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ON THE COVER:

Miguel Najdorf, who once promoted himself as Champion of the Western Hemisphere, has died at the age of 87, while visiting in Spain. His claim was not without merit. After WWII, he was probably one of the four strongest players outside the Soviet Union.

And while he wasn’t the first to play it, he was certainly responsible for popularizing the variation of the Sicilian Defense which bears his name. The cover photograph is by Bill Hook, taken in 1992.

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USCF is a not-for-profit membership organization devoted to extending the role of chess in American society.

USCF promotes the study and knowledge of the game of chess, for its own sake as an art and enjoyment, but also as a means for the improvement of society. It informs, educates, and fosters the development of players (professional and amateur) and potential players. It encourages the development of a network of institutions devoted to enhancing the growth of chess, from local clubs to state and regional associations, and it promotes chess in American schools.

To these ends, USCF offers a monthly magazine, as well as targeted publications to its members and others. It supervises the organization of the U.S. chess championship, an open tournament every summer, and other national events. It offers a wide range of books and services to its members and others at prices consistent with the benefit of its members.

USCF serves as the governing body for chess in the United States and as a participant in international chess organizations and projects. It is structured to ensure effective democratic procedures in accord with its bylaws and the laws of the state of Illinois.

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

OPTIONS

Just when I thought political correctness could not get any sillier along comes “Option Chess.” (Chess Life, February 1997, pp. 177).

To recap, for those who may have missed this advance in chess, White moving first is a racist concept. So “Option Chess” to the rescue — either color can go first. This makes as much sense as translating Fischer’s My 60 Memorable Games into Ebonics.

Does this mean those not in support of women’s rights may change the power of the queen? In fact this whole king-queen thing is a little dated. It implies a lack of tolerance for other life styles. Perhaps the queen should just be the significant other or done away with altogether. It might be worth considering a set with two kings or two queens to avoid offending those who don’t have a traditional life style.

When my students ask me why does White always go first, I say, “Because it is the rules!” That works just fine. I don’t have to question them about the structures of American or the injustice of the world. I just play chess.

Stephen Gordon
West Valley City, UT

OKAY

I read with great interest the recent “Letters to the Editor” concerning the large number of draws in chess. Here is my view:

The main reason for the large number of draws can be found in a branch of mathematics called game theory. A game theorist would tell you that the best strategy for the player with the Black pieces (assuming an equal opponent) is to play for a draw right from the start. Why? If Black were to play for a win, then the first move advantage for White would translate into Black expecting a score of .48 points. (I’m using statistical studies that show in master level games ending in a decision White wins 57% of the time and Black wins 43%). If Black were to play for a draw, then the expected score for Black is .50 points. At high levels of play, Black can almost certainly force a draw against an equal opponent by adopting a low risk game plan.

So according to game theory, a player’s optimal strategy is to play for a win as White and play for a draw as Black. Since the chances of a draw go way up if even one player is aiming for it, you have as a result of the scoring weights (1 for win, ½ for draw, 0 for loss) a huge number of draws.

The solution is to adjust the scoring weights so that Black’s expected score is the same no matter whether playing to win or to draw. This can be accomplished thusly:

Player winning with the White pieces: .88 points (or .9 points if two decimal places prove too cumbersome).

Player winning with the Black pieces: 1.16 points (or 1.2 points if two decimal places are too cumbersome).

Draws remain at .5 points for both sides. These weights were arrived at: .88/.50/.57 and 1.16/.50/.43.

This weighting system removes Black’s incentive to draw:

Black wins with percentage .43 x proposed weight .88/expected score .5016=.5

So the expected scores are equal for Black and White whether they play to win or draw which is the goal.

If tournament organizers adopted this scoring system, they would see every game 100% contested by both sides and fewer draws (except for last round pre-arranged draws).

James M. Brown
Jamaica, NY

RUN IT UP THE FLAGPOLE ...

Larry Evans’ article “The Tragedy of Paul Keres” in your October 1996 issue was one of the best pieces of chess historical writing you’re ever run. Evans’ analysis of games from the 1948 World Championship makes a strong case that Keres’ failure, and Botvinnik’s consequent success, were the result of coercion by Soviet authorities.

There are still many unanswered questions, however. Evans states that newly discovered, once secret Soviet files show that Keres was forced to abandon his quest for the world title. Yet you printed only one brief excerpt from these, an excerpt which did not prove Evans’ case. Is there a smoking gun, a document stating clearly that Keres was told “lose or we’ll kill you”? Did this ban on winning the title apply only to the 1948 tournament, or for all time? If the latter, it would explain Keres’ many-second-place finishes in Candidates tournaments. Perhaps most important, how much did Botvinnik know? It is almost impossible to believe that he was merely an innocent beneficiary, that Keres was coerced without Botvinnik’s knowledge and consent.

Between Evans’ article and GM David Bronstein’s recent book The Sorcerer’s Apprentice, a new and extremely ugly picture of Botvinnik is emerging, that of a cheat and hypocrite, who used his influence with Soviet authorities and with FIDE to subvert competitors and set himself up as a tin god of chess. Chess Life should investigate further and find out the facts. We could be on the verge of uncovering one of the major scandals in chess history.

Taylor Kingston
Shelburne, VT

... OR NOT

We all know there’s a fire sale on paranoia these days; every conspiracy will have its 15 minutes of fame. So I suppose it’s no surprise that Larry Evans wants to dig up that moldering chestnut of Keres being forced to lose to Botvinnik (October CL, p. 40).

Although Evans asserts that KGB documents support his claim, the one example he quotes does nothing of the sort. I would want to see quite a lot of such evidence — from primary sources, not excerpts selected by Evans — before swallowing this.

This evidence Evans does present is a collection of games in which Keres played poorly against Botvinnik and lost. Of course, the same sort of proof can be used to show that Fischer’s opponents threw games to him in the 1963-64 U.S. Championship (how else could he have scored 11-0?), or that Evans himself bought a half point from Reshevsky in the same event (surely no GM could have overlooked that stalemate combination). Elsewhere (see CL, p. 20), Evans himself unhappily dismisses Fischer’s similar claim that the Karpov-Kasparov matches were rigged as having “not a scintilla of proof” — beyond Fischer’s low opinion of the games.

Well, it’s still a free country, and Evans has every right to hold (credul quo absurdum) any crackpot theory he wishes. What I find disturbing is that this farrrago appeared in Chess Life with no response or disclaimer. Like it or not, Chess Life is still the journal of record of U.S. chess. I can easily imagine some writer twenty years from now quoting Evans as his source, and this will join Alekhine breaking the furniture, Lasker demanding a two-point edge, and giant alligators in the New York subway. Doesn’t chess deserve better?

John Hillery
Los Angeles, CA

WINNING HELPS...

The rating floor is an important tool for increasing the popularity of chess. Three ways it accomplishes this is by instigating enthusiasm among the mercurial and the old, counteracting sandbagging, and rectifying the natural deflation of the Elo system. Instead of lowering the rating floor, it should be raised and made constant like when it was one hundred points. Reproduction of the constant rating floor would create a situation where the more you play the more points you would tend to gain, as opposed to the present system where the more you play the more points you tend to lose.

Paul Liebhaber
San Francisco, CA

FLOORS DON’T

I was recently informed that all USCF rating floors had been dropped 100 points. For me this meant a floor of 1800 instead of 1900. It also meant a reduction in the rate of rating inflation. I thought it was a step in the right direction. After all when inflation takes place and ratings cease to be an accurate gauge of a player’s performance.

Next, I was told that the USCF has reinstated the 2200 floor players who have at some point reached a rating of 2300. I think this is a mistake! My reasons are:

1) Rating inflation will eventually render the whole rating system meaningless.

2) The player with a floor of 2200 rated 2201 can sit at the board relaxed and safe in the knowledge that he is insulated from a bad result. The one who gives him a sporting advantage against say, the struggling 2150 player who has a floor 1900 and a lot more to lose.

3) A floor of 2200 cheapens the words “National Master” in the U.S. and thereby the international opinion of the standard of play in our country!

4) A serious student of the game can be denied an accurate measure of his recent results, thus clouding his opinions of his game. This may slow his development as a player.

5) This has an unequal effect on all other players who had floors, as all other floors were lowered.

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The implicit statement in this decision is that rating inflation is okay as long as it effects higher rated players more dramatically than it does the average player. I am sure this was not your intention.

Personally, I think there should be no rating floors. Lifetime titles should alert a tournament director if a player is sandbagging.

Adam Bell
Cleveland, OH

ON THE CARPET
I just received my June issue. You might expect that I’d be thrilled by my first meaningful coverage in Chess Life.

I call your attention to the article. Am I wrong to cringe at the statement: “Jon admits to using ChessBase.” Why not just: “Jon uses ChessBase.” “Admits to” intimates that such use is illegal when it clearly is not.

Second, I am widely quoted as saying, in response to the question: “Which database should I buy?” that folks should buy the best engine, ChessBase, because they will wind up spending much more on data. Alex Dunne translates this to my saying that folks should buy the strongest computer possible, an absurd statement that again intimates that I am a cheat.

It is probable that Alex simply does not understand computer issues clearly, but isn’t that what editors are for?

Finally, given my PhD in African History, I cannot let pass Hanke’s blatant racism in Evans’ column. For years, racists used to say that blacks ought not to complain about racism in the U.S. because they’re better off than blacks in Africa — another absurd statement, but no different than Hanke’s. In the end, I agree with the gist of the main point — we ought to focus on chess. All the more reason why you and Evans ought not waste space on such a bigot. Perish the thought — more questions and answers about … chess.

Jon Edwards
Princeton

DOTTING THE “I”
In the summer extra issue of Chess Life, Alex Dunne comes up with a pretty good set of etiquette rules to be followed by correspondence chess players. However, I do take issue with his reference to postal chess lawyers. I suppose there are a few malcontented nitpickers who love to recite every nuance of postal chess rules to stir up a situation.

If that is all Mr. Dunne is referring to, I agree with him. More often than not, I suspect the complaints made are in a different category. Rules are rules and if the rules are petty then let us abolish them instead of calling the person petty who wishes to enforce them.

Whether it is how a knight moves in chess, or the proper recording of reflection time, or proper chess notation, all rules have some importance and are deserving of respect.

Recently, in a postal game, my opponent violated some rules of a minor nature. When I pointed it out to him, he did everything from ignoring me to outright name calling! Later, he accused me in effect of being exactly the kind of postal chess lawyer Mr. Dunne referred to in his column. He in effect called me a nitpicker and invited me to just play chess as though my complaints were a type of tactic to win the game.

Appropriately, Joan DuBois forfeited him when I sent her a copy of his postcards. The point of this letter is to point out the fine line between postal lawyers and real respecters of the rules. No one should expect that any rules on the books will not be enforced — no matter how technical they may be.

Ray Sollars
El Monte, CA

1997 INTERPLAY U.S. CHAMPIONSHIPS

The U.S. Chess Federation has announced a new format for the 1997 Interplay U.S. Championship, scheduled for August 22 through September 12 at the Sheraton San Marcos Golf Resort and Convention Center in Chandler, Arizona.

The semi-finals will be held September 3-6, and the six game finals September 7-12. All games will start at 3:00 PDT.

This year’s championship event shall consist of three stages. In Stage One, 16 of the country’s top players will square off in a two-player Round Robin. The top two finishers in each section shall move on to Stage Two, where they will meet in four-game mini-matches. The two finalists will meet in Stage Three in a six-game match for the title of U.S. Champion and the coveted U.S. Championship ring.

According to Eric C. Johnson, USCF Assistant Director, “USCF made the format change to bring an even higher level of excitement to the nation’s premier chess event. The chess public has a hunger for a one-on-one match-play.”

The eight-player rosters for Stage One are:

Group One
GM Alex Yermolinsky
GM Boris Gulko
GM Alexander Ivanov
GM Joel Benjamin
GM Larry Christiansen
GM John Fedorowicz
GM Walter Browne
Jorge Zamora Jr

Group Two
GM Gregory Kaidanov
GM Yasser Seirawan
GM Dmitry Gurevich
GM Nick de Firmian
GM Roman Dzindzichashvili
GM Alexander Shabalov
GM Sergey Kudrin
GM Gabriel Schwartzman

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BENT LARSEN’S COMEBACK

DENMARK'S legendary Bent Larsen wasn’t really expected to be in the running for the title when he returned to participate in this year’s national championship. After all, Bent peaked nearly 30 years ago and is now a 62-year-old suffering from a bit of diabetes and a great deal of forced passivity due to the fact that he lives in Buenos Aires, but still gets most of his invitations from Europe.

Although the old fighter didn’t win, Bent completely stole the show with a fresh blend of bold attacks mixed with nice technical performances. If you didn’t know better, Bent Larsen would certainly have seemed to be the youngest and most promising player in the tournament. And that the champion, 28-year-old GM Lars Bo Hansen, played like an old worn-out man.

Among those who Bent Larsen taught a lesson were Denmark’s reigning number one, Curt Hansen, and the young GM Peter Heine Nielsen. The first one got dribbled in an endgame, the other one just got clubbed.

SICILIAN DEFENSE [B66]

Richter-Rauzer Variation

W: GM Bent Larsen
B: GM Curt Hansen

1997 Danish Championship. Round 6


Improving on Robert Huebner’s 16. Nc1, which only got him into trouble against Vladimir Kramnik at last year’s tournament in Dortmund. This was a game Curt Hansen surely hoped to repeat — as Black won it in just 27 moves!

16. ... Rd8 17. Rxe5+ 18. fxe5 Nxe4 19. Qxe5 Bc8 20. Nd4 Be6 21. g4 Rab8?

This is where Black starts to go wrong. The continuation 21. ... Nxf2 22. Qxf2 Qb6 was okay for Black.

22. Bxe4 dxe4 23. b3 Bd5

On 23. ... Rd5 24. Qxe4 Rbd8 White has 25. Rd3.

24. Qg3 Qb6 25. Be3 Bxb3

Surely Curt Hansen saw the next 6-7 moves, but he was mistaken in thinking that it would give Black an easy draw.

26. axb3 Bxd4 27. Rxd4 Rxd4 28. e6! Rd8 29. e7

It’s not Black but White who will have to fight for a draw after 29. exf7+ Kxf7 30. Bxd4 Qxd4 31. Qf4+ Kg8 32. Qxe4 Qc3?

29. ... Rd1+ 30. Bc1 Rxc1+ 31. Kxc1 Rxe3 32. Rxe4 R6 33. Qd6 Qc3 34. Rxb4 Rxe7

Bent Larsen may be far more famous for his creativity and competitiveness, but in fact it was his ability to squeeze the most out of such small advantages (White’s passed c-pawn) that brought him bread and butter back in the 60s. By the way, over breakfast the next day Bent Larsen claimed that Black had missed at least two chances to draw the game.

35. Kb2 Kf7 36. Rf4 Qe6 37. h4 Qe5 38. Ka2 Rf7 39. Rd7+ Ke8 40. Rd8+ Kf7 41. Ra8 Qe4

I believe one chance was 41. ... Qb5.

42. h5! f5 43. Rxa6 Qe4 44. Qxe4 fxe4 45. Kbh2 e3

Starting a race which Black is bound to lose by a tempo or two.

46. Ra1 Kf7 47. Re1 Re8 48. c4 Kg5 49. b4 Kxg4 50. b5 Rcf7 51. Kc3 Kf3 52. Kb4 Kf2 53. Rc1 e2 54. c5 e1=Q+ 55. Rxe1 Kxe1 56. b6, Black resigns.

