 20. Nb3 Qd7 21. Na5! Ba8 22. Nc6 Rbe8 23. Nfd4 Qd6 24. b4 Re4 25. Qf3 Rfe8 26. Nf5 Qd7 27. g3! h6 28. h4 Kh8 29. Ne3 Kg8 30. Rfc1 Nf8 31. Nf5 Nh7 32. Kg2 Kh8 33. Nb8 Qd8!

Carlsen correctly avoided 33. ... Rxb8 34. Qxe4 Nf6 35. Qc2, when 35. ... Bxd5+ 36. f3 is lost.

34. Nc6 Qd7 35. Nb8 Qd8 36. Nxa6! Bxd5 37. Nc7 Bb7 38. Nxe8 Re7

Here Caruana found a masterful shot to take the game and continue the battle.



39. Qxb7! Rxb7 40. Ned6 Nf8 and Black resigned.

With this result, the match was tied at 5½ each. But Carlsen had White in the final game. When he won and triumphed in the playoff, fans concluded the rules were absolutely fair. Neither player had an extra White.

But Magnus Carlsen did have a slight advantage that is built into almost every tiebreaking format: He was the stronger player.

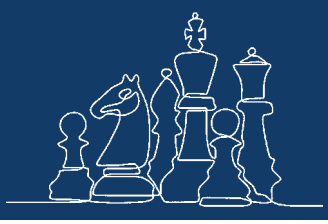
The longer a playoff, the more this advantage grows. This is why option (c) could be so favorable, yet seem fair.

I included a third option, (b), in my hypothetical question to see how well fairness and match length is understood. I wondered if anyone would correctly respond, "Format (b) is best for the weaker player. It is shorter than (c)." Yet, no one I asked felt it was the fairest playoff format.

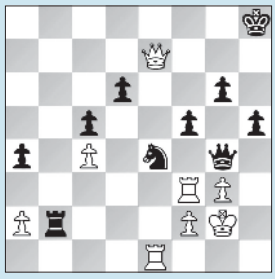
Even grandmasters are uncertain what is fair and what is in their best interest.

QUIZ FOR JANUARY

THIS IS A CENTENNIAL YEAR for great tournaments. The first of them was held 100 years ago in April, in the European resort of Karlsbad. Six of the world's seven best players competed in it. Only world champion Jose Capablanca was missing. The easiest way to compose a quiz based on Karlsbad 1923 is to pick six victories of Alexander Alekhine, who tied for first prize. But this month's posers were won by others. In each diagram you are asked to find the fastest winning line of play. This will usually mean the forced win of a decisive amount of material. For solutions, see Page 63.



PROBLEM 1
Richard Réti
Jacob Bernstein



WHITE TO MOVE

PROBLEM 2
Yefim Bogolyubov
George Thomas



WHITE TO MOVE

PROBLEM 3
F.D. Yates
Karel Treybal



WHITE TO MOVE

PROBLEM 4
Yefim Bogolyubov
Richard Réti



BLACK TO MOVE

PROBLEM 5
F.D. Yates
Aron Nimzowitsch



BLACK TO MOVE

PROBLEM 6
Rudolf Spielmann
Heinrich Wolf



BLACK TO MOVE

For example, GM Boris Spassky, one of the greatest match players ever, hated short matches. He feared he wouldn't have enough time to recover from losing a game in a short match. Spassky vowed in 1969 never to play in a match of less than 16 games.

But after he lost the world championship title to GM Bobby Fischer, he made a stirring comeback try. He played in two Candidates matches in 1977 that were designed to end after 12 games. He won both matches in tiebreaker games.

SICILIAN DEFENSE, CLOSED VARIATION (B25)

GM Boris Spassky
GM Lajos Portisch
Candidates Semi-Final Playoff (1), Geneva, 08.14.1977

1. e4 c5 2. Nc3 Nc6 3. g3 g6 4. Bg2 Bg7 5. d3 d6 6. f4 e5 7. Nh3 exf4 8. Bxf4 Nge7 9. O-O h6 10. Rb1 O-O 11. a3 Be6 12. Be3 Ne5 13. Nf4 Bd7 14. Kh1 Rc8 15. Qd2 Kh7 16. h3 Bc6 17. g4 Qd7 18. Rf2 b6 19. Rbf1 Bb7 20. Qe2 Rce8 21. Bc1 Kg8 22. Qe3 b5 23. Qg3 b4 24. axb4 cxb4 25. Nd1 d5 26. d4! N5c6 27. exd5 Nxd4 28. c4! bxc3 *e.p.* 29. bxc3 Nb3 30. Ba3 Rc8? 31.c4!
The threat is 32. Qxb3 but it is the other Black knight that is fatally vulnerable.

31. ... Na5 32. Re2! Rfe8 33. Rfe1 Bf8 34. Nh5!



So that 34. ... gxh5 35. gxh5+ Kh7 36. Be4+ or 35. ... Bg7 36. Rxe7.

34... Nxd5 35. cxd5 gxh5 36. gxh5 Bg7 37. Bb2 f6 38. Bxf6 Rxe2 39. Rxe2 Qf7 40. Re6, Black resigned.

Is there a match length that is most fair? Opinions vary. For most of the past 40 years, world championship matches have ranged in length from best-of-12-games to best-of-24.

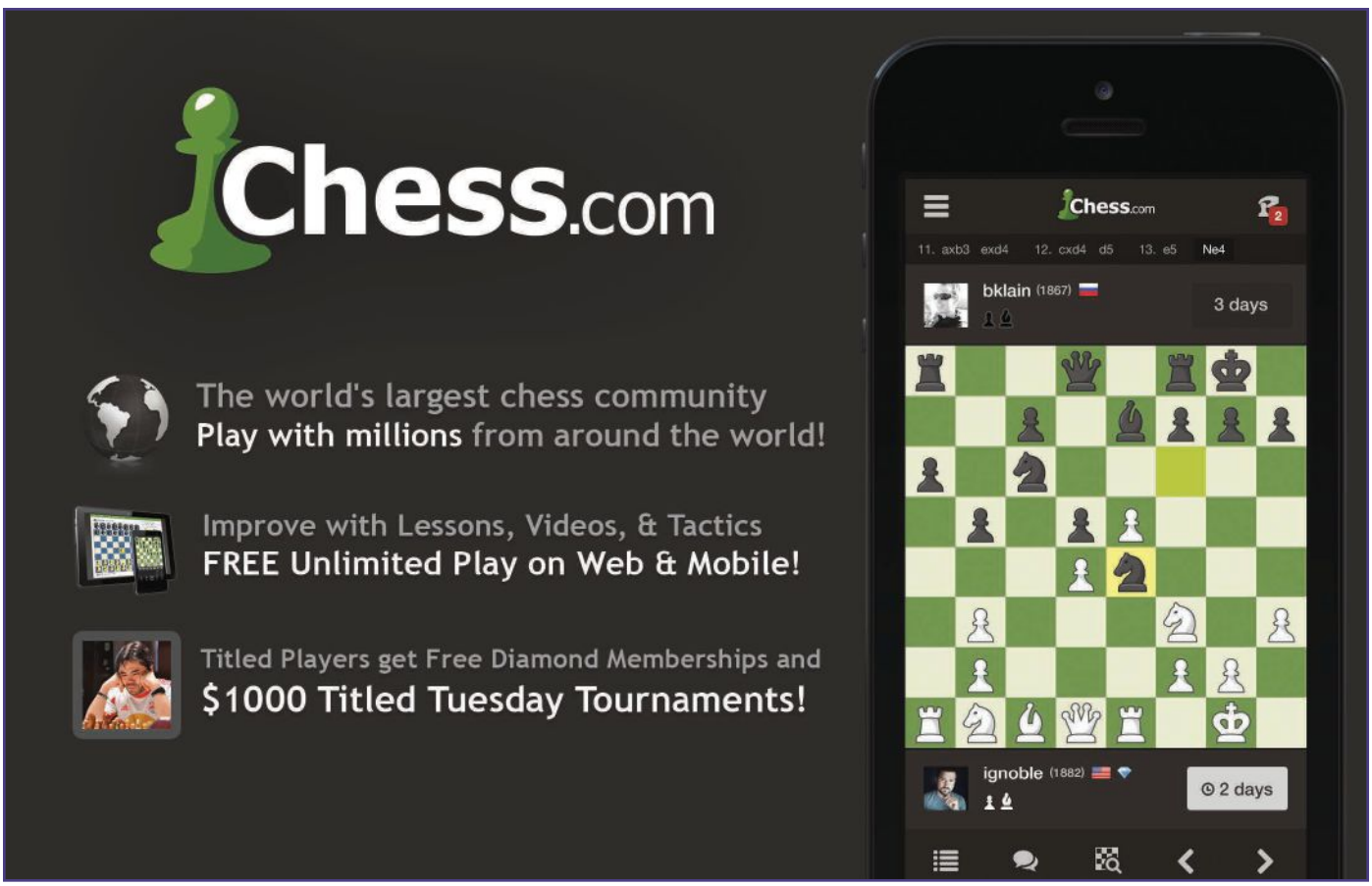
The last world championship, held in Dubai in 2021, was best-of-14 and that seemed more than enough. Carlsen was declared the winner when he scored his fourth victory over Ian Nepomniachtchi, against seven draws. There was no reason to believe more games would change the outcome.

Yet in the 1984 world championship, Anatoly Karpov led Garry Kasparov by *five* victories to none after 31 games. The match went on because the rules — widely regarded as fair — required six victories.

Kasparov made a magnificent comeback. The outcome of the match was suddenly in doubt — when FIDE halted play, without a winner. It was one decision that virtually everyone in the chess world could agree was unfair.

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


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WASHINGTON, DC
March 31-April 2, 2023
NATIONAL High School CHAMPIONSHIP
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(K-8)
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11. axb3 exd4 12. cxd4 d5 13. e5 Ne4
bklain (1867)
3 days
ignoble (1882)
2 days

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GM's Lenderman, Novikov, Mitkov

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FM, FT Kevin Bachler

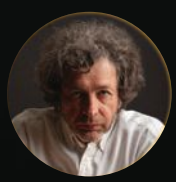
Co-Director: Deb Socha

TOURNAMENTS

JULY 21-23

- ✓ US Senior Open (Nat'l champ!)
- ✓ Caveman Medior Open
- ✓ US Junior Open (Nat'l champ!)
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The "Hows"

A new column devoted to giving you the tools needed to work on your game

BY **WGM TATEV ABRAHAMYAN**

IT IS SUCH A FASCINATING time to be a chess player.

We have access to immense amounts of chess information, and with the internet, a front row seat to new developments as they happen. By the same token, this massive influx of information has led many players astray, causing plateaus and no small amount of frustration.

There is more high-level chess being played than ever. There are more courses, more theory, more books, and more YouTube videos than anyone can consume. Blessed with all these riches, many players simply don't know how or what to study. We all have to learn to navigate this new landscape, and guidance is always welcome.

I have spent a considerable amount of time thinking about the direction of this column. After the chess world opened up following the worst of the COVID-19 pandemic, I watched my rating drop some 100 points from my peak, and I was beginning to feel a bit hopeless.

Fast forward to now: I am coming off a successful Olympiad where our Women's team tied for third place, missing out on a medal by a few tiebreak points. The thrill of playing on the top team board in the final round of the Olympiad is indescribable. The topsy-turvy nature of professional chess is not for the faint of heart!

I've done some work reevaluating my own chess and my approach to the game. After thinking about my experience as a player, a coach, the conversations I've had both as a mentor and a mentee, and finally, some lurking on Twitter, I came to the conclusion that most people struggle with the "hows of chess" — how to prepare, how to find a coach, how to find appropriate study material, etc.

Every month I will try to offer some guidance on these "hows" and outline practical tips to help readers work on their games. Chess improvement requires complete objectivity, which can be an unpleasant, and even a painful, experience. I believe that chess reflects a part of ourselves; to improve, we sometimes need to change something within ourselves. This column is part of that work for me, and I hope that my reflections and re-evaluations will be found useful by its readers.

Since I mentioned the ups and downs of my own chess, it feels appropriate that the instructional portion of this column is one of my games from the Olympiad. I think this game summarizes the experience of playing a tournament game quite well. The Olympiad is a special event and has reignited my passion for competitive chess. I invite the reader to also think about their love for the game when playing through it.

As you read last month, the women's team had an up and down event, but in the final round we got paired against tournament leaders India, giving us a chance to fight for a medal. This last game began at 10 a.m., five hours before the usual 3 p.m. start time. Chess players are notoriously known to be night owls, but this change wasn't just unpleasant for our sleep schedule — it also cut our preparation time significantly.

In June, I had a three-day minicamp with our Olympiad coach, GM Alejandro Ramirez, and our top board, WGM Gulrukhbegim (Begim) Tokhirjonova. Our training days started with solving some endgame studies to warm up. Solving studies is one of my absolute favorite ways to work on chess. Studies help us with creativity and calculation skills.

Later, when Begim visited me for some more Olympiad training, we solved studies by IM Ghenrikh Kasparyan and worked through IM Mark Dvoretsky's *Maneuvering: The Art of Piece Play* to get in good playing shape. As Begim is fond of saying, "You eat studies for breakfast," and I think it's true. Starting the day by solving a beautiful study sets the tone for the rest of the workday.

We analyzed the Two Knights Defense at this minicamp and we played some training games with both colors. I was relieved when I found out that my last round opponent plays this line, as it meant that I already had my preparation ready. The work we did in the summer paid off two months later. In chess, we don't always reap the benefits of our hard work immediately, but with consistency and perseverance we do reap them eventually — sometimes even at the most important moment.

TWO KNIGHTS DEFENSE (C58)

WGM Tatev Abrahamyan (2291)
IM Kulkarni Bhakti (2373)
44th Olympiad – Women (11), Chennai, 08.09.2022

1. e4 e5 2. Nf3 Nc6 3. Bc4 Nf6 4. Ng5

The last time I played this move in a tournament game was in 2014, so I was fairly sure my opponent wouldn't expect it.

4. ... d5 5. exd5 Na5

The infamous 5. ... Nxd5 is, of course, a well-known mistake. After 6. Nxf7 Kxf7 7. Qf3+ Ke6 the king has to step into the center to avoid losing the knight immediately. Play continues 8. Nc3 Ncb4 9. 0-0 c6 to defend

the knight, and after 10. d4 White has a very strong attack to compensate for the piece.

6. Bb5+ c6 7. dxc6 bxc6 8. Bd3
It's true that the bishop does look a bit funny here, as it blocks the d2-pawn's forward progress. But by controlling the e4-square, the g5-knight has a landing square. Meanwhile the dark-squared bishop will develop via b2-b3 and Bc1-b2.

8. ... Nd5 9. h4
This was our prepared idea.

9. ... h6
Here 9. ... Qc7 is another good continuation.

10. Qh5 Qf6 11. Ne4 Qe6
My opponent was playing quickly, and I realized that she knew this line. Meanwhile, I was starting to mix up my preparation, and I was getting a little frustrated

12. Nbc3
A new move. Previously seen was 12. Qf3 f5 13. Nbc3 Nb4 14. b3 Nxd3+ 15. Qxd3 fxe4 16. Nxe4 Be7 17. Bb2 0-0 18. 0-0-0 and Black was better, although White eventually won in Nepomniachtchi – Sadhwani, *Chess.com* 2022.

12. ... Nf4 13. Qf3 Nxd3+ 14. Qxd3 f5 15. Ng3 Be7
In a complicated position, I'm up a pawn, but my h4-pawn is under attack. The prospect of castling kingside terrified me, so I decided to change direction.

16. b3 Rb8 17. Bb2 Rb4
This surprised me. I think perhaps Bhakti was eager to win the pawn back.

Instead I thought the idea behind her previous move was 17. ... Nc4, when I planned to head for an endgame with 18. Qxc4 Qxc4 19. bxc4 Rxb2 and I wasn't sure how to evaluate this at the board.

18. 0-0-0 Rxh4 19. Rxh4 Bxh4 20. Re1
By spending three moves to win the h4-pawn, I managed to develop, castle, and put a rook in the center where it eyed the e5-pawn. Black's pieces, on the other hand, were scattered all over the board. The a5-knight was dim on the rim, the king was in the center, and the future of the c8-bishop was uncertain.

20. ... 0-0 21. Na4
It's not possible to defend the e5-pawn.

21. ... Rd8
Here 21. ... e4 loses to the double attack 22. Qc3, threatening mate on g7 and attacking the a5-knight.

22. Qc3 Bg5



While I knew my position was very good, I was indecisive here. A victory meant a win for the team, so I got excited, but doing so led me to lose a lot of time on the clock.

23. Rxe5
A sane move that locked in my advantage. Black's next move was another surprise.

After the tempting 23. Qxa5 Bxd2+ 24. Qxd2 Rxd2 25. Kxd2 I have a rook and two minors for the queen, but after 25. ... Qd5+ 26. Kc1 Qxg2 I lose my entire kingside!

23. ... Qf7
If 23. ... Qd7 24. Re2 Nb7 25. Nh5 is very strong for me.

24. Qxa5
I knew this move was committal, but I had to calm myself down. Compared to the previous position where I could take on a5, I'm just winning too much material.

24. ... Bxd2+ 25. Qxd2 Rxd2 26. Kxd2
Now Black doesn't even have a pawn to compensate for the material imbalance, and my rook dominates the board from the e5-square.

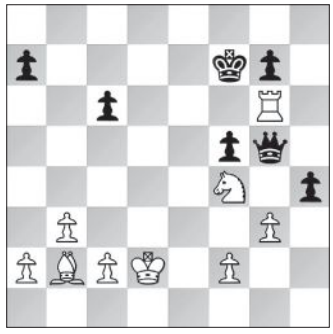
26. ... Qg6 27. Ne2 Kf7 28. Nf4 Qg5 29. g3 h5
An unpleasant move to face, as I was mentally already wrapping up the game. The h-pawn moves down the board due to the pin. I had wasted too much time on my earlier moves, and now my clock was running low.

30. Nc5 h4 31. Re3
After 31. Ncd3 h3 isn't scary as I can use my rook to get the pawn, i.e., 32. Re1 and now my d3-knight will go to e5 and then f3. Perhaps my nerves were getting the best of me here.

31. ... Qh6 32. Nce6
This required some precision, as I catch the pawn by one move!

32. ... Bxe6 33. Rxe6 Qg5
If 33. ... Qxe6 34. Nxe6 h3, and I'm fortunate to have 35. Ng5+ winning the pawn. Otherwise, the pawn would simply promote.

34. Rg6



34. ... Qd8+
Here's an example of where solving the Kasparian studies paid off! It's easy to be scared by 34. ... Qxg6, but again I can catch the pawn just in time with 35. Nxg6 h3 36. Ne5+ Ke6 37. Nf3.

35. Ke2 Qe8+ 36. Kf1 Qe4 37. Rxg7+ Ke8 38. Bf6 Qh1+ 39. Ke2 Qe4+ 40. Kd2
Having reached the time control, the scary part of the game was behind me. By this point our top two boards had drawn their games, and I think Carissa had won hers (or was well on her way to victory). With a likely score of 2-1, I could play freely.

40. ... Qb4+ 41. Kc1
My king is safe, and her h4-pawn is neutralized.

41. ... h3 42. Nxh3 Qd6 43. Re7+ Kf8 44. Ng5
Using another common theme from endgame studies!

44. ... Qa3+
If 44. ... Qxf6 45. Nh7+ Kxe7 46. Nxf6 Kxf6 White has a winning endgame.

45. Kb1 a6 46. Nh7+ Kg8 47. Rg7+ Kh8 48. Ng5, Black resigned. ♦

For another view of the Abrahamyan – Bhakti game, see WGM Tokhirjonova's analysis in our December 2022 issue.

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MAIN EVENT

6-SS, G/90,d5

Friday April 28
2:30 PM Opening Ceremony
3:00 PM Round 1

Saturday April 29
10:00 AM Round 2
2:30 PM Round 3
6:30 PM Round 4

Sunday April 30
9:00 AM Round 5
1:00 PM Round 6
5:00 PM Awards Ceremony

ENTRY FEE

$85 postmarked by 3/20,
$105 by 4/17, $115 by 4/27,
$125 on-site.

SIDE EVENTS

Bughouse Tournament

Fri. April 28 11:00 AM
Entry fee: $40 per team

Blitz Tournament (G/5,d0)

Fri. April 28 7:00 PM
Entry fee: $30 by 4/17, $35 after/on-site.



SECTION/AWARDS

Age as of 1/1/2023

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

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MAKE YOUR MOVE

BY **FM CARSTEN HANSEN**

THIS MONTH'S PUZZLES ARE TAKEN FROM THE U.S. CHAMPIONships that took place in October 2022 at the Saint Louis Chess Club.

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

Try first to solve the puzzle before reading the text at the bottom of the page. If unsuccessful, play through the solution, but return to the puzzle in one or two weeks to see if you can now solve it. That way you gradually expand your tactical vision, and it will be more likely that you will spot tactics as they occur in your own games. Whatever you do, do not use an engine to solve the puzzles. You will only cheat yourself out of improving your game. Solutions are on page 63.

TACTIC I.



WHITE TO MOVE

TACTIC II.



WHITE TO MOVE

TACTIC III.



BLACK TO MOVE

TACTIC IV.



BLACK TO MOVE

TACTIC V.



WHITE TO MOVE

TACTIC VI.



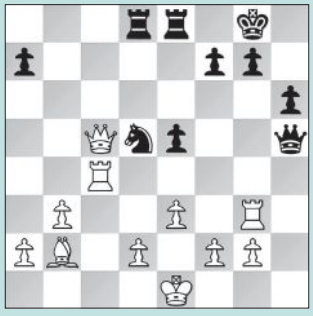
BLACK TO MOVE

TACTIC VII.



BLACK TO MOVE

TACTIC VIII.



BLACK TO MOVE

TACTIC IX.



WHITE TO MOVE

Position 1: LOOSE PIECES
Position 2: LIQUIDATION
Position 3: SUPERIOR FORCE
Position 4: NOT ENOUGH DEFENDERS
Position 5: CLEAR FOR THE KILL
Position 6: CLEAR THE PATH
Position 7: MAKE ROOM FOR INVASION
Position 8: UNWELCOME VISITOR
Position 9: DISTRACT THE DEFENDER


IM John Donaldson


GM Varuzhan Akobian


GM Lazaro Bruzon Batista

THE 2022 WORLD CHAMPI

Team USA crashes out in preliminaries.

THE 2022 FIDE WORLD Team Championship (November 19-26, Jerusalem, Israel) was won by China with Uzbekistan second and Spain third. The U.S. team did not do well and failed to qualify for the finals of the two-stage event.

London hosted the first Olympiad in 1927, but it was almost 60 years later — 1985 in Lucerne — that the first World Team Championship was held. The format called for the 10 best countries in the world to compete in a round robin event with geographical representation taken into account. In practice this meant the top five finishers from the previous Olympiad, the champions of Europe, Asia, Africa, and the Americas plus the host country.

The World Team, initially held every four years but later every two, has often been exceptionally strong. Case in point: GM Levon Aronian considers the 2011 tournament — which had over 20 players rated 2700+ competing — the strongest team event ever held. Still, this event has never come close to the popularity of Olympiads nor attracted many bids to organize it.

Why this should be the case is not completely clear. Certainly, it lacks the color of Olympiads, which attract close to 200 countries from all over the globe. On the other hand, it is more a test of skill, lacking the element of chance that sometimes plays a role in Swiss system events. It's not a particularly expensive event to put on as organizers provide only lodging and meals — not prize money, honoraria, or travel.

The lack of popularity and difficulty in finding sponsors caused FIDE to radically change the format this year. The time control was cut from the standard G/90+30 time control to a quicker G/45+10. This was not the only change. The field was enlarged to 12 countries competing in a pair of six team round-robins, with the top four finishers in each group advancing and playing a series of knock out matches.

This unusual time control, a slightly longer version of rapid chess, had never been used previously in an important competition, and this made the job of predicting pre-tournament favorites particularly challenging. Teams were seeded by the average rapid rating of their top four players, but considering many competitors had played few games with this system, this wasn't particularly predictive. Several of the top-seeded teams — including the United States, with GMs Hans Niemann, Lazaro Bruzon Batista, Alex Onischuk (playing in his record 14th team event for the U.S.), Varuzhan Akobian and Yuniesky Quesada — failed to advance.

The 2022 World Team was originally scheduled to be held in March, but had to be moved back due to Russia's invasion of Ukraine. The new dates were only announced a month before the start of the competition, with the result that many players had already made other commitments. This explains the absence of a number of top Americans and competitors from other countries.

Still, with one current 2700 player (Nie-

D TEAM ONSHIP

BY **IM JOHN DONALDSON**


GM Yuniesky Quesada


GM Hans Niemann


GM Alex Onischuk

mann) and two past ones (Bruzon Batista and Onischuk), along with good team chemistry, we were optimistic about our chances. Things started well as we defeated Poland (minus Jan-Krzysztof Duda) in round one.

QUEEN'S GAMBIT DECLINED, EXCHANGE VARIATION (D35)

GM Varuzhan Akobian (2591)
GM Szymon Gumularz (2561)
World Team Championship Pool B (1), Jerusalem, 11.20.2022

Var has a lot of experience and success playing for the U.S. team. He was a member of the bronze medal Olympiad teams in 2006 and 2008, and the silver medal team from the 2010 World Team Championship.

1. d4 Nf6 2. c4 e6 3. Nc3 d5 4. cxd5 exd5 5. Bg5 c6 6. e3 h6 7. Bh4 Be7 8. Bd3 0-0 9. Qc2 Re8 10. Nf3 Ne4 11. Bxe7 Qxe7 12. 0-0 Nd7 13. Rab1 Ndf6 14. b4 Nxc3 15. Qxc3 Ne4 16. Qc2 Nd6 17. a4 Be6 18. Rfc1 Rac8 19. Ne5 a6 20. Qc5 Qd8 21. h3 f6 22. Ng6 Qd7 23. Qc2 Bf5 24. Bxf5 Nxf5 25. Nf4 Nd6 26. Qd3 Qf7 27. Ne2

(see diagram top of next column)

Black has defended perfectly against White's minority attack, having exchanged off his light-squared bishop and positioned his knight on d6, its perfect post where it not only stops ... b7-b5, but eyes the c4- and e4-squares. Now, however, he makes an instructive mistake.



27. ... b5?

This move, often recommended in similar positions in Carlsbad pawn formations, where a knight can shield the backward c-pawn with ... Nd6-c4, is an error. It stops White's advance b4-b5, but only at the cost of activating White's rooks on the a-file. Var knew this from his game against IM Frode Elsness from the 2017 World Team Championship.

White is not winning after 27. ... b5?, but he does have an advantage and — more importantly — clear and easy play, which is particularly important when playing at a fast time control.

28. Ra1 Nc4 29. Qc2 Qe7 30. Qc3 Rb8 31. Nf4 a5 32. Nd3 axb4 33. Nxb4 Qd6 34. axb5 Rxb5 35. Na6?!

More precise was 35. Nd3.

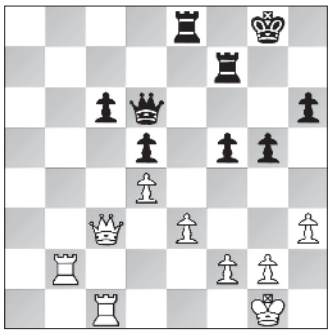
35. ... f5 36. Nc5 Rb2?

Black should have played 35. ... f4 seeking counterplay on the kingside, the reason why White's knight should have been on d3.

After 36. ... f4 37. e4 Qg6 38. e5 Rb2 39.

Qf3 Nd2 40. Qxf4 Rf8 41. Qg4 Qxg4 42. hxg4 Nb3 Black should hold the ending.

37. Nd3 Rb7 38. Rab1 Rf7 39. Rb3 g5 40. Nb2 Nxb2 41. Rxb2



41. ... Rf6
Objectively Black's position is defensible, but his pawn on c6 is a lasting weakness and his king is potentially vulnerable. This is not an easy position to defend short on time.