There was no way to halt Bent Larsen’s pawn storms after 56. ... Rf7 57. c6 etc.

SICILIAN DEFENSE [B36]

Accelerated Fianchetto

W: Peter Heine Nielsen
B: GM Bent Larsen


The young GM Peter Heine is currently working on a book about the Sicilian Dragon, and what better way to do that than letting Larsen play his old pet opening?

6. ... g6 7. Be2 Nxd4 8. Qxd4 Bg7 9. Be3 0-0 10. Qd2 Bd7

The main line goes 10. ... Be6 but Bent has always tried to bend opening theory to fit his own style and mood.

11. 0-0 a5 12. b3 Be6 13. f3 Nd7 14. Rab1 Nc5 15. Rf1 e6?

Psychologically perhaps the most critical point in the game. The majority of the White army has moved to the Queenside, so, bold as always, Bent Larsen decides to take direct action. As for Peter Heine, he knew the danger perfectly well, but mixed up his prepared lines.

16. Nh5 Be5 17. Rd1?

Last exit before a full scale catastrophe was 17. Nd4 and Nxe6.

17. ... Qh4+ 18. g3 (diagram)

Bxg3! 19. hxg3 Qxg3+ 20. Kh1

Going West with 20. Kh1 wasn’t really an option: 20. ... Nxe4 21. fxe4 f5! and now 22. e5 Bg2+ 23. Kg1 Bxh3+ 24. Kh1 Qg2+ mate, or 22. Bf2 e4 intending 23. ... e3. Peter Heine’s mistake that he only anticipated this position with ... Bxb5 already played, which would allow Kh1.

20. ... Nxe4! 21. Qd3 Qh3+ 22. Kg1 Ng3 23. Nd4?

Running like a rabbit with 23. Kf1 was absolutely White’s last chance. Larsen continued in the style that brought him so much success back in the 1960s.

23. ... Be4 24. fxe4 Qh1+ 25. Kf2 Nxe4+ 26. Qxe4 Qxe4

Don’t let the number of pieces fool you. White’s king is still a target, while the wall of Black pawns neutralizes any kind of counterplay.


This small accident in time-trouble wasn’t important since 38. Kg2 Qxa2 would just add pawn number five to Black’s collection.

38. ... Qh3+, White resigns.


1997 INTERPLAY CHAMPIONSHIPS CONTINUED FROM PAGE 7

4. WIM Anna Khan PA 2270
5. Jennifer Shahade PA 2243
6. Ivona Jezierska CA 2237
7. Tatjana Zitserman MN 2218
8. Jennie Frenklakh CA 2208
9. Irina Krush NY 2192
10. WIM Sharon Burtman CA 2176

Should an unforeseen emergency arise, the official alternate is:

11. WIM Alexey Root TX 2131

GM Alex

Yermolinsky

DEFENDING

INTERPLAY

CHAMPIONS

WGM Anjelina

Belakovskaja

11. 0-0 a5 12. b3 Be6 13. f3 Nd7 14. Rab1

WGM Anjelina Belakovskaja

The U.S. Chess Federation has announced the field for the 1997 Interplay U.S. Women’s Championship, scheduled for August 22 through September 2, at the Sheraton San Marcos Golf Resort and Convention Center in Chandler, Ariz.

The 1997 event is a traditional 10-player Round Robin, including:

1. WGM Anjelina Belakovskaja NY 2427
2. WGM Anna Gulko NJ 2397
3. WIM Esther Epstein MA 2296
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by Ann Campbell

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VOLUNTEER OF THE MONTH

PETER DYSON

by Jim Eade

If you need someone to host a state chess meeting, run a tournament; write a chess article or take over the state Treasurer’s duties at the last minute, rated chess expert Peter Dyson of Merritt Island, Florida can always be counted on to do the job and do it well. Peter is chairman of the board and CEO of Software Productivity Solutions, Inc. The Florida Chess Association (FCA) conducts its board meetings in office space at the company’s Indialantic, Florida headquarters.

When Peter took over as FCA Treasurer, he turned the Florida financial statements into easily read documents that serve as a solid foundation for the FCA Board’s decision process. Peter is the organizer and fundraiser for Florida’s Annual Space Coast Opon. Started by Peter in 1991, this tournament has grown in attendance and stature each year. This year’s tournament attracted 120 participants and was won by GM Sergey Kudrin. The editor of floridaCHESS knows he can always depend on Peter to submit timely articles in finished format. Currently, Peter is helping a young Soviet IM émigré establish a chess camp.

When asked how much time he puts into chess, Peter will reply, “More time than I have” — yet he never refuses to do more. Peter loves the game of chess and typifies the many unsung volunteers around the country who selflessly give to chess and enjoy doing it. How much does Peter love chess? Enough so that he was able to use his influence to name the very street he lives on, Chess Cove Lane.

EMPLOYEE OF THE MONTH

MARION HOFFMAN

by Sonia Lynch

Ever since she started at USCF in 1982, Marion Hoffman’s work has been characterized by accuracy, responsibility and efficiency. During each of the audits in which I have been involved, the auditors have remarked on the accuracy and completeness of the filing system, which has enabled us to answer any questions and provide back-up for their questions on Accounts Payable or Payroll in record time. This leads to a justified confidence in the system.

There have been remarkably few problems raised by vendors or staff — which is the best yardstick with which to judge performance. Marion is always willing to answer questions and has been an important member of the Accounting Department for the last 15 years, taking on Payroll and doing Personnel functions when necessary.

USCF is pleased to announce that applications for the title of FIDE Master (FM) have been initiated for the following USCF members:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NAME</th>
<th>AGE</th>
<th>CITY, STATE</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alex Balandin</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>Burnsville, Minnesota</td>
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<tr>
<td>John D. Bick</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>New Orleans, Louisiana</td>
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<td>Lawrence Chachere</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>New York, New York</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jacob Chudnowsky</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>Cincinnati, Ohio</td>
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<td>Alex Dunne</td>
<td>55</td>
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<td>Leonid Filatov</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>Chapel Hill, North Carolina</td>
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<td>George Francis Kane</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>Minneapolis, Minnesota</td>
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<td>Peter Peits</td>
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<td>Eugene Pereishyyn</td>
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<td>Ronald Simpson</td>
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<td>Alan Stein</td>
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<td>Vladimir Strugatsky</td>
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<td>Palo Alto, California</td>
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<td>David Vigolto</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>Las Vegas, Nevada</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kari Yoo</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>Pasadena, California</td>
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U.S. SENIOR CHAMPIONSHIP

Jerry Simon, of New York City, won the 1996 U.S. Senior Championship, which was held last October 12-19, aboard the S.S. Century, which was aesa in the Caribbean. Jerry, 53, scored 5½/6, just ahead of Max Wilkerson, 71, of Colma, California, and Boris Gurevich, 63, of Brooklyn, New York, both of whom finished 5-1. A total of 39 players took part in the cruise. The 1997 U.S. Senior Open will be drydocked at the Howard Johnson’s Ocean Resort in Deerfield Beach, Florida.

The U.S. Senior Open is open to all who are 50 years old or older by October 12, 1997. This year’s event will be sponsored by the Florida Chess Association and the USCF, and boasts a guaranteed prize fund of $2,500, with a $500 first place prize. For more information, see the display advertisement and the Tournament Life Announcement on page 62 of this issue.
PLAYER OF THE MONTH

IGOR IVANOV

Is he making a run for his ninth Novag Grand Prix title? Judging by the Grand Prix standings this month, it would certainly seem as though IM Igor Ivanov has once again found his stride. He is in 1st place with a healthy lead over Dmitry Gurevich, primarily due to his victory in the Lina Grummete Memorial Day Classic (see page 52).

The Novag Grand Prix standings are on page 78.

CATCHING UP

We can't tell you all that much about the 1996 (!) U.S. Action Championship, except that local support in Canton, Ohio, contributed greatly to the overall turnout of 173 players. Below are the top finishers in each section. The event was held September 14, 1996. ☞

1996 U.S. ACTION G/30 CHAMPIONSHIP

SEPTEMBER 13-14, 1996
CANTON, OH


Grades 7-12: 1st: Jacob Johnson, 5; 2nd: Nathan Hudson, 5; 3rd: Seve Martinez, 4½; 4th-7th: Brodie Butland, Katherine Thorn, Frederick Benfield, Darren True, 4.


1997 U.S. GAME/10 CHAMPIONSHIP

1st: Lawrence Butler, WI, 6½; 2nd-3rd: Alan Watson, IL; Leslie Keller, IN; 6; Class A: John Rick, IA; 6; Class B: Matthew Hoeft, NC; 6; Class C: Gailon Sronce, IL; 5; Class D: Greg Weber, IL; 5; Class E: Keith Middleton, IL; 4; Class F: Nathan Kroes, IN; 4; Class G: Alexandar Kamazes, CA; 3½; Unrated: Richard Gregg, IL; 3.

SPOTLIGHT

“2000 by the year 2000!” Now that’s a goal if ever there was one. And it is also the battle cry for Dennis Okola of Kents Store, Virginia (as reported by USCF Sales representative Vince Klemm).

BATTLE CRY

GOOD SAMARITANS

Good Samaritans try to make a difference every day. Mark Hunt of Ray Brook, New York, certainly proved that at the Chess Life offices. Stopping in for a visit, he saw us selling cookies and snacks in order to raise money for shelving for our library (which has been in boxes since we moved last summer). A generous check for $100 got us started in the right direction. And as we spread the word, a check for $50 from Myron and Rachel Lieberman soon followed. ☞

Please turn to page 79.

Join FIDE World Champion ANATOLY KARPOV at the NATIONAL OPEN in Las Vegas March 26-29, 1998

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GM Follies

At last count, the Chess Informant was using 57 symbols, punctuation marks, and letters in their annotated games to take the place of words — and sometimes, it seems to take the place of thinking.

Among them is “N” for “Novelty” — formerly known as “TN” for “Theoretical Novelty” — to designate some new and wonderful addition to opening theory. Of course, not every good move is new — and not every new move is good. In fact, the last few years have seen a remarkable plague of Hls — Horrible Innovations. A few examples:

DUTCH DEFENSE


This is a known, if speculative, gambit, whose main point is that mate arrives early after, say, 6. ... PXA 7. N-K5 and 8. QXP. The “book” gives 6. ... B-N2, preparing castling, with a crucial line running 7. B-Q4 P-QN4! 8. N-N5! PXB 9. QXPch K-K2 10. N-K8! Q-N1! — believe it or not.

6. ... P-Q4?? 7. N-K5
Black can resign (7. ... Q-Q3 8. QXPch K-Q1 9. N-B7ch).

7. ... R-N1 8. QXPch R-N3 9. QXR!, Black resigns.

Okay, that was a case of mere masters treading in obscure waters. What about

strong grandmasters? The story is similar.

PIERC DEFENSE

7. P-KR3 N-B3 8. P-Q5 N-QR4

This is more of a trap than a TN. Usually the Black knight retreats to QN1 and re-emerges later at Q2 or R3. But here he tries to tempt White into 9. P-QN4? PXP 10. PXB which seems to trap the offside knight — but loses the White queen rook to 10. ... N1-K.

It’s Black’s next move, in place of the expected 9. ... B5, that makes the opening original — and memorable.


Those innovations are not likely to be repeated. But some really bad, yet not immediately refutable, novelties were tried more than once — and became famous enough to be recognized with their own name. Among them:

THE ORSINI GAMBIT

1. P-K4 P-K4 2. P-KB4 PXP 3. P-QN3?! analyzed at the end of the last century by someone named Emilio Orsini — and by almost no one since.

THE GUATEMALA DEFENSE

1. P-K4 P-QN3 2. P-Q4 B-R3?, used in a 1949 correspondence game by the Guatemalan Chess Club, with no other discernible benefit than to get out of “book” as quickly as possible.

THE JEROME GAMBIT


THE SCHWARTZ DEFENSE

This defense to the Queen’s Gambit Accepted is an anti-positional horror — 1. P-Q4 P-Q4 2. P-QB4 PXP 3. P-K4 P-KB4?, attributed to, or rather blamed on, a Wilhelm Schwartz of Livonia.

THE ATKINSON VARIATION

A variation of the Center Counter Defense, which had been proposed by a British amateur, Walter Atkinson, and was tried once in international play (Vergani-Blackburne, Hastings 1895). After 1. P-K4 P-Q4 2. PXP P-QB3?! 3. PXp P-K4? (The Atkinson Variation is the Danish Gambit for Black which means that he a move down over the usual line.) which

gives Black scant compensation for his sacrificed material.

There’s also the infamous Chicago Gambit. Never heard of it? It’s not something the Windy city would like to be proud of. Here’s how it came about.

Harry Nelson Pillsbury was giving one of his celebrated simul displays on January 7, 1889 in Chicago. The U.S. Champion played checkers on 10 boards and chess on 27, alternating between Black and White, and scored 27 wins, seven draws and only three losses altogether. One of his chess losses as Black was so remarkable that his opponent’s third move was hailed by the newspapers as the “Chicago Gambit.”

CHICAGO GAMBIT

1. P-K4 P-K4 2. N-KB3 P-QB3 3. NXP?!

In his blindfold displays, opponents often tried to get Pillsbury “out of book” quickly in the mistaken belief that his skill was just a memory trick. One of his games from a 1902 exhibition at the Philidor Club in Paris ended in mate after 10 moves that began 1. P-K4 P-KB4! 2. PXP P-KB2??.

Here White’s innovation is a wildly unsound piece sacrifice but it seems to induce a dangerously false sense of security on Pillsbury’s part.


From this point White has real compensation on the light squares now that Black’s knights are deprived of the key dark ones at K4 and (after P-KN5) KB3.


The only way to safeguard the kingside now, but his sacrifice of the Exchange in three more moves was unnecessary.

PxB 33. QxP
Incredibly, White is winning. Pillsbury was never outplayed this badly from a won position, in any of his many tournaments and matches with much better players.


Also, there was a world champion, Adolph Anderssen, who was credited with all sorts of gambits back in the middle of the 19th century. Among those you won’t see recommended in the opening books is this disaster: 1. P-K4 P-K4 2. B-B4 P-QN4? 3. BxP P-KB4? 4. P-Q4! KPxP 5. QxP N-KB3 6. PxP B-N2 7. P-KB3 and White won easily in Mongredien–Anderssen (London 1851).

What’s the worst-ever HI? There are many candidates but this should be a contender.

**SCOTCH GAME**

W: Jousser
B: Kiprov

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This had all been played before and is better than 16. PxP QxPch 17. K-B1 B-Q6 or 16. P-K6 N-Q4 and wins.

16. ... Q-B6 17. R-QB1! PxP

It’s not clear how much of this had been analyzed before, but White’s most promising try is 18. RxQ P-R8=Qch 19. K-B2, after all, if you knew enough to play White’s 17th move — in a postal game, when you can move the pieces — you would have looked this far.


However, White found a remarkably bad alternative, one that certainly gets him out of “book.”

18. White resigns??

It’s hard to find a new move worse than that.

---

**The following book by Andy Soltis is available from U.S. CHESS:**


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EVSANS ON CHESS
by Grandmaster Larry Evans

THOUGHT FOR THE MONTH: “By not winning the title from Botvinnik in 1951 I put a shadow on my chess career, and it is a little sad that I have had to read and hear for more than 40 years that I am not a good player. It seems all my other achievements in chess have been ignored.” — GM David Bronstein

THE BEST QUESTION
Malcolm Peskoff
Bronx, New York

Q. A game against Ratmir Holmov in The New York Times, on December 15, 1963, is not included in the complete collection of Mikhail Tal’s games or any other source I could locate, including various opening games. Was it really played by the indicated players or was there some kind of error? Finally, what’s your opinion of Tal’s 13... B-Q1 instead of the customary 13... BxN?

A. We searched under Holmov as well as Holmov and couldn’t find it either. However, a speed event took place in Moscow in conjunction with a great international tournament there in 1963. The following item in Tal’s autobiography The Life And Games Of Mikhail Tal (page 249) sheds light on the mystery: “My third individual tournament in a row was the Championship of Moscow University... in lightning chess, in which some of our guests took part. Out of 19 games I lost one, drew none, and came ahead of Holmov (who took second place) by 2½ points.”

The timing is right. This fast game was omitted from anthologies because it was not played under tournament conditions.

SICILIAN DEFENSE

W: GM Ratmir Holmov  B: GM Mikhail Tal

Position after 37... PxP


The fact that Holmov got mated instead of resigning a move or two sooner also tends to indicate it was a speed game. With various time controls in effect today, it’s hard to tell under which conditions a game was played.

READERS’ MAILBAG
Terence M. Shuman
St. Joseph, Missouri

Q. I read, with great sadness, the comment about the coercion used to the 1948 World Championship. It taints the achievements of Mikhail Botvinnik, whom I had long admired. It strains credulity to suggest he knew nothing of the pressure put on Paul Keres to throw the match. In particular, I was struck by Bill Brock’s comment that “no one told Bronstein not to win his match with Botvinnik, but he implicitly understood that it wouldn’t be a good idea.” That jogged something in my memory, so I pulled out Catalog Of Chess Mistakes by Andy Soltis.

Sure enough, I found this position (see diagram) on page 7 from their sixth match game in 1951. GM Soltis writes: “Bronstein was leading in a match for the world title when he threw away a certain draw in this game. He eventually drew the match — letting the champion retain the title — and never got close to the championship again.”

Instead of 57. N6-N5 followed by N6-Q4 which draws easily, Bronstein lost after 1. Kc2?? Kg5. Soltis quotes Bronstein’s explanation for the blunder: “Now that time pressure was over and it was necessary only to give N6 check, I began to recall...”

Without the opening of the game, smiling at the refinement of his eighth move for a whole 45 minutes, and then unexpectedly I took hold of the king. It had to move.”

Soltis concludes: “So the world championship may have been lost through daydreaming and a slip of the finger — not the miscalculation the chess world assumed.” Given what we know now, I’m not so sure. Despite GM Bronstein’s amusing “explanation” I can’t dismiss a darker possibility. What do you think?

A. We can only go by what Bronstein himself had to say in The Sorcerer’s Apprentice (USCF Order No. 7916B, Members Price $18.95): “I have been asked many, many times if I was obliged to lose the 23rd game and if there was a conspir- acy to stop me from taking Botvinnik’s title.

“The only thing I am prepared to say about all this controversy is that I was subjected to strong psychological pressure from various sources and it was entirely up to me to yield to that pressure or not. Let’s leave it at that.

“Playing for the title of World Champion is the dream of every chess player but deep inside me, subconsciously, I must have had no real ambition to win. Otherwise I cannot explain why I did not win the match when, only two games from the end, all the odds were in my favor... Anyhow, even if I had won the match, I am not sure that I would have been able to call myself World Champion for long because the rules, created by Botvinnik, gave him the right to join the next World Championship contest and play.”

Each month, five-time U.S. champion Larry Evans shares the most interesting items from his mailbox with Chess Life readers. Comments in italics are by Grandmaster Evans. Because of the volume of mail, submissions cannot be returned, and personal replies are not possible. Send your letters to:

Larry Evans on Chess
Chess Life
3054 Route 9W
New Windsor, NY 12553

BETSY QUESTION CONTEST

If you have a dynamite question, Chess Life has the contest for you. Each month, GM Larry Evans will award an Informant or a book of comparable dollar value to the reader who sends in the most interesting question. In addition, the reader who submits the outstanding query during each half of the year will receive a copy of The Even More Complete Chess Addict by Fox and James. To enter, send your questions to the address above.

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for the title in a tournament with three participants: the present World Champion, his new challenger and Botvinnik himself. “I think that if you cannot defend your title in the same way that you get it you’re not a real World Champion.”

The introduction by Bronstein’s wife states: “The truth is that Devik was afraid to be proclaimed the official World Champion.”

“If the son of an enemy of the people, moreover being Jewish, had surreptitiously climbed to the top of the pyramid of the chess world it would have been considered a flaw in The System, especially if the family history of the new champion had been made public. Few people knew that, when Devik played this match in the Tchaikovskiy Hall, his parents were sitting in the first rank in the audience. As a former prisoner of several camps [for seven years], it was forbidden for his father to be in Moscow. Sitting close by in his loge was the powerful chief of the KGB, General V.S. Abakumov [the same man who met with Molotov in 1946 to discuss the fate of Keres]. And, in spite of his subconscious desire not to become World Champion, Devik did not lose this match [on purpose] to Botvinnik whom he did not regard as such an exceptionally good player as most thought he was.

“One day the authorities found the right opportunity to eliminate Devik altogether. After the 1976 IBM tournament in Amsterdam, Victor Korchnoi chose not to return to the Soviet Union. Among the names of grandmasters that condemned Korchnoi for this, the one of Bronstein was missing. It was then that they remembered he was a friend of Korchnoi and that he had helped him during his match with Anatoly Karpov, the flagbearer of Soviet chess. This was sufficient to close the door to participation in tournaments in the West for the next 14 years.

“Devik continued to participate in local tournaments of minor importance with players of lesser strength and, as a result, his rating deteriorated; but the quality of his games remained high. Now the officials told him that with such a rating he could no longer participate in prestigious tournaments. A wind of change coincided with the appearance of ‘perestroika’ in 1986.”

“The tight leash was slackened and Devik was allowed to play a tournament in Yugoslavia at the personal invitation of GM Svetozar Gligoric.”

**READERS’ SHOWCASE**

ILLEGAL MOVE WINS GAME!
Jason W. Cornish
Holt, Missouri

I recall one of your newspaper columns where you showed how an illegal move saved a hopeless position. Something equally bizarre happened to me in a rapid tournament. In severe time-pressure, I was a move away from being mated when I promoted a pawn to a knight, giving check. This forced my opponent to move his king to a certain square; then I mated him on the very next move with my rook.

Sounds great, huh? It would have been — except when I promoted my pawn I grabbed the wrong colored knight! Neither of us noticed this. He resigned, we shook hands, marked the result on the scoresheet, and I went into the next room. Suddenly a friend rushed in to tell me about a controversy in my game.

Apparently my opponent discovered the mistake. Nevertheless, to say there was a big fuss that ended in calling it a draw. How should the director rule this game, and has this ever happened to any of the Big Dogs (great players) such as yourself?

**A. These errors must be corrected before the game is over — otherwise it’s too late. The rules clearly state: “The game is won by the player whose opponent declares he resigns.” It never happened to me, but I saw it twice in my career. Here’s the game reported in my newspaper column.**

**KING’S INDIAN DEFENSE**

W: James McCormick
B: Brian Zavodnik

Western States Open, Reno, 1994


**WHAT’S THE BEST MOVE?**

**I. White moves**

A. P-KR3
B. N-QR4
C. N-K1

**II. White moves**

A. B-B7ch
B. Q-N1
C. Q-R5

**III. White moves**

A. P-N6
B. B-N2
C. P-N3

**IV. White moves**

A. R-N7ch
B. QxP
C. QxR

You have three options to consider for each of the positions above, but only one of them is The Best Move. When you’ve decided which move you would play in each position, Check It Out on page 81.
97th U.S. Open, Continued

To continue our survey of the 1996 U.S. Open, I select several rook endgames, which frequently occur in tournaments of all levels.

DOUBLED PAWNS

Naturally White is better with an active king and rook. But in rook endgames it is sometimes not possible to realize an advantage. The first move is obvious: White must go after the passed pawn, not allowing 51. exd5 f6+ 52. Ke4 (or 52. Rx6 Rxd5+) 52. ... Ra7 etc.

51. Ra6 a4

Black does not want to straighten out the white pawns by 51. ... dxe4 52. fxe4.

52. exd5 f6+ 53. Ke4 Rb7 54. Rxa4 Rb2

White is two pawns up, but they are doubled. The black rook is activated so the issue is still cloudy.

55. Ra7+ Kd6 56. Ra6+ Ke7 57. d6+ Kd7

If 57. ... Ke6 58. d7+! Kxd7 59. Rxd6 looks good for White.

58. Kd5 Rb5+ 59. Kc4 Rh5?!

The move 59. ... Rf5! looks safer.

60. d5 Rxb3 61. Kc5 Rxf3 62. Ra7+ Kd8 63. d7 (see diagram, top of next column) 63. ... Rb3?

The losing move. Black’s only chance was 63. ... Ke7, after which the win is not clear. White’s best try is 64. d8=Q+ Kxd8 65. Kd6 Ke8 (but not 65. ... Ke8? 66. Ke6), when Black still might survive.

64. Kc6 Rb8

Now that the Black rook is in a passive position, White can go for mate.

65. d6 b5 66. Ra1 h4 67. Re1 and White won.

ROOK PAWNS

Next we see both players missing some fine points which are worthy of study.

M. Lance (1900) - H. Wachtel (2220)

White to move

S. McClelland (2153) - J. Curdo (2414)

Black to move

Black is better because the e-pawn is isolated and over-advanced.

25. ... Kd7 26. g4

White tries to stop the threat of 26. ... Ke6 and 27. ... Kg5.

26. ... Ke6

This is a natural move but not necessarily the best. In order to win the e-pawn, Black has to minimize White’s possible counterplay. To do that I suggest 26. ... Rf4 27. h3 Rf3 28. Kg2 Rd3 followed by ... Ke6 and ... Rd5, when the White king is cut off. Or (after 26. ... Rf4 27. h3) 27. ... Ke6 now, since 28. Kg2 Rd4 29. Kf3 Rd3+ 30. Kf4 Rxf3 wins the h-pawn, and the e-pawn is still weak.

27. Kg2 Rd8

Black goes after the e-pawn but it only ties up the White rook; therefore, he might use a different strategy by 27. ... c5 to mobilize his queenside pawns. If 28. Rd2 Rf7 secures the seventh rank while still keeping out the White king.

28. Kg3 g5?!

However, here keeping out the White king with a pawn creates weaknesses which give White an opportunity for counterplay.


Obviously something has gone wrong for Black. He has won a pawn but at the price of activating White’s rook. The attempt to create two passed pawns fails: 35. ... a5 36. Rxa6 Rxa2 37. Rb6 and he ends up only with his rook pawn.

35. ... Rh6 36. h4 Ra6 37. Rxb7?

It was careless to lose another pawn — even if it is a rook pawn. After 37. hxg5 hxg5 38. Rxb7 Ra3+ White can draw without any difficulties, because the g5-pawn is also vulnerable.

37. ... Ra3+ 38. Kg2 Rxa2+ 39. Kh3 Ra3+ 40. Kh2 g4xh4 41. Rh5+?

White helps Black by chasing the king. If White wants to win the h6-pawn he should just play 41. Kh7.

41. ... Kg4 42. Rh5

If 42. Rh4+ Kg5 and ... h3 and ... Kh4 could be played.

42. ... Kxh4 43. Rxb6 Ra2+ 44. Kg1

White’s king pays for the chase; Black’s king and rook push it to the first rank. Sometimes it is possible to draw against two rook pawns but not when the king is in this position.

44. ... a5 45. Kg6+ Kh3 46. Rh6

A better defense is 46. Rd6 intending horizontal checks.

46. ... a4 47. Rh8?

This is the last chance for 47. Rc6. Now Black can quickly end the game.

47. ... Rg2+ 48. Kg1 Rg4

And this draws out the game; after 48. ... a3 and ... a2 the game is resignable. The rest does not need comment.

49. Rc8 Kh2 50. Rc2+ Kh1 51. Rc3 Rf4+ 52. Ke1 Kg2 53. Rc2+ Kg3 54. Rc3+

ERRATA

In Endgame Lab in the Special Summer issue (page 25), the colors were incorrectly identified in the game Rosner-Graybeal. Mr. Rosner played White and won.

The colors were also reversed in C. Schlechter-R. Spielmann.
Now Black is in a quandary; if 45. ... Ke7 46. Kc5 and the passed b-pawn is too strong.
45. ... Rxb4+ 46. Kc5!
If 46. Kxd5? Ke7 and Black has good drawing chances with four against three on the same side.
46. ... Rxa4 47. Rxf7+ Ke8 48. Rf6 Rh3
49. Kxd5 Rg3 50. f4 Rxe5 51. Rxc6
White’s success in creating two connected passed pawns makes the game hopeless for Black.
51. ... h4 52. Rh6 h3 53. Kd4 Rg3 54. Ke4 Kf7 55. Ke5 Kg7 56. Kf5 Kg8 57. Kg6, Black resigned.

Next our talented teenager puts up stiffer resistance.

Irina Krush (2071)—GM A. Yermolinsky
White to move

The queens have just been traded. Black stands better because of White’s isolated pawn on c4 but it is not easy to take advantage of it — Black also has a weak backward pawn on d6.
Black prepares to bring his king to help the d-pawn. Meanwhile White aims to chase the knight from its dominating post.
27. Rb5 Kg6 28. Rd5 Ke7 29. Rd3 Ra6

33. e4
So far White has defended well, but this move is dangerous, opening up the second rank. If White wants to protect the c-pawn with her king, safer is Kf2-Ke3 etc.
33. ... Ke6 34. Ke2?
The right move was 34. Rd2 Ra4 35. Rd2, when White still can hold on.
34. ... Ra4 35. Kd3
If 34. c5 Ra2+ 35. Kf1 still loses a pawn but it gives better chances than in the game.
35. ... Ra2! 36. Rb1
White places her hope for a counterattack on 37. Rb6 after 36. ... Rxb2.
36. ... Ra3+! 37. Ke2 Rxc4 38. Rb6
White persists to no avail. She could do better but she most likely was in time pressure.

I am that, given a little more experience, Irina will hold endgames like this.

**Summary:** Pros will work to secure an advantage. Then they will try to force an error, but after it has been committed they are careful not to give their opponent a chance to get back into the game.

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**BENKO’S BAFFLERS**

Send submissions to Benko’s Bafflers, Chess Life, 3054 Route 9W, New Windsor, NY 12553.

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Most studies resemble positions that could occur over-the-board. You must simply reach a theoretically won or drawn position for White.
If you think you’ve got the right answers — or if you're simply baffled — Check It Out on page 81.
Opening Characteristics and Middlegame Deviations

An inconsistency between what you say about an opening and what happens in the resulting middle game is noted from time to time by some bright neophytes. How is it possible that an opening that you tell them is "quiet, conservative and positional" erupts into an adventurous middlegame?

It does not do any good to say that what you are showing them is an aberrant case, that most games proceeding from that opening are instead positional and quiet and conservatively contested. Because there are too many such deviants and it sounds, after a while, as though you are making excuses for what was in the first place an incorrect characterization.

The fault, if it really is one, lies in chess itself. The game is so free, so unconfined, so juicy, so replete with complexity that it mocks rigid characterizations. That is why we are attracted to it. Never totally predictable, it escapes routine. So, it is not unusual for a quiet opening to burst into violence and, of course, for a sharp debut to collapse into a dull, drawish middle game.