42. Rb6 Ree6?
This proves to be the losing move. Black could have reached a drawn rook and pawn ending after 42. ... f4 43. Qxc6 Qxc6 44. Rcxc6 Rxc6 45. Rxc6 fxe3 46. fxe3 Rxe3 47. Rxh6 Re4 48. Rg6+ Kf7 49. Rxg5 Rxd4. For example 50. Kf2 Kf6 51. Rh5 Rd3 52. g4 d4 53. h4 Rh3 54. Kg2 Re3 followed by ... d4-d3.

43. Qb3
Black now wishes his kingside pawns were back on their original squares. The rest is self-explanatory as White's heavy pieces creep into Black's position.

43. ... Qd7 44. Rb7 Qd6 45. Ra1 Re7 46. Rxe7 Qxe7 47. Qb6 Qe6 48. Qc7 Rf7 49. Ra8+ Kg7 50. Qd8 Kg6 51. Qg8+ Kh5 52. Rf8 Re7 53. Qxe6 Rxe6 54. Rxf5 Kg6 55. g4 Re8 56. Re5 Rxe5 57. dxe5 Kf7 58. f4 Ke6 59. Kf2 gxf4 60. exf4 d4 61. h4 c5 62. h5 c4 63. Ke2 Kd5 64. g5 d3+ 65. Kd2 Kd4 66. e6 c3+ 67. Kd1 d2 68. Kc2, Black resigned.

Amazingly — and sadly — this was the only game the U.S. team won in this event. We were soundly beaten in round two by an Azerbaijan team led by GMs Shakhriyar Mamedyarov and Teimour Radjabov.

The following round we played the 2022 Olympiad gold medalists from Uzbekistan, who were missing their first board GM Nodirbek Abdusattorov. After an hour of play it looked like we would win 3-1, but this was not to be as we lost 2½ -1½. Something similar happened against Israel the next round, and it was clear our stay in Jerusalem was going to be cut short.

Here is a key game from the match with the Israelis.

GIUOCO PIANO (C55)

GM Yuniesky Quesada (2583)
GM Evgeny Postny (2588)
World Team Championship Pool B (4), Jerusalem, 11.21.2022

GM Yuniesky Quesada was the most consistent performer for the U.S. team and never had a bad position in the four games he played. Unfortunately, he also didn't have any luck with the draw margin in chess stopping him from converting several favorable positions. The following game is a good example.

1. e4 e5 2. Nf3 Nc6 3. Bc4 Nf6 4. d3 Be7 5. 0-0 d6 6. a4 Na5 7. Ba2 c5 8. c3 Nc6 9. Na3 0-0 10. Nc2 a6 11. b4 cxb4 12. cxb4 d5 13. b5 axb5 14. axb5 Nb4 15. Nxb4 Bxb4 16. Bb2 Bg4 17. h3 Bxf3 18. Qxf3



18. ... d4?
A veteran member of the Israeli team, Postny has played well so far, but here he resolves the central tension in the wrong way. Correct was 18. ... dxe4 19. dxe4 Qe7 when White has the two bishops but Black's position is fine.

19. Bc4 Rxa1 20. Rxa1 Bc3?
This is the consistent follow-up to Black's 18th move, but 20. ... Nd7 was better.

21. Bxc3 dxc3 22. Qd1 Qd4 23. Qb3
White prepares to round up Black's c-pawn while keeping Black's rook tied up.

23. ... Ne8?
Black prepares to reroute his knight to the d6-square. This looks logical but better chances to resist were offered by 23. ... g5 24. Rc1 Kg7 25. Qxc3 Qxc3 26. Rxc3 Rc8.

24. Rc1
Even stronger was 24. Ra4!, with one line continuing 24. ... Qc5 25. Qxc3 b6 26. Qa3 Qxa3 27. Rxa3 Nd6 28. Ra7 with a winning ending.

24. ... Nd6 25. Rxc3 Ra8 26. Rc1
Here White might have considered 26. g3 as the king will be better placed on g2 (not h2) where it protects the f-pawn.

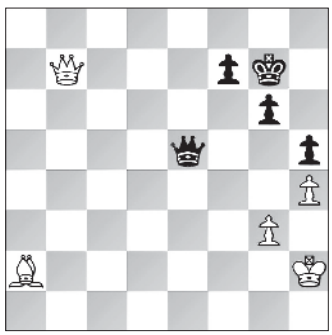
26. ... Ra1 27. Rxa1 Qxa1+ 28. Kh2 Qd4 29. Qa2 g6 30. g3 Kg7
Stockfish 15 believes Black is holding after 30. ... Nxc4 31. dxc4 Qxe4 32. c5 Qb4 33. c6 bxc6 34. Qa8+ Kg7 35. Qxc6 e4 36. b6 e3 37. fxe3 Qd2+ 38. Qg2 Qb4 39. b7 Qb5, but this would have been hard for a human to see, especially with little time.

31. Kg2 h5 32. h4 Kf6 33. f4
This is a very tricky position to play with both players having less than five minutes on their clocks. Stockfish 15 points out 33. Bd5! was strong with the idea 33. ... Qxd3 34. Qa5 Nxe4 35. Qd8+ Kg7 36. Qd7 and f7 is falling.

33. ... Kg7 34. Qf2 Qc3 35. Bd5 Qxd3 36. fxe5 Nf5!
Postny is defending brilliantly while playing on the increment.

37. Kh3 Qxb5 38. Ba2 Qc6
Here 38. ... Nh6 also held. Remarkably, White has no realistic winning chances in the piece up ending that soon transpires.

39. exf5 Qh1+ 40. Qh2 Qf1+ 41. Qg2 Qxf5+ 42. Kh2 Qxe5 43. Qxb7



Despite White being a piece up for a pawn the ending is drawn. GM Jim Tarjan analyzed a related ending (rook and bishop and two vs. rook and three) from Mamedyarov – Nakamura, Tromso Olympiad 2014, that should also have been drawn. See the November 2015 issue of *Chess Life* for the article.

43. ... Qe2+ 44. Qg2 Qe3
Trading queens with 44. ... Qxg2+ 45. Kxg2

f6 46. Kf3 is one potential winning plan for White. Another would be capturing the f7-pawn in a way that led to a winning pawn ending. A third plan would be attacking the f7-pawn with queen, bishop, and king. The problem with all of these is White has no way to force them. Black is often saved by repeatedly checking with his queen. The second player is also helped by White's rook pawn being of the wrong color.

45. Qc2 Qe5 46. Qf2 Qe7 47. Bd5 Kg8 48. Kg2 Kg7 49. Qf3 Kg8 50. Qe4 Qf6 51. Qf4 Qe7 52. Qd4 Qe2+ 53. Qf2 Qe7 54. Qf3 Kg7 55. Qc3+ Kg8 56. Kf3 Qd6 57. Ke4 Qe7+ 58. Qe5 Qd7 59. Ke3

Another try is 59. Kd4 but White can't win even if the white king reaches the e8-square. For example: 59. … Qa7+ 60. Kc4 Qa6+ 61. Kc5 Qa7+ 62. Kb5 Qd7+ 63. Kb6 Qd8+ 64. Kc6 Qc8+ 65. Qc7 Qf5 66. Qd7 Qf6+ 67. Qd6 Qf5 68. Kc7 Qc2+ 69. Kd7 Qf5+ 70. Ke8 Qc8+ 71. Qd8 Qxd8+ 72. Kxd8 Kg7 73. Ke7 g5! 74. hxg5 Kg6 with … Kg6xg5 and … h5-h4 to follow. Something similar happens in the game.

59. … Kh7 60. Bc4 Qa7+ 61. Kf3 Kg8 62. Qf6 Qb7+ 63. Kf2 Kf8 64. Qh8+ Ke7 65. Qd4 Kf8 66. Bd5 Qd7 67. Qe5 Kg8 68. Kf3 Kh7 69. Ke3 Kg8 70. Bc4 Qa7+ 71. Ke4 Qd7 72. Ke3 Kf8 73. Qh8+ Ke7 74. Qg7 Qf5 75. Qd4 Kf8 76. Qd8+ Kg7 77. Qd5 Qf6 78. Qd4 Qxd4+ 79. Kxd4 g5 80. hxg5 Kg6 81. Bxf7+ Kxg5 82. Be6 h4 83. g4 h3 84. Ke3 h2 85. Bd5 Kxg4 86. Kf2 h1=N+ 87. Bxh1, draw.

There was a lot of interesting chess played in Jerusalem. Here's one of my favorite games from the event, a spectacular win from the preliminaries. Spain's reserve player sacrifices a knight, then a rook, and then another knight to take the full point.

SICILIAN DEFENSE, NAJDORF VARIATION (B90)

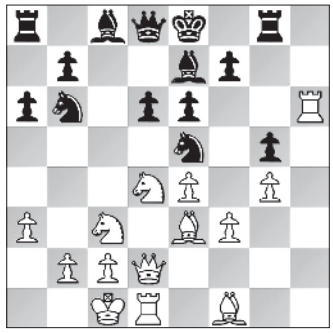
GM Miguel Santos Ruiz (2587)
FM Banele Mhango (2210)
World Team Championship Pool A (5), Jerusalem, 11.22.2022

1. e4 c5 2. Nf3 d6 3. d4 cxd4 4. Nxd4 Nf6 5. Nc3 a6 6. h3 e6 7. g4 h6 8. a3 Be7 9. Be3 g5 10. h4 Rg8 11. hxg5 hxg5 12. f3 Nfd7 13. Qd2 Ne5 14. 0-0-0 Nbd7 15. Rh6 Nb6

(see diagram top of the next column)

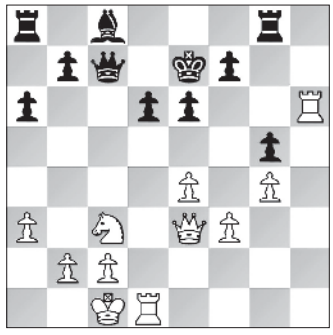
16. Nf5! Nbc4

Black declines the gift. On 16. … exf5 White has huge compensation for the piece. For example: 17. exf5 Bd7 18. Ne4 Nbc4 19. Bxc4 Nxc4 20. Qe2 Bb5 21. Bd4 with threats of Ne4-f6+, f5-f6, and a3-a4. If 21. … Ne5 then



22. Qe1 Qc7 23. Nxd6+ Bxd6 24. Rxd6 Qxd6 25. Bxe5 Qe7 26. Qc3 Rd8 27. Re1 is decisive.

17. Bxc4 Nxc4 18. Qd4 Nxe3 19. Qxe3 Qc7 20. Nxe7 Kxe7



21. Rd5! Bd7 22. Rxg5 Qc4 23. Nd5+! exd5 24. exd5+ Be6 25. Rxe6+, Black resigned.

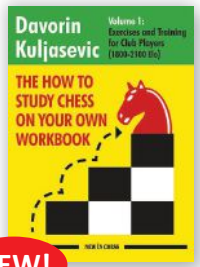


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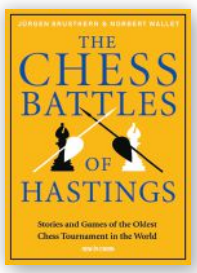
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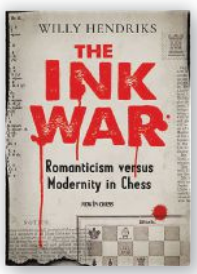
The Workbook for Self-Study
Davorin Kuljasevic

Last year, *How To Study Chess on Your Own*, was a surprise bestseller. Now there is a Workbook with the accompanying exercises and training tools for self-study for all players with an Elo of 1800-2100. Most workbooks offer puzzles and puzzles only. But Kuljasevic has used his experience as a coach to create a much broader and more interesting training schedule with tasks like 'Find the mini-plan'.



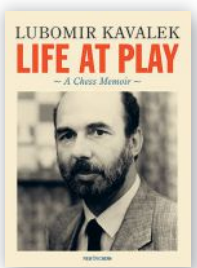
The Oldest Chess Tournament in the World
Jürgen Brustkern & Norbert Wallet

No other chess tournament has such a long and rich history as Hastings. Countless chess players, professionals and amateurs alike, have celebrated Christmas and welcomed the New Year in Hastings while battling it out on the chessboard. The book covers the tournament's fascinating history and portrays forty of the most colourful participants. The stories begin in 1895 and span 125 years.



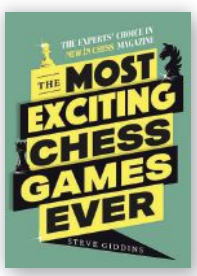
The Birth of Modern Chess
Willy Hendriks

The rivalry between William Steinitz and Johannes Zukertort, the world's strongest chess players in the late nineteenth century, became so fierce that it was named 'The Ink War'. It was not only about who was the strongest player but also about who had the best ideas on how to play the game. In *The Ink War*, IM Willy Hendriks once again offers his unique perspective on the birth of modern chess.



Kavalek's long-awaited memoir
Lubomir Kavalek

American-Czech Grandmaster Lubomir Kavalek (1943-2021) was a three-time US Chess Champion and one of the best chess writers of the last decades. Kavalek could speak from experience as he worked with or met all the chess greats of the last century, from Bobby Fischer to Nigel Short. Including many of his best games with Kavalek's entertaining comments.



Enjoy the most exciting chess games ever
Steve Giddins

New In Chess magazine has a back page column, entitled Just Checking. One of the questions is: What was the most exciting chess game you ever saw? This new anthology presents the 45 most exciting of these most exciting games, as chosen by top players and experts such as Anand, Short and Ivanchuk.

Another hit repertoire
Christof Sielecki

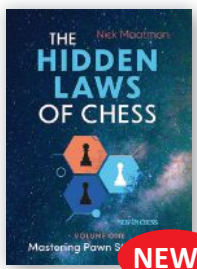
German coach and IM Christof Sielecki presents a complete solution for Black. With this repertoire, you will not only safely navigate the opening phase, but you will actually understand what is happening and how you can play for a win. Why is the repertoire called simple? For the simple reason that the variations are straightforward, easy to remember, and require little or no maintenance.



NEW!

Discover the Hidden Laws of Chess
Nick Maatman

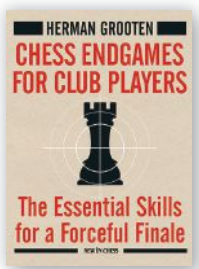
IM Nick Maatman invented the *Hidden Laws of Chess* as an instructional tool to help his students bridge the gap between the basic understanding of a club player and the next level of knowledge of Masters and Grandmasters. The *Hidden Laws* will uncover elements such as space, the quality of a pawn structure, and a doubled pawn's strength or weakness.



NEW!

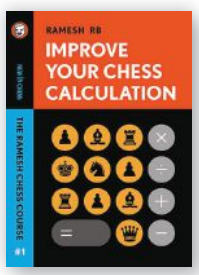
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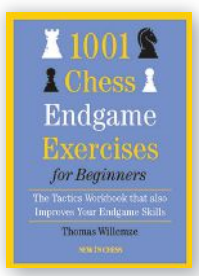
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NEW JERSEY STATE CHESS FEDERATION


CHESS TOUR

L'affaire Niemann

Chess is overshadowed by off-the-board controversy at three flagship St. Louis events.

BY **JOHN HARTMANN**

What has come to be known as the "butterfly effect" is a complicated mathematical definition within modern chaos theory that can be grasped with a simple metaphor.

Imagine a butterfly, flittering around the milkweed plants in your garden. The tiny atmospheric disturbance caused by the monarch's beating wings might — not *will*, but *might* — be the first element in a causal chain that leads to, or prevents, a major weather event like a tornado. This is the butterfly effect: the idea that a small, local action might unpredictably snowball beyond its immediate conditions and change the world.

GM Richard Rapport is just such a butterfly.

Were one to "let the chess speak for itself," the story of the 2022 editions of the Saint Louis Rapid and Blitz, the Sinquefield Cup, and the Champions Showdown 9LX tournaments at the Saint Louis Chess Club would be the play of GM Alireza Firouzja. After a disappointing performance in the 2022 Candidates Tournament, Firouzja was absolutely dominant, winning the Rapid and Blitz outright, and sharing first in the Sinquefield Cup and Champions Showdown 9LX, taking the former in a playoff.

This was the breakout performance that everyone had been waiting for, including the young French-Iranian himself, who revealed in an interview with GM Cristian Chirila that had he had vowed to win his first tournament on Missouri soil. Firouzja played creative and combative chess on the way to becoming the 2022 Grand Chess Tour champion, and it signaled his place both as a potential title challenger in the future, and as one of today's elite now.

But no one talks about Firouzja's victories. After leaving St. Louis, and outside of his weekly Titled Tuesday appearances, he has largely retreated from the contemporary chess landscape. Instead, with a few flaps of Rapport's wings, another name has been inserted into its beating heart.

■ ■ ■

GM Hans Niemann wasn't even supposed to be there. The peripatetic American was playing in the Turkish league when he got the call. COVID-19 related travel restrictions forced Rapport to withdraw from the Rapid and Blitz and the Sinquefield Cup. Could Hans make it back to St. Louis and fill one of the spots?

The Rapid and Blitz was too soon — GM Jeffery Xiong filled in admirably there — but soon enough Niemann was back in St. Louis, taking his place among the simultaneous exhibitors at the Sinquefield Cup opening ceremony.

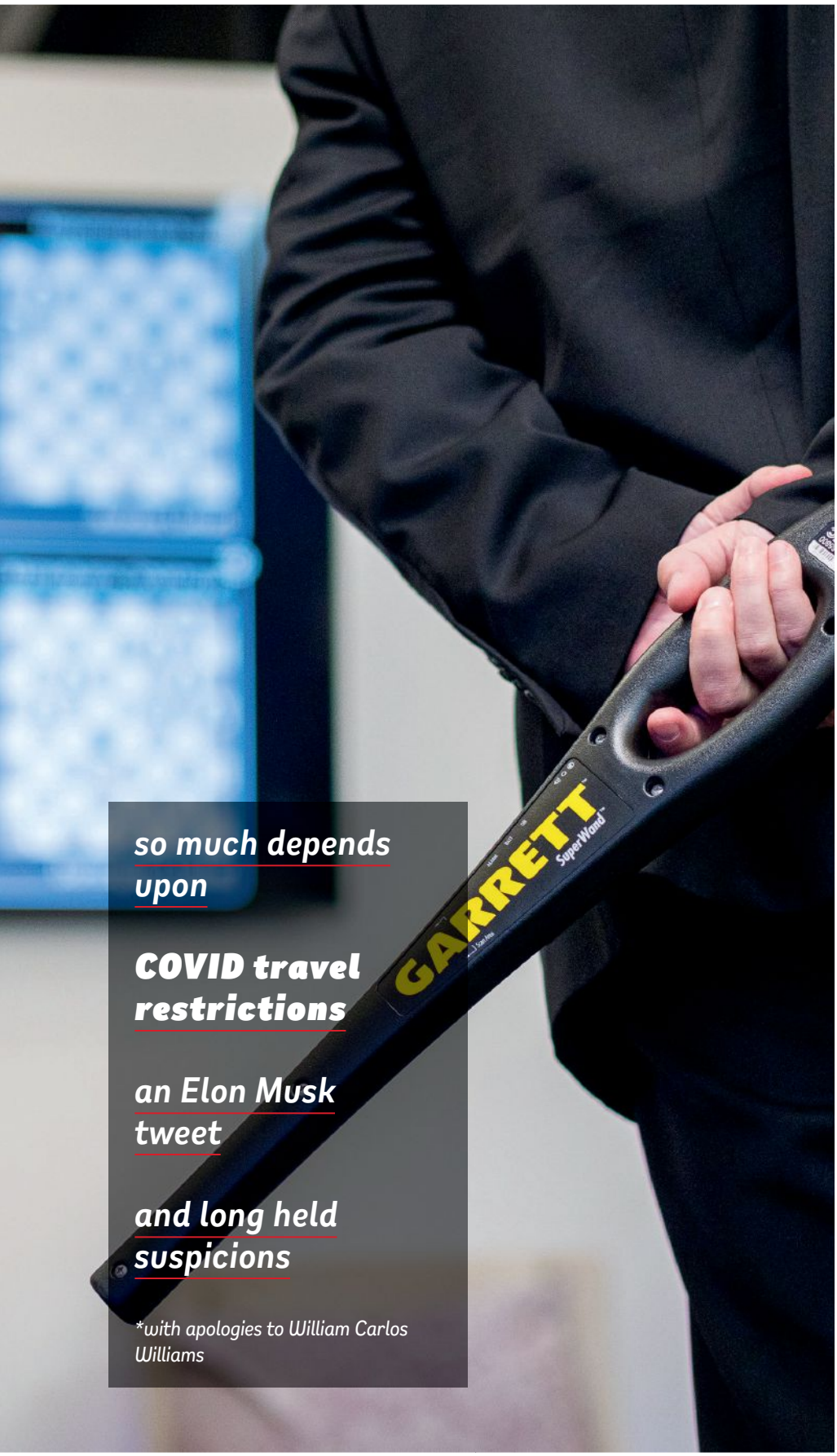
I was there, that Thursday night in Forest Park. If you look at the various photos from the event, you'll see me in my Star Wars themed RSVLTS shirt, looking haggard while playing blitz, or holding up a copy of *Chess Life* for the cameras. And looking back at what I saw, already there were hints that something was not quite right.

Carlsen was a little chippy as he was in-



Left: Niemann interviewed after round four. Right: Carlsen and Niemann, making the first moves in their round three game.

PHOTOS: COURTESY SLCC / OOTES



Left: Now-essential arbiter gear. Right: Elon Musk's now-deleted tweet, reprinted here for its historical value, if not its accuracy.

terviewed during the simul by GM Cristian Chirila and WGM Anastasiya Karlovich, taking what very much felt like digs at Niemann as the two made their respective moves. As soon as the games were ended and the autographs signed, Team Carlsen disappeared, making for a very awkward moment at the event opening when Carlsen's name was called and he was nowhere to be found.

By itself, this might not have meant anything at all. But in the weeks since "*l'affaire* Niemann" began, we've come to know quite a lot about the behind-the-scenes machinations of top-level chess. One of the things we learned from Chirila and GM Fabiano Caruana's must-listen "C-Squared Podcast" is that Carlsen was protesting Niemann's playing in the Sinquefield Cup as soon as he learned of it.

What could have caused this rift? After all, Niemann was a regular participant in Play Magnus tour events, and we now know that Carlsen and Niemann played friendly games on a Miami beach on August 12. So what happened in the intervening days between the 12th and 25th, when Niemann's participation was announced?

Perhaps it was Niemann's petulant proclamation "the chess speaks for itself," spat at a Chess24 reporter after defeating Carlsen in the first game of their FTX (yes, *that* FTX) Crypto Cup match — a match that Carlsen went on to win by a score of 3-1.

But perhaps there was more to it. Niemann, it seems, has been the subject of long-standing rumors regarding online cheating, a subject that had not received much public attention, but was of great concern to the world's leading players. It's not clear how Carlsen could have come to know of Niemann's juvenile bans from *Chess.com* events — he had been playing in *Chess.com* prize tournaments regularly, and Chess24 had no apparent problems with Niemann's participation — but, for whatever reason, he was perturbed.

The first days of the Sinquefield Cup saw nothing out of the ordinary. Carlsen stylishly defeated GM Ian Nepomniachtchi in round one. Nepo took out his frustrations on Firouzja in round two, while Niemann won a nice game against GM Shakhriyar Mamedyarov.

And then came round three, and this pairing — one that overturned the chess world as we know it.

PHOTO: COURTESY SLCC / OOTES

NIMZO-INDIAN DEFENSE (E20)

GM Magnus Carlsen (2861)
GM Hans Niemann (2688)
Sinquefield Cup (3), St. Louis, 09.04.2022

1. d4 Nf6 2. c4 e6 3. Nc3 Bb4 4. g3 0-0 5. Bg2 d5 6. a3 Bxc3+ 7. bxc3 dxc4 8. Nf3 c5 9. 0-0 cxd4 10. Qxd4 Nc6 11. Qxc4 e5 12. Bg5 h6 13. Rfd1 Be6 14. Rxd8 Bxc4 15. Rxa8 Rxa8 16. Bxf6 gxf6 17. Kf1 Rd8 18. Ke1 Na5 19. Rd1 Rc8 20. Nd2 Be6 21. c4 Bxc4 22. Nxc4 Rxc4 23. Rd8+ Kg7 24. Bd5 Rc7 25. Ra8 a6 26. Rb8 f5 27. Re8 e4 28. g4 Rc5 29. Ba2 Nc4 30. a4 Nd6 31. Re7 fxg4 32. Rd7 e3 33. fxe3 Ne4 34. Kf1 Rc1+ 35. Kg2 Rc2 36. Bxf7 Rxe2+ 37. Kg1 Re1+ 38. Kg2 Re2+ 39. Kg1 Kf6 40. Bd5 Rd2 41. Rf7+ Kg6 42. Rd7 Ng5 43. Bf7+ Kf5 44. Rxd2 Nf3+ 45. Kg2 Nxd2 46. a5 Ke5 47. Kg3 Nf1+ 48. Kf2 Nxh2 49. e4 Kxe4 50. Be6 Kf4 51. Bc8 Nf3 52. Bxb7 Ne5 53. Bxa6 Nc6 54. Bb7 Nxa5 55. Bd5 h5 56. Bf7 h4 57. Bd5, White resigned.

Niemann's post-game interview raised more than a few eyebrows. Switching in and out of a strange accent, he told GM Alejandro Ramirez that he had "by some miracle" checked the opening position that day — an admission that got a lot of air time in the ensuing social media melee — and, with his usual bravado, claimed that Magnus must be shattered to "lose against such an idiot like me. It must be embarrassing for the World Champion to lose to me. I feel bad for him."

For his part, Carlsen had seen enough. The rumors started to circulate on social media as round four began with a 15-minute broadcast delay; soon, we learned that Carlsen failed to show up for his game with Mamedyarov, choosing instead to withdraw from the event. His only comment was a cryptic tweet announcing his departure, giving a curious link to a Jose Mourinho "If I speak, I am in big trouble" video as a chaser. For those not in the know: Mourinho was referring to what he saw as colossal refereeing errors during a 2014 Chelsea football game.

Chess social media exploded: while Carlsen coyly avoided fingering Niemann as a cheat, everyone very quickly read between the lines and began to speculate. Prominent chess streamers like GMs Hikaru Nakamura and Eric Hansen immediately talked about and around rumors of Niemann's past online cheating, his bans from *Chess.com*, and the various ways that he might have cheated over-the-board against Carlsen. Multiple theories, some *very* strange, began to emerge.



Some focused on leaked prep from Carlsen's camp. Others were more... *esoteric*.

Now, I was in the room for the beginning of the first round, and I watched as IA Chris Bird explained the security measures to the players. I can't prove that Niemann didn't cheat — it's nearly impossible to prove a negative — but it's very hard to see how he could have pulled it off.

Spectators weren't allowed in the hall, and journalists / guests of the event had to leave after the first 10 minutes. Players were wanded at the door, and all electronics had to be surrendered upon entry. The players could not leave the playing hall without a chaperone, and with only one bathroom, there was no place to hide a cell phone *a la* Igor Rausis.

Carlsen was in that same room for those same announcements, and presumably he had been given similar information during the players' meeting before the tournament began. He had to have known how tricky it would be to pull off that kind of scheme. So why did he withdraw from the event, an action that is almost unthinkable at elite levels, and one that would be sure to draw the ire of the Saint Louis leadership?

I don't think outsiders were — or are — aware of just how troubled top players are by the prospect of cheating. Equipped with Stockfish, today's cell phones are more than strong enough to defeat any human alive. Consulting the engine even once or twice a game could be enough for a savvy player to turn a loss into a win. And Niemann's history with engine use in online games was not unknown to his fellow grandmasters.