In this month's games, both from the 28th Mar del Plata Open in Argentina, White chooses unhurried development. In the first, the Argentine International Master Marcelo Tempone, as Black, brilliantly converts his game with Alejandro Acosta of Columbia into an arena for his creative attacking play. In the second, the Argentine Grandmaster Hugo Spangenberg, playing White against Cristian Dolezal of Argentina, suddenly lashes out with an ingenious combination that wins beautifully.

**QUEEN'S GAMBIT DECLINED**

W: Alejandro Acosta  
B: IM Marcelo Tempone  
Mar del Plata, 1997

1. Nf3 Nf6 2. d4 e6 3. c4 c5 4. e3  
It is true that 4. e3 avoids the hectic struggle of the Benoni Defense that occurs after 4. d5, yet it does not just lapse into a sterile draw, if that's what Acosta was hoping.

4. ... d5 5. Nc3 Nc6

This position was considered by Siegbert Tarrasch to be the "normal pattern of this defense," representing best play for both sides. White's next is a waiting move that encourages Black to play 6. ... cxd4 7. exd4 c6 8. Bxc6. In this case, however, it turns out that 6. a3 is not wasted but looks toward a later Ba2-b1 (or Bb3-Bc2) and Qd3, when the White queen and bishop battery, aimed at a black castled king position, cannot be disturbed by ... Nb4.

6. a3 a6  
But Black can wait, too. In this line of the Tarrasch, either side can play to isolate the other's d-pawn. The choice depends on whether you want to play for mate or win an endgame.

7. dxc5 Bxc5 8. b4 Ba7 9. Bb2 0-0 10. cxd5 exd5 11. Be2  
So, Black is the lucky/unlucky one with the isolated d5 pawn. But it is plain that Tempone is not unhappy because he could obtain a flat equality with the bloodletting beginning with 11. ... d4, yet he has no interest in that.

11. Re8 12. 0-0 Qd6  
Perhaps Acosta should now play 13. Rc1, and if 13. ... Bg4, then 14. Nd4 Bxe2 15. Nxe2.

13. Qc2 Bg4 14. h3  
This "putting the question to the bishop," as Nimzovich called it, is not wise in this type of position. For one thing, 14. ... Bh5 leaves the bishop with a smile on its face. But, more important, White does not have the luxury of two weakening pawn moves on the kingside, and he is soon going to feel the need for a second.

14. ... Bh5 15. Rfd1 Rad8 16. Rd2  
Acosta seems to be aiming to punish his opponent for not defending his d5 pawn with 14. ... Be6, but he is ignoring Tempone's buildup to a powerful mating attack.

16. ... Bb8 17. g3

This would not have been an error if he had not played 14. h3, because then the pawn at g3 would have been adequately defended. He could not have availed himself of 17. Kf1 because 17. ... dxg3 18. Qh4 Qh2 19. Bh5 Nxd4 20. Rxd4 Rxd4 21. Bf3 Rd7 leaves Tempone with a rook for bishop and pawn. Moreover, 17. Rad1 d4! 18. Na4 Bxf3 19. Bxf3 Qh2+ 20. Kf1 dxe3! 21. fxg3 (21. Rxd7 loses outright to 21. ... e2+!) 21. ... Rxd2 22. Qxd2 Ne5! 23. Bxe5 (23. Bxb7 loses to 23. ... Nc4!) 23. ... Qxe5 favors Black.

17. ... Rxe3!


18. Kg2 d4!  
Tempone's attack is now a juggernaut.

19. Rad1 Bxf3+ 20. Bxf3 d3!

Once again it is forbidden to take Tempone's rook: thus 21. fxg3 Qxg3+ 22. Kh1 Qxf3+ 23. Kg1 Qxe3+ 24. Kh1 Qxh3+ 25. Kg1 Ba7+ 26. Rf2 and now 26. ... dxc2 is annihilating.

Acosta wanted to be spared such grisly details as 24. Kh2 Neg4+! 25. hxg4 Nhxg4+ 26. Kg1 Ba7+.

PIRC DEFENSE

W: GM Hugo Spangenberg
B: FM Cristiano Dolezal

Mar del Plata, 1997

1. Nf3 g6 2. e4 Bg7 3. d4 d6 4. Nc3 Nf6
5. Be2

This quiet, positional form of meeting the Pirc Defense is popular because it does not overextend the White position nor concede any weaknesses for Black to proceed against. Although there is nothing wrong with Black’s setup, it is not so easy for him to find counterplay.

5. ... 0-0 6. d4 a6

The plan of creating counterplay by advancing on the queenside with 7 ... b5 is good, but prevented by Spangenberg’s reply.

7. a4

The only problem that this move might create would be the weakening of the b4 square. It is, however, not easy to back up a knight reaching such an outpost nor to prevent White from kicking it out with a timely c3.

7. ... Nc6

The idea now is 8. ... e5 9. d5 Ne7 followed by moving the king knight and thrusting for a mating attack with f5. The exchanges with 9. dxe5 Nxe5 10. Nxe5 dxe5 11. Qxd8 Rxd8 are not promising for White.

8. d5

On 8. ... Ne5, there could come 9. Nxe5 dxe5 10. Be3 with a slight but clear superiority for White.

8. ... Nb8 9. a5 Bg4 10. Be3 Nbd7 11. h3 Bxf3 12. Bxf3 c5

Dolezal has a sort of belated Benoni formation, but without the usual sting that Black gets.


Dolezal hopes for play on the b-file, but the point b2 is easily defended. No criticism is intended — it’s hard to see what else Black should have done.


While the Black pieces are massed on the queen’s wing, Spangenberg comes knocking at the Black king’s door.

22. ... Ne8 23. fxg6 fxg6 24. Qf2 Nf6

Neither would 24. ... Bf6 have stopped Spangenberg’s next drive.

25. e5! Nd7 26. e6 Ne5 27. Qh4

It’s a difficult question whether Dolezal should have forced an endgame with 27. ... Nxe4 28. Qxc4 Qb3 29. Qxb3 Rxb3. For example, 30. Bg5 Ra7 31. Rf7 Bf8 32. Bf4 Ra6 looks good for White, yet he still must develop a concrete plan if he is to win.

27. ... Rf8 28. Bg5 Qb7 29. Rxf8+ Bxf8 30. Qe4 Bg7

Perhaps Dolezal believed that he was safe here, but Spangenberg has a clever plan.

31. Be2 Qb3

32. Bxe7!

This is it! A nice sacrifice to break open the Black position and put the White center pawns to work.

32. ... Qxa2 33. Bxd6

Since the Black knight is trapped — right in the center of the board — Spangenberg recovers some material at once.

33. ... Qxb2 34. Bxe5 Bxe5 35. Qxe5 Qb1+ 36. Kh2 Qf5 37. Qxf5 gxf5

Spangenberg had to have calculated this endgame precisely because the Black a-pawn is dangerous.

38. d6 a4 39. Bh5

One point is that there is no time for 39. ... Kg7 40. e7 Kg6 41. e8=Q Rxe8 42. Bxe8 a3 because 43. d7 Ke7 44. Bf7 wins for White.

39. ... a3 40. e7 a2 41. d7 a1=Q 42. e8=Q+ Kg7 43. Qf7+ Kh6 44. Qf6+ Kxh5 45. Qxf5+ Kh6 46. Qf6+, Black resigns.

There is no avoiding 46. ... Kh5 47. g4 mate.

1997

Interplay

U.S. Championship Interplay U.S.
Women’s Championship
Phoenix, Arizona
Aug. 22 – Sept. 12

1997

U.S. Class Championship

Parsippany, New Jersey
Oct. 17 – 19
It was said of Alekhine that to win against him one had to beat him three times: once in the opening, once in the middle game, and once in the endgame. Nowadays many of the top players are this resourceful in defense. In their game from the Aarhus (Denmark) International in June, Michael Adams definitely beat Bent Larsen in the opening. And Adams navigated the middlegame successfully as well, coming out a pawn ahead. Yet when it got to the endgame, suddenly everything was liquidated, and the win became a ghost.

The French Defense

1. e4 e6 2. d4 d5 3. Nf3 c5

Strange-looking at first. The idea is to play ... c5-c4 and then ... Nb8-c6 without experiencing the hassle of a pin from White's bishop at b5. Because the Tarrasch move, 3. Nf3 aims not for quick development but instead play against a potential Black isolated queen pawn (if ... c5 is played), Black can afford the luxury of this non-developing move.

4. Ng3 c5 5. Bb3 Nc6 6. dxc5

Black's pressure on the d4 square induces White to make this exchange.

6. ... Bxc5 7. dxe5 dxe5 8. 0-0 Nf6?! It is rare for this move to be a mistake. I would prefer 8. ... Nge7, which fights to keep Black's bishops active. After the correct d3-square bishop move, Black would not have to retreat to cover the e-file. Black also envisions the move ... Bc8-f5. After 8. ... Nge7 9. Nh3, probably 9. ... Bd6 is best (on 9. ... Bx a4 10. Re1 followed by Be3 is a good plan) as 10. Bc4 can be met by 10. ... Bg4 (a move which would be playfully if Black had already castled because of Baxh7 followed by Ng5) 11. Be3 Qc7 12. b3 Bb5. Note that because Black's isolated queen pawn is stuck on a light square, White theoretically would like to trade dark-squared bishops, while Black would like to trade light-squared bishops.

9. Re1 Be7 10. Nf1 (diagram)

Adams already enjoys a nice edge as Black's minor pieces lack good squares to go to, and White is heading places with the b1 knight.

10. ... 0-0 11. Ng3 Qe6

This makes quite an unfavorable impression, given that White is focusing efforts on getting the knight to f5 anyway. A better idea was to start creating distractions with 11. ... Nh4! as 12. Bf1 is met by 12. ... Bg4.

12. Bb5!

By drawing the h-pawn forward, White greatly improves his prospects of landing and keeping a knight on f5, and ... g7-g6 will become impossible, and Black's kingside pawns will be under great pressure.


White is threatening 17. Nhx6+.

16. ... Ne4!

An excellent defensive pawn sacrifice. Larsen pitches his center pawn in order to eliminate White's attacking formation, and obtain obscure counterplay against White's queenside. There was not much of a choice anyway.

17. Be3 Qa5

Even more obscure is 17. ... Qb4, providing an immediate hit on the h-pawn. White has many tantalizing possibilities, but I do not see anything conclusive. For example, 18. Nxe4 dxe4 19. Qxe4 Bx b4 20. Qxb4 Qxb4 21. g1 Qh5 22. b3 Ne5 does not resolve anything.


20. ... Qb4 21. Be1!

A brave move, undeveloping the bishop to preserve his extra pawn! But Adams was intent about holding the extra material, and does not want to be bluffed into giving it back. Still, I think 21. Bf1 was a better try. This stops 21. ... Qxb4?? 22. Bxe5 Qxe5 23. Nxe6+! gx6 24. Bh7+ and wins. Also 21. ... Bxf5 22. Bxe6 Bxe4 23. Qxe4 leaves White consolidated with a healthy extra pawn, and 21. ... Re8 or 21. ... Nc4 both allow 22. c3. Therefore, Black would play 21. ... Ng6 (as 22. c3? fails to 22. ... Nxe4, and White should stand better after 22. Bg3 Qxb2 (or 22. ... Qe7) 23. Qf3. Qh5. 21. ... Bxf5 22. Bxf5 Re8 A strange phase of the game. Of course White's extra pawn and two bishops would win easily in the endgame, but the bishops find themselves with no middlegame targets to counterbalance Black's pressure.

23. Be4! (diagram, top of next column.)

To stop Black from inflicting damage with 23. ... Nh5- or other discoveries.

25. ... Ne7?

More energetic was 23. ... f5! 24. Bd5+ Kh8; then if White sidesteps the discovery with 25. Rf1, then 25. ... Qd6 carries with it the threat of ... Ne5-g4. And on 25. Rd1 Be5 should make White very uncomfortable.

24. c3 Qb5 25. a4 Qc5 26. Bf4! g5 As the idea 26. ... f5 fails to 27. Bf4 followed by a bishop check on d5, Larsen finds another way to create distractions.

27. b4 Qc8 28. Bg3 Bxg7 29. Qc2 a5! Although it looks as if White has finally consolidated and is about to move over to the attack, Larsen succeeds in making an issue out of the backward c-pawn. If White now just develops with 30. Rad1, then 30. ... Na3 forces 31. ... Qxc3 next. It may be that White should try 30. Bxa5 here, just to get Black off his back for a move or two.

30. b5 Nb6 31. Re3 (diagram) 31. ... Qxc4!! A very finely calculated defensive riposte. Larsen sees that he can afford to jettison his b7 pawn. Now the focus is the weak a-pawn, as White is still wrestling with the extrication process on the e-file.

32. Rael

Trying to turn the e-file battery against Black, with the threat of 33. Bh7.

32. ... Kh8 33. Bxb7 Rxe7 34. Rxe7 Rd8! 35. h3 Reasonable. White stops to take care of his back rank as 35. Re1?? Qb2! is only looking for trouble. Although some simplification is allowed, it looks like White will remain a pawn up.

35. ... Nxa4 36. Re4 Qxb5 37. Rxa4 Qxb7 38. Rxa5 Qe7! A frontal assault on the c-pawn would have allowed c3-c4, but now this advance is impossible because 38. ... Qe1- would spear the rook on a5.

39. Ra1 Re8 Now White's extra pawn is pinned on the diagonal, and is history.

40. Rb1 Bxc3 41. Kh2 Qe6 42. Rb8 Qc6, draw.

Note that after 43. Rx c8- Qxc8, if 44. Be5??, then Black captures on e5 with check. Therefore, there is no way to intensify the pressure, and Black will unwind next with 44. ... Qe5.
In his recent match with Deep Blue, Garry Kasparov departed from his usual opening repertoire. Famous for his deeply analyzed main lines, Kasparov surprisingly switched to unorthodox openings in an attempt to sidestep Deep Blue’s opening database. In my opinion, this was a highly dubious decision, though a case can be made that the Champion made a plus score in the unorthodox games (1, 3, 4, and 5).

The strategy paid dividends in game four, where Kasparov used a rare move order to put Deep Blue off-balance.

PRIBYL DEFENSE

W: Deep Blue
B: GM Garry Kasparov

1. e4 c6 2. d4 d6
This is a form of the Príbyl Defense which has actually been often employed by FM Asa Hoffmann, who dubbed it the Asa Defense. Kasparov knows that computers play moves from exact positions that appear in their databases, but can not extrapolate strategies from similar positions. If Deep Blue had stumbled on 3. Nc3 (as plausible as the text move 3. Nf3), any Kasparov response would have led back into Deep Blue’s repertoire. In that case, 3. ... Nf6 4. f4 transposes into a risky line which has been discussed in this column.

Since I’m known to be a specialist in this opening, one wonders if this is what Kasparov had in mind. More intriguing is 3. Nc3 g6 4. f4 (4. Nf3 leading to a Classical Pirc, is probably a better choice for Blue, if not everyone else) 4. ... d5!? (eccentric English GM Julian Hodgson has experimented with this line) 5. e5 (The f4-pawn doesn’t mesh with White’s position if the center gets opened) 5. ... h5.

The position is known from the Gurgenidze system, with the exception that the Black bishop is not on g7. Since the long diagonal is emphatically blocked, the bishop might have a better future elsewhere. Furthermore, the position is rather closed, which is hardly in the best interest of a computer.