Interviews with other Sinquefield participants confirmed this. With a wink and a nod, Nepomniachtchi called Niemann's victory "most impressive" in an interview after round four; soon, a year-old video of Nepo wondering how much Niemann was using an engine to harvest rating points emerged. GM Levon Aronian admitted that his colleagues could be "paranoid" about young players making leaps in strength. Caruana suggested that people were probably right to guess what made Carlsen withdraw.

I think — and here I'm just speculating — that Carlsen saw himself as taking a stand against cheating in chess, tearing the band-aid off a wound that very few outside of top-level chess knew about. Whether he could prove that Niemann cheated in their

PHOTO: TWITTER / ARCHIVE.ORG





Top: IA Chris Bird officially forfeits Carlsen in round five. Left: Mamedyarov suspects his hours preparing for Carlsen will be wasted.

game was, in some ways, irrelevant. The well was already poisoned, and Niemann's in-game behavior was just the tipping point.

Meanwhile, the other competitors soldiered on. Niemann drew a fascinating game against Firouzja; afterwards, he struggled through a post-game interview with Ramirez where, in contrast to previous days, the Lichess engine was turned off. This was more fuel for the fire: Eric Hansen called Niemann's analysis "incoherent" without access to the engine, and soon suggested that a carefully secreted, vibrating adult toy would be one way to defeat the security checks and receive in-game assistance.

This was chum in the water, and what was a big story in the chess world suddenly took on a life beyond it. After the world's second richest man (at time of writing) and walking embodiment of the Dunning-Kreuger effect Elon Musk tweeted about Hansen's "theory," the mass media machine swarmed, and chess players everywhere had to answer uncomfortable questions from their friends.

Niemann's response to the controversy was to give one of the most remarkable interviews in chess history on September 6. For nearly 20 minutes after his round five draw with GM Leinier Dominguez Perez, Niemann addressed every aspect of the controversy in detail. He admitted to cheating in online games when he was 12 and 16, and to being banned (and then restored) for those offenses. He unequivocally denied cheating against Carlsen, and offered to play naked, if need be, to prove his innocence.

Perhaps most troubling was his assertion that *Chess.com* re-banned him because of the charges leveled by their new business partner, Magnus Carlsen. (Recall that *Chess.com* announced plans to purchase the Play Magnus Group on August 24.) Why, he asked, would "someone very high up at *Chess.com*" — quite possibly IM Danny Rensch himself, who was on-site in St. Louis for the first days of the event — personally tell him three days earlier that he'd be welcome in the *Chess.com* Global Chess Championship, only to have his account "privately rescinded" after defeating Carlsen?

There may have been four rounds of chess to go, but for all intents and purposes, the tournament was at this point over. All of the oxygen in the room was sucked up by the insatiable churn of social media, and the "chess itself" became little more than excuse to gossip and retweet.

(For the record: Firouzja shared first with Mamedyarov, defeating him in a playoff to claim the actual Sinquefield Cup. See key annotated games by IM John Watson in our February issue.)

The off-the-board moves slowed, but they kept coming. Niemann challenged Nakamura and Hansen to watch his interview and respond. Play Magnus published and quickly deleted a story about the "biggest cheating scandals" in chess history. *Chess.com* defended themselves in a September 8th tweet, stating that Niemann was informed as to the reasons for his removal from their events, and promising to "protect the integrity of the game that we all love."

On September 10, Sinquefield arbiter Bird released a statement, confirming that there was "no indication that any player has been playing unfairly in the 2022 Sinquefield Cup." That same day, four Robert Palmer video-esque "Niemann fans" held a vigil outside the playing hall in honor of their hirsute hero.

Any hopes that the controversy would subside after the final moves were played in St. Louis were quickly dashed. Rather than play Niemann in their online Julius Baer Generation Cup game, Carlsen resigned after one move. Two days later, on September 21, Carlsen fired another shot in this new Cold War, avoiding direct comment but saying, "I have to say I'm very impressed by Niemann's play, and I think his mentor Maxim Dlugy must be doing a great job." Carlsen doubled down in a September 27 statement, where he detailed his belief "that Niemann has cheated more — and more recently — than he has publicly admitted."



Left: "SNL's" Heidi Gardner and Punkie Johnson point to Austin Butler's alleged cheating device, "like that chess player."

PHOTOS: COURTESY SLCC / OOTES (TOP), YOUTUBE (BOTTOM)



Right: Three of the four pro-Hans Niemann demonstrators who came to St. Louis to support their hero during round eight.

PHOTO: COURTESY SLCC / B. ADAMS

The shot at Dlugy was not an innocent jab. Once Niemann's coach in 2014, Dlugy had long been suspected in elite circles of online fair play violations. These charges were substantiated one week later when *Chess.com* provided emails and other materials related to Dlugy to a *Vice.com* reporter.

Why *Chess.com* leaked communications that all sides agreed were private is unclear. But more confidential emails were included in the October 4 *Chess.com* "Hans report," a document that was also given to a *Wall Street Journal* writer ahead of publication. (Note that this was the day before the U.S. Championship began — where Niemann was scheduled to participate, a fact of which *Chess.com* must have been aware.) In that report, *Chess.com* claimed evidence of more online cheating, and more recent cheating, than Niemann had admitted to in his interview.

About over-the-board cheating, the report was equivocal. While there was "no direct evidence" of foul play in the Sinquefield game, *Chess.com* nevertheless claimed that the win over Carlsen was "suspicious." Their decision to re-ban Niemann came after the Carlsen game, and in light of the suspicions it raised.

This is a key point. There is no evidence that Niemann cheated over-the-board. All of the amateur attempts to prove malfeasance were flawed, while both anti-cheating expert IM Kenneth Regan and the *Chess.com* report itself cleared Niemann's over-the-board performances. So why did *Chess.com* decide to trust Carlsen's "vibe check," for lack of a better word, and re-suspend Niemann's account? This has never fully been explained.

On October 20, Niemann filed a defamation lawsuit against Carlsen, *Chess.com*, Nakamura, and Rensch himself. Since then, every filing and motion nudges the controversy back into the public eye. The *New York Times* devoted the front page of their Sunday Business section to the saga on December 4, and the NPR program "Here and Now" had the co-author of that story, Dylan Loeb McClain, as a guest on December 12.

And in perhaps the ultimate sign of the impact this scandal had on the broader cultural landscape, "Saturday Night Live" name-checked the Hansen / Musk theory in a game-show skit on December 17.

■ ■ ■

This is the first feature I've written for *Chess Life* in some time, and honestly, it wasn't a lot of fun to work on. The sad truth is that no one comes off well in its telling. There are no winners here, only various grades of losers.

But this is as important a story as it is unpleasant in its content. I suspect that when we look back at "*l'affaire* Niemann" a few years down the road, it will, in fact, appear as an inflection point in the history of our game. Carlsen's anti-Niemann gambit may have been factually false, but at root, I think it was a desperate attempt to grapple with the threat of cheating in competitive chess.

Engines aren't going away. They're getting smarter, and the devices they run on are getting smaller. Every chess organizer, and every chess organization — including this one — must remain vigilant to protect the integrity of their events.

There's another part to the story here, and one that hasn't really been discussed. That's the growing influence of *Chess.com* and online chess on the modern chess landscape.

At launch, the *Chess.com* Global Chess Championship was called the *Chess.com* World Chess Championship. While the name was quickly changed, that it was initially designed to be a "World Championship" could be an indication of *Chess.com's* ambition. This was perhaps less of a concern while it was in direct competition with Chess24 and Play Magnus; now, having bought out the competition, *Chess.com* stands alone.

What is *Chess.com's* place in international chess governance? Should a ban on their platform be a reason for FIDE to investigate a player? And does a commercial relationship with one or more competitors, or a commercial interest in their success, lead to irresolvable conflicts of interest?

Such questions are far beyond my prognosticative abilities. For now, both Carlsen and Niemann continue to ply their trade, both online and in-person, and the next chapter in their saga may have already taken place by the time you read these words.

The World Rapid and Blitz Championships are scheduled for late December in Kazakhstan, with both Carlsen and Niemann listed as competitors. What happens if they are paired? Will Carlsen forfeit again out of principle? Will he try to let "the chess speak for itself" and take his chances over-the-board?

Perhaps most significantly: what will happen the next time he's paired with someone else — someone not named Hans Niemann — whom he suspects of foul play?

And what will happen if other players follow in Carlsen's footsteps, or even take the lead? ♦

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by Jeanne Cairns Sinquefield

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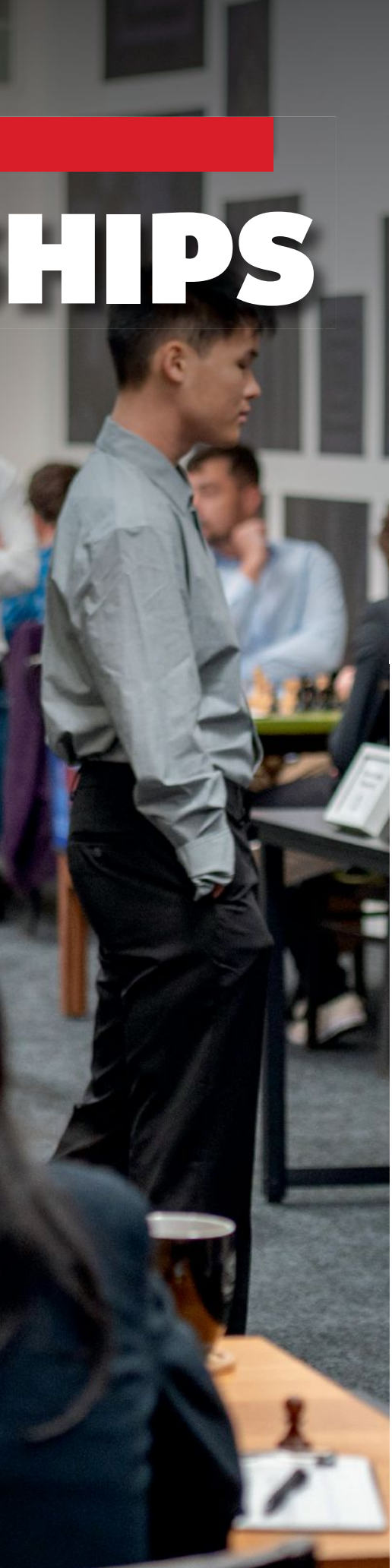
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THE 2022 U.S. CHAMPIONS



Caruana holds off "chess terrorists" to claim second U.S. title.

BY **GM AWONDER LIANG**



THE U.S. CHAMPIONship. The moment I received the invitation in late July, I felt both excitement and nervousness. My main question: how would I balance missing three weeks of school and playing in my most prestigious event of the year?

By now, everyone knows that the U.S. Championship has found a home in St. Louis, as has as the new US Chess office, which we visited as part of the opening ceremony. As always, the team at the Saint Louis Chess Club ran a flawless event, with top-notch playing conditions in the beautiful Central West End of St. Louis. Such spectacular playing conditions leave me feeling additional pressure to elevate my playing level. This is *serious chess*.

Getting an invite like this is, for some of the top players in the field, just another Tuesday. It was a little different for me, and I knew there was a lot of work to be done. My most recent event was a sickening performance at the U.S. Juniors, dropping 17 rating points and committing numerous blunders in the process. And as a college student worried about grades, finding time to train during the quarter wouldn't be easy.

As the wildcard invite, it felt as if a gift had been bestowed upon me — and it was one that I didn't want to squander. But that nervousness kept creeping in. I had serious doubts about my ability to perform at a high level for 13 rounds — three weeks, my longest event ever — and while also keeping up with a full course load. My professors are understanding, but homework and class projects can't be put off for that long.

Ultimately, I settled on a strategy of play-

ing like a "chess terrorist." Before you read too much into that, let me explain! In the 2020-21 Candidates tournament, facing the wily GM Alexander Grischuk, GM Anish Giri needed a win in the penultimate round with Black to catch leader GM Ian Nepomniachtchi. Giri lost in 51 moves.


GM Levon Aronian


GM Elshan Moradiabadi

Afterwards Grischuk described his strategy as follows: "My plan was to play like a terrorist, to terrorize him with a draw and if he goes for a worse position then I will play. That's pretty much exactly what happened."

There's a very real sense in which this approach is antithetical to the spirit of the game, and overall, this attitude is certainly not something I subscribe to. But from a strict value perspective, borrowing this strategy exceeded all expectations. I was able to keep my games simple enough to avoid blunders, and my preparation, especially with the black pieces, was an incredible success.

The unfortunate truth is that results matter at the end of the day. Chess can be a cruel game: my opponents were punished for taking excessive risk again and again; meanwhile, I chickened away from playing for a win in advantageous positions several times in this event. To be rewarded in such a glorious manner for such exceptional pragmatism made me feel incredibly guilty... and yet, I would probably do it all over again. After all, it is the result that matters!

I began to put my plan into action with an extremely tame draw against the defending champion, GM Wesley So, with a game that had virtually no new moves.

FOUR KNIGHTS GAME (C47)

GM Awonder Liang (2697)
GM Wesley So (2845)
U.S. Championship (1), St. Louis, 10.05.2022

I'm always a little jittery for the first-round game of a tournament. Here I decided to play one of the safest lines in modern opening theory.

1. e4 e5 2. Nf3 Nc6 3. Nc3 Nf6 4. d4 exd4 5. Nxd4 Bb4 6. Nxc6 bxc6 7. Bd3 0-0 8. 0-0 d5 9. Bd2 Bxc3 10. Bxc3 dxe4 11. Bxf6 Qxf6 12. Bxe4 Qxb2 13. Bxc6 Rb8 14. Rb1 Qxb1 15. Qxb1 Rxb1 16. Rxb1 Rd8 17. Bf3 Kf8 18. Rb8 Re8 19. h4



All of this has been seen before, with one of the notable games being So-Carlsen (Wijk aan Zee, 2020)! Needless to say, a player of So's caliber held this position effortlessly.

19. ... Ba6 20. Rb4 Re1+ 21. Kh2 Re5 22. Ra4 Be2 23. Kg3 Bxf3 24. Kxf3 Rc5 25. Rxa7 Rc3+ 26. Ke2 Rxc2+ 27. Ke3 h5 28. g3 Ke7 29. a4 g6 30. Ra8 Rc3+ 31. Ke4 Rc2 32. Ke3 Rc3+ 33. Ke4 Rc2 34. Ke3, draw.

Next, disaster struck for me nearly immediately as I played rashly with the black pieces against GM Elshan Moradiabadi, looking for a sharp game. This is a risky gambit against any player, as everyone comes to the U.S. Championship extremely well prepared! This moment of lost objectivity convinced me to stick to my original, low-risk plan, keeping the positions as solid as possible.

RUY LOPEZ, ZAITSEV VARIATION (C92)

GM Elshan Moradiabadi (2627)
GM Awonder Liang (2697)
U.S. Championship (2), St. Louis, 10.06.2022

1. e4 e5 2. Nf3 Nc6 3. Bb5 a6 4. Ba4 Nf6 5. 0-0 Be7 6. Re1 b5 7. Bb3 d6 8. c3 0-0 9. h3 Bb7 10. a4!?

Moradiabadi told me after the game that he had mixed up his preparation, instead planning to play a2-a4 after ... Rf8-e8.

10. ... Nb8 11. d3 Nbd7 12. Na3 c5

This move is fine, but probably a little too ambitious, as there is a weakening of the d5-square coming. A safer option was 12. ... c6 13. Nc2 Re8 14. Ne3 Bf8, with a good game ahead.

13. Bg5 Qb6?!

Telegraphed. The idea is to have ... c5-c4 and ... Nf6xe4 with a target on f2, but it is easily parried. Better was 13. ... Bc6 14. Nc2 h6.

14. Nc2 c4?!

Consistent, and also bad. After 14. ... h6 15. Bh4 g6 16. Ne3 Kg7 the queen is a bit odd on b6, but the position is basically safe for both sides.

15. dxc4 Nc5

(see diagram top of next column)

16. Bxf6! Bxf6 17. a5!

The key intermezzo, shutting down the a-file. Unfortunately, White's control over the

PHOTOS: COURETSY SLCC / C. FULLER (PREVIOUS PAGES, MORADIABADI), SLCC / OOTES (ARONIAN)








d5-square is unavoidable now, with Nc2-e3, c4xb5, and Bb3-d5 or Ne3-d5 coming.

17. ... Qc7 18. Ne3 Nxb3
Better was 18. ... bxc4 19. Bxc4 Nxe4, when at least I'm not losing material.

19. Qxb3 Bxe4 20. cxb5 axb5 21. Qxb5 Bxf3 22. gxf3 Rfb8 23. Qc4 Qd7 24. b4
Around here I realized I was just dead lost, without any hint of counterplay after just 20 moves, and without posing any problems to my opponent either. Moradiabadi didn't convert the game in the most efficient manner, but the result was never in doubt.

24. ... e4 25. Nd5 Qxh3 26. Qxe4 Be5 27. f4 Bxc3 28. Re3 Qg4+ 29. Rg3 Qxg3+ 30. fxg3 Bxa1 31. Qd3 Bf6 32. a6 Bd8 33. b5 h6 34. Kg2 Bb6 35. f5 Bc5 36. f6 gxf6 37. Nxf6+ Kg7 38. Nd7 Re8 39. Qc3+ Kh7 40. Nf6+ Kg6 41. Nxe8 Rxe8 42. Qd3+ Kg7 43. Qf3 Re3 44. Qb7 Rb3 45. Qc6 Kg6 46. Kh3 Kg7 47. Qe8 Re3 48. Qc8 Ra3 49. Qg4+ Kf8 50. Qf4 Kg7 51. Kg4 Re3 52. Qa4 Re5 53. Qa5 Bf2 54. Qc3 Bc5 55. Qc4 Kf6 56. Kh3 Rh5+ 57. Kg2 Re5 58. Qg4 Re3 59. Qa4 Ba7 60. Qb4 Bc5 61. Qb2+, Black resigned.

With a nice win against GM Alex Lenderman in round three, followed by a solid draw against GM Sam Sevian in round four, my tournament was back on track. And then came my famous game against Levon...

So many people have congratulated me on this win at this point that I've started to feel guilty. This is my last chance to correct the record! I managed to catch Levon on an off-tournament and whilst he was in a fighting mood — a dangerous combination. In nine of 10 games, we probably would have agreed to a quick draw, but fortunately for me, he gave me the chance to create something beautiful.

SCOTCH GAMBIT (C44)

GM Awonder Liang (2697)
GM Levon Aronian (2830)
U.S. Championship (5), St. Louis, 10.09.2022

1. e4 e5 2. Nf3 Nc6 3. d4 exd4 4. Bc4
An opening choice inspired by Professor Nick Polson of the University of Chicago Business School! Nick was kind enough to make the trip down to St. Louis, and he pushed me for the better half of an hour to play a gambit against Aronian. Even after the game, I couldn't believe my luck!

4. ... Bc5 5. Ng5 Nh6 6. Nxf7 Nxf7 7. Bxf7+ Kxf7 8. Qh5+ g6 9. Qxc5 d5 10. c3 dxe4 11. 0-0



A well-known line from the 1800s. Unbeknownst to me, Mamedov had tried this against Anand just a few days before this game! Here, Aronian keeps things complicated.

11. ... Re8
Instead 11. ... Qd6 12. Qxd6 cxd6 13. cxd4 Nxd4 14. Nc3 Bg4 15. Nxe4 Nc2 16. Nxd6+

Above: more Niemann-centric drama when Sam Sevian "beheads" Hans Niemann's king in round 12. (He was trying to fix the crown.)

promises fairly easy equality for Black, with all the pieces coming off the board. Levon said afterwards that he knew this line, which makes it very hard to take any credit for this victory.

12. cxd4 Qxd4 13. Qg5 Nb4?
The knight more or less belongs here, but the timing of this move allows a hidden resource for White.

The position after 13. ... Bf5 14. Nc3 Nb4 15. Be3 Qf6 16. Qg3 is still difficult for Black from a practical perspective, as he is saddled with long term weaknesses.

14. Bd2!
The idea is that White prepares Bd2-c3, rather than Nb1-c3. This is only possible because the b4-knight hangs in many lines, and now Black has to spend another tempo dealing with the Bd2-c3 threat.

14. ... Qd6?
Faced with a tough position, Aronian slips again. He should have played 14. ... Kg8 15. Bc3 Qd6 16. Na3 when White has the initiative.

My guess is that he thought there was no difference between 14. ... Qd6 and 14. ... Kg8, but again I switch tack:

15. Nc3!
White goes back to putting a knight on c3! This move is not intuitive, but now there is a massive threat of Nc3-b5, forcing Black to burn another critical tempo. His whole position falls apart now.

15. ... c6
A sad move — Black would much rather get his king to safety, but there is no time. Alternatives: (a) 15. ... Nd3 16. Qh4! and with Nc3xe4 and Bd2-c3 coming, Black is toast. Unfortunately, the b4-knight will be hang-

PHOTOS, L TO R: YOUTUBE (1,2); COURTESY SLCC / A. FULLER (3), SLCC / OOTES (4)

ing for another move. (b) White wins after 15. ... Re5 16. Nb5! Rxg5 17. Nxd6+ cxd6 18. Bxg5. (c) After 15. ... Qf6 16. Qg3 c6 17. a3 Nd5 18. Nxd5 cxd5 19. Rac1! Black is far too weak on the dark squares.

16. Rad1 Bf5?
A third mistake, after which there is no saving the game. It was clearly an off-day for Levon, whose enterprising chess was not rewarded in this case.

More resilient was 16. ... Qe7 17. Qh6 Kg8 18. Nxe4 Nd5 19. Nc3 Bg4 20. f3, although with long-term kingside weaknesses, the position remains difficult.

17. g4!
The most natural move, simply kicking the bishop back.

17. ... h6 18. Qh4 Bc8 19. Bxh6 Nd3 20. Bg5 Qe5 21. f3!
The last important move. With all five white pieces attacking, Black has little chance.

21. ... Rh8 22. fxe4+ Kg8 23. Bh6 Qd4+ 24. Kh1 Be6 25. Qg5 Bf7 26. Rxf7 Rxh6 27. Rxd3 Qxd3 28. Qf6 Rxh2+ 29. Kxh2 Qd2+ 30. Kg1 Qc1+ 31. Kf2 Qh6 32. g5, Black resigned.

With 3/5 and a win against one of the top players in the world, I entered the first rest day on cloud nine. Meanwhile, GM Fabiano Caruana had taken an early lead with +2 after five rounds, and he picked up where he left off after the rest day with two more wins. I found his victory against Lenderman quite instructive in the way Fabi developed a long-lasting initiative after gambiting a pawn in the opening. I am hesitant to give any more credit to the DeepMind team, but I can say that this game feels very much in the spirit of modern chess!

SLAV DEFENSE (D11)
GM Fabiano Caruana (2828)
GM Aleksandr Lenderman (2603)
U.S. Championship (7), St. Louis, 10.12.2022

1. c4 c6 2. d4 d5 3. Nf3 Nf6 4. Qc2 dxc4 5. e4!?
An interesting gambit. Caruana said in his post-game interview that he'd drawn inspiration from a game with Firouzja in this line. In round three I had tried the more solid 5. Qxc4 against Lenderman.

5. ... b5 6. b3 cxb3 7. axb3 e6 8. Bd3 a6?!
Very natural, but somewhat passive. Instead,

How I defeated GM Wesley So!

BY **GM CHRISTOPHER YOO**



GM Christopher Yoo explains his key victory over one of the world's best.

GM Awonder Liang wasn't the only junior player with a breakout performance at the 2022 U.S. Championship. In his first appearance in the event, GM Christopher Yoo scored a respectable 5½/13, with draws against Aronian, Caruana, and Robson, and a statement victory over GM Wesley So in round two. Here are Yoo's notes to that game, exclusively for *Chess Life*.

PETROFF DEFENSE (C42)
GM Wesley So (2845)
GM Christopher Yoo (2655)
U.S. Championship (2) St. Louis, 10.06.2022

1. e4 e5 2. Nf3 Nf6
A surprise for So. The Petroff is very solid, and I hadn't played it much before this game.

3. Nxe5 d6 4. Nf3 Nxe4 5. d4 d5 6. Bd3 Bd6 7. 0-0 0-0 8. c4 c6 9. Re1 Bf5 10. Qb3
An ambitious path forward, keeping the pieces on the board. 10. Nc3 is more tame: 10. ... Nxc3 11. bxc3 Bxd3 12. Qxd3 dxc4 13. Qxc4 Nd7 with an equal position.

10. ... Qd7 11. c5 Bc7 12. Qc2 Na6 13. a3 Bg6
Going for ... f7-f5, to cement the knight on e4.

14. Nc3 f5 15. Ne2 Bh5 16. Ng3 Bg6 17. Ne2 Bh5 18. Ng3 Bg6 19. b4
Avoiding the repetition, and rightfully so, as White is a bit better due to my misplaced a6-knight.

19. ... Rae8 20. Bb2
Better was 20. Ne5, forcing me to give up the bishop pair with 20. ... Bxe5 21. dxe5.

20. ... Re6?!

Trying to attack, but it's a bit unsound. I should have played 20. ... Qe7! 21. Ne5 Qh4 with equality.

21. Ne2!
Preparing Nf3-e5 followed by Ne2-f4 in some cases.

21. ... Qe7 22. Ne5 f4
I think this is the best practical option, but So can repulse the attack if he is accurate.

23. Nxg6 Rxg6 24. f3 Qh4 25. Nc3 Rh6



White now has a critical decision to make: should he allow ... Qh4xh2+, calling the bluff, or should he play h2-h3 and making sure he isn't mated? It turns out that my attack was in fact a bluff, but he overestimated my chances.

26. h3
After 26. Nxe4! dxe4 27. Bxe4 Qxh2+ 28. Kf1 Bd8 29. d5 it turns out that ... Qh2-h1+ is not a problem, as White can escape with Ke2-Kd3.

26. ... Ng5 27. Qf2
This gave me an interesting tactical possibility, but I wanted to keep the queens on the board.

27. ... Qh5!?
Worth considering was 27. ... Qxh3 28. gxh3 Nxh3+ 29. Kg2 Nxf2 30. Kxf2 Rh2+ 31. Kf1 Rxb2 32. Re7 with an unclear position. I thought White had compensation for the pawns due to the active rook and coordinated pieces.

28. b5 Nb8 29. a4 Bd8
Getting the bishop off the lackluster c7-square, where it was being blocked by the f4-pawn. It can also go to f6 or h4 in the future. Meanwhile, it's tough to find a good plan for White.

30. Re2 Qf7
With threats of ... Rh6xh3 or ... Ng5xh3+.



31. Kf1?
He needed to control the h3-square to make it harder to sacrifice.

Correct was 31. Qf1! preventing both sacrifices on h3. The position is equal after 31. ... Ne6 32. Nd1 Bf6 33. Qf2 Bh4 34. Qf1 Bf6.

31. ... Nd7 32. a5



32. ... Nxh3!
Breaking through! I had to act fast before he got his queenside counterplay. With this move I have serious initiative with my rook and queen attacking on the h-file.

33. gxh3 Rxh3 34. Qg2 Qh5 35. Rf2 Rg3 36. Qh2 Rh3 37. Qg2 Re8!
Avoiding the repetition! I felt like my pieces were more than strong enough to play for the win, despite not being able to calculate one at this point.

38. Ne2 Re3 39. Ra3 Rh1+?
A bit of a miss from me in time trouble. Here 39. ... Bxa5! would have won on the spot. After 40. Rxa5 Rexf3! the attack is simply too strong: 41. Nxf4 Rh1+ 42. Ke2 Rxf4+ and Black is crushing.

Left: Christopher Yoo explodes with joy at the closing ceremony festivities. Above: Yoo lurks as Wesley So thinks.

40. Ng1 Nf6?
Once again I had 40. ... Bxa5! but overlooked it due to time pressure: 41. Be2 Rxa3 42. Bxa3 Nf6 and Black should win.