3. Nc3 Ng6 4. Nc3 Bg4 5. h3 Bb5 6. Bd3
The main line is 6. Qe2 e6 7. g4 Bg6 8.

h4 h5 9. g5 Nf7, but developing moves shouldn’t be discounted.
6. ... e6 7. Qc2 d5 8. Bg5 Be7

This move throws away White’s chances for advantage. The right way is 9. g4 Bg6 10. Bxf6! (This exchange is surprisingely in this type of position.) 10. ... Bxf6 11. 0-0-0 with promising attacking chances for White. Black cannot develop smoothly (11. ... Nf7 12. exd5 cxd5 13. Nxd5), while White is ready to get on with h3-h4.

9. ... Nf7 10. Bxe7 Qxe7 11. g4 Bg6
12. Bxg6 hxg6 13. h4 Na6 14. 0-0-0 0-0-0
15. Rd1
Deep Blue aims for active play with h4-h5, though admittedly this looks a bit strange.

15. ... Ne7
The move 15. ... Nb6 aiming for queenside play was another option. It’s mainly a matter of taste.
16. Kb1
Whenever Deep Blue moved its king in this match, the commentators invariably described it as a pointless computer move.

16. ... f6
Kasparov makes a bid for space. His follow-up shows he thought out this position quite deeply.

17. exf6 Qxf6!
It’s natural to undouble the pawns with 17. ... gx6 but then 18. g5 earns White the critical e5-square. Kasparov looks instead to dominate the file.

18. Rg3 Rde8 19. Re1 Rh8 20. Nd1
At the time, I thought Deep Blue was doing quite well here. It has almost consolidated its position; after two more moves, c2-c3 and Nf3-g5, Black will be in big trouble.

20. ... e5!
With this positional pawn sacrifice, Kasparov assumes the initiative. To me, this was the only moment in the match where Kasparov showed the kind of spark we are accustomed to seeing in his play.

21. dxe5 Qf4
Most people believe computers value material above everything. Deep Blue evaluated the position as less than half a pawn better for White, indicating the high value it places upon positional features.

22. a3
This move contributes, but a bit slow-

ly. The move 22. Qe3 is certainly safer.

22. ... Ne6 23. Ne3 Ndc5 24. b4
This move begins a highly controversial sequence. The knight is driven from its active post, but the cost of weakening the king safety is considerable. Deep Blue may have seen some follow-up, but it didn’t come to pass.

24. ... Nd7 25. Qd3 Qf7 26. b5

Apparently, Kasparov praised this bold attempt to generate counterplay on Black’s king. Most grandmasters did not agree. The Deep Blue team gave this position a great deal of attention after the game, eventually discovering a major flaw in the evaluation (it was too technical for me to understand, but the programmers were able to correct it).

26. ... Ndc5 27. Qe3 Qf4
The queen is White’s only effective piece, and after its exchange, Black will have pawn weaknesses to attack.

28. bxc6 bxc6 29. Rd1 Kc7 30. Ka1 Qxe3
This swap indicates Kasparov’s overly cautious approach in this match. It was better to wait a bit longer with 30. ... Rf7.

31. fx3 Rf7 32. Rh3?
I have a reasonable hypothesis as to why Deep Blue played this inane move, but it’s more amusing to see outsiders try to explain it.

32. ... Rf8 33. Nd4 Rf2
Deep Blue’s evaluation went negative for the first time in the game.

34. Rb1 Rg2 35. Nc2 Rxg4
Kasparov later lamented this hastily played move. Deep Blue expected 35. ... Rf2 with the following analysis: 36. Nc1 Rxg4 37. Nd3 Rf7 38. Nxe6+ Nxe6 39. Nb4 Nc5 40. Nd3 with a small advantage for Black. Since Kasparov moved so quickly, Deep Blue did not have time to look further.

36. Nxe6+ Nxe6 37. Nd4!
After this simplification, Black’s pawns are too loose to prevent a draw.

37. ... Nxd4 38. exd4 Rxd4 39. Rg1
The continuation 39. Rb3 was also good enough for a draw.

39. ... Rb4 40. Rb6
Deep Blue switched off the rather more trivial draw with 40. Rh2 Rf4 41. Rxe6 Rg4 42. Rg2.

40. ... Rxc2 41. Rxc2+ Kb6 42. Rb3+ Kc5 43. Rxa7

Please turn to page 31.
EASY DOES IT

Newcomers to this column may be puzzled by the sometimes unusual places where the pieces are located in diagrams. Kings may be found anywhere, in the most unlikely places. Friendly and enemy forces are scrambled about with no apparent logic.

For those who delve into mysteries of problemdom, this all becomes an acquired taste.

For the uninitiated, I can only counsel patience — composers do take great pains to find the appropriate setting for their creations. I have selected two positions which bear some resemblance to a real game. The Black kings are attacked where they ordinarily live.

In the first example (diagram), White closes in for the kill with 1. Kx8, menacing 2. Qx8. Black throws up some interesting defenses through pawn moves.

1. ... c6 is a square vacation whereby the White queen is obliged to continue guarding c7. The resulting mate 2. Nxb6 invokes unguard of b6 line opening to d6, and self-block of c6. The actual mating blow is called a White interference mate which incidentally discovers guard on e6. 1. ... c5 makes an open gate from 2. Ba4. The line cut against the Black queen gets tagged self-interference.

1. ... f5 opens a guard on e8, but interferes anew on the queen permitting 2. Ne5. This is known as a valve. In similar fashion 1. ... f6 obstructs the bishop when White finishes up 2. Rxe7. Here is an instance of a bi-valve.

In the second diagram, witness a modern treatment of Black pawn tactics.

There are set mates 1. ... cxb6 2. Bxb6 and 1. ... e6 2. B6. A worthy try is 1. Qd6? (2. Nc6). Now 1. ... cxd6 returns 2. Bb6 and 1. ... exd6 gives 2. Bf6. Thus the same mates occur after different responses — transferred mates. 1. ... Bb7 fails to 2. Qxd7, but Black finds 1. ... Rc4!

The solution 1. Qf6 (2. Qh6) fetches two more transferred mates — 1. ... e6 2. Bb6 and 1. ... exf6 2. Bxf6. Finally, 1. ... c5 prompts the switchback 2. Qb6.

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YOUR FIRST MOVE

U.S. CHESS IT’S YOUR MOVE

Whether you are a beginner, a novice, or a former member who wants to brush up on the basics, this is where you make your first move.

The material has always been here, but we realize that our format may be somewhat overwhelming at times. Here is a brief guide for using Chess Life as a study guide.

1. Start with this section! Jeremy Silman, Lev Alburt, and Bruce Pandolfini will walk you through the basics. This month we revisit Chess Tactics for the Tournament Player, Chapter 8: “Drawing Combinations.” This is the third volume of Lev Alburt’s Comprehensive Chess Course, and is available from the USCF (Order No. M394PP, Members Price $18.95).

2. Give Andy Soltis and Larry Evans a quick read. Enjoy the lighter side of chess, and then see what you can pick up from Evans as he answers questions on almost every aspect of the game.

3. We suggest Endgame Lab next. The time you spend with Pal Benko will pay off in triplicate.

4. Then tackle Robert Byrne’s 65th Square and Michael Rohde’s Game of the Month. You won’t understand every note; indeed you may want to skip over the analysis the first time through. Then go through the games a second time, with a pocket set next to the main board.

5. Play through the rest of the annotated and unannotated games in the magazine. You’ll always find a gem of truth in each of the games presented in Check is in the Mail. Don’t try toathom the reasons for every move; that will come with practice. For now, be content to develop a feeling for the types of positions that arise from each opening.

6. If you still find this section beyond your ken, Basic Chess Curriculum by Bruce Pandolfini and Larry D. Evans might help to fill in the missing pieces. Send $3.00 to cover postage and handling to: USCF, 3054 NYS Rte. 9W, New Windsor, NY 12553.

ALGEBRAIC NOTATION

The horizontals (ranks) are numbered from 1 to 8, starting from the rank nearest White. The verticals (files) are lettered from a to h, starting at White’s left (the WR file in algebraic is the a-file). The intersections of the horizontals and the verticals give the individual squares their names. Study the diagram.

Captures are indicated by “x” and checks are indicated by “+” or “ch.”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Descriptive</th>
<th>Algebraic</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>Black</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. P-K4</td>
<td>P-K4</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. N-KB3</td>
<td>N-QB3</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. B-N5</td>
<td>P-QR3</td>
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<tr>
<td>4. BxN</td>
<td>QxPb</td>
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<td>5. B-Q3</td>
<td>P-B3</td>
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<tr>
<td>6. Q-KN5</td>
<td>B-QN5</td>
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<td>7. PxP</td>
<td>QxQ</td>
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<td>8. RxQ</td>
<td>PxP</td>
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<td>etc.</td>
<td>etc.</td>
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BLACK

| 8 | a8 | b8 | c8 | d8 | e8 | f8 | g8 | h8 |
| 7 | a7 | b7 | c7 | d7 | e7 | f7 | g7 | h7 |
| 6 | a6 | b6 | c6 | d6 | e6 | f6 | g6 | h6 |
| 5 | a5 | b5 | c5 | d5 | e5 | f5 | g5 | h5 |
| 4 | a4 | b4 | c4 | d4 | e4 | f4 | g4 | h4 |
| 3 | a3 | b3 | c3 | d3 | e3 | f3 | g3 | h3 |
| 2 | a2 | b2 | c2 | d2 | e2 | f2 | g2 | h2 |
| 1 | a1 | b1 | c1 | d1 | e1 | f1 | g1 | h1 |

WHITE

DESCRIPTIVE NOTATION

Descriptive notation uses the same letters as algebraic for the pieces, with the addition of "P" for all pawn moves. The major difference is in the way each system identifies the square to which a piece is moving.

In descriptive, the files are named for the pieces that stand on them at the beginning of the game. The file on which the Kings start, the e-file in algebraic, is the K-file in descriptive. Similarly, the algebraic d-file is the descriptive Q-file. The remaining files are identified as being on the “Queenside” (a-, b-, and c-files become QR-, QN-, and QB-files) or the “Kingside” (f-, g-, and h-files become KB-, KN-, and KR-files).

Each rank has two names in descriptive notation. They are numbered 1 through 8 from each side of the board, depending on which player is moving. The square that is “a1” in algebraic would be “QR1” for White and “QR8” for Black in descriptive.

To record a move, we give the name of the piece and the square it moves to, just as in algebraic. For instance, “1.d4 Nf6” in algebraic would be “1. P-Q4 N-KB3” (Black’s KB3, which is White’s KB6) in descriptive.

Notation from Black’s view

Notation from White’s view

Gabriel Schwaitsman writes a weekly chess column for The Gainesville Sun.

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Throughout 70 years of chess Olympiads, it has been a dear wish of the International Chess Federation (FIDE) to join the International Olympic Committee (IOC), and thus make chess an Olympic discipline.

But is chess a sport to begin with? Supporters of the "chess is a sport" idea bring as their argument the concept of chess as a game where intellectual abilities are not enough. The modern game of chess has become psychologically and physically demanding. In order to be successful a player has to consider not only the normal training at the chessboard, but also the development of a good physical condition. It is impossible to resist, during a six hour game requiring a maximum concentration, without a certain degree of physical fitness, especially in the case of chess where one mistake can lose the entire game.

One may also point to the 1985 World Championship match between Kasparov and Karpov, adjourned after the latter had lost over 40 points. After all, very few sports, except boxing, have had instances where a world championship was prematurely ended because of the physical exhaustion of the contenders.

I agree that, with the exception of a certain world chess championship 20 years ago where the organizers had to install cardboard under the table to stop the players from kicking each other, a chess game does not involve much physical activity. But is this the only thing that would make it a sport?

What about the fact that chess, just like tennis and many other sports, is a fierce competition between two or more players? And what about the ancient Roman maxim "a healthy mind in a healthy body"—isn't chess a form of brain gymnastics that develops the mind, just as athletics develops the muscles and help us preserve it in good shape?

So, I do think chess is a sport, and the good news is more people are starting to think that too. In a joint press conference, held at the Olympic Museum in Lausanne, Switzerland, IOC President Juan Antonio Samaranch and FIDE President Kirsan Ilyumzhinov proudly announced that the 1997/98 World Chess Championship will be held under the patronage of the IOC. As a matter of fact, the World Championship finals will take place inside the Olympic Museum.

IOC President Samaranch admitted that hosting the World Championship at the Olympic Museum "is a great moment for sports and the City of Lausanne." And both dignitaries agreed that this landmark event has a special significance for chess in FIDE's drive to be fully integrated into the Olympic movement.

All this is more than just symbolism. Currently, chess is recognized as a sport in 97 countries, and in 73 of these countries the national chess federation is already affiliated with the National Olympic Committee. But becoming part of the global Olympic organization remains a major goal for FIDE, because it would add a certain legitimacy that chess doesn't yet have in every country.

This would also trigger worldwide recognition of chess as a sport, and as a result, more national chess federations could benefit from the increased funds available to other sports organizations. Needless to say, all this would lead to an increase in the popularization of chess, which is FIDE's main objective.

All I can say is that it is a dream of mine, one day, to represent the United States in the Olympic Games, and since chess is the only game I am really good at, it better become part of the Olympics, soon! ☺

---

**Chess Tactics For The Tournament Player:**

**Drawing Combinations**

by GM Sam Palatnik and Mark Ishee

Chess players often say that "it is never too late to resign." The examples below show how sometimes you can save a losing position with a timely tactical blow. These drawing combinations are based on stalemate, perpetual check, and forced repetition of the position (called "pursuit").

**STALEMATE**

A stalemate often occurs when one of the opponents makes a serious error in a won position.

![Fichtl-Blatny, Bratislava 1956](Image)

White to move

In this position White, who enjoyed a decisive material advantage, carelessly played:

1. d6??

This move sets up the stalemating combination.

1. ... Bc6+!! 2. Qxc6

Capturing the bishop is forced, but now the Black king has nowhere to go, and in order to reach stalemate all that remains is to get rid of the rook.

2. ... Rg1+ 3. Kxg1 stalemate

**INSTRUCTIVE EXAMPLE**

![Diagram](Image)

White to move

White has an extra bishop, but it is in no position to stop both of the Black pawns. It is often difficult to eliminate one's own bishop to achieve stalemate, because it is hard to force the opponent to capture it. But here there is another way:

1. Ba5! g1=Q 2. b4!

And no matter what Black does, White is stalemate.

1. Kh1!

White puts his king in position for a stalemate in the corner. Of course White could play 1. Bxc5+, but after 1. ... Kxc5 Black will win the king and pawn endgame.

In response to 1. Kh1! Black must capture the bishop. All other legal moves lose the queen for nothing!

1. ... Qxf2 stalemate.

---

R.Bianchet, 1925
Black to move

AUGUST 1997 / CHESS LIFE 25
White threatens a deadly discovered check, but Black’s king is already in position for a stalemate in the corner.
1. \( \text{Re}3+! \)

This forces a draw because 2. \( \text{Bxc}3 \) is stalemate, and 2. \( \text{Kxc}3 \text{ Kxg}7 \) or 2. \( \text{Kb}1 \text{ Kxg}7 \) both draw due to insufficient mating material.

Composition by C. Bent (final part)

White to move

In this example, White saves the half point using the stalemate idea. Even though he must jettison three pieces to do so:

1. \( \text{Ne}7+ \text{ Bxe}7 \)

Black must capture or he loses his queen.