41. Bc1 Qh4!
Sacrificing an Exchange, but with good reason — ... Nf6-h5-g3+ is very powerful.

42. Bxe3 fxe3 43. Bxh7+ Qxh7 44. Rxe3 Bc7 45. Re7??
The final mistake. There was a saving move, but it was admittedly very difficult to find: after 45. Rb3!! Rh2 46. Qg5 Rxf2+ 47. Kxf2 Qc2+ 48. Ne2 Qxb3 49. Qf5 Bxa5 50. b6 White somehow has a perpetual check here. This is a bit hard to believe, but it's a very nice resource.

45. ... Qb1+ 46. Re1 Qd3+ 47. Rfe2 Rh2 48. Qg5 Nh5, White resigned.
White cannot stop ... Nh5-g3+. Winning against Wesley So (and with Black) is a huge achievement for me, and I am even happier to have done it in a chaotic fashion!

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

PHOTOS: COURTESY SLCC / C. FULLER (FACING), OOTES (THIS PAGE)

Black could have uncorked a surprising sequence.

With 8. … a5! Black takes advantage of White's surprising awkwardness: 9. Nc3 (*9. 0-0 Na6 10. Qxc6+ Bd7 11. Qc2 Nb4 12. Qe2 Nxd3 13. Qxd3 Be7* was equal in Carlsen – Harikrishna, *chess24.com* 2022) 9. … Na6 10. Qe2 Bb4! 11. Bd2 e5! 12. Nxe5 Qxd4 13. Nxc6 Qxc3 14. Bxc3 Bxc3+ 15. Kd1 Bxa1 with good compensation for the missing queen. Of course, without having analyzed this line at home, it would be nearly impossible to reach this position.

9. 0-0 Be7 10. Nc3 Bb7 11. Rd1 h6 12. Qe2!
A good regrouping: the queen heads to the g4-square in many lines.

12. h3 was played in the aforementioned Firouzja game. Black took over after 12. … Nbd7 13. Be3 Rc8 14. e5 Nd5 15. Nxd5 cxd5 16. Qd2 Nb8 17. b4 Rc4!. (Firouzja – Caruana, *chess24.com* 2020)

12. … Nbd7 13. e5 Nd5 14. Nxd5 cxd5 15. Ne1 Qb6 16. Qg4 g6



Time to take stock. White is down a pawn on the queenside, but Black's kingside will be eternally weak, especially on the dark squares. Black's pieces are also quite passive. However, outside of Bd3xg6, which appears speculative, it is difficult to see a clear breakthrough.

17. Bd2?!
A step in the wrong direction. In complicated positions, even the top guys can make mistakes!

17. h4! was both natural and strong. Black should initiate counterplay on the queenside anyway — for lack of a better move! 17. … a5 (*17. … Nb8 18. Be3 Nc6* tries to provoke b3-b4, but it is much too slow: *19. Bxg6! fxg6 20. Qxe6* and White crashes through) 18. Be3 b4 19. Rdc1 Ba6 20. g3 with a similar structure to the game, but where White doesn't waste a tempo.

17. … b4 18. Be3 a5 19. Qe2 Kf8 20. g3 Ba6 21. h4 h5 22. Nf3 Kg7 23. Bg5!
Black has finally managed to connect his rooks, but the long-term problems on the kingside endure.

23. … Rhe8 24. Rdc1 Bxd3 25. Qxd3 Bxg5 26. Nxg5



26. … Rac8?
Lenderman's first real mistake of the game. Although this move appears to contest the c-file, in fact, after Qd3-f3, Black is forced to play … Rc8xc1 and then defend the f7-pawn. Instead, it was better to go after the terrible g5-knight, but even then, Black is just barely holding on.

Preferable was 26. … Nf8! 27. Qf3 Qb7 and Black holds, although White has some dangerous tries: 28. g4!? (*28. Qf6+ Kg8 29. Rc5 Nh7 30. Nxh7 Kxh7* is equal) 28. … hxg4 29. Qf6+ (*29. Qxg4 Nh7 30. Kg2 Qe7 31. Rc5 Rh8* and it appears that Black's king is safe enough) 29. … Kg8 30. h5 Qe7 31. Rc7 Qxf6 32. exf6 Nh7 33. Nxf7 gxh5 34. Nh6+ Kh8 with equality.

27. Kg2
A devilish idea: now Qd3-f3 cannot be met with … Rc8xc1 as there is no check!

27. … f6 28. exf6+ Nxf6 29. Qe2 Kg8?
The decisive mistake. The game still could have been saved by a well-timed exchange of pieces: 29. … Ne4! 30. Nxe4 dxe4 31. Qxe4 Rc3 32. Rxc3 bxc3 33. Qe5+ Kg8 34. Rxa5 Rc8! and White will probably have to go for perpetual check soon, e.g. 35. Qf6 (*35. Ra7 Qxa7 36. Qxe6+ Kg7 37. Qxc8 Qxd4* is equal) 35. … Qxa5 36. Qxg6+.

30. Rxc8 Rxc8 31. Rxa5!
A nasty detail. Now all of White's pieces start crashing through, and material loss is inevitable. A testament to how difficult it is





Left: Robson and So exit the playing hall after their game. Right: Liang stares down Caruana after plunking down 3. … Nxe4.

to play these guys! All it takes is one mistake, and the game can end just like that.

31. … Re8 32. Ra6 Qxd4 33. Rxe6 Rf8 34. Qc2 Ne4 35. Rxg6+
White cleans up the kingside.

35. … Kh8 36. Rh6+ Kg8 37. Nxe4 dxe4 38. Rxh5 Qf6 39. Rg5+ Kh8 40. Qe2 Qf3+ 41. Qxf3 exf3+ 42. Kh3 Rc8 43. Rg4 Rc2 44. Rxb4 Rxf2 45. Kg4 Rf1 46. Rb7 Kg8 47. b4 Kh8 48. b5 Kg8 49. b6 Kh8 50. Rb8+ Kg7 51. b7, Black resigned.
What I really enjoyed about this game was the concept of long-term compensation for the pawn. It wasn't until nearly 20 moves later that the material balance was restored! Meanwhile Black was under great pressure until he finally cracked.

With this win, Fabiano moved to 5½/7, a clear point lead against the field. But GM Ray Robson did his best to keep pace, stringing together win after win, including an absolutely crushing victory over Wesley So.

NIMZO INDIAN DEFENSE (E50)

GM Ray Robson (2770)
GM Wesley So (2845)
U.S. Championship (7), St. Louis, 10.12.2022

1. d4 Nf6 2. c4 e6 3. Nc3 Bb4 4. e3 0-0 5. Nf3 Bxc3+ 6. bxc3 d6
So plays a relatively rare line, looking for imbalances as Black. Robson responds with the most critical reply.

7. Bd3 e5 8. e4! Re8 9. 0-0 exd4 10. cxd4 Nxe4 11. Re1 Nf6 12. Rxe8+ Qxe8
Just like Caruana, Robson sacrifices a pawn for dynamic compensation. White has a slight lead in development, as well as the bishop pair, although it is not at all clear how to continue the attack.

13. h3!
Very sophisticated! White keeps options of Bc1-b2 and Bd3-b5 open and plays a generally useful move. After 13. Bg5 Nbd7 14. Qc2 Qf8 15. Re1 h6 16. Bh4 b6 Black is able to finish his development.

13. … Nbd7
For now, Black has to play it safe. Worse is 13. … d5 14. Bg5 Nbd7 15. Qc2 h6 16. Re1 Qf8 17. Bh4 and with all White's pieces developed, the pressure is unbearable.

14. Qc2 b6
Better was 14. … Qd8! avoiding the Ra1-e1 idea. But given White's resources in this position, I doubt we'll see this repeated at top levels: 15. Bb2 d5 16. Re1 Nf8 17. Ba3 Ng6. This looks safe for Black, but White's possibilities are far from exhausted. After 18. Ng5 Bd7 19. cxd5 (*19. Nxf7!?*) 19. … Nxd5 20. h4 Qf6 21. Qb3 (*21. Re5!?*) 21. … Nb6 22. Re3 (*22. Nxh7*) the engine gives the dreaded triple zeros here, but it feels nearly impossible to play over the board.

15. Bb2 Bb7
After 15. … Qf8 16. d5 Nc5 17. Re1 Bd7 18. Ng5 Nxd3 19. Qxd3 h6 20. Bxf6 hxg5 21. Be7 Qc8 22. Bxg5 White keeps good pressure.

16. d5 Qf8 17. g4! h6 18. Kh2!
Not the hasty 18. g5? hxg5 19. Nxg5 Qe7 when Black prepares … Nd7-f8 or … Kg8-f8, and it is remarkably hard to break through.



18. … c6?
Believe it or not, this is already the decisive mistake.

The engine gives 18. … b5!! 19. g5 (*19. Bf5*) 19. … bxc4! (*19. … hxg5 20. Nxg5 bxc4 21. Bh7+ Kh8 22. Bf5 Ne5 23. f4* would be very similar to the game) when the key difference is that Black avoids Bd3-h7+. Play gets very complicated, but here are some sketches:

- (a) 20. Bf5 hxg5 21. Nxg5 g6!! 22. Bxd7 (*22. Rg1 Bxd5 23. Nh7 Kxh7 24. Bxg6+ Kh8 25. Qf5 Qg7 26. Bh5 Qh6 27. Bg6* is equal) 22. … Nxd7 23. Qxc4 Qe7!! and Black hangs on, i.e., 24. Qh4 (24. Rg1 Ne5 25. Qb3 (*25. Qh4? f6* and Black is winning!) 25. … Ba6 26. f4 Nd3 27. Ne6 Kh7 28. Qc3 fxe6) 24. … f6 25. Ne6 Qh7 26. Qg3 Qh5 27. Rg1 Kf7 28. Nxc7 Rh8 29. Nb5 Bxd5 30. Nxd6+ Ke7 31. Re1+ Be6.
- (b) 20. gxf6 cxd3 21. Qxd3 Ne5 (*21. … Nxf6? 22. Bxf6 gxf6 23. Rg1+ Kh8 24. Qf5* and wins) 22. Nxe5 (worse is *22. Bxe5 dxe5 23. Rg1 e4!*) 22. … dxe5 23. Rg1 g5 24. Bc1 (*24. h4 Qb4 25. hxg5 Qh4+*) 24. … e4.
- (c) 20. Qxc4 Bxd5 21. Qh4 Bxf3 22. gxf6 d5 23. Rg1 Qd6+ 24. Rg3 Re8 25. fxg7 Be4! 26. Bxe4 dxe4 27. Bc1 Qf6 and White is struggling to find a knockout blow.

Another idea is 18. … Re8 19. g5 hxg5 20. Rg1 b5 21. Nxg5 Qe7 22. Bh7+ Kh8 23. Bf5 Qe2 and White has compensation but no clear win.

19. g5 hxg5 20. Nxg5 cxd5 21. Bh7+!!
The key resource: the black king is stuck in the killzone now. Black lives after 21. Bf5 g6! 22. Bxg6 fxg6 23. Qxg6+ Qg7 24. Qf5 Rf8.

21. … Kh8 22. Bf5 Ne5
Or 22. … g6 23. Bxd7.

23. f4! Ng6 24. Bxf6 gxf6 25. Nxf7+ Qxf7 26. Bxg6!
Black is just dead in the water here.

26. … Qe7 27. Qf2 f5 28. Rg1 Rg8 29. Rg5 Rg7 30. Qh4+ Kg8
An ingenious defensive idea — Black builds a shield for his king, but it is just not enough.

31. Qh5 Bc8 32. cxd5 a5 33. Qh6 b5 34. Bh7+ Kf8 35. Rg2!, Black resigned.
Threatening the unstoppable Bh7xf5 and Qh6-h8. A flawless game by Ray that left him within an inch of the lead!

With five rounds to go, it looked like it was going to be an ultra-tight finish for first. However, while the Women's Championship culminated with an absolute bloodbath, the Open Championship was relatively tame. Both Caruana and Robson finished with clean five draws to complete the event. My round nine draw with Caruana was interesting, and for more than just the opening.

PETROFF DEFENSE (C42)

GM Fabiano Caruana (2828)
GM Awonder Liang (2697)
U.S. Championship (9), St. Louis, 10.14.2022

1. e4 e5 2. Nf3 Nf6 3. Nxe5 Nxe4!?

(see diagram next page)

An opening that I probably won't repeat, but this was a highly entertaining move to essay over the board — probably one that Caruana hadn't seen since he was six! The latest analysis suggests it may be objectively sound, but the ensuing endgames tend to be

PHOTOS: COURTESY SLCC / A. FULLER (LIANG), OOTES (ROBSON – SO)



rather depressing. However, against Fabiano's opening prowess, I was satisfied to reach a slightly worse yet survivable endgame.

4. Qe2 Qe7 5. Qxe4 d6 6. d4 dxe5 7. dxe5 Nc6 8. Bb5!?

Not the critical try, but over the board it is difficult to assess. Theory prefers 8. Nc3 Qxe5 9. Qxe5+ Nxe5 10. Nb5 and White has serious pressure here, although I had prepared a decent amount.

8. ... Bd7 9. Nc3 0-0-0 10. Bf4 Qb4 11. 0-0-0 Qxe4 12. Nxe4 Nxe5 13. Bxd7+ Nxd7 14. Ng5 Be7!

The critical trick, after which Black equalizes: I'm able to defend f7 with tactics. Against almost anyone else I would expect the game to end in the next 10 moves, but the nervousness of playing the former world championship challenger caused me to go almost immediately astray.

15. h4!

A very good practical try, keeping the pieces on the board.

After 15. Nxf7 Rdf8 16. Nxh8 Rxf4 17. Rhe1 Kd8 18. Re6 Rf8 19. Ng6 hxg6 20. Rxg6 Bf6 the endgame looks a little dangerous, but Black equalizes with accurate play: 21. h4 Kc8 22. h5 Ne5 23. Rg3 Nc4 24. c3 Be5 25. Rgd3 Bd6 26. f3 g6!. Here it will be very difficult to make progress on the kingside, and Black can always harass White's queenside pawns.

15. ... Bxg5?

Trying to simplify too early, and missing a key tactical resource.

The alternative 15. ... Nc5! is the safest, trading a pair of rooks. Both pawns are immune: 16. Rxd8+ Rxd8 17. Re1 (*17. Nxh7? Ne6 18. Re1 Bxh4* and the h7-knight is trapped) 17. ... Bf6 18. b3 Rd5 19. g3 h6 20. Nxf7 Rf5 21. Re8+, and a draw was agreed in Ilyasov-Rashitov, ICCF 2012.

16. hxg5 f6 17. Rde1! fxg5 18. Bxg5 Rdf8 19. Re7 Nb6!

The only defensive try for Black: now I avoid the mating ideas on the back rank. Of course 19. ... Rxf2? 20. Rxh7! was a cold shower, when White will clean up on the seventh rank.

20. Rxg7 Rxf2



At this point I was trying to calculate whether Black was fine or in trouble. Then I realized it was completely futile: if White has a win here, Caruana was sure to find it; if not, then I would most likely hold a draw. With this in mind, I went for a relaxing walk and let Fabi do the hard work at the board!

21. Bh4 Rff8 22. Be7 Re8 23. Rhxh7 Rxh7 24. Rxh7 Nd5?

I had seen a draw with a pawn-down rook endgame, but I wanted to find something

2022 U.S. Championship

ST. LOUIS, OCTOBER 5-20, 2022

			1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	
1	**GM Fabiano Caruana**	2828	*	½	½	½	½	½	½	½	1	½	1	½	1	1	8½/13
2	**GM Ray Robson**	2770	½	*	½	½	½	1	½	½	1	½	½	½	½	1	8/13
3	**GM Awonder Liang**	2697	½	½	*	½	½	½	½	½	½	1	1	½	1	0	7½/13
4	**GM Leinier Dominguez Perez**	2814	½	½	½	*	½	½	½	½	½	½	½	1	½	1	7½/13
5	**GM Jeffery Xiong**	2773	½	½	½	½	*	½	½	½	½	½	½	1	½	½	7/13
6	**GM Wesley So**	2845	½	0	½	½	½	*	1	½	½	½	½	0	1	1	7/13
7	**GM Sam Shankland**	2790	½	½	½	½	½	0	*	½	½	½	½	1	½	1	7/13
8	**GM Samuel Sevian**	2762	½	½	½	½	½	½	½	*	0	½	1	½	½	1	7/13
9	**GM Hans Niemann**	2776	0	0	½	½	½	½	½	1	*	½	0	1	1	1	7/13
10	**GM Levon Aronian**	2830	½	½	0	½	½	½	½	½	½	*	0	½	½	1	6/13
11	**GM Dariusz Swiercz**	2730	0	½	0	½	½	½	½	0	1	1	*	0	½	½	5½/13
12	**GM Christopher Yoo**	2655	½	½	½	0	0	1	0	½	0	½	1	*	0	1	5½/13
13	**GM Aleksandr Lenderman**	2603	0	½	0	½	½	0	½	½	0	½	½	1	*	1	5½/13
14	**GM Elshan Moradiabadi**	2627	0	0	1	0	½	0	0	0	0	0	½	0	0	*	2/13

more immediate. Fortunately, I wasn't punished for my error, but this impulsive decision could have cost me dearly!

The draw is in hand after 24. ... Rg8 25. Rh2 Nd5 26. Bh4 Ne3 27. g3 Nf5 28. Rf2 Nxh4 29. gxh4 Rg1+ 30. Kd2 Rh1 31. Rf4 Rh2+ 32. Ke3 b5.

25. Bg5 Re2 26. Rh2
Black has no clear continuation here, and White kicks the rook out of the second rank.

26. ... b5 27. Kd1 Re4 28. Bd2 Kd7 29. g3 Rg4 30. Rh3 a5 31. Ke2 Nb4 32. Bf4?
After the correct 32. Rh7+! Kc6 33. Bf4 Nd5 34. Kf3 White would have a technical win.

32. ... Rg7 33. Rh5 Kc6 34. a4?
Fortunately, time trouble saved me in this game. Now White trades too many queenside pawns, and I felt relatively safe again. After 34. c3 Nxa2 35. Kd3 a4 36. Kc2 b4 37. Ra5! White collects the house on the queenside.

34. ... bxa4 35. Rxa5 Nxc2 36. Rxa4 Kd5 37. Kd3 Ne1+ 38. Kc3 Ng2 39. Ra5+ Ke4 40. Ra4+ Kd5 41. Ra5+ Ke4 42. Rg5 Rd7 43. Bd2 Rd3+ 44. Kc2 Ne3+ 45. Kc1 Nf5 46. g4 Nd4 47. Bc3 c5 48. Kb1 c4 49. Bxd4 Kxd4 50. Rg8 Rd1+ 51. Ka2 Ke5 52. Re8+ Kf4 53. Re2 Rc1 54. Ka3 Kxg4 55. Kb4 Kf5 56. Kc5 Kf6 57. Kd4 Kf5 58. Kc5 Kf6 59. Kd5 Kf7 60. Kd6 Rd1+ 61. Kc5 Rc1 62. Kb4 Kf6 63. Re3 Rc2 64. Ka3 Kf5 65. Rc3 Rxc3+ 66. bxc3 Ke6 67. Kb4 Kd6 68. Kxc4 Kc6 69. Kd4 Kd6 70. c4 Kc6 71. c5 Kc7 72. Kd5 Kd7 73. c6+ Kc7 74. Kc5 Kc8 75. Kb6 Kb8 76. c7+ Kc8 77. Kc6, draw.

In the end, Fabiano kept his half-point lead to take the title with a solid 8½/13. Robson finished a half-point behind in second, while I tied for third place at 7½ along with GM Lenier Dominguez Perez.

A hearty congratulations to Caruana, who had an absolutely clinical tournament victory! Every year, the U.S. Championship continues to get stronger, not only by absolute strength, but also in terms of the level of preparation required to succeed. The U.S. Championship is undoubtedly the most difficult national championship to win — a testament to the strength and depth of contemporary American chess.

For more games and analysis from the 2022 U.S. Championship, check out the ***Chess Life Online*** archives at ***uschess.org/clo***.

PHOTO: COURTESY SLCC / C. FULLER

Yu defeats Krush in memorable Armageddon showdown to earn second Women's title.

BY **WGM TATEV ABRAHAMYAN**



THE STORY OF THE 2022 U.S. Women's Chess Championship had all the drama and intrigue one could hope for: a tight race, lots of twists and turns, and a nail-biting finish.

This year's tournament featured an increased player pool, moving from 12 to 14 competitors, and the largest prize fund in the event's history. A total of $154,000 was at stake, with first place earning a cool $40,000 — a substantial $15,000 increase from the previous year. The expansion of the field allowed for an interesting mix of experience and youth, with the notable absence of the defending champion IM Carissa Yip, who declined her invitation due to university obligations. Several of our top young talents made their debut this year: FM Alice Lee, FM Ruiyang Yan, FM Rochelle Wu, and WFM Sophie Morris-Suzuki.

This 13-round tournament was the longest one I have ever played in. To prepare myself, I thought of the tournament like it was a marathon, one that would require stamina and good nerves. Luckily, we had two rest days to help with our pacing: one each after the fifth and 10th rounds. These two days off divided the grueling tournament into three portions and made it more manageable. As for the nerves part of the equation, I have struggled there in the past, and alas, this year was no exception.

From the get-go, the tournament was a close race between GM Irina Krush and WGM Jennifer Yu. While several players — such as WIM Megan Lee, FM Alice Lee and your author — saw ourselves on top of the standings at different points of the event, Irina and Jennifer were more consistent in

their fight for the title.

Yu is a volatile player, and she can be very dangerous when she goes on a hot streak. Case in point: she won the 2019 US Women's Championship with a phenomenal score of 10½/11. Here she started off with two wins but I was able to stop her winning streak in round three.

GIUOCO PIANO (C54)

WGM Tatev Abrahamyan (2408)
WGM Jennifer Yu (2407)
U.S. Women's Championship (3), St. Louis, 10.07.2022

1. e4 e5 2. Nf3 Nc6
I was expecting a Petroff, but Yu is versatile in the opening.

3. Bc4 Bc5 4. c3 Nf6 5. d3 h6
There are so many move orders in the Italian that it's difficult to explain all the intricacies!

6. 0-0 d6 7. Re1 0-0 8. h3 a6 9. Bb3 Re8 10. Nbd2 Be6 11. Bc2 Ba7
We have ended up in a common tabiya.

12. Nf1 d5
While White maneuvers the knight to the kingside and builds an attack there, it's the right time for Black to challenge the center.

13. exd5


WGM Tatev Abrahamyan

I had played 13. Qe2 many times before but decided to play something new this time.

13. ... Bxd5 14. Ng3 Nh7
Uncommon, and only played a few times previously. More common is 14. ... Qd7 15. Nh4 Rad8 16. Nhf5 with an unclear position.

15. Qe2
This move felt awkward to me during the game. I think 15. Be3, challenging the bishop, seems like a logical way of handling this position.

15. ... Qd7 16. Nh4 Be6 17. Qh5 Nf6 18. Qf3 Bd5
We were both spending quite a bit of time on these moves — perhaps an indication that neither of us were quite sure how to handle this position.

19. Ne4 Nh7 20. Qh5 Ne7 21. Be3



21. ... f5?!
More accurate is 21. ... Bxe3 22. Rxe3 f5. During the game I was also considering the anti-positional recapture 22. fxe3 Bxe4 23. dxe4. I thought my strong light-squared bishop and the open f-file gave me enough compensation for the weak pawn structure, but the engines disagree.

22. Bxa7 Rxa7??
This leads to tactical problems for Black, as the e8-rook is now loose.

After 22. ... fxe4 23. Bc5 exd3 24. Bxd3 White is doing well due to her bishop pair and superior pawn structure.

23. Nc5 Qc6 24. Rxe5 Nf6 25. Qe2 Qxc5 26. Re1
Now I will simply win the piece back and remain a pawn up.

26. ... g5
A bit of a desperate attempt.

27. Nxf5 Nxf5 28. Rxe8+ Nxe8 29. Qxe8+ Qf8 30. Qg6+ Ng7 31. d4
Black's extra piece is irrelevant.

31. ... Ra8 32. Qxh6 Qf4
I missed this move, and panicked a bit. I thought the game was over, but suddenly she has a threat of ... Qf4-d2.



33. Bh7+?
Correct was 33. Qh7+ Kf7 (33. ... Kf8 34. Qh8+ Bg8 35. Bb3 and White wins) 34. Bg6+ Kf6 (or 34. ... Kf8 35. Qh8+ Bg8 36. Re3) 35. Bd3 and White is in the driver's seat.

33. ... Kf8 34. Bd3 Bf7??
Returning the favor.

With 34. ... Re8 things get very complicated: 35. Rxe8+ Kxe8 36. Qxg7 Qc1+ 37. Bf1 (37. Kh2 Qf4+ will lead to a perpetual) 37. ... Bc4 38. Qxc7 Qxf1+ 39. Kh2 and suddenly matters aren't so clear, even with all the extra pawns!

35. Qh8+ Bg8 36. Bc4 Qf7 37. Bxf7 Kxf7 38. Qh6, Black resigned.

After this loss, Yu went on to win her next two games to take a half-point lead over Krush, Lee, and your author.

Irina has won the U.S. Women's Championship eight times, and she is actively trying to earn 10 titles. Her start in this year's event was slower, with three draws followed by two wins. The second of those wins was against last year's second place finisher, WGM Gulrukhbegim "Begim" Tokhirjonova, in a nice Sicilian.

SICILIAN DEFENSE, RICHTER-RAUZER VARIATION (B62)

WGM Gulrukhbegim Tokhirjonova (2420)
GM Irina Krush (2515)
U.S. Women's Championship (5), St. Louis, 10.09.2022

1. e4 c5 2. Nf3 d6 3. d4 cxd4 4. Nxd4 Nf6 5. Nc3 Nc6 6. Bg5

PHOTO: COURTESY SLCC / OOTES

Challenging Krush in her long-standing favorite Sicilian, the Richter-Rauzer!

6. … e6 7. Qd3 Bd7 8. Be2
It's not necessary to develop this bishop here. More standard is 8. 0-0-0 a6 9. f4 Be7 10. Nf3.

8. … a6 9. f4 Be7 10. 0-0-0 b5 11. Bf3 Rc8 12. Nxc6 Bxc6 13. a3
This is always a difficult move to make in opposite-side castled positions, as it creates a hook and makes Black's … b5-b4 move a lot scarier.

13. … 0-0 14. g4 Qc7 15. h4 a5
White's attacking chances are nebulous, while Black is ready to break through with … b5-b4.

16. Ne2
I think it was necessary to change the course of the game with something like 16. e5, as "normal" moves will lead to a disaster. Play could continue 16. … dxe5 17. Bxc6 Qxc6 18. fxe5 b4 19. exf6 gxf6 20. Bh6 bxc3 21. Bxf8 cxb2+ 22. Kb1 Bxf8 with an unclear position.

16. … b4 17. Nd4 Bd7 18. axb4 axb4



19. Rhe1
Optically, it looks like White has put her pieces on very natural squares, but the attack against White's threadbare king is coming very fast here.

19. … h6 20. Rh1 e5 21. Nf5 Bxf5 22. Bxf6 Bxf6 23. exf5 exf4
Opposite-colored bishops are very dangerous during attacks as they cannot be tamed by their absent counterparts.

24. Rh2 Qa7 25. Qb3 Rfe8 26. Re2 Re3 27. Rxe3 fxe3 28. Kb1 Bxh4
Grabbing another pawn.

29. Rxd6 Qe7 30. Qd3 Bf6 31. Rd5 Re8
Now White also has to worry about the passed e-pawn.

32. Be2 Ra8 33. Rb5 Qa7 34. c3 bxc3 35. Qd5 cxb2 36. Bc4 Qa1+ 37. Kc2 Qc1+, White resigned.
A smooth victory for Krush.

After five rounds it was time for a much-needed rest day, and then back to work. Unfortunately, the middle portion of the tournament was a complete disaster for me, with three losses in a row putting an end to my dream of finally winning the title.

The tournament remained a close battle between Krush and Yu, except for round eight, when Megan Lee briefly took the lead after defeating Yu in a pretty one-sided affair. However, Jennifer quickly recovered with two wins in a row to retake the lead.

The big showdown was set for the penultimate round, when Krush and Yu finally faced off. At this point, Jennifer was half a point ahead of Irina and a full point ahead of FM Thalia Cervantes Landeiro, whom she was set to play in the final round. It is very rare in a round robin that the chips fall as they did here, giving the leader total control of her fate. A win in round 12 would basically secure the championship for Yu.

It was a tense battle until disaster struck.

WHOOPSIE

WGM Jennifer Yu (2407)
GM Irina Krush (2515)
U.S. Women's Championship (12), St. Louis, 10.18.2022



WHITE TO MOVE

Spoiler alert: this won't be the last time we see a bishop donation in this event!

More seriously, Yu completely hallucinated here and forgot that after capturing the bishop, the black queen still defends the e8-rook.

31. Ba4??
Instead 31. h5! (which she was planning on playing) is quite strong, posing some serious questions to Black. The opposite-colored bishops, as we saw in the previous game, favor White as the black king is weaker. Things look disastrous for Black after 31. … gxh5 32. Qxh5.

31. … Qxa4 32. Qf7+ Kh8
The game is over.



WGM Gulrukhbegim Tokhirjonova



GM Irina Krush

PHOTOS: COURTESY SLCC / ADAMS (TOKHIRJONOVA), OOTES (KRUSH)

33. h5 gxh5 34. Rf5 Bd4 35. Rg5 Qc2+ 36. Kh3 Qe4 37. Rxh5 Qh1+ 38. Kg4 Re4+, White resigned.

This set the stage for a memorable final round, with Yu and Cervantes Landeiro — both trailing Krush by a half-point — paired against one another. Thalia had a remarkable showing in the second half of the tournament, winning five games in a row beginning with her victory over me in round eight. Having the white pieces against her closest rival in the final round was the best-case scenario for her.

Now Irina had the fate of her tournament in her hands: a win against her longtime rival IM Anna Zatonskih would have sealed the deal. Irina had the upper hand throughout the game but couldn't manage to squeeze out a win, while Yu bested Cervantes Landeiro in a rook endgame.

SQUEEZE

FM Thalia Cervantes Landeiro (2362)
WGM Jennifer Yu (2407)
U.S. Women's Championship (13), St. Louis, 10.19.2022

(see diagram top of next column)

Black is doing really well due to the strong knight and better structure, but now she goes on to dominate the board.

27. … Rf3 28. Rc2 Nb4 29. Rd2 Ke7
The king marches to the queenside to defend the b6-pawn and free the b8-rook.



FM Thalia Cervantes Landeiro


BLACK TO MOVE

30. Rc1 Kd6 31. Rf1
White doesn't have any active ideas, and marks time. One of her rooks will always be tied down, defending the weak f2-pawn.

31. … Kc7 32. Nc3 Rbf8 33. Ne2 h5 34. Kg2 c5
Playing on both sides of the board.

35. h4
A decision perhaps borne of impatience, but the weakness on h4 will prove crucial.

35. … gxh4 36. gxh4 Rg8+ 37. Ng3
Played to activate the knight, but unfortunately for White, the h5-pawn will never become a problem for Black.

37. … Rg4 38. Rh1 Kd6 39. dxc5+ bxc5 40. Ra1 Nc6
Here Yu passed up the winning 40. … Nd3! 41. Rxd3 Rfxg3+! 42. fxg3 exd3 43. Rxa5 Rb4 .

41. Rc1 d4
I think 41. … Ne7 with the threat of either … Ne7-f5 or … Ne7-g6, attacking the h4-pawn and the g3-knight, is much stronger.

42. exd4 cxd4 43. Rc4 d3



44. Ra4
Now 44. Rxe4 doesn't work because of 44. … Rfxg3+ 45. fxg3 Rxe4 and Black wins.

44. … Ne5
The game will end quickly once the knight arrives on the kingside.

45. Rxa5 Ng6 46. Ra6+ Kc7 47. Ra4 Nxh4+ 48. Kh3 Nf5
Black collects another pawn, and the passed e- and d-pawns will be unstoppable.

49. Rc4+ Kd6 50. Kh2 Nxg3 51. fxg3 Kd5 52. Ra4 Rgxg3 53. Ra5+ Kd4 54. Rxh5 Ke3 55. Rd1 Ke2 56. Ra1 d2 57. Rh4 e3, White resigned.

After the loss against Krush, Yu felt as though she did not deserve another chance at the title. But she managed to keep her cool, did what she had to do without stressing about Irina's game, and fate granted her another chance at the title. It was time for another day of chess, and a rapid and blitz playoff, to determine the winner.

THE PLAYOFFS

I watched the playoffs live with Begim, GM Fabiano Caruana, and GM Maurice Ashley outside of the commentary studio. While there was nothing at stake for us, our emotions were running high as we watched the drama unfold. Maurice had taken the year off from his commentary duties, but he couldn't help but go into commentator mode and provide some entertainment for the three of us!

The format of the tiebreak was two games of G/10+5, a much faster time control than in previous years. I thought Krush would be a heavy favorite in this situation given her experience, but the faster time control turned out to favor Yu, who had just contested a playoff in the U.S. Girls' Junior!

Jennifer took the first game by keeping things imbalanced and taking Irina out of her comfort zone.

TIME PRESSURE

WGM Jennifer Yu (2407)
GM Irina Krush (2515)
U.S. Women's Championship Playoff (1), St. Louis, 10.20.2022

(see diagram top of next column)

38. Rxe5!
With just 15 seconds on her clock, Yu makes the correct decision to sacrifice the Exchange and get rid of Black's annoying dark-squared bishop.

PHOTO: COURTESY SLCC / OOTES



WHITE TO MOVE

38. … dxe5 39. Rxf5 Rxb3?
Krush immediately errs, but it is difficult to manage this position with no time on the clock.

Best was 39. … Qg7 as Black needs to be ready for the Rf5-f7 threat. Here 40. Rf7 Rgf8 keeps the position very unclear.

40. Rf7 Qd6 41. Be4 Rg7 42. Rf8+ Rg8 43. Rf7 Rg7 44. Rf8+ Rg8



45. Qf7
Now mate is unstoppable!

45. … Qxf8
After 45. … Rb2+ 46. Kh1 Black runs out of checks as the b1-square is covered by the bishop.

46. Qxh7, mate.

The victory meant that Yu only needed a draw to clinch the title. But Krush had the white pieces and, this time, the better nerves. Once again, the game was resolved in a time scramble.

MORE TIME PRESSURE

GM Irina Krush (2515)
WGM Jennifer Yu (2407)
U.S. Women's Championship Playoff (2), St. Louis, 10.20.2022



BLACK TO MOVE

35. … Nc4??
With a mere five seconds left on the clock, Yu moves the wrong knight. On the broadcast video, we can see her hesitating after grabbing the piece, as she realizes that there is no good square for it to land on.

Black keeps the advantage after 35. … Nbc6, challenging the d4-bishop and trying to either force its exchange or chase it off the a1-h8 diagonal. For instance: 36. Be3 Nd3 37. Bxh6 Rxe1+ 38. Rxe1 Nd4 and Black is cruising.

36. Rxe8+ Bxe8 37. Bh8
Now the necessity of neutralizing the bishop becomes clear.

37. … f6 38. Qxf6 Qf7 39. Qc3 Bb5 40. Rd1 Nc6 41. Bf6 Qe6 42. Re1 Qd7 43. h4 Nd2 44. Be5 Nxe5 45. Qxe5 Nc4 46. Qf6 Qf7 47. Qd8+ Kg7
The final blunder, losing immediately.

The only way to keep the game going is 47. … Qf8 as Re1-e8 is not possible. The computer evaluates the position as completely lost for Black, but anything could have happened in the time scramble.

48. Re7, Black resigned.

This result meant that the championship title would be decided in an Armageddon game. After winning the coin toss, Yu chose to play Black, which gave her draw odds but

Below: Dr. Jeanne Sinquefield rings the bell to signal that the rapid playoff between Yu and Krush is underway.



PHOTO: COURTESY SLCC / OOTES






just four minutes on the clock against Irina's five. One more key point: there would be no increment until move 60.

I was a bit surprised by Jennifer's choice. Both of the games were decided decisively thus far, and a one-minute advantage is quite significant with so little time.

I was more surprised by the way the game unfolded. Here's how history was made.

KING'S INDIAN ATTACK (A07)

GM Irina Krush (2515)
WGM Jennifer Yu (2407)
U.S. Women's Championship Playoff (3), St. Louis, 10.20.2022

1. Nf3 d5 2. g3 g6 3. Bg2 Bg7 4. 0-0 e5 5. d3 Ne7 6. Nbd2 0-0 7. e4 d4 8. Ne1 Nbc6 9. f4



9. ... Bg4??

Yu thought she had a knight on f6, and didn't realize that this move leaves her bishop *en prise*. Instinctively she tried to take the move back, only to realize that she had let go of the piece.

10. Qxg4

With an extra piece and an extra minute on the clock, the commentators were ready to call the game for Krush, but Yu soldiered on.

10. ... f5 11. Qe2 Qd7 12. Nef3 Rae8 13. fxe5 Nxe5 14. Nxe5 Bxe5 15. exf5 Nxf5 16. Ne4 b6 17. Bd2 c5 18. Rf2 Re7 19. Raf1 Rfe8 20. Bh3 Rf7 21. g4 Nd6 22. Nxd6



22. ... Bxh2+

An opportunity presents itself.

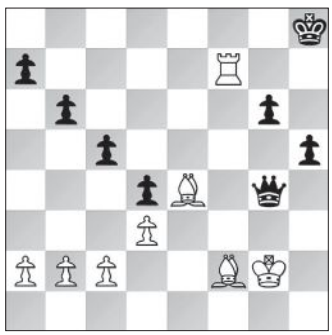
23. Kxh2 Qxd6+ 24. Kh1 Rxe2 25. Rxe2

Objectively, the position is lost for Black, but now at least things are murky. Black has a queen, and the white king is exposed. And Yu was a minute ahead on the clock.

25. ... Qd5+ 26. Kg1 Rxf1+ 27. Bxf1 Qf3 28. g5 Qg4+ 29. Rg2 Qd1 30. Bf4 Qf3 31. Rf2 Qg4+ 32. Bg2 Qd1+ 33. Kh2 Qe1 34. Bd5+ Kg7 35. Bg3 Qe8 36. Kg2 h5 37. Rf7+ Kh8 38. Kf1 Qe3 39. Rf8+ Kg7 40. Rf7+ Kh8 41. Bf2 Qc1+ 42. Be1 Qxg5

It's important to recall here that there was no increment in this Armageddon game until move 60. With just five seconds left on the clock, and 18 moves until the increment kicked in, Krush was in dire straits.

43. Be4 Qg4 44. Bf2 Qd1+ 45. Kg2 Qg4+



Krush played the illegal move 46. Kg1, leaving her king in check, and a sign that her nerves had completely given up. Yu correctly made the claim and had one minute added to her clock, while Krush had to make 14 moves in two seconds to get to move 60 and the two-second increment — a physically impossible task.

46. Kh2 Kg8 47. Rf3 h4, White lost on time.

Now came the inevitable — Krush ran out of time, and Jennifer Yu added a second national title to her future 2022 "Year in Review."



PHOTO: COURTESY SLCC / C. FULLER

Right: It's not all hard work at the U.S. Championships. Here Wesley So analyzes with Alex Lenderman as friends look on.







Above: A hung bishop on g4. An illegal move in time pressure. A gracious resignation. An elated Jennifer Yu is our new champion!

What an incredible game! Even the unflappable GM Yasser Seirawan was shocked: "I can't believe what I just saw," he exclaimed on the livestream after the handshake.

For her part, the newly crowned champion was sheepish after her victory: "I just want to apologize for how bad that game was," was her initial comment to GM Cristian Chirila during the post-game interview.

So what about that bishop blunder? Jennifer explained how she mentally convinced herself to keep fighting. "There is no way I lose a U.S. Championship because I hung a bishop against Irina twice," she said.

Later, during her interview with Caruana and Chirila on the "C-Squared Podcast," she elaborated on this decision. The general consensus on the internet that she should have resigned surprised her. She never considered that as an option — it was a quick game that would be over soon and she had nothing to lose at that point.

Perhaps our new two-time champion put it best right after her Armageddon victory: "It's kind of crazy that two and a half weeks of work comes down to a few seconds, but I guess that's chess." Congratulations to her, and thanks to everyone at the Saint Louis Chess Club for hosting another fantastic U.S. Women's Championship!

2022 U.S. Women's Championship

SAINT LOUIS, OCTOBER 5-20, 2022

			1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	
1	**GM Irina Krush**	2515	*	1	1	½	½	½	½	1	½	½	½	½	1	1	9/13
2	**WGM Jennifer Yu**	2407	0	*	1	1	0	½	0	1	1	1	1	1	½	1	9/13
3	**FM Thalia Cervantes Landeiro**	2362	0	0	*	½	1	½	1	1	½	½	½	1	½	1	8/13
4	**FM Ruiyang Yan**	2333	½	0	½	*	½	½	1	½	½	0	1	½	1	1	7½/13
5	**WGM Tatev Abrahamyan**	2408	½	1	0	½	*	½	½	0	½	1	½	1	1	0	7/13
6	**FM Alice Lee**	2373	½	½	½	½	½	*	0	1	½	0	½	½	1	1	7/13
7	**WIM Megan Lee**	2332	½	1	0	0	½	1	*	0	0	1	0	1	1	1	7/13
8	**WGM Gulrukhbegim Tokhirjonova**	2420	0	0	0	½	1	0	1	*	½	1	1	0	½	1	6½/13
9	**IM Anna Zatonskih**	2420	½	0	½	½	½	½	1	½	*	½	½	½	½	0	6/13
10	**FM Rochelle Wu**	2350	½	0	½	1	0	1	0	0	½	*	0	1	½	1	6/13
11	**WFM Sophie Morris-Suzuki**	2289	½	0	½	0	½	½	1	0	½	1	*	0	0	1	5½/13
12	**WGM Sabina Foisor**	2311	½	0	0	½	0	½	0	1	½	0	1	*	½	0	4½/13
13	**IM Nazi Paikidze**	2433	0	½	½	0	0	0	0	½	½	½	1	½	*	½	4½/13
14	**FM Ashritha Eswaran**	2400	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	½	*	3½/13

PHOTOS: COURTESY SLCC / OOTES

Romancing the Past

Defending isn't as easy as engines make it seem.

BY **BRUCE PANDOLFINI**

GO BACK TO THE 19TH CENtury and you'll find game after game replete with sacrifices and brilliant conclusions. Take those same romantic "brilliancies," put them in a present-day engine, and see practically each one's inaccuracies and gambling assaults confuted. Rarely in our present day world do we encounter grandmasters issuing wild attacks. Today's state-of the art defenses easily rebuff unsound and speculative aggression. That makes this month's offering between GM Alexei Shirov and Jerzy Lapinski (Black), played in Latvia in 1990, particularly unusual. The way Shirov fearlessly attacked, though refutable by today's analytic software, proved not so easy to grapple with over the board. This exciting contest (where the Par Scores are gauged somewhat rhapsodically) began as a King's Gambit Accepted.

KING'S GAMBIT ACCEPTED (C37)

GM Alexei Shirov
Jerzy Lapinski
Daugavpils, 1990

1. e4 e5 2. f4 exf4



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.**

3. Nf3 **Par Score 6**
A natural developing move, which guards against ... Qd8-h4+. The alternative 3. Bc4 (***3 points part credit***) is a bit riskier.

3. ... g5
Black defends the f4-pawn, but not without some risk. By keeping the f4-pawn solid, it's harder for White to exploit the f-file. But advancing kingside pawns in this manner spawns potential weaknesses and exposes Black to tactics.

4. Bc4 **Par Score 6**
White continues straightforward development, aiming at the vulnerable f7-square. You may accept ***full credit*** for 4. h4, trying to undermine Black's advanced pawns by enticing 4. ... g4.

4. ... g4
Black plays the insistent advance anyway. Also playable were 4. ... Nc6 and 4. ... Bg7. The question now is, where does the white knight go?

5. 0-0 **Par Score 8**
It doesn't go anywhere, at least nowhere on the board. The sacrifice is not quite sound, and correct play has Black on top. Under the circumstances, accept ***6 points part credit*** for 5. Ne5.

5. ... gxf3
It's hard to turn down a gift horse.

6. Qxf3 **Par Score 6**
This is better than 6. Rxf3. White needs to get out the warriors and quickly.

6. ... Qf6
Black hopes to strengthen the f-file and possibly trade queens. Also plausible was 6. ... Bc5+.

7. e5 **Par Score 7**
Having committed to this campaign, White sacs more to open attacking lines. You may accept ***4 points part credit*** for 7. d3, which is somewhat slow. ***Deduct 2 points*** for 7. Qxf4?, losing a piece to 7. ... Qd4+, when White's attack evaporates.

7. ... Qxe5
Black reckons he has time to accept this pawn, while dealing with the open e-file.

8. Bxf7+ **Par Score 7**
This is about time, and time waits for no chess player. But it shouldn't work, as every engine tells us. You may accept ***5 points part credit*** for the pedestrian, though analytically more correct, 8. d3.

8. ... Kxf7
The old saw applies: the best way to refute a sacrifice is to accept it.

9. d4 **Par Score 7**
What's another pawn? White is committed to opening lines and full assault.

9. ... Qxd4+
A tad safer was 9. ... Qf5. Black already has enough material to win. More important was to break White's attack.

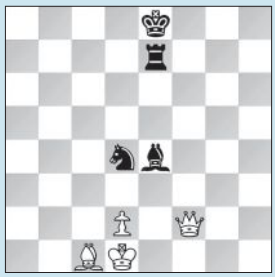
10. Be3 **Par Score 7**
A nice surprise. The bishop is safe from capture. Black must move the queen again, wasting more time.

ABCS OF CHESS

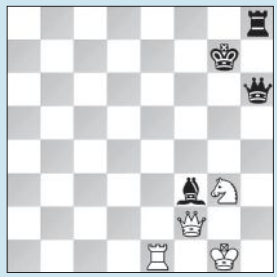
THESE PROBLEMS ARE ALL related to key positions in this month's game. In each case, Black is to move. The answers can be found in Solutions on page 63.

JANUARY EXERCISE:
Whenever feasible, we should play over our serious games, aiming to understand both our correct ideas and our errors. To be sure, we tend to play the moves from our point of view. But there's an awful lot to be learned from sitting on the other side of board. The moves are the same, but the different perspective opens new vistas. Playing out a game from the opponent's side gives you practice at trying to play a two-way game, thinking offensively and defensively at the same time.

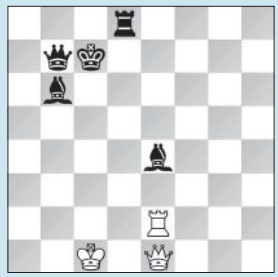
PROBLEM 1
Mating net



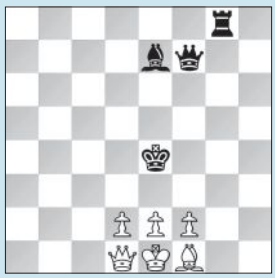
PROBLEM 2
Mating net



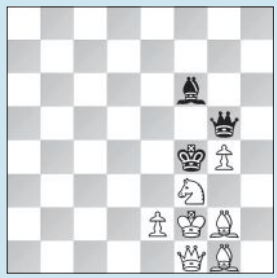
PROBLEM 3
Mating net



PROBLEM 4
Mating net



PROBLEM 5
Mating net



PROBLEM 6
Mating net



10. ... Qf6
Black still seeks a queen trade and a sapping of White's attack. Pawn grabbing by 10. ... Qxb2 would have been ridiculously greedy.

11. Bxf4 Par Score 6
The lines are further opened, but Black is up two pieces, and should be able to survive with correct defense.

11. ... Ke8
Black is under heavy fire, so naturally he tries to find better shelter for his king. But getting out more pieces with 11. ... Nc6 or 11. ... Ne7 made sense.

12. Nc3 Par Score 6
White had a few checks, but none of them brought home the point. The approach of activating the knight and connecting the rooks is more consistent.

12. ... Nc6
Black must get out his pieces. This development seems better than 12. ... Bc5+ 13. Kh1 Ne7 14. Qh5+ (***1 bonus point***).

13. Nd5 Par Score 6
White crosses the frontier line, with looming possibilities. You may accept ***full credit*** for 13. Rae1+.

13. ... Qg6
On 13. ... Qd4+ White had 14. Be3.

14. Rae1+ Par Score 6
White's pieces are now in full battle array. Yet, Black can still defend, not by 14. ... Kd8 15. Bxc7 mate (***1 bonus point***), but by 14. ... Nge7, when he can afford to abandon his a8-rook.

14. ... Be7
Remarkably, this is a blunder. White's constant pressure and spirited attack produces a 19th century-like conclusion.

15. Bd6 Par Score 8
The threat is 16. Qf8 mate.

15. ... Kd8
Black gets out of the pin, but it doesn't help.

16. Qf8+ Par Score 7
White has a forced winning line combination.

16. ... Bxf8
If 16. ... Qe8 instead, White mates in the same way.

17. Bxc7, mate. Par Score 7
Yes, 17. Rxf8+ also mates (***6 points part credit***), but it takes an extra move. You're not likely to see many serious games played like this these days. With all its imprecisions, it stands out as a wonderful game.



FINAL POSITION

TOTAL YOUR SCORE TO DETERMINE YOUR APPROXIMATE RATING BELOW:

Total Score	Approx. Rating
95+	2400+
81-90	2200-2399
66-80	2000-2199
51-65	1800-1999
36-50	1600-1799
21-35	1400-1599
06-20	1200-1399
0-05	under 1200

Know Your Fundies!

The basics never go out of style.

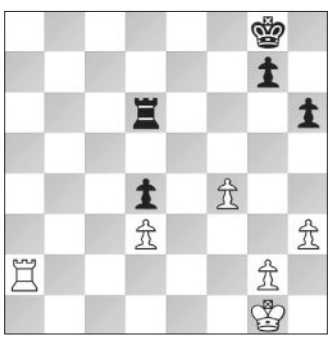
BY **GM JOEL BENJAMIN**

ENDGAMES ARE DIFFICULT to play correctly. The job is harder than ever in 2023 with faster time controls, increment finishes, and never, ever any adjournments. It's all the more reason to study them. Unique problems will be just as challenging to solve, but many situations become easier by following fundamentals and specific, learnable concepts. This is particularly true in rook endings, the most frequent type of endgame.

The following game between two teenagers contained many mistakes, despite the fact that both players are masters. I find it particularly instructive because it shows how rook endings can dramatically change as they pass from one phase to another. Naturally, I'm a big fan when the pawn endings pop up, too.

DIFFICULT PROGRESS

FM Ruiyang Yan (2311)
WFM Gracy Prasanna (2224)
2022 Haring K-12 (4), Rancho Mirage, 08.01.2022



BLACK TO MOVE

We pick up the action at the beginning of the rook ending.

34. ... Rf6!
That's a good start. The first order of business is rook activity. The pedestrian 34. ... Kf7? allows White to tie down Black's rook to the defense of the d4-pawn with 35. Ra4, or perhaps even better, 35. Re2, with 36. Re4 to follow.

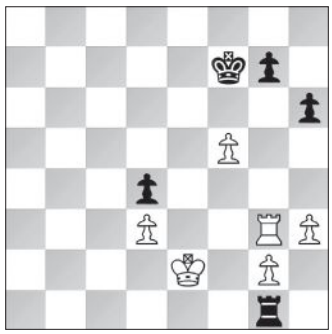
35. Rf2
Necessary, because 35. g3 Re6! with the threat of 36. ... Re3 will force White to defend passively or trade a pair of pawns, neither of which will provide much in the way of winning chances.

35. ... Re6 36. Rf3 Kf7
That rooks belong on the seventh rank is something drilled into many of us at an early stage, and this is a prime example why. 36. ... Re2! 37. Kf1 Rd2 ties down both white pieces.

37. f5
As above, 37. Kf2 was more accurate.

37. ... Re1+?
The correct 37. ... Re2 38. Rf4 Kf6 39. Rxd4 Kxf5 should be easily held, as Black's attention to rook activity has led to far greater king position.

38. Kf2 Rd1 39. Ke2 Rg1 40. Rg3



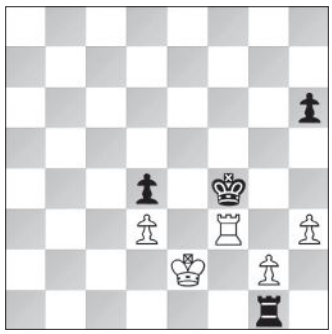
White is reorganizing her pieces to more useful squares.

40. ... Kf6?
Black is on the wrong path and needs to change course. She should not oppose a trade of her vulnerable d-pawn for the f5-pawn, but a bit of care is needed.

The correct path begins with 40. ... Ra1 41. Rg4 (Black is okay after *41. Rg6 Ra5 42. g4 Re5+* or *41. Kf3 Re1*) and only now 41. ... Kf6!, as the newly active rook gives enough counterplay after 42. Rg6+ Kxf5 43. Rxg7 Ra2+. Note that after 41. ... Ra5 White switches gears with 42. Rf4!, retaining the threat to the d4-pawn while preparing to improve the king's position and protect the f5-pawn with g2-g4.

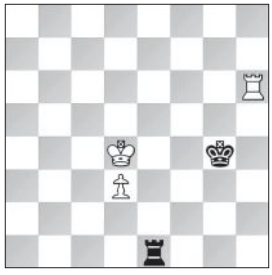
41. Rg6+ Kxf5 42. Rxg7
This pawn trade is very favorable for White. Black's remaining pawns are isolated and vulnerable. White can potentially make a passed pawn on the kingside or seek to trade her d-pawn for the h-pawn to get connected passers.

42. ... Kf4 43. Rg4+ Ke5 44. Rg6 Kf5 45. Rg3 Kf4 46. Rf3+
White presents a difficult dilemma; whichever way the enemy king goes, it will be cut off from the other direction.



46. ... Ke5

Going the other way would run into different, but serious, problems: 46. ... Kg5 47. Rf2 Ra1 48. Kf3 Kf5 49. g4+ Kg5 50. Ke4 Kh4 51. Rf3 Rh1 (*51. ... Ra4 52. Rf5 Kxh3 53. Kf3!* and the mating threat keeps an extra pawn on the kingside) 52. Rf6! (after *52. Kxd4? Rxh3* Black is in time in the pawn ending) 52. ... Re1+ 53. Kxd4 Kxh3 54. Rxh6+ Kxg4 and now White will cut off the black king.



POSITION AFTER 54. ... Kxg4

If 55. Kd5 Re8 56. d4 cuts along the rank, while 55. Rh8 leads to the more traditional file cut as 55. ... Kf5 56. Rf8+ forces the king to the kingside again.

47. Kf2 Rd1 48. g4 Rd2+ 49. Kg3 Re2 50. h4

The other strategy of obtaining connected passed pawns also works, but with a caveat. 50. Rf5+ Ke6 51. Rh5 Re3+ 52. Kf4 Rxd3 53. Rxh6+ Kd5 and now 54. h4? Rh3! only draws, while something like 54. Rh8 Rd1 55. h4 d3 56. Rd8+ Kc4 57. h5 gets the job done.

50. ... Re1 51. Kf2 Rd1 52. g5 hxg5 53. hxg5 Rd2+ 54. Kg3 Rd1 55. Kg4 Rg1+



56. Rg3

Technically correct, but I think that this makes things more complicated than necessary.