2. \( \text{Nd}6+! \text{ Bxd}6 \text{ 3. Bg}4! \text{ Qxg}4 \text{ stalemate.} \)

Pitch–lux, Berlin 1963

Black to move

Although the Black king has some room to maneuver, there is still a stalemate available if Black can get rid of the knight (getting rid of the queen is rarely difficult).

1. ... \( \text{Qe}6+ \) 2. \( \text{Kf}5 \text{ Ng}7+ \) 3. \( \text{Bxg}7 \)

Otherwise White loses the queen.

3. ... \( \text{Qg}6+! \)

However White captures, it is stalemate.

INSTRUCTIVE EXAMPLE

White to move

As in the previous example, Black’s poor king position enables White to draw.

1. \( \text{Rb}3+! \text{ Ka}4 \)

Both 1. ... \( \text{Kxb}3 \) and 1. ... \( \text{Qxb}3 \) are stalemate.

2. \( \text{Rb}4+! \text{ Ka}5 \) 3. \( \text{Rb}5+! \text{ Ka}6 \) 4. \( \text{Rb}6+! \text{ Ka}7 \) 5. \( \text{Rb}7+! \text{ Ka}8 \) 6. \( \text{Rb}8+! \)

Black’s king cannot escape, so White draws.

PERPETUAL CHECK

Perpetual check arises when one player can continuously give check to the enemy king. This leads to the game being drawn, and many combinations are built on this idea.

INSTRUCTIVE EXAMPLE

White to move

Black enjoys a huge material advantage, but his pieces are misplaced.

1. \( \text{Qe}5+ \text{ Qgg}7 \) 2. \( \text{Qe}8+ \text{ Qhg}8 \) 3. \( \text{Qh}5+ \text{ Qth}7 \) 4. \( \text{Qe}5+ \)

And it is clear that the game must end in a draw.

INSTRUCTIVE EXAMPLE

White to move

Here White is behind in material, but he can save the game with a typical combination to create perpetual check.

1. \( \text{Rgx}7+! \text{ Kgx}7 \)

If 1. ... \( \text{Kh}8 \), White plays 2. \( \text{Rxh}7+ \) which also leads to a draw by perpetual check.

2. \( \text{Qg}5+ \text{ Kh}8 \) 3. \( \text{Qf}6+ \text{ Kg}8 \) 4. \( \text{Qg}5+ \) with a draw by perpetual check.

Here is yet another variation on this theme:

INSTRUCTIVE EXAMPLE

White to move

White’s attack is getting nowhere, and Black has an extra piece and a strong counterattack. So White balls out with a perpetual check.

1. \( \text{Qxg}6+! \text{ fxg}6 \) 2. \( \text{f}7+ \text{ Kh}7 \)

2. ... \( \text{Kh}8? \) loses to 3. \( \text{Rh}3+ \)

3. \( \text{Rh}3+ \text{ Bh}6 \) 4. \( \text{Ng}5+ \text{ Kg}7 \) 5. \( \text{Ne}6+ \) with perpetual check.

INSTRUCTIVE EXAMPLE

White to move

1. \( \text{Bxe}4! \)

Instead 1. \( \text{Bc}2 \) would be a mistake because of 1. ... \( \text{Ra}2! \) 2. \( \text{Bb}1 \text{ Rb}2! \)

1. ... \( \text{Rx}f1 \) 2. \( \text{Bf}5! \)

And a draw was agreed, since 2. ... \( \text{Ral} \) is met by 3. \( \text{Be}6+ \text{ Kh}7 \) 4. \( \text{Bf}5+ \text{ Kg}8 \) 5. \( \text{Be}6+ \).
   1. ... Re8!! Losing is 1. ... Qxb5? 2. Qxxg8+, after which White can use his extra piece. But 1.
   ... Re8! is a strong reply which not only threatens a back rank mate but also puts
   the rook on a safe square, making ...Qxb5 a real threat.
   2. Rb1! White guards his back rank and saves his rook.
   2. ... Rg8! 3. Rb5!, draw.

Neither player can improve his position.

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1. White to move
2. Black to move
3. White to move
4. Black to move
5. Black to move
6. White to move
7. Black to move. His queen is lost! How can you save the position by exploiting the vulnerability of the White king?
8. Black to move. Perpetual check can save Black.
9. Black to move. By sacrificing a knight and a rook, Black can make a draw in this difficult position.

For solutions, Check it Out on page 81.

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Sax-Mariotti, Las Palmas 1978
Black to move

1. ... Nxe3! 2. Rxc2 Ra1+! 3. Kh2 Nf1+
And the game is drawn, since the knight will shuttle between e3 (with the rook at a1 providing discovered check) and f1, where it attacks the king directly.

Yudasin-Kir. Georgiev, Manila 1990
White to move and draw

1. c6!! Nxc6
Other captures fail: 1. ... Kxc6 2. Bxb4 and 1. ... Rxd6 2. c7 Rc6 3. Rxc6.
2. Rb3+ Ka5 3. Ra3+ Kb5 4. Rb3+, drawn by perpetual check.

Pursuit
Pursuit is the term we use for situations where a less valuable piece endlessly chases a more valuable enemy piece. We have already seen this idea as perpetual check when the more valuable piece is the king. But there can also be a forced draw by repetition when the enemy piece is something other than the king.

Ullrich-Spentler, Berlin 1948
White to move
White is a piece ahead, but right now he has a big problem: His queen is under attack, and is pinned against the g2-square. Black will play Qxg2 mate if White’s queen leaves the g-file.
Coming to Grips

I've found that teaching a student all the positional rules is only a tiny piece of the learning process; the really hard part is explaining how to recognize them in the heat of battle!

By now everyone who reads my stuff is aware of the battle between bishops and knights, but how many players put importance on this when the enemy is staring in their eye?

We know that weak squares can turn into fine homes for our knights, but we have difficulty coming to terms with the time-consuming journey a knight may have to make to reach that exalted perch.

Many of us understand basic facts about closed positions, but who can mix this bit of knowledge with often contradictory input that we receive concerning other imbalances?

In the end, all a teacher can offer is constant repetition. We show all of the imbalances in simplified form so that a student can become accustomed to them. Once the basics are mastered, we point these imbalances out (and how the student did or did not make use of them) in the confines of their own games. Only by doing this again and again and again can a player create the habits that enable him/her to actively seek out a verbal/mental description of each position and its individual parts.

The following game, played by two unrated individuals (with minor modifications by me), is a wonderful illustration of the ever-changing pattern of imbalances that constantly mystifies players of all types and strengths.

1. e4 e5 2. Nf3 d6
The Philidor Defense is better than its reputation but should still be avoided by non-masters simply because it blocks in the f8-bishop. A “little thing” to be sure, but allowing this for no reason at all creates bad habits. Don’t block your bishops unless you have a very good reason for doing so!

3. Nc3
The immediate 3. d4 is more accurate, but the text is also quite playable and will usually transpose back into main lines.

Following book isn’t important. Making logical moves that gain space, control the center and develop one’s pieces takes precedence over memory any day.

3. ... Be6
The first error is made by Black. This early bishop move places it on a vulnerable square. Black must have been trying to keep White’s bishop off of the active c4-square, but such an inflexible move (Black isn’t really sure where this bishop belongs) should have taken a back seat to the superior 3. ... N6c6.

4. d4
A good reply that frees the c1-bishop, attacks the e5-pawn and gains space in the center.

4. ... Nd7
Black realized that 4. ... exd4 5. Nxd4 brings the knight into striking distance of the bishop (more proof that the bishop shouldn’t be on e6 at all!). The move actually played develops a piece and gives more support to e5. Unfortunately, it also takes retreat squares away from the bishop and makes it more vulnerable than ever.

White to move

Believe it or not, a lot is going on and logical decision making (at least in this situation) is far more important than calculation.

First, try to “read” the position as thoroughly as you can. Write down your thoughts and then compare them to the facts that I will soon illustrate. If you find that you missed most of the salient features in our example, don’t despair! All this does is show you how difficult it can be to get on top of everything that’s going on. Notice how I said “difficult” and not unobtainable. If you look at everything calmly, you will see that all the information is fairly easy to grasp. The hard part is training yourself to catch it during actual combat.

Ready? All right, here we go!

1) Pawn tension: Many of my students have a habit of trading pawns as soon as they come into contact with each other. They have trouble realizing that destroying the pawn tension consider-erably limits their own possibilities.

In the present situation White would usually refrain from capturing on e5 for the following reasons:

a) There is no hurry! White is the one with the option to take since a Black capture via ... exd4 would only help White bring his knight to a better post after Nxd4.

b) By not rushing to take on e5 White keeps Black off balance by making him worry about both dxe5 and d4-d5.

c) Many players think that by taking on e5 they are trading their good d-pawn for Black’s good e-pawn. However, this is not really the case! The real trade is d4-pawn for Black’s inferior d6-pawn.

d) Taking on e5 helps Black by freeing his entombed f8-bishop. Why do something nice for your opponent?

2) Bishop versus knight: At the moment both sides have two bishops and two knights. However, White can try to hunt Black’s e6-bishop down by Ng5 or d4-d5.

3) Closed centers: White must decide whether to close the center by d4-d5, to leave it as it is and just develop a piece, or to open the center completely with dxe5.

4) Creating a scenario where your imbalance is superior to your opponent’s: This is the key to the position! White should take all the information given earlier and mix it together in some palatable form.

Here’s the way I would approach this position: I already have a small advantage in space, so quiet development by Be2 and 0-0 is an option (in other words, I can simply nurture the imbalance that I already have). I can also play h2-h3 (a useful move in itself) with the threat of d4-d5, winning Black’s bishop.

More interesting, however, is a plan based on gaining the two bishops. I could try and hunt Black’s bishop down by d4-d5, but why close the position if I intend to get bishops? Wouldn’t it be more logical to open the position?

With this in mind, the immediate 5. Ng5 comes into consideration (yes, I’m breaking the rule that tells us not to move the same piece twice in the opening!). Another way to do this is 5. dxe5 (didn’t I just criticize this move? No, I just pointed out all the things that were wrong with it, and said that I normally wouldn’t take it into serious consideration. In this case, though, White intends to grab the two bishops, so opening the position as wide as possible makes a good deal of sense.) 5. ... dxe5 6. Ng5 when 6. ... Qf6 7. Nxe6 Qxe6 8. Qd3 (less clear is 8. Nd5 0-0-0 9. Bc4 Qg6 10. Qf3 Ne5) 8. ... Qxd5 9. Nxd5 0-0-0 10. Bc4 when White has the preferable position thanks to his two bishops.

White would be doing well if he chose
5. h3, 5. Be2, 5. Ng5 or 5. dxe5 followed by 6. Ng5. Just remember one big thing: don’t grab an imbalance if you feel the resulting position (and all the factors that make it up) is at odds with it (e.g., striving for bishops in a closed position; striving for knights in an open position. Both these errant plans might prove harmful to your health).

5. d5?! White goes for the closed position, not realizing that he is simultaneously making his f1-bishop a poor piece by placing the center pawns on its color.

5. ... Bg4 6. h3 Bxf3

Also possible is 6. ... Bh5 7. g4 Bg6. What’s the first thing that strikes you about the position (after 7. ... Bg6)? How about that hole on f4?

Every student of the game should train himself to salivate whenever a hole appears on the board (of course, you should have an aversion towards creating them in your own position). Though Black has absolutely no way to make use of that hole at the moment, my eyes would go cloudy and I would fantasize in the following manner: I would dream of trading off my g6-bishop and one knight for White’s two knights. I would also dream of exchanging my bad f8-bishop for White’s good piece on c1. That would leave me a good knight versus White’s bad bishop. Then a quick maneuver like ... Nd7-f8-g6-f4 would give me a winning minor piece position.

Naturally, the actualization of this plan might take thirty moves, but the possibility (and the rewards it brings) would never leave my mind.

7. Qxf6 f6? When I saw this move, I almost collapsed in horror! One little pawn push and so much self-destruction. Black has taken the f6-square away from both his knights. created a hole on e6, made his f8-bishop even worse than it was, blocked his queen and thrown a full tempo out the window.

What should Black have done? The answer lies in two areas: 1) the minor piece battle; 2) the closed position and the use of the “pawn pointing theory.”

When the center is closed you generally play in the direction your pawns point. Since you must attack with pawns in closed positions (compared to piece attacks in open positions), you should usually advance the pawn that is next to your most advanced unit. In this case, Black will play for ... f7-f5 (placing the pawn next to his advanced e5-pawn) while White would like to play c2-c4-c5 (something that won’t be easy for him to do).

The other key factor in the position is the minor pieces. White has two bishops and Black would like to follow this rule: When your opponent has two bishops, trade one off (for a bishop or a knight) and leave him with only one.

Another rule worth following asks you to trade off your poor pieces for your opponent’s good ones. In this case, Black would love to exchange his bad f8-bishop for White’s fine c1-bishop. This can be done by 7. ... Be7 followed by 8. ... Bg5 or by 7. ... g6 followed by 8. ... Bh6. Most logical is 7. ... g6 since it prepares for an eventual ... f7-f5 advance and also prepares to trade the bishops.

Black’s actual move caters to none of these positional demands and, therefore, is an abomination of the worst order.

8. Bb5? White fails to make the most of his opportunities and misses two very interesting plans. The first centers around the move f2-f4. Normally White would not consider this because, after Black takes on f4, the e4-pawn would be backward on an open file and the e5-square would serve as a home for Black’s pieces.

Note that the weakening of e6 allows White to dream about placing a knight there. Unfortunately, White’s knight has no way to reach this oasis in the heart of Black’s position. This changes after Black captures on h4 since suddenly the f4 and d4 squares are available to the White knight and maneuvers like Nc3-e2-d4-e6 are now “on.”

This shows us that f2-f4, seemingly a space gaining idea on the kingside, actually is a well-disguised attempt to infiltrate to e6 with the knight.

White’s second plan is even better. He has the two bishops and would like to activate the pathetic guy on f1. Since bad bishops belong outside the pawn chain, the move 8. h4! turns out to be very strong. Please understand that White is not trying to attack Black on the kingside. Instead, he is playing for two goals: 1) the nullification of all Black’s kingside play; 2) the activation of the f1-bishop.

To achieve ... f6-f5, Black will have to play ... g7-g6 at some point (this also allows Black to trade his bad bishop with ... Bh6). However, after 8. h4 g6, White has the annoying 9. h5. More importantly, White’s real intention is to follow up with 9. g3 and 10. Bh3, when the bishop has turned into a monster.

Once he has stopped Black on the kingside and assured himself of a highly favorable minor piece, White can then turn his attention back to the queenside where he can try to make use of his spatial advantage in that area. Total domination of the board would then become complete, and the game would surely be yours.

Putting these ideas into elementary perspective, it is enough to say that when you see a weak square, try to find a way to occupy it. If you have a bad bishop, fight tooth and nail to get it outside the pawn chain so it can become active.

Both these plans are very advanced, so don’t feel bad if you have trouble fully understanding them.

8. ... a6 9. Bxd7+ Qxd7 10. 0-0 0-0

Something new has happened. We now have kings castled on opposite sides of the board. Usually this means that both sides will launch attacks against the enemy monarch and seek a knockout. No more subtlety, just brute force and endless aggression.

11. Bd2 Nh6 A big question comes to mind. Should White capture on h6 and open up the h-file for Black’s rooks? The answer is a resounding yes! The reason for this decision doesn’t lie with the win of a pawn (which White won’t take) or with attacking considerations. Instead, the reason centers around the creation of a hole.