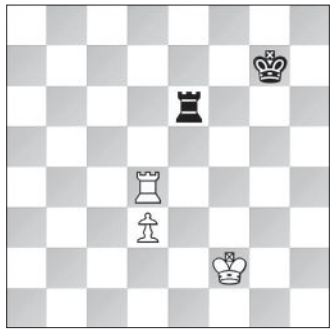
White wins after 56. Kh5 Rh1+! (the pawn race is lost after *56. ... Re1 57. g6 Re3 58. Rxe3+ dxe3 59. g7 e2 60. g8=Q e1=Q 61. Qe8+*) 57. Kg6 Re1!, but has to find the maneuver to win a tempo: 58. Rf5+! Ke6 59. Rf6+! Ke5 (*59. ... Ke7 60. Rf4*) 60. Kf7 Re3 61. g6 Rxd3 62. g7 Rg3 63. Rg6! (Black would draw if she could sacrifice her rook for the pawn) 63... Rf3+ 64. Ke7 (*64. Ke8? Ra3* saves the game) 64. ... Ra3 65. Re6+ (*65. Rg5+* also works) 65. ... Kf5 66. g8=Q, etc.

56. ... Re1 57. g6?? Kf6 58. Kh3 Kg7 59. Kg2 Re6 60. Kf3 Re5

Smartly biding her time. The hasty 60. ... Rxg6? 61. Rxg6+ Kxg6 62. Ke4 Kf6 63. Kxd4 Ke6 64. Kc5 wins for White. When White takes the d4-pawn, Black's king has to land on d6 to draw the pawn ending.

61. Kf2 Re6 62. Rg4 Rxg6 63. Rxd4 Re6

Both players had very little time to consider their moves from here on in. The text move doesn't hurt anything, but the first priority is to put the king in front of the pawn: 63. ... Kf7 64. Re4 Re6 65. Ke3 Rxe4+ 66. Kxe4 Ke6 draws immediately.



64. Rf4 Re7

A bit of calculation can save a lot of work. 64. ... Rf6 65. Ke3 Rxf4 66. Kxf4 Kf6 gains the opposition.

65. Kf3 Re1?!

This placement is a bad sign, though it does not yet ruin things. Putting a rook behind a passed pawn is a fundamental principle, but not in rook and pawn versus rook. Here the rook belongs in front of the pawn, both to harass the approaching king and to offer rook swaps when appropriate.

Black had easier draws with 65. ... Rf7 66. Rxf7+ Kxf7 67. Ke3 Ke7! maintaining the opposition, or 65. ... Re6 66. Re4 Rd6 (not *66. ... Kf6?? 67. Rxe6+ Kxe6 68. Ke4 Kd6 69. Kd4*) 67. Ke3 Kf6 68. d4 Re6.

66. Re4 Rd1 67. Ke2 Ra1 68. Rf4 Kg6 69. Ke3 Ra5??

Again misplacing the rook, Black finally falls down the slippery slope. The pawn ending is again drawn after 69. ... Ra7! 70. d4 (if *70. Kd4 Rd7+ 71. Kc4 Rc7+ 72. Kb5 Rd7 73. d4 Kg5 74. Re4 Kf5 75. Re5+ Kf6 76. Kc5 Rd8!* the pawn will advance no further) 70. ... Rf7!.

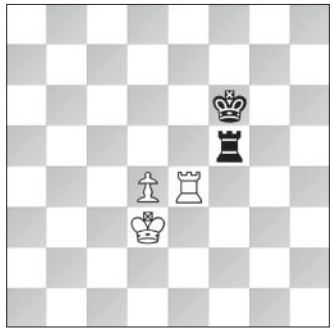
70. d4??

After 70. Ke4! Ra8 71. d4 the pawn is up far enough for the king to advance: 71. ... Re8+ 72. Kd5 Rd8+ 73. Kc5 Rc8+ 74. Kb6 Kg5 75. Rf1 Rd8 76. Rd1 Kf6 77. Kc7 Rd5 78. Kc6 Rd8 79. d5 and the pawn cannot be stopped.

70. ... Rf5

Suddenly it's a draw again, though not as trivial as before.

71. Re4 Kf6 72. Kd3



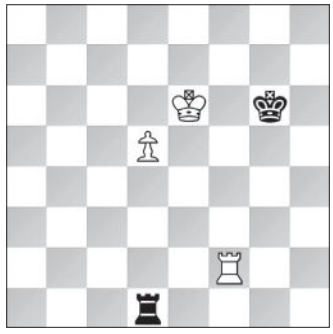
72. ... Rh5??

The rook needs to head to the back rank, but only from the other side. The last chance to hold was found with 72. ... Ra5! 73. Kc4 (*73. Re8 Ra4!* is equal) 73. ... Ra8!. If White refrains from 74. d5 her king will be pushed back, but then 74. ... Ra4+ 75. Kd3 Rxe4 76. Kxe4 Ke7 holds.

73. Kc4 Rh1

Again, this is a flawed strategy, but after 73. ... Rh8 74. d5 Black cannot trade rooks as in the previous variation, so the rook will get fatally squeezed.

74. d5 Rd1 75. Kc5 Rc1+ 76. Kd6 Rd1 77. Rf4+ Kg5 78. Rf2 Kg6 79. Ke6, Black resigned.



The Lucena position is within sight, e.g., 79. ... Re1+ 80. Kd7 Kg7 81. d6 Rd1 82. Ke7 Re1+ 83. Kd8 Rd1 84. d7 Rc1 85. Rf4 Rc2 86. Ke7 Re2+ 87. Kd6 Rd2+ 88. Ke6 Re2+ 89. Kd5 Rd2+ 90. Rd4. ◆

A Chess Romantic

Kavalek's life and games, told in his own voice

BY **IM JOHN WATSON**

GM LUBOMIR ('LUBOSH') Kavalek died last year at age 77. His chess career was full and varied, with impressive over-the-board successes and notable achievements as a coach, organizer, writer, and columnist. Over his last years, with the collaboration of Jan Novak, he began collecting notes for a memoir. After his death they were compiled and put into book form by Novak, set to be published in Czech in the near future.

Kavalek's wife Irena translated and edited that text with the assistance of IM John Donaldson. She enlisted Donaldson and Craig Saperstein to look through databases and Kavalek's game files to find the best candidates for inclusion. The result is *Life at Play: A Chess Memoir*, with 47 well-annotated games in Kavalek's voice.

The biographical section is centered on tournament travels and results, but Kavalek didn't settle upon chess as early as most elite players, so there are some interesting side paths. Due to his family's poor standing with the political authorities in Communist Czechoslovakia, his academic prospects were blocked and he was assigned to study at the Faculty of Transport, to learn to run the railways.

This involved being "banished" to the town of Zilina, which he calls "Siberia." Kavalek studied there for years, and found his escape in travel to theatres and chess coffeehouses. He even started a "small amateur theater devoted to jazz and beat poetry, which was all the rage then among students." Ultimately, his chess career prevailed over routing trains, and Kavalek won two Czech national championships while earning his grandmaster title.

After the 1968 Soviet invasion, he was able to defect and spent two years in Europe before settling permanently in the United States in 1970. He won or tied for first in three U.S. Championships, and peaked in strength in 1973-74, reaching the world's number 10 ranking in 1974. During this period Kavalek began his lifelong occupation of chess journalism, and he played a serious role in the Fischer – Spassky match, analyzing adjourned games with Fischer in the second half.

Towards the end of the book he describes his work with prominent players such as GMs Yasser Seirawan and Robert Hübner. The last section is called "Training Odyssey (1988-1993)", which, among other things, covers his intense collaboration with GM Nigel Short, one that ended in a controversial breakup.

I found the games section the most interesting part of the book, full of complex and exciting games in Kavalek's style, which tended towards the tactical with a strong theoretical bent. Here are two of his best-known games.

RUY LOPEZ, CORDEL GAMBIT (C64)

Eduard Gufeld
Lubomir Kavalek
Student Olympiad, Marianske Lazne, 1962

1. e4 e5 2. Nf3 Nc6 3. Bb5 Bc5 4. c3 f5 5. d4 fxe4 6. Ng5
A very rare try. The alternative 6. Bxc6 dxc6 7. Nxe5 is the traditional and most popular line.

6. ... Bb6 7. d5?!
Here 7. Nxe4! has the idea 7. ... d5 8. 0-0! dxe4 9. d5 with an advantage for White.

7. ... e3!
Attacking the g5-knight and f2-square, while avoiding 7. ... Nce7?? 8. Ne6!.

8. Ne4?
The computer finds that after 8. Bxe3! Bxe3 9. Ne6! dxe6 10. dxc6 Qxd1+ 11. Kxd1 White survives, with near-equality.

8. ... Qh4 9. Qf3 Nf6!?
Instead 9. ... Nge7! 10. dxc6 bxc6 followed by ... e3xf2+ and ... d7-d5 is extremely strong for Black.

10. Nxf6+ gxf6 11. dxc6?
Modern engines find 11. Bxe3! Bxe3 12. dxc6, leading to equality.

11. ... exf2+ 12. Kd1?!
A better defense is 12. Kf1.

12. ... dxc6 13. Be2
The tempting material grab 13. Bxc6+ bxc6 14. Qxc6+ fails to 14. ... Kf7 15. Qxa8 Bg4+ 16. Qf3 e4 and Black wins.

13. ... Be6
Black has three pawns for the piece and open lines against the white king.

14. Qh5+ Qxh5 15. Bxh5+ Ke7 16. b3 Bd5 17. Ba3+ Ke6 18. Bg4+ f5 19. Bh3 Rhg8
Black gets a fourth pawn for the piece, with a powerful passed f-pawn.

20. Nd2 Bxg2 21. Bxg2 Rxg2 22. Rf1
Insufficient, but all the other options lose as well.

22. ... Rd8 23. Ke2



23. ... Rxd2+!!
Beautiful. Black prevents Nd2-c4.

24. Kxd2 e4
Now Black is a rook down, but the pawns are killers.

25. Bf8 f4 26. b4
Cleverly preparing Bf8-c5 to neutralized the powerful bishop on b6.

26. ... Rg5! 27. Bc5 Rxc5!
The bishop is more valuable than a rook.

28. bxc5 Bxc5 29. Rab1 f3 30. Rb4
Again trying to divert or cut off the bishop. If 30. Rxb7 Black continues with 30. ... e3+ 31. Kd3 e2 32. Rbb1 Kf5! threatens ... Kf5-g4-h3-g2(!). Then 33. Rh1 Be7! 34. Rhf1 Bh4 wins both rooks after 35. ... e1=Q.

30. ... Kf5 31. Rd4 Bxd4 32. cxd4 Kf4, White resigned.
The point is 32. ... Kf4 33. Rxf2 e3+ 34. Ke1 exf2+ 35. Kxf2 and any passed queenside pawn wins, e.g., 35. ... b6 36. h3 c5 37. dxc5 bxc5 38. h4 c4, etc. A brilliant effort by Kavalek, and one that GM Andy Soltis ranked sixth in his list of the best games of all time.

When I was younger, everyone had seen the next game, but I suspect that few of our younger readers have. It is played in the great romantic spirit of the classical masters:

KING'S INDIAN DEFENSE, SÄMISCH VARIATION (E80)

GM Lajos Portisch
GM Lubomir Kavalek
Wijk aan Zee, 1975

1. d4 Nf6 2. c4 g6 3. Nc3 Bg7 4. e4 d6 5. f3 c6 6. Be3 a6 7. Bd3 b5 8. e5!
Remarkably, this has been played in fewer than ¼ of the hundreds of games with this position, even among the games of the past several years.

8. ... Nfd7 9. f4 0-0
Here (or on the next move) 9. ... bxc4 would give Black more room in which to maneuver.

10. Nf3 Nb6?! 11. b3
Kavalek gives this move, restricting the knight, an exclam. In fact, 11. c5! is even stronger.

11. ... N8d7
Black gets more and more cramped. 11. ... Bg4 was worth a try.

12. a4!
Threatening to win the knight with a4-a5.

12. ... bxc4 13. bxc4 c5!
Criticized by annotators, but Kavalek has a wonderful idea and intuitively recognizes that the time has come to play for broke, because 13. ... a5 14. c5 and 13. ... Rb8 14. a5 Na8 15. c5! are just awful for Black.

14. a5 cxd4 15. Nxd4 dxe5
Continuing with his ingenious idea. 15. ... Bb7 16. e6 Nc5 17. axb6 is hopeless.

16. Nc6 Qe8 17. axb6



17...exf4!! 18. Nd5
Here 18. Bd4?? e5 clearly favors Black.

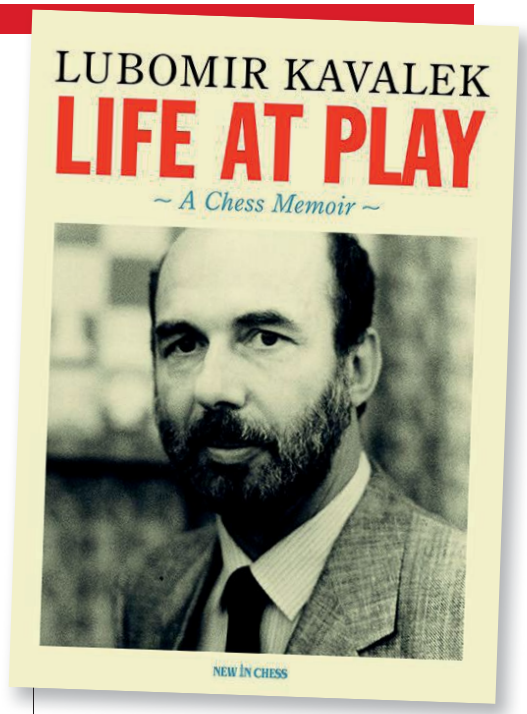
18. ... fxe3!
The point. Kavalek: "During the game I considered this pawn to be very strong, as it ties up the white position to some extent. It is the key to the queen sacrifice... Timman pointed out that 'White's dark-squared bishop is a vital piece in the Sämisch Variation of the King's Indian Defense.'"

19. Nc7 Bc3+! 20. Kf1
Black will win after 20. Ke2?? Nxb6 21. Nxe8 Bg4+.

20. ... Bb7 21. Nxe8 Bxc6 22. Nc7 Rad8
Kavalek: "Simple counting shows that Black has only a bishop for the queen, but it will take White a long time to consolidate on all fronts. That was encouraging." What an idea!

23. Rc1!?
Kavalek calls this the critical point, because while White is still better, it's no longer easy. The computer finds 23. Ra3! and after much analysis eventually spoils the party, but this was a real game with a huge number of tempting ways for White to go wrong.

23. ... Bd2 24. Nd5?! Bxd5 25. cxd5 Nxb6!? 26. Rc5 Nxd5 27. g3 Rd6 28. Kg2 Rfd8 29. Rxd5?!



Understandable, with White's king exposed and the dangerous e-pawn looming. Kavalek analyzes the better try 29. Bc4 at great length and finds numerous fortress positions.

29. ... Rxd5 30. Bc4 Rf5 31. Qb3 Rf2+ 32. Kh3 Rd6!
Contemplating ... g6-g5 and ... Rd6-h6+.

33. Qb8+ Kg7 34. Qa7 g5! 35. Qxe7 g4+ 36. Kxg4 Rg6+ 37. Kh3 Rh6+ 38. Kg4 Rg6+, draw.

The narrative section of *Life at Play* ends with the 1988-93 period, which covers Kavalek's career as a trainer. His playing career was effectively over at that point, and arguably the main thing we are missing is his commentary on the evolution of chess in the 21st century. He does express a few opinions about computers, most notably that "computers don't play for beauty, and beauty is the most exciting part of chess."

I don't see this as much of a problem: intentionally or not, computers come up with staggeringly beautiful moves. But it is also true that sacrificial ideas like those in Portisch – Kavalek are not likely to impress contemporary players in the way they amazed us 45 years ago. After all, the engine is screaming at us that White is winning throughout! If we're fortunate, however, some young genius studying Kavalek's games will be inspired to throw caution to the winds once in a while, risking all in the romantic spirit he cherished.

Kavalek, Lubomir. *Life at Play: A Chess Memoir*. New in Chess, 2022. ISBN-13: 978-9493257665, 352 pages.

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 January 31, 2023 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 "$XXX in Guaranteed prizes" (or similar words) for their GP events shall be allowed to re-state their prize funds in their publicity as "$XXX 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]*. You will find the event's unique five-digit TLA ID at the end of each TLA.

Nationals

NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP EVENT

2023 U.S. Amateur Team North
FEBRUARY 17-19, 2023, ILLINOIS

Event site: Hyatt Regency Schaumburg **Address:** 1800 E. Golf Rd., Schaumburg, IL 60173 **Overall prize fund:** n/a **GP Points:** n/a **FIDE Rated:** N **Handicap accessible:** Y **Residency restriction:** N **Organizer:** Chess Weekend **Email:** *glenn@chessweekend.com* **Phone:** n/a **Website:** *https://www.chessweekend.com/* **TLA ID:** 35153

NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP EVENT • HERITAGE EVENT

World Amateur Team & U.S. Team East
FEBRUARY 18-20, 2023, 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:** n/a **Website:** *https://njscf.org/* **TLA ID:** 35322

NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP EVENT • HERITAGE EVENT • JUNIOR GRAND PRIX

2023 National High School (K-12) Championships
MARCH 31-APRIL 2, 2023, WASHINGTON, D.C.

Event site: Washington Hilton **Address:** 1919 Connecticut Avenue NW, Washington, DC 20009 **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:** n/a **Website:** *http://www.uschess.org/tournaments/2023/hs* **TLA ID:** 35762

NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP EVENT • HERITAGE EVENT • JUNIOR GRAND PRIX

2023 National Middle School (K-8) Championships
APRIL 21-23 2023, TEXAS

Event site: Kalahari Resorts & Conventions **Address:** 3001 Kalahari Drive, Round Rock TX 78665 **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:** n/a **Website:** *http://www.uschess.org/tournaments/2023/ms* **TLA ID:** 36212

NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP EVENT

2023 KCF All-Girls National Championship
APRIL 28-30, 2023, ILLINOIS

Event site: Historic Palmer House Hotel **Address:** 17 East Monroe St, Chicago, IL 60603 **Overall prize fund:** n/a **GP Points:** n/a **FIDE Rated:** N **Handicap accessible:** Y **Residency restriction:** N **Organizer:** David Heiser **Email:** *david.heiser@renaissanceknights.org* **Phone:** n/a **Website:** *http://allgirls.rknights.org/* **TLA ID:** 35478

NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP EVENT • GRAND PRIX • ENHANCED GRAND PRIX • JUNIOR GRAND PRIX

2023 U.S. Women's Open
JUNE 14-15, 2023, NEVADA

Event site: Rio All Suites Hotel & Casino **Address:** 3700 W Flamingo Rd, Las Vegas, NV 89103 **Overall prize fund:** $3,500 **GP Points:** 50 **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:** 35981

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

2023 National Open
JUNE 14-18, 2023, NEVADA

Event site: Rio All Suites Hotel & Casino **Address:** 3700 W Flamingo Rd, Las Vegas, NV 89103 **Overall prize fund:** $100,000 **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:** 35980

Grand Prix

The Grand Prix continues in 2023. For information visit *new.uschess.org/us-chess-grand-prix-program.*

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

55th annual Liberty Bell Open
JANUARY 13-16, 2023, PENNSYLVANIA

Event site: Sheraton Philadelphia Downtown **Address:** 201 N 17th St, Philadelphia 19103 **Overall prize fund:** $25,000 **GP Points:** 120 **FIDE Rated:** Y **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:** 34860

GRAND PRIX • ENHANCED GRAND PRIX • JUNIOR GRAND PRIX

14th annual Golden State Open (new location)
JANUARY 13-16, 2023, CALIFORNIA, NORTHERN

Event site: Embassy Suites San Rafael Marin County **Address:** 101 McInnis Pkwy, San Rafael CA 94903 **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:** *director@chess.us* **Website:** *http://www.chessevents.us* **TLA ID:** 35010

GRAND PRIX

Dewey Beach Open 2023
JANUARY 14-15, 2023, DELEWARE

Event site: Hyatt Place **Address:** 1301 Coastal Highway, Dewey Beach, DE 19971 **Overall prize fund:** see TLA **GP Points:** 10 **FIDE Rated:** N **Handicap accessible:** N **Residency restriction:** N **Organizer:** DCA **Email:** *bradct@verizon.net* **Phone:** 302-312-4525 **Website:** *http://www.delawarechessassociation.org* **TLA ID:** 35831

GRAND PRIX

2023 Charlotte Open
JANUARY 14-16, 2023, NORTH CAROLINA

Event site: UNC Charlotte Mariott Hotel & Conference Center **Address:** 9041 Robert D Snyder Road, Charlotte, NC 28262 **Overall prize fund:** $15,000 **GP Points:** 60 **FIDE Rated:** Y **Handicap accessible:** Y **Residency restriction:** N **Organizer:** Charlotte Chess Center **Email:** events@charlottechesscenter.org **Phone:** 9802651156 **Website:** *https://www.charlottechesscenter.org/charlotteopen* **TLA ID:** 35927

GRAND PRIX • ENHANCED GRAND PRIX

10th annual Liberty Bell Open Blitz
JANUARY 15, 2023, PENNSYLVANIA

Event site: Sheraton Philadelphia Downtown **Address:** 201 N 17th St, Philadelphia 19103 **Overall prize fund:** $500 **GP Points:** 10 **FIDE Rated:** Y 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:** 35659

GRAND PRIX • ENHANCED GRAND PRIX

10th annual Golden State Open Blitz
JANUARY 15, 2023, CALIFORNIA, NORTHERN

Event site: Embassy Suites San Rafael Marin County **Address:** 101 McInnis Pkwy, San Rafael CA 94903 **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:** *director@chess.us* **Website:** *http://www.chessevents.us* **TLA ID:** 35660

STATE CHAMPIONSHIP EVENT • GRAND PRIX

2023 Michigan Master/Expert & Class Championships
JANUARY 21-22, 2023, MICHIGAN

Event site: Radisson Hotel Lansing at the Capitol **Address:** 111 N Grand Ave, Lansing, MI 48933 **Overall prize fund:** $4,200 **GP Points:** 20 **FIDE Rated:** Y **Handicap accessible:** Y **Residency restriction:** N **Organizer:** Michigan Chess Association **Email:** *jeffchess64@gmail.com* **Phone:** *810-955-7271* **Website:** *https://www.michess.org/* **TLA ID:** 34324

REGIONALS • GRAND PRIX

CFCC 2023 Winter Open & Scholastic
JANUARY 27-29, 2023, FLORIDA

Event site: Holiday Inn Resort Orlando **Address:** 13351 State Road 535, Orlando, FL 32821 **Overall prize fund:** $10,000 **GP Points:** 30 **FIDE Rated:** Y **Handicap accessible:** Y **Residency restriction:** N **Organizer:** Larry Storch **Email:** *larrystorch88@gmail.com* **Phone:** *407-312-6237* **Website:** *https://www.centralflchess.org/* **TLA ID:** 35538

GRAND PRIX • STATE CHAMPIONSHIP EVENT

2023 PA State Game/75 Championship
JANUARY 28, 2023, PENNSYLVANIA

Event site: Wm. Pitt Union, Univ. of Pittsburgh **Address:** 5th Ave. & Bigelow Blvd., Pittsburgh, PA 15213 **Overall prize fund:** $695 **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:** 36079

HERITAGE EVENT • GRAND PRIX • JUNIOR GRAND PRIX

Land of the Sky XXXV
FEBRUARY 3-5, 2023, NORTH CAROLINA

Event site: Crowne Plaza Resort Asheville **Address:** One Resort Dr, Asheville NC 28806 **Overall prize fund:** $12,000b/215 **GP Points:** 20 **FIDE Rated:** Y **Handicap accessible:** N **Residency restriction:** N **Organizer:** Wilder Wadford **Email:** *info@landofthesky.us* **Phone:** *info@landofthesky.us* **Website:** *https://landofthesky.us/* **TLA ID:** 35606

GRAND PRIX • ENHANCED GRAND PRIX • JUNIOR GRAND PRIX

14th annual Southwest Class Championships
FEBRUARY 16-20, 2023, TEXAS

Event site: Westin Dallas Fort Worth Airport **Address:** 4545 W John Carpenter Fwy, Irving TX 75063 **Overall prize fund:** $35,000 **GP Points:** 200 **FIDE Rated:** Y **Handicap accessible:** Y **Residency restriction:** N **Organizer:** Continental Chess Association **Email:** *di-*

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.

rector@chess.us **Phone:** *director@chess.us* **Website:** *http://www.chessevents.us* **TLA ID:** 35024

GRAND PRIX • ENHANCED GRAND PRIX

9th annual Southwest Class Blitz
FEBRUARY 19, 2023, 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:** *director@chess.us* **Website:** *http://www.chessevents.us* **TLA ID:** 36040

GRAND PRIX • ENHANCED GRAND PRIX • JUNIOR GRAND PRIX

7th annual George Washington Open
FEBRUARY 24-26, 2023, VIRGINIA

Event site: Sheraton Reston Hotel **Address:** 11810 Sunrise Valley Drive, Reston VA 20191 **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:** *director@chess.us* **Website:** *http://www.chessevents.us* **TLA ID:** 36062

GRAND PRIX

30th Collyer Memorial
FEBRUARY 25-26, 2023, WASHINGTON

Event site: Hampton Inn (Spokane Airport) **Address:** 2010 South Assembly Road, Spokane, WA 99201 **Overall prize fund:** $2,050 **GP Points:** 15 **FIDE Rated:** N **Handicap accessible:** Y **Residency restriction:** N **Organizer:** Kevin M Korsmo **Email:** *kmkorsmo@comcast.net* **Phone:** *15092701772* **Website:** *http://spokanechessclub.org/* **TLA ID:** 35778

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

30th annual Western Class Championships
MARCH 3-5, 2023, CALIFORNIA, SOUTHERN

Event site: Hilton Orange County Airport **Address:** 18800 Macarthur Blvd, Irvine CA 92612 **Overall prize fund:** $20,000 **GP Points:** 120 **FIDE Rated:** Y **Handicap accessible:** Y **Residency restriction:** N **Organizer:** Continental Chess Association **Email:** *director@chess.us* **Phone:** *director@chess.us* **Website:** *http://www.chessevents.us* **TLA ID:** 35350

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

31st annual Eastern Class Championships
MARCH 17-19, 2023, CONNECTICUT

Event site: Sheraton Hartford Hotel at Bradley Airport **Address:** 1 Bradley Airport (visible at airport entrance), Windsor Locks CT 06096 **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:** *director@chess.us* **Website:** *http://www.chessevents.us* **TLA ID:** 35923

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

20th annual Southern Class Championships
MARCH 17-19, 2023, 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:** *director@chess.us* **Website:** *http://www.chessevents.us* **TLA ID:** 35983

GRAND PRIX

2023 Lone Star Open
MARCH 17-19, 2023, TEXAS

Event site: DoubleTree by Hilton Bush International **Address:** 15747 John F. Kennedy Blvd, Houston, TX 77032 **Overall prize fund:** $11,150 **GP Points:** 60 **FIDE Rated:** Y **Handicap accessible:** Y **Residency restriction:** N **Organizer:** Francisco Guadalupe **Email:** *flguadalupe@aol.com* **Phone:** *(713) 530-7820* **Website:** *https://www.kingregistration.com/event/2023LoneStar* **TLA ID:** 36126

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

27th annual Mid-America Open
MARCH 24-26, 2023, 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:** *director@chess.us* **Website:** *http://www.chessevents.us* **TLA ID:** 35708

AMERICAN CLASSIC • GRAND PRIX • ENHANCED GRAND PRIX • JUNIOR GRAND PRIX

15th annual Open at Foxwoods
APRIL 5-9, 2023, CONNECTICUT

Event site: Foxwoods Resort Casino & Hotel **Address:** Rt 2, Mashantucket CT 06339 **Overall prize fund:** $60,000 **GP Points:** 200 **FIDE Rated:** Y **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:** 35657

GRAND PRIX • ENHANCED GRAND PRIX

14th annual Blitz at Foxwoods
APRIL 8, 2023, CONNECTICUT

Event site: Foxwoods Resort Casino & Hotel **Address:** Rt 2, Mashantucket CT 06339 **Overall prize fund:** $2,000 **GP Points:** 20 **FIDE Rated:** N **Handicap accessible:** Y **Residency restriction:** N **Organizer:** Continental Chess Association **Email:** *director@chess.us* **Phone:** *director@chess.us* **Website:** *http://www.chessevents.us* **TLA ID:** 36065

GRAND PRIX • ENHANCED GRAND PRIX • JUNIOR GRAND PRIX

3rd annual Niagara Falls Open
MAY 5-7, 2023, NEW YORK

Event site: Sheraton Niagara Falls **Address:** 300 3rd St, Niagara Falls NY 14303 **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:** *director@chess.us* **Website:** *http://www.chessevents.us* **TLA ID:** 36018

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

32nd annual Chicago Open
MAY 25-29, 2023, 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:** *director@chess.us* **Website:** *http://www.chessevents.us* **TLA ID:** 35929

AMERICAN CLASSIC • GRAND PRIX • ENHANCED GRAND PRIX • JUNIOR GRAND PRIX

17th annual Philadelphia Open
JUNE 23-25, 2023, PENNSYLVANIA

Event site: Sheraton Philadelphia Downtown **Address:** 201 N 17th St, Philadelphia, PA 19103 **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:** *director@chess.us* **Website:** *http://www.chessevents.us* **TLA ID:** 35977

GRAND PRIX • ENHANCED GRAND PRIX • JUNIOR GRAND PRIX

16th annual Philadelphia International
JUNE 24-28, 2023, PENNSYLVANIA

Event site: Sheraton Philadelphia Downtown **Address:** 201 N 17th St, 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:** *director@chess.us* **Website:** *http://www.chessevents.us* **TLA ID:** 35939

GRAND PRIX • ENHANCED GRAND PRIX • JUNIOR GRAND PRIX

12th annual World Open Women's Championship
JUNE 29-30, 2023, PENNSYLVANIA

Event site: Sheraton Philadelphia Downtown **Address:** 201 N 17th St, Philadelphia, PA 19103 **Overall**

Continental Chess OTB Tournament Schedule

See www.chessevents.us for details, possible changes, other events

SOUTHWEST CLASS, Feb 16-20, Westin DFW Airport, Irving, Texas. $35,000 guaranteed, FIDE norms possible in 9 round Master, others 7 rounds.

GEORGE WASHINGTON OPEN, Feb 24-26. Sheraton Hotel, Reston VA, near DC. $17,000 guaranteed prizes.

WESTERN CLASS, Mar 3-5, Hilton Orange County Airport, Irvine, CA. $20,000 guaranteed prizes.

NEW YORK STATE SCHOLASTICS, Mar 11-12, Saratoga Springs. Out of state welcome. 6 rounds in 14 sections, from HS Championship down to K-1 U 400.

EASTERN CLASS, Mar 17-19, Sheraton Hartford Hotel at Bradley Airport. $20,000 guaranteed.

SOUTHERN CLASS, Mar 17-19, Wyndham Orlando Resort. $17,000 guaranteed prizes. .

MID-AMERICA OPEN, Mar 24-26, Clayton, MO (Saint Louis). $20,000 guaranteed prizes.

OPEN AT FOXWOODS, April 5-9, Foxwoods Resort Casino, Mashantucket, Connecticut. $60,000 guaranteed prizes, FIDE norms possible in 9 round Open Section, other sections 7 rounds.

NIAGARA FALLS OPEN, May 5-7, Sheraton Hotel, next to Seneca Casino in western New York. $10,000 guaranteed prizes.

CHICAGO OPEN, Memorial Day weekend, May 25-29, Westin Chicago North Shore Hotel, Wheeling, IL. $100,000 guaranteed prizes, FIDE norms possible in 9 round Open Section, others are 7 rounds.

CLEVELAND OPEN, June 9-11, Crowne Plaza Airport. $15,000 guaranteed prizes.

WORLD OPEN AND SIDE EVENTS at Sheraton Philadelphia Downtown Hotel:

World Open top 6 sections, June 30-July 4
World Open U1200 & U1000, June 23-25
Philadelphia Open, June 23-25.
Philadelphia International, June 24-28
World Open Under 13, June 26-27
World Open Amateur, June 26-28.
World Open Junior, June 28-29
World Open Senior Amateur, June 28-29
World Open Action, June 29
World Open Womens Champ, June 29-30
World Open G/7 Blitz, June 30
World Open G/10 Championship,, July 3
World Open Blitz Championship, July 4

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

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:** *director@chess.us* **Website:** *http://www.chessevents.us* **TLA ID:** 36017

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

51st annual World Open, top 6 sections
JUNE 30-JULY 4, 2023, PENNSYLVANIA

Event site: Sheraton Philadelphia Downtown **Address:** 201 N 17th St, 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:** *director@chess.us* **Website:** *http://www.chessevents.us* **TLA ID:** 36019

GRAND PRIX • ENHANCED GRAND PRIX

12th annual World Open Game/7 Blitz
JUNE 30, 2023, PENNSYLVANIA

Event site: Sheraton Philadelphia Downtown **Address:** 201 N 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:** *director@chess.us* **Website:** *http://www.chessevents.us* **TLA ID:** 36038

Online

CCA January Action on ICC
JANUARY 21, 2023

Event site: Online **Address:** *playcca.com* **Overall prize fund:** see TLA **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:** 36049

3rd annual CCA February Open on ICC
FEBRUARY 4, 2023

Event site: Online **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:** 36051

Regional

ALABAMA

DECEMBER 31, 2021-ONGOING ON SUNDAY, THURSDAY, AND SATURDAY

Weekly and Monthly Rated Chess at Memphis Chess Club (TN)
See Tennessee.

JANUARY 14-16, 2023

2023 Charlotte Open (NC)
See Grand Prix.

JANUARY 21, 2023

Evangel 2023 Open
Event site: Evangel Church **Address:** 3975 Vaughn Rd, Montgomery, AL 36117 **Overall prize fund:** $1,350 **GP Points:** n/a **FIDE Rated:** N **Handicap accessible:** Y **Residency restriction:** N **Organizer:** Doug Strout **Email:** *evangelchess@yahoo.com* **Phone:** n/a **Website:** *http://www.facebook.com/evangelchessclub* **TLA ID:** 35780

FEBRUARY 25, 2023

Tom Nard Memorial IX
Event site: Evangel Church **Address:** 3975 Vaughn Rd, Montgomery, AL 36117 **Overall prize fund:** $1,400 **GP Points:** n/a **FIDE Rated:** N **Handicap accessible:** Y **Residency restriction:** N **Organizer:** Doug Strout **Email:** *evangelchess@yahoo.com* **Phone:** n/a **Website:** *http://www.facebook.com/evangelchessclub* **TLA ID:** 35781

MARCH 17-19, 2023

20th annual Southern Class Championships (FL)
See Grand Prix or *chessevents.us.*

ARIZONA

JANUARY 13-16, 2023

14th annual Golden State Open (CA-N)
See Grand Prix or *chessevents.us.*

MARCH 3-5, 2023

30th annual Western Class Championships (CA-S)
See Grand Prix or *chessevents.us.*

MAY 14-18, 2023

2023 National Open (NV)
See National Events.

MAY 14-15, 2023

2023 U.S. Women's Open (NV)
See National Events.

ARKANSAS

DECEMBER 31, 2021-ONGOING ON SUNDAY, THURSDAY, AND SATURDAY

Weekly and Monthly Rated Chess at Memphis Chess Club (TN)
See Tennessee.

CALIFORNIA

SEPTEMBER 19, 2021-ONGOING

PCC LBX Hangar Sunday Action
Event site: LBX Hangar Building (inside and out) **Address:** 4150 McGowen St, Long Beach CA 90808 **Overall prize fund:** 80% of total entry fee **GP Points:** n/a **FIDE Rated:** N **Handicap accessible:** Y **Residency restriction:** N **Organizer:** John Tan **Email:** *paramountchessclub@gmail.com* **Phone:** 3107356871 **Website:** n/a **TLA ID:** 31701

JANUARY 13-16, 2023

14th annual Golden State Open (CA-N)
See Grand Prix or *chessevents.us.*

JANUARY 15, 2023

10th annual Golden State Open Blitz (CA-N)
See Grand Prix or *chessevents.us.*

MARCH 3-5, 2023

30th annual Western Class Championships (CA-S)
See Grand Prix or *chessevents.us.*

MAY 25-29, 2023

32nd annual Chicago Open (IL)
See Grand Prix or *chessevents.us.*

MAY 14-18, 2023

2023 National Open (NV)
See National Events.

MAY 14-15, 2023

2023 U.S. Women's Open (NV)
See National Events.

JUNE 30-JULY 4, 2023

51st annual World Open (PA)
See Grand Prix or *chessevents.us.*

COLORADO

MAY 14-18, 2023

2023 National Open (NV)
See National Events.

MAY 14-15, 2023

2023 U.S. Women's Open (NV)
See National Events.

15th annual OPEN at FOXWOODS

April 5-9, 6-9 or 7-9, Easter weekend, Foxwoods Resort Casino

$60,000 guaranteed prizes, GM & IM norms possible!

Open Section: 9 rounds, Apr 5-9, 40/80, SD/30, d30, FIDE rated, GM & IM norms possible.

Other sections: 7 rounds, Apr 6-9 or 7-9, 40/80, SD/30, d30 (3-day option, rds 1-2 G/60 d10). U2200 & U2000 are FIDE rated.

Foxwoods Resort Casino, in the woods of Southeast CT

Cellphone rules: see devicerules.com..

In 7 sections:

Open: $5000-3000-2000-1000-800-600-500-400, clear or tiebreak 1st $200 bonus, top FIDE 2250-2399 $2000-1000, top FIDE U2250/Unr $2000-1000. 200 GPP.

U2200, U2000, U1800: Each $3000-1500-1000-700-500-400-300-300.

U1600, U1400: Each $2000-1000-800-600-500-400-300-300.

U1100: $1000-700-500-400-300-300-200-200,

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

Mixed doubles: Male/female combined 2-player team scores among all sections: $1000-600-400. Must average under 2200, may play in different sections, register before both begin round 2. Open rounds 8-9 not counted toward doubles.

If under 26 games rated by April 2023 list, limit $600 U1100, $1000 U1400, $1400 U1600, $1800 U1800.

Unrated limits: $200 U1100, $400 U1400, $600 U1600. $800 U1800.

If any post-event Regular OTB or Regular Online rating posted 4/3/22-4/3/23 or current Regular Online rating was more than 40 pts over section max, prize limit $500.

Entry fee: $228 onine by 4/3, $250 later or at site. $100 more to US players not USCF or FIDE 2200/over. GMs. Foreign IMs/WGMs in Open: free. US IMs/WGMs & FIDE foreign in Open: $100 less. U1100 section, $80 less. Seniors 65/over in U1400/up: $80 less.

Foreign titled minimum prizes: see chessevents.us.

5-day reg. ends Wed 6 pm, rds Wed 7 pm, Thu 1 pm & 7 pm, Fri 11 & 5, Sat 10 & 4, Sun 10 & 3:30.

4-day reg. ends Thu 6 pm, rds Thu 7 pm, Frii 11 & 5, Sat 10 & 4, Sun 10 & 3:30.

3-day reg. ends Fri 10 am, rds Fri 11, 2 & 5, merges with 4-day Fri at 5 pm.

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

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

Special room rates: Grand Pequot Tower (2-3 minute walk, very luxurious): Fri/Sat $213, others $157. Fox Tower (7-9 minute walk in connected building): Fri/Sat $183, others $127. Great Cedar Hotel (5-7 minute walk, same building): Fri/Sat $153, others $107. All: $4.95 resort fee, includes wired internet, fitness center, pool, spa, coffee, etc.

Blitz tournament Sat 9:30 pm, register by 8:45 pm.

Entries, registration list: chessaction.com.

CONNECTICUT

OCTOBER 9, 2022 - MAY 7, 2023

8th Annual Magnus High School and Junior High Chess League! (NY)
See New York.

MARCH 17-19, 2023

31st annual Eastern Class Championships (CT)
See Grand Prix or *chessevents.us.*

APRIL 5-9, 2023

15th annual Open at Foxwoods (CT)
See Grand Prix or *chessevents.us.*

APRIL 8, 2023

14th annual Blitz at Foxwoods (CT)
See Grand Prix or *chessevents.us.*

JUNE 30-JULY 4, 2023

51st annual World Open (PA)
See Grand Prix or *chessevents.us.*

DIST. OF COLUMBIA

JANUARY 21, 2023

2023 Kerr Philanthropic Middle School Chess Championship
Event site: Embassy Suites Hotel by Hilton / Chevy Chase Pavilion / Tenleytown Ballroom **Address:** 44300 Military Road NW, Washington, DC 20015 **Overall prize fund:** $675 **GP Points:** n/a **FIDE Rated:** N **Handicap accessible:** N **Residency restriction:** N **Organizer:** Malik F Johnson **Email:** *iconchess@aol.com* **Phone:** 202-557-8266 **Website:** *https://caissachess.net/online-registration/index/2104* **TLA ID:** 35951

FLORIDA

JANUARY 14-16, 2023

2023 Charlotte Open (NC)
See Grand Prix.

MARCH 17-19, 2023

20th annual Southern Class Championships (FL)
See Grand Prix or *chessevents.us.*

MAY 25-29, 2023

32nd annual Chicago Open (IL)
See Grand Prix or *chessevents.us.*

JUNE 30-JULY 4, 2023

51st annual World Open (PA)
See Grand Prix or *chessevents.us.*

GEORGIA

JANUARY 14-16, 2023

2023 Charlotte Open (NC)
See Grand Prix.

MARCH 17-19, 2023

20th annual Southern Class Championships (FL)
See Grand Prix or *chessevents.us.*

JUNE 30-JULY 4, 2023

51st annual World Open (PA)
See Grand Prix or *chessevents.us.*

IDAHO

MAY 14-18, 2023

2023 National Open (NV)
See National Events.

MAY 14-15, 2023

2023 U.S. Women's Open (NV)
See National Events.

ILLINOIS

FEBRUARY 4, 2023

2023 Greater Chicago K-12 Championships
Event site: McCormick Place - West Building **Address:** 2301 S Dr Martin Luther King Jr Dr. Chicago, IL 60616 **Overall prize fund:** n/a **GP Points:** n/a **FIDE Rated:** N **Handicap accessible:** Y **Residency restriction:** N **Organizer:** Renaissance Knights **Email:** *david.heiser@renaissanceknights.org* **Phone:** *david.heiser@renaissanceknights.org* **Website:** *https://greaterchicago.rknights.org/* **TLA ID:** 35475

MARCH 24-26, 2023

27th annual Mid-America Open (MO)
See Grand Prix or *chessevents.us.*

MAY 25-29, 2023

32nd annual Chicago Open (IL)
See Grand Prix or *chessevents.us.*

MAY 14-18, 2023

2023 National Open (NV)
See National Events.

JUNE 30-JULY 4, 2023

51st annual World Open (PA)
See Grand Prix or *chessevents.us.*

INDIANA

FEBRUARY 17-19, 2023

2023 U.S. Amateur Team North (IL)
See National Events.

MARCH 24-26, 2023

27th annual Mid-America Open (MO)
See Grand Prix or *chessevents.us.*

MAY 25-29, 2023

32nd annual Chicago Open (IL)
See Grand Prix or *chessevents.us.*

JUNE 30-JULY 4, 2023

51st annual World Open (PA)
See Grand Prix or *chessevents.us.*

IOWA

FEBRUARY 17-19, 2023

2023 U.S. Amateur Team North (IL)
See National Events.

KENTUCKY

DECEMBER 31, 2021-ONGOING ON SUNDAY, THURSDAY, AND SATURDAY

Weekly and Monthly Rated Chess at Memphis Chess Club (TN)
See Tennessee.

JANUARY 14-16, 2023

2023 Charlotte Open (NC)
See Grand Prix.

FEBRUARY 17-19, 2023

2023 U.S. Amateur Team North (IL)
See National Events.

LOUISIANA

FEBRUARY 16-20, 2023

14th annual Southwest Class Championships (TX)
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.

JANUARY 13-16, 2023

55th annual Liberty Bell Open (PA)
See Grand Prix or *chessevents.us.*

JANUARY 14-16, 2023

2023 Charlotte Open (NC)
See Grand Prix.

FEBRUARY 24-26, 2023

7th annual George Washington Open (VA)
See Grand Prix or *chessevents.us.*

JUNE 23-25, 2023

17th annual Philadelphia Open (PA)
See Grand Prix or *chessevents.us.*

JUNE 23-25, 2023

51st annual World Open, lower sections (PA)
See Pennsylvania or *chessevents.us.*

JUNE 24-28, 2023

16th annual Philadelphia International (PA)
See Grand Prix or *chessevents.us.*

JUNE 26-28, 2023

2nd annual World Open Amateur (PA)
See Pennsylvania or *chessevents.us.*

JUNE 26-27, 2023

15th annual World Open Under 13 Championship (PA)
See Pennsylvania or *chessevents.us.*

JUNE 28-29, 2023

World Open Junior Championship (PA)
See Pennsylvania or *chessevents.us.*

JUNE 30-JULY 4, 2023

51st annual World Open (PA)
See Grand Prix or *chessevents.us.*

MASSACHUSETTS

MARCH 11-12, 2023

55th annual New York State Scholastics (NY)
See New York or *chessevents.us.*

MARCH 17-19, 2023

31st annual Eastern Class Championships (CT)
See Grand Prix or *chessevents.us.*

APRIL 5-9, 2023

15th annual Open at Foxwoods (CT)
See Grand Prix or *chessevents.us.*

APRIL 8, 2023

14th annual Blitz at Foxwoods (CT)
See Grand Prix or *chessevents.us.*

JUNE 23-25, 2023

17th annual Philadelphia Open (PA)
See Grand Prix or *chessevents.us.*

JUNE 23-25, 2023

51st annual World Open, lower sections (PA)
See Pennsylvania or *chessevents.us.*

JUNE 24-28, 2023

16th annual Philadelphia International (PA)
See Grand Prix or *chessevents.us.*

JUNE 26-28, 2023

2nd annual World Open Amateur (PA)
See Pennsylvania or *chessevents.us.*

JUNE 26-27, 2023

15th annual World Open Under 13 Championship (PA)
See Pennsylvania or *chessevents.us.*

JUNE 28-29, 2023

World Open Junior Championship (PA)
See Pennsylvania or *chessevents.us.*

JUNE 30-JULY 4, 2023

51st annual World Open (PA)
See Grand Prix or *chessevents.us.*

MICHIGAN

FEBRUARY 17-19, 2023

2023 U.S. Amateur Team North (IL)
See National Events.

MARCH 5-7, 2023

3rd annual Niagara Falls Open (NY)
See Grand Prix or *chessevents.us.*

MAY 25-29, 2023

32nd annual Chicago Open (IL)
See Grand Prix or *chessevents.us.*

JUNE 30-JULY 4, 2023

51st annual World Open (PA)
See Grand Prix or *chessevents.us.*

MINNESOTA

FEBRUARY 17-19, 2023

2023 U.S. Amateur Team North (IL)
See National Events.

MAY 25-29, 2023

32nd annual Chicago Open (IL)
See Grand Prix or *chessevents.us.*

MISSISSIPPI

DECEMBER 31, 2021-ONGOING ON SUNDAY, THURSDAY, AND SATURDAY

Weekly and Monthly Rated Chess at Memphis Chess Club (TN)
See Tennessee.

MISSOURI

DECEMBER 31, 2021-ONGOING ON SUNDAY, THURSDAY, AND SATURDAY

Weekly and Monthly Rated Chess at Memphis Chess Club (TN)
See Tennessee.

NOVEMBER 3, 2022-ONGOING ON THURSDAYS

Chess Cardinals Thursday Open
Event site: Chesterfield YMCA **Address:** 16464 Burkhardt Pl, Chesterfield, MO 63017 **Overall prize fund:** n/a **GP Points:** n/a **FIDE Rated:** N **Handicap accessible:** N **Residency restriction:** N **Organizer:** Chess Cardinals **Email:** *chess4chesterfield@gmail.com* **Phone:** 210-912-three seven two nine **Website:** *https://chesscardinals.com/* **TLA ID:** 35826

FEBRUARY 17-19, 2023

2023 U.S. Amateur Team North (IL)
See National Events.

MARCH 24-26, 2023

27th annual Mid-America Open (MO)
See Grand Prix or *chessevents.us.*

MAY 25-29, 2023

32nd annual Chicago Open (IL)
See Grand Prix or *chessevents.us.*

NEVADA

JANUARY 13-16, 2023

14th annual Golden State Open (CA-N)
See Grand Prix or *chessevents.us.*

MARCH 3-5, 2023

30th annual Western Class Championships (CA-S)
See Grand Prix or *chessevents.us.*

NEW JERSEY

OCTOBER 9, 2022 - MAY 7, 2023

8th Annual Magnus High School and Junior High Chess League! (NY)
See New York.

JANUARY 13-16, 2023

55th annual Liberty Bell Open (PA)
See Grand Prix or *chessevents.us.*

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

JANUARY 14-DECEMBER 30, 2023
Hamilton Chess Club Quads
Dates: Jan. 14, Feb. 11, Mar. 18, Apr. 29, May 20, Jun. 3, Aug. 19, Sep. 30, Oct. 21, Nov. 18, Dec. 30. **Event site:** Switlik Park Pavilion **Address:** Fischer Place/Joe Dimaggio Drive, Hamilton, NJ 08610 **Overall prize fund:** n/a **GP Points:** n/a **FIDE Rated:** N **Handicap accessible:** N **Residency restriction:** N **Organizer:** Edward Sytnik **Email:** *edmendou@aol.com* **Phone:** 609-758-2326 **Website:** *https://sites.google.com/site/hamiltonchessclub/* **TLA ID:** 35704

JANUARY 15, 2023
10th annual Liberty Bell Open Blitz (PA)
See Grand Prix or *chessevents.us.*

FEBRUARY 24-26, 2023
7th annual George Washington Open (VA)
See Grand Prix or *chessevents.us.*

STATE CHAMPIONSHIP EVENT

FEBRUARY 26, 2023
NJ Elementary and Junior High School Championships
Event site: Brookdale Community College - Student Life Center **Address:** Just past lots #5-6, Arena Drive, Lincroft, NJ 07738 **Overall prize fund:** n/a **GP Points:** n/a **FIDE Rated:** N **Handicap accessible:** Y **Residency restriction:** N **Organizer:** New Jersey Chess Federation **Email:** *tournaments.njscf@gmail.com* **Phone:** *tournaments.njscf@gmail.com* **Website:** *https://njscf.org/* **TLA ID:** 35565

MARCH 11-12, 2023
55th annual New York State Scholastics (NY)
See New York or *chessevents.us.*

MARCH 17-19, 2023
31st annual Eastern Class Championships (CT)
See Grand Prix or *chessevents.us.*

APRIL 5-9, 2023
15th annual Open at Foxwoods (CT)
See Grand Prix or *chessevents.us.*

MAY 25-29, 2023
32nd annual Chicago Open (IL)
See Grand Prix or *chessevents.us.*

JUNE 23-25, 2023
17th annual Philadelphia Open (PA)
See Grand Prix or *chessevents.us.*

JUNE 23-25, 2023
51st annual World Open, lower sections (PA)
See Pennsylvania or *chessevents.us.*

JUNE 24-28, 2023
16th annual Philadelphia International (PA)
See Grand Prix or *chessevents.us.*

JUNE 26-28, 2023
2nd annual World Open Amateur (PA)
See Pennsylvania or *chessevents.us.*

JUNE 26-27, 2023
15th annual World Open Under 13 Championship (PA)
See Pennsylvania or *chessevents.us.*

JUNE 28-29, 2023
13th annual World Open Senior Amateur (PA)
See Pennsylvania or *chessevents.us.*

JUNE 28-29, 2023
World Open Junior Championship (PA)
See Pennsylvania or *chessevents.us.*

JUNE 29-30, 2023
12th annual World Open Women's Championship (PA)
See Grand Prix or *chessevents.us.*

JUNE 29, 2023
10th annual World Open Action (PA)
See Grand Prix or *chessevents.us.*

JUNE 30-JULY 4, 2023
51st annual World Open (PA)
See Grand Prix or *chessevents.us.*

NEW MEXICO

MAY 14-18, 2023
2023 National Open (NV)
See National Events.

NEW YORK

OCTOBER 9, 2022 - MAY 7, 2023
8th Annual Magnus High School and Junior High Chess League!
Event site: Columbia Grammar and Prep. High School Cafeteria **Address:** 36 W. 93rd St. (bet. Central Park West & Columbus Ave., near 96th St. subways), NYC **Overall prize fund:** $450 per match date **GP Points:** n/a **FIDE Rated:** Y **Handicap accessible:** Y **Residency restriction:** N **Organizer:** Chess Center of New York **Email:** *chesscentr@gmail.com* **Phone:** 347-201-2269 (leave message, but email is better) **Website:** *https://www.magnusleague.org/* **TLA ID:** 35086

JANUARY 13-16, 2023
55th annual Liberty Bell Open (PA)
See Grand Prix or *chessevents.us.*

JANUARY 15, 2023
10th annual Liberty Bell Open Blitz (PA)

FEBRUARY 24-26, 2023
7th annual George Washington Open (VA)
See Grand Prix or *chessevents.us.*

MARCH 5-7, 2023
3rd annual Niagara Falls Open (NY)
See Grand Prix or *chessevents.us.*

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

MARCH 11-12, 2023
55th annual New York State Scholastic Championships
Event site: Saratoga Hilton & Courtyard by Marriott **Address:** 534 Broadway, 11 Excelsior Ave, Saratoga Springs, NY 12866 **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:** 35289

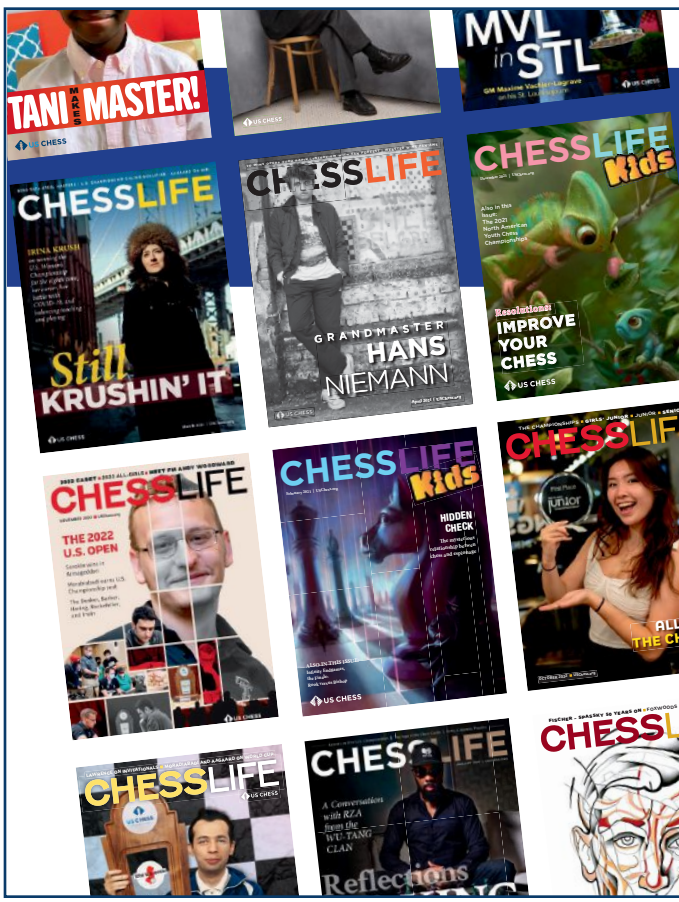
MARCH 17-19, 2023
31st annual Eastern Class Championships (CT)
See Grand Prix or *chessevents.us.*

APRIL 5-9, 2023
15th annual Open at Foxwoods (CT)
See Grand Prix or *chessevents.us.*

APRIL 8, 2023
14th annual Blitz at Foxwoods (CT)
See Grand Prix or *chessevents.us.*

MAY 25-29, 2023
32nd annual Chicago Open (IL)
See Grand Prix or *chessevents.us.*

JUNE 23-25, 2023
17th annual Philadelphia Open (PA)
See Grand Prix or *chessevents.us.*



Chess Life and Chess Life Kids

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All US Chess members have **free access** to digital editions of US Chess' award-winning magazines, **Chess Life** and **Chess Life Kids**.