12. Bxb6 gxb6 Please turn to page 31

LESSONS FROM THIS ARTICLE

1) Closed positions are conducive to long maneuvers.
2) Open positions call for quick development.
3) Closed centers call for play on the wings with pawns (to gain space and get the rooks into the battle).
4) Always be on the lookout for weak squares (holes).
5) If you can exterminate enemy play before proceeding with your own, don’t hesitate to do so!
6) Make sure that the imbalance you strive to obtain fits in well with other factors in the position.
Young Master Trapper

Many chess traps have been decided by traps. An ability to recognize the opponent’s traps and to set up one’s own in masterfully fashion is an important part of being an accomplished chessplayer.

To be effective, a trap must have attractive bait. Aimlessly attacking the opponent’s men isn’t trapping, but rather wishful thinking (for instance, playing 1. e4 e5 2. Bc4 Bc5 3. Qf3 and hoping that your opponent will overlook the threat of 4. Qxf7 mate!)

The first piece of advice on how to set chess traps is to stop instantly rejecting a candidate move because you are afraid of a certain reply. Remember, a move that looks menacing to you is also a move that looks attractive to him. If you can find a flaw in this supposedly strong reply, voila! you’ve got a trap.

Of course, there are traps, and then there are traps. In the diagrammed position (after 1. e4 e5 2. Nf3 Nc6 3. Nc3 d6 4. Be4 Bg4), 5. Nxe5?? will be a trap, yes, but an unsound (bad) trap.

While the White queen makes attractive bait, and while after 5. ... Bxd1?? White wins by playing 6. Bxf7+ Kxf7 7. Nd5 mate (which is called Legal’s Mate), if Black stops to think this through, he will reply 5. ... Nxe5, leaving the trapper down a piece (for only a pawn).

Thus instead of 5. Nxe5 White should play 5. h3!! the best move here, which also contains a trap — if Black retreats his bishop to h5 (a natural move, common in such situations) now White can strike with 6. Nxe5, winning at least a pawn after 6. ... Nxe5 7. Qxh5 Nxc4 8. Qb5+, or perhaps the game after 6. ... Bxd1 7. Bxf7+ and 8. Nd5 with the above-mentioned Legal’s Mate.

The winner of this month’s contest is 13-year-old Jim Virtel, whose letter is given below. In his game (and comments) he proves himself an excellent “trapper.” He shows maturity and sophistication, for to be good at trapping, one must learn to think for one’s opponent — and this is one of the most important prerequisites for successful chess.

Dear Mr. Alburt,

Hello, my name is Jim Virtel. I am 13 years old, and live in Lemont, Illinois. I have played chess for three years, and played in my first tournament when I was 11. I really enjoy reading your column. It’s nice to know that people care about the lower rated players like me. (My rating has never been over 1000). Right now, my rating is 993, and I have two e-norms.

The game I am about to show you is from the Junior High section at a scholastic tournament in West Chicago. It was from the second round. I had just finished a 25-move draw with a person rated 400 points higher than me (I was rated 885 at the time, and my opponent was rated 1283) so I was looking for a game with a lower-rated player. Instead I faced a 1086 player with the Black pieces, so I was pretty nervous. Here is what happened.

CARO-KANN DEFENSE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>B18</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>W: Jeffrey Cobia (1086)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B: Jim Virtel (885)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West Chicago, 1997</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Notes in italics are by GM Alburt)

1. e4 c6
I was sick of playing the Sicilian Defense and I thought now was the perfect time to try something different.

2. d4 d5  Nc3
I was glad that he didn’t play 3. e5 or 3. exd5 because I had only seen part of these variations.

3. ... dxe4 4. Nxe4 Bf5 5. Nc3?! Better was 5. Ng3.
Correct. First because 5. Ng3 wins a tempo by attacking the bishop, and second because, placed on c3, the knight is restrained by the Black c6-pawn.

5. ... Nd7 6. Nf3 Ng6 7. Bf4 e6 8. Bc4?! Better was 8. Bd3, to exchange my light-squared bishop to take pressure off the queenside.

8. ... Be7?! I should have played 8. ... Nb6 immediately.
Correct again. Good for you, Jim, to be concerned about tempo.

9. Qd2 Nb6!
To trade off the dark-squared bishop with 10. ... Bd6.

10. Bb3
He still could have played 10. Bd3, to exchange the light-squared bishop.

10. ... Bd6 11. 0-0-0 Qc7

12. Bxd6
I’d prefer 12. Bg3, and if 12. ... Bxg3, then of course, 13. hxg3, strengthening the center. The game is about even.

12. ... Qxd6 13. Rxe1 0-0-0
I didn’t like casting kingside because a pawn storm could have started against me.

14. Ne5 Rf8
Better was 14. ... Qc7.

15. Kb1 Qc7 16. Qf4 Bg6?
I saw that White was going to attack my
kingside, and I wanted to protect my bishop. Now, White could exchange his good knight for my good bishop and double my pawns. Better was 16. ... h6! to save the bishop.

17. Qd2?
He should have attacked my kingside with 17. h4.

17. ... Nbd5
I wanted to get a better grip in the center, but traded off my active knight. Better was 17. ... Nbd5.

18. Nxd5

18. ... exd5?!
I didn’t like 18. ... cxd5 because it opened lines to my king, but White cannot attack him there. Also, White now gets the e-file.

After 18. ... cxd5 it’ll be Black who will use — and benefit from — the c-file.

19. Qg5?
White sets himself up for a fork.

20. f4??

Very clever! A model of how to set up a trap.

20. ... f6
I win a piece.

21. Qg4 fx5 22. Rxe5 Rde8 23. Rde1 Be4

The rooks are separated.

24. g3 Nd7?!
A trap is set.

25. Rxe8+ Rxe8 26. Qxg7??

Another win of material.

26. ... Bxc2+!!
Not only does this win the rook, but it puts his king out in the open.

Jim clearly excels in traps — very good!

27. Kxc2 Rxe1 28. Qxh7
I was afraid of the passed pawns on the kingside, even though I thought, because I would eventually break into the queenside.

28. ... Re2+ 29. Kc3??
The biggest blunder. After 29. Kd3, he would give up a queenside pawn, but still have the passed pawns. Now it’s a forced mate in two.

29. ... Qa5+ 30. Kd3 Qd2 mate.

Deep Blue was ridiculed for heading into this position, yet its evaluation — very slightly better for Black — is actually dead on.

43. ... Rf1+
GM John Nunn proposed a win with 43. ... Kc4, but 44. Rb4+ Kd3 (44. ... Kc3 45. Rc7) 45. e6 Rf1+ 46. Rb1 Rf2 47. Rb3+ just sends Black round in circles.

44. Rb1 Rf2 45. Rb4!
With a rather unexpected mate threat.

45. ... Re1+ 46. Rb1 Rec2 47. Rb4 Rc1+ 48. Rb1
A silly rumor got started in the press that the Deep Blue team had offered a draw. This would be a breach of etiquette because clearly Black could force a draw if so inclined.

48. ... Rxh1+ 49. Kxb1
In Inside Chess, Yasser Seirawan erroneously (and rather mysteriously) wrote that this position was in Deep Blue’s endgame database. To hold enough memory to store a nine-piece endgame database, IBM would have to link together every computer they ever produced!

49. ... Rc2 50. Re7 Rh2
Ilya Gurevich speculated that 50. ... d4 offered good winning chances, but 51. Re6! (Deep Blue) stops Black dead in his tracks.

51. Rh7
White also has a simple draw after 51. Rd7 (Yermolinsky) 51. ... Rxd4 52. e6.

51. ... Rc4
51. ... d4 52. Rh6 keeps the balance.

52. Rc7 c5 53. e6 Rh4 54. e7 Re4 55. a4! Kb3 56. Kc1, draw.

Further attempts to win could only backfire on Black. For the record, the draw was offered by Kasparov.

Understanding Chess

Black is lost
Frankly speaking, this position is completely hopeless for Black. Normally White would strive to attack the Black king by b2-b4, a2-a4-a5, Rb1 and b4-b5 ripping open lines to the enemy monarch. (Of course, Black would be doubling on the g-file and trying to create his own attack.) However, White has a way to kill all enemy counterplay and virtually turn the game into a lock victory.

13. Ne2!
This is it! Instead of eating a pawn by 13. Qxf6 (which gives Black some counterplay with 13. ... Be7; 14. Qf5 Qxf5 15. exf5 Rdf8 16. g4 h5 17. f3 hxg4 18. fxg4 h5 19. Rf2 hxg4 20. hxg4 Rf8 21. Rg2 Rh4), White swings his knight around to the dominating f5-square where it rules the Black bishop and kills any chances Black may have had for an attack (place the knight on f5 and White’s pawns on h4 and g3. Such a set-up would give Black no hope at all). Once White takes control of the kingside, his superhorse, he can then proceed to play for a queenside attack without fear any resistance whatsoever.

Several students have asked how to know when it’s all right to move a piece several times in a row. “Can’t the opponent do something to punish you?”

If the position were open, then long maneuvers would be of doubtful value since development and speed of operations become critical. However, the closed center in our present game means that play will be more ponderous and thus conducive to productive knight journeys.

13. ... Be7 14. Ng3 Rdg8 15. Nf5 and White went on to win the game.
Solitaire chess lets you test your chess skill against the world's top players. It's easy and instructive. Play through the opening moves and then, using a slip of paper, cover White's moves. Play Black's move, and guess at White's reply. Expose White's move and record your score. If correct, you earn the par score from the center column. Check the game notes on page 33 for partial credits — and deductions.

Although he was never able to capture the world championship, Paul Keres (1916–1975) was undoubtedly one of the greatest attacking players of all time. Mixing incisive tactics with deep positional understanding, he could take the measure of anyone on any day. Here, his victim is a future World Champion, Vasily Smyslov (Black) in this contest played at Leningrad in 1947. The opening moves were: 1. e4 Nf6 2. Nc3 c5 3. Nf3 e6 4.g3 d5 5. cxd5 Nxd5 6. Bg2 Nc6 7. 0-0 Ne7 (diagram).
SOLITAIRE CHESS

ENGLISH OPENING
W: Paul Keres
B: Vassily Smyslov
Leningrad, 1947

a. The best place for the c1-bishop is on the a1-h8 diagonal.

b. Trying to close the long diagonal and cramp White’s game. But safer was 9... 0-0.

c. White makes good use of the half-open c-file. The c5-pawn is the target.

d. Add a bonus point if you had planned to answer 10... 0-0? with 11. Na4, winning a pawn.

e. Attacking the c5-pawn and provoking a concession.

f. Guards c5, but weakens the long light-square diagonal. The lesser evil was 11... Nc7-e6, when Keres intended 12. Nh4 and f4.

g. Deduct one point for 12. Nx e5? Nxe5 13. Bxb8 Nxa8, which favors Black. Note that both White knights are on the edge. When Keres violates the principles, watch out!

h. Black avoids 12... Bb7 which pins his knight to the bishop. Accept two bonus points if you saw how to take advantage: 13. b4! Ne6 14. Nf5 0-0 15. Qh3, and something goes.

i. You may have only two points, partial credit, for 13. Nf5, which works well if 13... Bx f5 14. Bxc6+. But Black can just castle, 13... 0-0. You may take four points partial credit for 13, f4.

j. Natural and necessary. Add a point if you saw that White threatened 14. Qh5+.

k. Ripping open the center. Receive a bonus point if you envisioned the threat of d4-d5 and d5-d6, forking two pieces.

l. The c-pawn if pinned. Pile on a point if you planned to answer 14... cxd4? by 15. Bxc6.

m. Give yourself two more bonus points if you were going to reply to 15... Nxd4? by 16. Bxd4 cxd4 17. Bxb8 Nxa8 18. Bxc7 Rxc7 19. Qxd4. Black loses the Exchange for no compensation.

n. Take two points partial credit for 16. d5, which also wins a pawn, for it forces 16... Nd4.

o. Trying to keep the knight out, whereas 16... Bxc5 17. Nxc5 lets it in.


q. Tally only three points partial credit for 18. Nf3, when after 18... Bf6 Black’s game is improving.

r. Just two points partial credit for 19. g xh4. The h4-bishop is not running away.

s. Add a bonus point if you realized that retreating the h4-bishop loses a piece to 20. Rxd7 and 21. Bxc6.

t. Assume but three point partial credit for 20. Bxc6, when Black can still offer resistance by sacrificing his queen: 20... Bxc6 21. Rxd8+ Rxd8, with counteractive piece play.

u. Tack on a bonus point if you would have answered 20... Nb6 with 21. c6!.

v. The secret to master chess: take things! The knight heads for d6.

w. Secure two bonus points for considering 21... Re7 22. N d6 R c7 23. Nxd5 R f7 24. Qg4 K h8 25. Rfd1, and Black can hardly move.

x. Profit by a bonus point if you were going to answer 24... Ne5 with 25. Rd5.

y. Tell you what. You can have equal credit for 25. Bxe7 Nxd2 26. Bxc6. This wins too.

z. With this tenth-round victory, Keres overtook the leader (Smyslov), and moved into first place by himself. This was the first of three USSR championships won by Keres: 1947, 1950, and 1951.

SCORING

Over 95: Over 2400
81-95: 2200-2399
66-80: 2000-2199
51-65: 1800-1999
36-50: 1600-1799
21-35: 1400-1599
6-20: 1200-1399
0-5: Below 1200

YOUR FIRST MOVE

No. IV Fork

Black to move corresponds to note (p)

No. V Pin

Black to move corresponds to note (s)

No. VI Unpin

Black to move corresponds to note (t)

You can Check It Out on page 81.

The following books by Bruce Pandolfini are available from U.S. CHESS:

Title
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Those Who Left Their Stamp

The history of chess is rich with great games and great players. We have all seen the golden attacks of our Morphys, Alekhines, and Tals. We know the names of the heroes of our past 150 plus years, and their exploits have served as seeds to generations of young chessplayers. Much less well known are the giants of correspondence chess. There are players in our past who have dominated their contemporaries, who stood out above the rest of the field.

One such giant was Irving Kandel. For many years the premiere correspondence club in the United States was the CCLA, CCLA’s yearly championship, the Grand National, may have lacked the numbers of the USCF’s Golden Knights, but arguably was a stronger tournament. Some of the early winners of the Grand Nationals may be familiar to readers: John Collins, C.F. Tears, Isaac Farber (twice) ICCM Nicholas Preo (also twice), but in the 1955-56 Grand Nationals, the name Irving Kandel bobbed to the surface. Kandel shared the Grand National title with Norman Hornstein (who would win again in 1963). The next year Kandel stood alone as Grand National champion. And the next.

In 1959 and 1960, Kandel won undisputed first place, and in 1961 he tied with Leonid Dreibergs, completing a run of six consecutive national titles. Then there was a quiet period — eight Grand Nationals passed, won by such names as Thomas Mueller (twice), Jack Straley Battell, and Robert Reynolds. Then in 1970, Kandel returned, winning two more Grand Nationals in a row. Kandel also represented the USA on both the IV and the IX Olympiad team.