Printed copies of **Chess Life** or **Chess Life Kids** can be added on to any membership for a nominal fee, currently $12.00/year (12 issues) for *Chess Life* and $6.00/year (6 issues) for *Chess Life Kids.*

JUNE 23-25, 2023
51st annual World Open, lower sections (PA)
See Pennsylvania or *chessevents.us.*

JUNE 24-28, 2023
16th annual Philadelphia International (PA)
See Grand Prix or *chessevents.us.*

JUNE 26-28, 2023
2nd annual World Open Amateur (PA)
See Pennsylvania or *chessevents.us.*

JUNE 26-27, 2023
15th annual World Open Under 13 Championship (PA)
See Pennsylvania or *chessevents.us.*

JUNE 28-29, 2023
13th annual World Open Senior Amateur (PA)
See Pennsylvania or *chessevents.us.*

JUNE 28-29, 2023
World Open Junior Championship (PA)
See Pennsylvania or *chessevents.us.*

JUNE 29-30, 2023
12th annual World Open Women's Championship (PA)
See Grand Prix or *chessevents.us.*

JUNE 29, 2023
10th annual World Open Action (PA)
See Grand Prix or *chessevents.us.*

JUNE 30-JULY 4, 2023
51st annual World Open (PA)
See Grand Prix or *chessevents.us.*

NORTH CAROLINA

FEBRUARY 3-5, 2023
Land of the Sky XXXV (NC)
See Grand Prix.

JUNE 30-JULY 4, 2023
51st annual World Open (PA)
See Grand Prix or *chessevents.us.*

OHIO

JANUARY 28, 2023
Flower City Open 5
Event site: Asia Plaza **Address:** 2999 Payne Ave., Cleveland, OH 44114 **Overall prize fund:** $500 **GP Points:** n/a **FIDE Rated:** N **Handicap accessible:** Y **Residency restriction:** N **Organizer:** Cleveland Chess Club **Email:** *starvationarmyzine@hotmail.com* **Phone:** *(216) 408-8575* **Website:** *https://www.facebook.com/clevelandchessclub* **TLA ID:** 36184

FEBRUARY 17-19, 2023
2023 U.S. Amateur Team North (IL)
See National Events.

MARCH 24-26, 2023
27th annual Mid-America Open (MO)
See Grand Prix or *chessevents.us.*

HERITAGE EVENT

APRIL 14-16, 2023
2023 Cincinnati Open
Event site: Embassy Suites Hotel **Address:** 4554 Lake Forest Drive, Blue Ash, OH 45242 **Overall prize fund:** $16,000 **GP Points:** n/a **FIDE Rated:** Y **Handicap accessible:** Y **Residency restriction:** N **Organizer:** Alan Hodge **Email:** *a.hodge195@gmail.com* **Phone:** *5136009915* **Website:** *https://www.chesscincinnati.com* **TLA ID:** 35840

MARCH 5-7, 2023
3rd annual Niagara Falls Open (NY)
See Grand Prix or *chessevents.us.*

MAY 25-29, 2023
32nd annual Chicago Open (IL)
See Grand Prix or *chessevents.us.*

JUNE 30-JULY 4, 2023
51st annual World Open (PA)
See Grand Prix or *chessevents.us.*

OKLAHOMA

FEBRUARY 16-20, 2023
14th annual Southwest Class Championships (TX)
See Grand Prix or *chessevents.us.*

OREGON

JANUARY 13-16, 2023
14th annual Golden State Open (CA)
See Grand Prix or *chessevents.us.*

MAY 14-18, 2023
2023 National Open (NV)
See National Events.

MAY 14-15, 2023
2023 U.S. Women's Open (NV)
See National Events.

PENNSYLVANIA

North Penn Chess Club
Main & Richardson - St. John's UCC, 500 West Main St., Lansdale, PA 19446. See *www.northpennchess* club.org for schedules & info or 215-699-8418

OCTOBER 9, 2022 - MAY 7, 2023
8th Annual Magnus High School and Junior High Chess League! (NY)

JANUARY 13-16, 2023
55th annual Liberty Bell Open (PA)
See Grand Prix or *chessevents.us.*

JANUARY 15, 2023
10th annual Liberty Bell Open Blitz (PA)
See Grand Prix or *chessevents.us.*

FEBRUARY 24-26, 2023
7th annual George Washington Open (VA)
See Grand Prix or *chessevents.us.*

APRIL 5-9, 2023
15th annual Open at Foxwoods (CT)
See Grand Prix or *chessevents.us.*

MARCH 5-7, 2023
3rd annual Niagara Falls Open (NY)
See Grand Prix or *chessevents.us.*

MAY 25-29, 2023
32nd annual Chicago Open (IL)
See Grand Prix or *chessevents.us.*

JUNE 23-25, 2023
17th annual Philadelphia Open (PA)
See Grand Prix or *chessevents.us.*

HERITAGE EVENT • JUNIOR GRAND PRIX

JUNE 23-25, 2023
51st annual World Open, lower sections
Event site: Sheraton Philadelphia Downtown **Address:** 201 N 17th St, 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.chessevents.us* **TLA ID:** 36030

JUNE 24-28, 2023
16th annual Philadelphia International (PA)
See Grand Prix or *chessevents.us.*

JUNIOR GRAND PRIX

JUNE 26-28, 2023
2nd annual World Open Amateur
Event site: Sheraton Philadelphia Downtown **Address:** 201 N 17th St, Philadelphia, PA 19103 **Overall prize fund:** $3,000 **GP Points:** n/a **FIDE Rated:** Y **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:** 35957

JUNIOR GRAND PRIX

JUNE 26-27, 2023
15th annual World Open Under 13 Championship
Event site: Sheraton Philadelphia Downtown **Address:** 201 N 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:** *director@chess.us* **Website:** *http://www.chessevents.us* **TLA ID:** 35994

REGIONALS

JUNE 28-29, 2023
13th annual World Open Senior Amateur
Event site: Sheraton Philadelphia Downtown **Address:** 201 N 17th St, Philadelphia, PA 19103 **Overall prize fund:** $1,000 **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.chessevents.us* **TLA ID:** 36006

JUNIOR GRAND PRIX • REGIONALS

JUNE 28-29, 2023
World Open Junior Championship
Event site: Sheraton Philadelphia Downtown **Address:** 201 N 17th St, Philadelphia, PA 19103 **Overall prize fund:** $5,000 **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.chessevents.us* **TLA ID:** 36031

JUNE 29-30, 2023
12th annual World Open Women's Championship (PA)
See Grand Prix or *chessevents.us.*

REGIONALS

JUNE 29, 2023
10th annual World Open Action
Event site: Sheraton Philadelphia Downtown **Address:** 201 N 17th St, Philadelphia, PA 19103 **Overall prize fund:** see TLA **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:** 36036

JUNE 30-JULY 4, 2023
51st annual World Open (PA)
See Grand Prix or *chessevents.us.*

JUNE 30, 2023
12th annual World Open Game/7 Blitz Championship (PA)
See Grand Prix or *chessevents.us.*

SOUTH CAROLINA

JANUARY 14-16, 2023
2023 Charlotte Open (NC)
See Grand Prix.

TENNESSEE

DECEMBER 31, 2021-ONGOING ON SUNDAY, THURSDAY, AND SATURDAY
Weekly and Monthly Rated Chess at Memphis Chess Club
Event site: Memphis Chess Club **Address:** 195 Madison Ave Suite 101, Memphis, TN 3810 **Overall prize fund:** n/a **GP Points:** n/a **FIDE Rated:** N **Handicap accessible:** Y **Residency restriction:** N **Organizer:** Memphis Chess Club **Email:** *info@memphischessclub.com* **Phone:** 7318685755 **Website:** *https://www.memphischessclub.com/* **TLA ID:** 32334

JANUARY 14-16, 2023
2023 Charlotte Open (NC)
See Grand Prix.

MARCH 24-26, 2023
27th annual Mid-America Open (MO)
See Grand Prix or *chessevents.us.*

JUNE 30-JULY 4, 2023
51st annual World Open (PA)
See Grand Prix or *chessevents.us.*

TEXAS

FEBRUARY 16-20, 2023
14th annual Southwest Class Championships (TX)
See Grand Prix or *chessevents.us.*

MARCH 4-5, 2023
2023 Texas Senior Championship
Event site: Home2 Suites by Hilton Euless DFW West **Address:** 2570 State Highway 121, Euless, TX 76039 **Overall prize fund:** n/a **GP Points:** n/a **FIDE Rated:** N **Handicap accessible:** Y **Residency restriction:** N **Organizer:** Arlington Chess Club **Email:** *club@arlingtonchess.com* **Phone:** n/a **Website:** *https://arlingtonchess.com/senior* **TLA ID:** 35908

MARCH 24-26, 2023
27th annual Mid-America Open (MO)
See Grand Prix or *chessevents.us.*

MAY 25-29, 2023
32nd annual Chicago Open (IL)
See Grand Prix or *chessevents.us.*

MAY 14-18, 2023
2023 National Open (NV)
See National Events.

JUNE 30-JULY 4, 2023
51st annual World Open (PA)
See Grand Prix or *chessevents.us.*

UTAH

MAY 14-18, 2023
2023 National Open (NV)
See National Events.

MAY 14-15, 2023
2023 U.S. Women's Open (NV)
See National Events.

VERMONT

JUNE 24-28, 2023
16th annual Philadelphia International (PA)
See Grand Prix or *chessevents.us.*

VIRGINIA

JANUARY 13-16, 2023
55th annual Liberty Bell Open (PA)
See Grand Prix or *chessevents.us.*

JANUARY 14-16, 2023
2023 Charlotte Open (NC)
See Grand Prix.

FEBRUARY 24-26, 2023
7th annual George Washington Open (VA)
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APRIL 5-9, 2023
15th annual Open at Foxwoods (CT)
See Grand Prix or *chessevents.us.*

MAY 25-29, 2023
32nd annual Chicago Open (IL)
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JUNE 23-25, 2023
17th annual Philadelphia Open (PA)
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JUNE 23-25, 2023
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For complete details on individual events, please visit *new.uschess.org/node/[TLA ID]*. You will find the event's unique five-digit TLA ID at the end of each TLA.

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JUNE 30-JULY 4, 2023
51st annual World Open (PA)
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WASHINGTON

JANUARY 13-16, 2023
14th annual Golden State Open (CA-N)
See Grand Prix or *chessevents.us.*

MAY 14-18, 2023
2023 National Open (NV)
See National Events.

MAY 14-15, 2023
2023 U.S. Women's Open (NV)
See National Events.

WEST VIRGINIA

STATE CHAMPIONSHIP EVENT

MARCH 11, 2023
2023 - WV State Scholastic Chess Championships
Event site: WV State University Student Union **Address:** 284 Washington Ave., Institute, WV 25112 **Overall prize fund:** n/a **GP Points:** n/a **FIDE Rated:** N **Handicap accessible:** Y **Residency restriction:** N **Organizer:** Craig M Timmons **Email:** *craigtimmons@gmail.com* **Phone:** 3044152119 **Website:** *https://www.wvsca.com* **TLA ID:** 36263

WISCONSIN

JUNIOR GRAND PRIX • HERITAGE EVENT

FEBRUARY 4-5, 2023
Michael A. Selig Memorial/56th NorthEastern Open
Event site: DoubleTree by Hilton **Address:** 150 S. Nicolet Rd., Appleton, WI 54914 **Overall prize fund:** $1,200 **GP Points:** n/a **FIDE Rated:** N **Handicap accessible:** Y **Residency restriction:** N **Organizer:** Mike Nietman **Email:** *mike.nietman@charter.net* **Phone:** 608-467-8510 **Website:** *http://wischess.org* **TLA ID:** 34318

FEBRUARY 17-19, 2023
2023 U.S. Amateur Team North (IL)
See National Events.

HERITAGE EVENT

FEBRUARY 25, 2023
Waukesha Memorial (41st Annual)
Event site: Country Inn & Suites **Address:** 1250 South Moorland RD (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://waukeshachessclub.blogspot.com* **TLA ID:** 35602

FEBRUARY 25, 2023
RBO - Waukesha
Event site: Country Inn & Suites **Address:** 1250 South Moorland RD (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://waukeshachessclub.blogspot.com* **TLA ID:** 35604

MAY 25-29, 2023
32nd annual Chicago Open (IL)
See Grand Prix or *chessevents.us.*

JUNE 30-JULY 4, 2023
51st annual World Open (PA)
See Grand Prix or *chessevents.us.*

14th annual Southwest Class Championships

Feb 16-20, 17-20 or 18-20 (Presidents weekend), Irving, Texas

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Westin Dallas Fort Worth Airport, 4545 W John Carpenter Fwy, Irving TX 75063, Free parking, free airport shuttle.

In 7 sections; Unr may enter A-E. See peakrating.us.

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

Mixed doubles: $1000-600-400. Master Section, rds 1-7 only. All sections OK, must average under 2200. See chessevents.us.

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Expert to C entry fee: $168 at chessaction. com by 2/15, $190 at site, or online until an hour before rd 1.

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Cellphone posession during play not allowed (in bag near table OK).

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4-day schedule: Reg. ends Fri 6 pm, Rds Fri 7 pm, Sat 11 & 5, Sun 10 & 4, Mon 10 & 3:30.

3-day schedule: Reg. ends Sat 10 am, rds Sat 11, 2 & 5, Sun 10 & 4, Mon 10 & 3:30.

Half point byes OK all, limit 2; must commit before rd 3.

All: Bring clock, set, board if possible- none supplied. Unofficial rating usually used if otherwise unr.

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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.

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  - o Class C: 1200-1699
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- If you do not have an existing correspondence rating, please estimate your playing strength when submitting your entry.
- Correspondence chess gift certificate prizes can be used on correspondence chess entries only. They cannot be used for membership renewals or at US Chess Sales.

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☐ Golden Knights EF: $25 ☐ Electronic Knights EF: $25 | ☐ Palciauskas ICCF EF: $5 | ☐ Muir ICCF Quad EF: $10 ☐ Collins Quad EF: $10 | 2-player matches, EF: $5 per entry, see above for options Postal Match: 2 ☐ | 4 ☐ | 6 ☐ Email Match: 2 ☐ | 4 ☐ | 6 ☐

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PAGE 11 CHESS TO ENJOY

PROBLEM 1. 41. Rxe4! Qxe4 42. Qf6+ followed by Qf6xb2. Or 41. ... fxe4 42. Rf8 mate. **PROBLEM 2.** 40. Nb3+! Kxc4 41. Kc2 Bb7 42. Rc6+! Bxc6 43. Nb6+ Kb4 44. a3 mate. **PROBLEM 3.** 29. Bxf6 is fastest: (a) 29. ... Rxf6 30. Nc7, (b) 29. ... gxf6 30. Qh6+ or (c) 29. ... Qxd5 30. Qh6+ Kg8 31. Nxg7!. **PROBLEM 4.** 36. ... Qb7 is good. But 36. ... Bxg2+! is better: 37. Rxg2 Ra1+ 38. Rg1 Qb7+ 39. e4 Rxg1+ 40. Kxg1 Qa7. **PROBLEM 5.** 42. ... Rf5! threatens 43. ... Qe1 mate and 43. ... Qh2+. White resigned after 43. Ra8+ Kg7 44. Qa7+ Kh6 45. Qg1 Qf6+. Play continues 46. Kg3 Rf3+! 47. Bxf3 Qxf3+ and it's mate in one. **PROBLEM 6.** It ended with 41. ... Kb2! 42. Rg1 c1=Q 43. Rxc1 Rxc1! 44. h5 (Black wins after *44. Kxf7 Rh1*) 44. ... Rh1 45. h6 Rh5. Also winning is 41. ... Rc4 42. h5 Rf4+. But not 41. ... Kd2? 42. Rxc2+! Kxc2 43. h5 or 42. ... Rxc2 43. Kxf7.

PAGE 17 MAKE YOUR MOVE

TACTIC 1. 9. cxd5! Qxd5?? Black doesn't see the problem yet. It was better to play 9. ... Nd6 when 10. Nc3 and White has won a pawn. **10. Bxe4!** and **Black resigned**. After 10. Bxe4 Bxe4 (or *10. ... Qxe4 11. Re1* and the e7-bishop drops) 11. Nc3 Qf5 12. Nxe4 Qxe4 13. Re1, White wins a piece. Dominguez Perez – Moradiabadi, US ch 2022. **TACTIC 2. 25. Bxg7! Qxg7 26. Nh6+ Kf8 27. Rxe4** Yes, the knight was loose. **27. ... e5 28. Rg4** and **White** has won two pawns and **eventually won the game**. Cervantes Landeiro – Foisor, US ch Women 2022. **TACTIC 3. 37. ... Rg3! 38. Bc1 Rh5! 39. Ra2 g5 40. Bd2 Bd3!** The bishop is on the way to the f5-square to hit the h3-pawn. **41. a6 b6!** This is better than the game continuation which went **41. ... Bxa6 42. Rc1 Qf5 43. Be1 Rgxh3 44. gxh3 Rxh3 45. Rxa6 Rxh2+ 46. Kxh2 bxa6 47. Rxc6 Qd3** and **Black eventually won the game** in Foisor – M. Lee, US ch Women 2022. **42. Bb4 Bf5** and Black would have been easily winning. **TACTIC 4. 38. ... Nge4!** 38. ... Nfe4! will typically lead to the same positions and also win. **39. Rf4** Or 39. Bxe4 Nxe4 40. Rf4 Rxc6 41. Nb3 Nd2+ 42. Nxd2 exd2 43. Rd1 Re1 44. Rf1 Rc1+ with mate. **39. ... Rxc6 40. Bxe4 Nxe4 41. Ne2 Nd2+ 42. Ka1 Ra8** Ouch! All of a sudden, the focus is White's king. Mate is being threatened with ... Ra8xa2+ followed by ... Rc6-a6 mate. **43. Nc1 b3 44. a3 Rac8 45. Nd3** The alternatives also are of no use for White: 45. Nxb3 Nxb3+ 46. Ka2 Nc1+ 47. Kb1 Nd3, or 45. Ne2 Rc2 which is similar to the concluding theme of this game. **45. ... e2 46. Rf2 Rc2 47. Rfxe2 Ra8!** and **White resigned**. The continuation is 47. ... Ra8 48. Nc1 (or *48. Re8 Rxa3+ 49. bxa3 Ra2* mate) 48. ... Rxa3+ 49. bxa3 b2+ 50. Ka2 b1=Q mate. Abrahamyan – Cervantes Landeiro, US ch Women 2022. **TACTIC 5. 31. Bc2!** 31. Qf1 White would also win after trying to transpose into the game continuation with his next move. Similarly, both 31. Bd3 and 31. Bb1 would also win the game. **31. ... Rf6** Black stops the threat of Rg6. **32. Qf1!** White renews the threat by protecting the rook on h1. Now, Black is simply lost. **32. ... b5 33. Rg6** Black's queen cannot escape. **33. ... bxc4 34. Kc1 Rf8 35. Rxh6+ Nxh6 36. Qg2 Kg8 37. Qg6 c6 38. Rg1** and **Black resigned**. Shankland – Yoo, US ch 2022. **TACTIC 6.** White had just captured on b7, undoubtedly thinking himself in a good position to win the game. **37. ... hxg3! 38. fxg3??** White misses what Black had cooking for him. However, the position after 38. Qc8+ Kf7 39. fxg3 Rh6 40. Kf2 Re5 is extremely unpleasant for White. **38. ... e5!** Boom! **White resigned**. There is no saving both the queen and the f4-knight. In this position capturing Black's e-pawn en passant is possible but then the queen falls, and if 39. Qxh7+ Kxh7, then White can no longer capture *en passant*. Moradiabadi – Niemann, US ch 2022. **TACTIC 7. 18. ... Nxd5!!** In the game, Black instead went **18. ... Qd6? 19. Be2 Qb4+ 20. Kf1 Qc3? 21. g3 Ne4?? 22. fxe4 f5 23. Kg2 fxe4 24. Rf1** when Black did not have enough for the piece and eventually lost the game in **M. Lee – Eswaran**, US ch Women 2022. **19. cxd5** Declining the piece sacrifice does not work either: 19. Be2 Nb4 20. 0-0 Qe7 21. Qb1 Rfd8 22. Qe4 Qxe4 23. fxe4 Rd2 24. Bg4 Rc5 and Black has a decisive advantage. **19. ... Qh4+ 20. g3 Qb4+ 21. Ke2 Rc3! 22. Rb1** After 22. Bh3, Black's attack is irresistible, for instance, 22. ... Rxb3 23. Kf1 Rb2 24. Qe1 Qd4 25. Rd1 Rd2 26. Rxd2 exd2 27. Qd1 Re8 28. Kg2 Qd3 and it is curtains for White. **22. ... Rfc8 23. Rb2 Rc1** and White can resign. **TACTIC 8. 24. ... Qh1+! 25. Ke2 Qb1** Black has forced White's king forward and controls the back rank. The immediate 25. ... Nf4+?? of course, does not work because of 26. Rxf4 exf4 27. Rxg7+ and White wins. **26. Qa3** Or 26. Bc3 Nxc3+ 27. Rxc3 Rxd2+! 28. Kxd2 Rd8+ and White will have to give up the queen. **26. ... Nf4+ 27. Rxf4 Qd3+** An important intermediary check; the rook on f4 still cannot be captured. **28. Kf3 Qd5+** The f4-rook is still untouchable. **29. Re4 f5 30. Bc3 Qxe4+ 31. Ke2 f4 32. Rf3 Qd3+** and **Black had a winning position**, but it took another 40 moves to secure the full point. Aronian – Swiercz, US ch 2022. **TACTIC 9. 21. Nd6! Bxd6?!** Or 21. ... Rcd8 22. Nxb7 Qxb7 23. Nd4 Rd7 24. Qc2 and White has a clear positional advantage on account of the bishop pair. **22. Ng5!** White cannot recapture on d6: 22. exd6 Nf4! 23. gxf4 Bxf3 24. Bxf3 Qxf3 25. d7 Rcd8 and Black is at least equal. **22. ... g6** Now, this weakening of the dark squares gives White a decisive advantage. It was better to play the ugly 22. ... f5 23. exf6 *e.p.* g6 when Black can continue to fight, even if White is much better. **23. exd6!** Now is the right time to recapture. **23. ... Qb8 24. Rc4 h6? 25. Nxe6?!** 25. Rh4! was even stronger. **25. ... Nxe6 26. Bxd5 Bxd5 27. Rxd5 Qb7 28. d7** and **Black resigned**. Swiercz – Niemann, US ch 2022.

PAGE 49 ABCS OF CHESS

PROBLEM 1. Mating net: Black mates immediately with **1. ... Bc2 mate. PROBLEM 2. Mating net:** Black mates in two: **1. ... Qh1+ 2. Nxh1 Rxh1 mate. PROBLEM 3. Mating net:** It ends in two moves: **1. ... Be3+ 2. Rxe3** (or 2. Rd2 Qb1 mate) **2. ... Qb1 mate. PROBLEM 4. Mating net:** Black wins in two: **1. ... Qxf2+ 2. Kxf2 Bh4 mate. PROBLEM 5. Mating net:** The queen sac mates: **1. ... Qh4+ 2. Nxh4 Bxh4 mate. PROBLEM 6. Mating net:** Black mates in two: **1. ... Bf3+ 2. Kh2 Bxg3 mate.**

US CHESS

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MY BEST MOVE

EVAN RABIN

CEO OF PREMIER CHESS



I STARTED PLAYING CHESS IN New York after my brother and dad taught me how to play at age seven. Two months after joining WIM Shernaz Kennedy's club at the Churchill School, I played my first tournament. A few months later, I played in the 1998 Elementary Chess Nationals in Peoria, Illinois. Since then, I've never stopped. I started teaching chess when I was 12 years old and made master when I was 20 — on spring break from my sophomore year at Brandeis University.

New York was a wonderful place for a young chess player to grow up. My friend Steve Immitt ran a weekly tournament series, "Four Rated Games Tonight," at the Marshall Chess Club, and during high school I would play almost every week. This gave me the opportunity to test myself against strong players, including GMs Michael Rohde and Alex Lenderman, and IM and New York legend Jay Bonin.

I developed several friendly rivalries at these events, including one with FM Leif Pressman, whom I have played in over 50 rated games. Leif is a tough opponent for me — I have drawn him in about 15 games, and beat him in two or three. In this game, I knew I was better at a critical moment, but was not sure how to break through.

ENGLISH OPENING (A38)

Evan Rabin (2146)
Leif Pressman (2165)
Four Rated Games Tonight (4), New York, 09.11.2008

1. c4 c5 2. Nf3 Nf6 3. g3 g6 4. Bg2 Bg7 5. 0–0 0–0 6. Nc3 Nc6 7. d3 e6 8. e4 d6 9. Re1 e5 10. Bg5 h6 11. Bxf6 Qxf6 12. Nd5 Qd8 13. Qd2 Be6 14. a3 Rb8 15. b4 b6 16. Rac1 f5 17. exf5 gxf5 18. Nh4 Nd4 19. Ng6 Re8 20. f4 Bf7 21. Nh4 Kh7 22. Kh1 Bxd5 23. Bxd5 Bf6

(see diagram top of next column)

After the instinctual 24. Nf3, Leif would play 24. … Nxf3 25. Qxf3 exf4, activating his dark-squared bishop and equalizing.



With a ticking clock, I tried to search for more, and I recalled some advice from my coach, GM Leonid Yudasin. He would say that most tactics are possible because of positional factors. Since White has a dominant bishop, controlling all of Black's weak light squares, the conditions for a tactical shot were there.

24. Nxf5

This is **MY BEST MOVE!** With it I created a battery, developed an attack, and forced Black to sacrifice material to avoid getting checkmated.

24. … Nxf5 25. Be4 d5 26. cxd5 Kg7 27. Bxf5 Qxd5+ 28. Be4 Qd4 29. Qe2 Kh8 30. Qh5 Bg7 31. fxe5 Rxe5 32. Qg6 Rxe4 33. Qxe4, Black resigned.

In 2016, I was running my first company — Pillar Sales, a sales outsourcing firm for SaaS companies — and teaching chess on the side. While I enjoyed managing Pillar, I spent too much of my savings, and I started to look for sales jobs.

It's said that you should sell what you believe in. And I believe in the enduring value of chess. So in July 2017, I decided to "sell chess" for two months. I started a teaching company called Premier Chess, got 14 school clients, and hired 10 instructors. Today we teach chess and the life skills that go with it at 80+ school programs and corporate classes. We offer private lessons, host a podcast, and more.

None of this would have happened without the confidence I learned at the chessboard and the relationships I built across it. Leif remains a good friend and sparring partner. He also teaches in some of our school programs!

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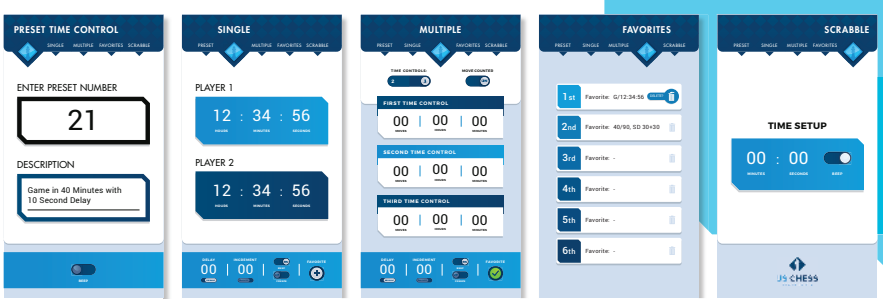
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