GAME OF THE MONTH

In the IX Olympiad, the U.S. had a strong team but a disappointing result, failing to qualify for the finals. Kandel was right at home with other strong U.S. players: Eugene Martinovsky, ICCM Richard McClellan, Robert Snyder, John Jacobs, and Richard Delaune. Kandel contributed his share of points to the team as follows:

**ENGLISH OPENING**

W: Irving Kandel
B: L. Oliver
IX Olympiad

1. c4 Nf6 2. Nc3 e6 3. g3 d5 4. Bg2

In the good old days (as recent as the 1970s) information on the openings was not easy to get in the U.S. Many international postal players found subscribing to foreign periodicals to keep up with opening theory a necessity. Here the American lack of theory misses the superior 4. d4 as Black now gains an edge.

4. ... d4 5. Ne4 Nxe4 6. Bxe4 Be7
But theory prescribes ... Nb8-d7-f5 attacking e4 and ending up with a safe kingside and center space, Black’s failure to develop this knight to the kingside gives White chances to develop an initiative.

7. b4!
Expanding on the queenside and preventing ... c5 guarding the d4-pawn.

7. ... d4 8. a3 c6 9. f4?!
Now that the d-pawn has been artificially isolated, White intends to prove that Black’s advanced d-pawn has become weak.

9. ... a5 10. Bb2!
White gladly exchanges his b-pawn for the central d-pawn and superior attacking chances.

10. ... axb4 11. axb4 Rxa1 12. Qxa1 Bxb4 13. Bxd4 Bxd2+?
Black finds an ingenious plan for counterplay by this temporary sacrifice as the resulting exchange of pieces limits White’s kingside attacking chances.

14. Kxd2 c5 15. e3 Nc6 16. Nf3 exd4
17. exd4 Qc7 18. Qc3 b6 19. c5?!
Better was 19. Bb1!

19. ... b5?
Black shuts down his lines of counterplay with this advance. After 19. ... bxc5 20. dxc5 (the continuation 20. Qxc5 Qa5+ is okay for Black) 20. ... Rd8+ 21. Ke3 Qd7 gives Black enough to hold. Now Kandel finds an ingenious route to bring his knight to d6 where it dominates the bishop.

20. Rd1 Ba6 21. Ke3 Rd8 22. Qc2 g6
23. Qa2 Bc8 24. Bxc6!
With all Black’s pawns on white squares, Black has a bad bishop compared to White’s mobile knight.

24. ... Qxe6 25. Ne5 Qe7 26. Qb2!
With the two-fold idea of Ng4 and an attack on the kingside and a pin on the b-pawn, allowing Nc4-d6.

26. ... f6 27. Nc4 e5?!
Black does not fold easily — the open lines created by this advance offer some counterplay for the Black pieces, but the d6 knight will just be too strong.

Black has activated his bishop and broken up White’s kingside, but White’s pieces are more active. Therefore White turns his attention to the kingside to force some weaknesses there.

31. Kf2 Qd7 32. f5!
Defense and offense with the same move. Kandel can do it all! This move shuts out the Black queen and begins the breaching of Black’s fortress.

32. ... g5 33. Rb2 h5
Black may as well seek more activity as White will soon play h4, opening up the kingside anyway. Black is lost.

34. Qa5 Bc4 35. Qe1 Kf8 36. Qe4 Qc7 37. h4!
The fatal open can opener. Black’s position cannot stand this pressure. If 37. ... gxh4 38. Qxh4 is a fatal double attack, and 37. ... g4 38. Qf7+ Ne8+ wins.

37. ... Rd8 38. hxg5 fxg5 39. Qe5!
White prevents the Exchange sacrifice
and Black has no more defensive chances. Kandel now scores the point with a few more well-timed attacking moves.

39... Qg7 40. f6 Qh7 41. c6! Qa7 42. f7, Black resigns.

• The 12th US Correspondence Chess Championship Finals has just been announced. Qualifying by victory in the preliminary rounds are James Blackwood (2499), Edward Duliba (2230), Richard McLaughlin (2304), Gary Shure (2455), Quin Shea (2442), Richard Cale (2321), Craig Jones (2134), John Moussessian (2301), Wesley Brandhorst (2244), Jackson Morrison (2343), Robert Dobrianski (2083), and Charles Musgrove (2139).

Nominated by their respective organizations are APCT's Stephen Barbre (2450), USCF's David Eisen (2485), and CCL's Konstantin Dolgitsow (2276).

The last two contestants are Wayne Conover (2363), who had deferred his qualification to the 11th championship, and Mark Lonoff (2395), who qualifies as a former USCCC champion. Good skill, gentlemen!

• The 1996 Absolute Correspondence Chess Championship, average rating 2417, is underway. Ricardo D'Aurela is the number one seed at 2493, but he is followed closely in the ratings by William Trim (2482) and Ron Lifson (2481). Ron is returning to the chess wars after winning the 1991 Absolute. Gary Shure (2461), Chris Quinbey (2444), ICCM William Maillard (2411), and Claran O'Hare (2404) round off the 2400 players.

Jeffrey Tlghman (2391), Robert Forbis (2386), and the old war horse, 1981 Absolute champion, Kiven Pless (2382) make up the lower middle.

The last three (numerically by ELO) can't be counted out in this strong tournament. Tom Ward (2374), David Bragg (2356), and Mike Colucci, the 1988 Golden Knights champion (2356) conclude this year's Absolute contenders. Good skill, gentlemen!

• A new booklet, Alexander Alekhine and Correspondence Chess, has been published by Dirk Van Esbroeck, P.O. Box 71, B-9120 Beveren-Waas, Belgium, at a cost of 5 DM. At 1.72 DM per dollar, the cost of the booklet (including postage) is $2.90. Some of the games are annotated. This booklet is a bargain to help build your postal library. Remember, not only did Alekhine begin his chess career with correspondence chess, but in 1936 Alekhine addressed the delegates at the congress of the International League of Correspondence Chess (IFSB) encouraging the establishment of a world correspondence championship. After the war (and Alekhine's death) his plan became a reality.

Readers with further information about the life and games of Irving Kandel are invited to write to me at the address on the previous page.

Claude Bloodgood, a long-time postal player, demonstrates a rare gambit in this lively draw. Students of opening traps will enjoy finding the refutation of 4...Qd4?

NORFOLK GAMBIT

W: Claude Bloodgood (2250)
B: Anthony Barnsley (2475)


A game that might be of interest to Marshall players — two USCCF finalists face off in the 13th preliminary round. White varies on move 29 (f) from Polakovic-Novotny, corr. 1990 (which went 29. Rxa6 and a Black win), and saves the half point.

RUY LOPEZ

W: Jackson Morrison (2343)
B: Ted Brandhorst (2244)


A pawn for some squares: Webster Phillips sacrifices a pawn for play on the dark squares and it pays off handsomely.

SICILIAN DEFENSE

Alapin Variation

W: Webster Phillips (1890)
B: Glenn Lindberg (1866)


TOURNAMENT NOTES

NEW OPTIONS AVAILABLE

If you are participating in one of USCF's correspondence chess events being played using the Post Office to send/receive moves, you may now use electronic or fax mediums for exchanging moves ONLY if you and your opponent agree. PLEASE keep in mind, with traditional correspondence chess you have the luxury of transmission time between moves. This would probably much be eliminated if you are going to use e-mail or fax to exchange moves.

You must get the agreement in writing. You can correspond with your opponent via e-mail or fax. You must download/save a paper copy of the move transmission with date information in order to document a game or move dispute.

In order to make reporting simple time complaints/game results/change of addresses/excused time/withdrawals, etc. feel free to e-mail your correspondence to corres-uscf@quno.com marking it to the attention of Joan DuBois, Correspondence Chess Director.

EXTENSIONS AND ADJUDICATIONS

To avoid having your unfinished game closed out as a rattle draw, refer to Rule 16 in the white-colored CC rulebook. Regarding new rule 16, we have been closing out tournaments/sections which have reached their 2½ year limit.

UPDATE ON 1997 GOLDEN KNIGHTS

As of June 21, 1997 we have 74 sections participated which involves 318 USCF Correspondence Chess players! If you would like to participate in USCF's 50th Annual Golden Knights Championship please see our ad on page 9 of this issue for details.

CLASS, TROPHY, RATING, PRIZE, AND TEAM WINNERS

S. McDonald . . . 363 S. Bass . . . 21
A. Greuter . . . 332 B. Blanchard . . . 239
D. Collins . . . . 238 T. Hooker . . . 26
R. Harvill . . . 14
F. Zaiser . . . . 144 F. Zaiser . . . . 144
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G. Fortunato . . 16 G. Fortunato . . 16
E. Express . . . 8 E. Express . . . 8
AUGUST 1997 / CHESS LIFE 35
by Al Lawrence

Willingly, 187 contenders passed up the smell of grease-splattered charcoal and the edgy ritual of swapping boasts with ketchup-chinned relatives. Instead, they went for that rarest of brass rings, a national championship title for those below master. Among the crowd filling the Hilton’s ballroom in New Brunswick, N.J., on May 24-26, were some deadly old hands very, very close to the cutoff of 2200.

But along the three-day trek, the top-ranked treasure hunters stumbled and fell back. The final round matched 19th-seeded Matthew Traldi, the only player to keep a perfect score, against 13th seed David Cole, who had managed 4½ points. Both were rated under 2100. A bit over three hours later, when the clock’s buttons were leveled, Traldi, of Easton, Pa., had become the youngest-ever winner of the U.S. Amateur East — or of any other non-scholastic National Championship.

What could be a sweeter comeback for a prodigy who had made master at twelve, only to see his rating slip more than 150 points? Well, how about winning two National Championships within 30 days? On April 27, Matthew had tied for the K-6 Championship title in Knoxville, Tenn.

NEW GENERATION

My generation of players was inspired by Bobby Fischer. Matthew confesses to being one of the generation inspired by a motion picture — Searching for Bobby Fischer! When he was nine, he started playing rated chess. Three years later, he was a master. (Evidently the movies can be more effective than the real thing.) As for training methods, the two-time national champ says simply competing many games at the Allentown (Pa.) Center City Chess Club — when he wasn’t practicing piano, violin, or playing soccer — was the most important factor. And there’s always competition at home as well. His mathematics-professor father, Lorenzo, his brothers Arthur, 15, and Oliver, 9, and his sister Rebecca, 6, all play chess.

Below Matthew annotates his Amateur East clincher.

ENGLISH OPENING

| W: David Cole (2005) | A26 |
| B: Matthew Traldi (2048) |

1. c4 e5 2. g3 Nc6

The idea of 13 ... b5 was that on usual moves like 14. Na3, 14. b4, 14. e3, 14. a3, or virtually any other move, 14 ... bxc4 followed by 15 ... e4 destroyed White’s strong outpost at d5 by taking away some of its protection. Also, on 14. cxd5, I play 14 ... Bxd5 and either 15. Bxd5+ Nxd5 16. Bxc6 Qxc6 where I have active pieces and a strong center, or 15. Bxc6 Bxc6 and again I have a strong center and pieces. White’s move in the game simply fortified c4 and if now 14 ... bxc4, then 15. bxc4 and White has a rook on an open file and the better game.

14. Bf7

I could’ve played this last move, but I wanted to throw in the moves 13 ... b5 and 14. b3 to gain space, block in his b1-rook, and take my b-pawn out of play after 13. Bf7 14. Nxe7+ Nxe7 (forced) 15. Bxb7, where after 15 ... c6 16. Ba6 Qc7 17. c5f I am probably slightly worse.

15. Nce3

White supports his knight, defends e4, and brings a piece into action.

15. ... exf4 16. gxf4

I throw in a zwischenzug (interpolative move) to weaken his pawn structure.

16. ... Nxd5 17. Nxd5

If he plays 17. Bxd5, then 17 ... Bd4 makes his position look shaky, and if 17. cxd5, then 17 ... Nd4 is fine for me.

17. ... Ne7 18. Nxe7+ Nxe7

I trade off his superior pieces and take off some of his pressure. If I had played 18 ... Qxe7, then 19. Bc6 snags a pawn.

19. e3

He defends his weak dark squares and prepares for 20. Qf3.

19. ... Re8

Connecting my rooks and preparing to occupy the b-file.

20. Qf3!

The move I missed. Now on 20 ... bxc4 21. bxc4 Rc8 22. Qc6 Qxc6 23. Bxc6 Red8 (or c8, or f8) 24. Ba5, and he has too much pressure on my pawns.

20. ... bxc4

I have a trick up my sleeve.

21. bxc4 d5!

I neutralize his long diagonal, open up my diagonals, and open up my d-file at one stroke.

22. cxd5?

This loses a pawn, but if 22. c5 d4! and I

Al Lawrence, who also wrote the sidebars to this article, is the co-author of the popular Chess for Children, and two new books out in spring of 1998. Winning Chess: Perfecting Your Game Piece by Piece, and How to Beat a Chess Computer, all from Sterling Publishing, New York.

The U.S. Amateur Championships are among more than 25 national title events co-sponsored by the USCF and participating affiliates.
have an advantage, if he defends his c-pawn then 22. dx4 and if 23. dx4 Qxd2 winning.

22. ... Bxd5 23. Qxd5+
If his queen moves, then 23. ... Bxg2 and
24. ... Qxd3 and I'm plainly up a pawn.

23. ... Qxd5 24. Bxd5+ Rxd5 25. d4
This loses a pawn, but if 25. Rb3 Red8
26. d4 c5 and he still loses it.

25. ... c5!
The pawn is pinned to his bishop and can't take.

26. Rb5
Pinning my pawn to my rook.

26. ... Red8
Defending my other rook and keeping up the pin.

27. Ba5!
Attacking my rook and releasing the pin
on his bishop but ...

27. ... cxd4!
Gives White no satisfactory way to reply: if 28. Rxd5 Rxd5, if 28. Bxd8 Rxb5,

28. Rb1
White tries to keep things as unclear as possible. His move defends his rook on b5 and threatens 29. Bxd8. Black has a few simple answers to this. He can move his Rook on d8 to d6 or d7, he can trade Rooks, or he can play a6, threatening White's Rook and preventing 29. Bxd8. I chose the simplest option.

28. ... Rxb5 29. Rb5 Re8
Probably my best move in this position. Now I answer 30. exd4 with 30 ... Bxd4 +
31. Ke1 (31. Kg2 Rc2+ or 31. Kh1 Rc1 + 32. Kg2 Rc2+) 31. ... Rc2 when I win a pawn, and prevent protection of e3, because of 30. Rb3 (30. Kf2 Rc2+ nets a pawn) 30 ... 

This is better than 29. ... Re8 because then White could play 30. exd4 Bxd4 + 31. Ke1 and hold on for a little while longer.

Please turn to page 40.

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Matthew Traldi—at 12, the youngest ever winner of a U.S. Amateur!


Family Background: I have one older brother, Arthur, who is 15 — he plays chess and is an A player. I have one younger brother, Oliver, who is 10 — he also plays chess and is a B player. My sister, Rebecca, is the youngest at 7 and doesn't play chess often, but has a rating of about 550.

My mother doesn't play chess, but my father, now a C player, taught my siblings and me to play chess. After I began to play reasonably well, he turned my caucasian education over to a 1700 rated college student at Lafayette, where he teaches /taught, Satish Nath. We soon began rated play, but after a few years Satish graduated from college. We then began lessons with Dan Heisman, a master from the Philadelphia area, who still teaches all four of us.

Achievements in other areas: 2nd place PA state Math Contest for 6th graders, 1997; member of the Lehigh Valley Junior String Philharmonic, 1995-1998 (at least- that much has been determined already).

Playing info: I play most often at the Allentown Center City Chess Club, but I also go to many tournaments in Eastern Pennsylvania and New Jersey. I have been playing for 3 and 1/2 years. My first year I gained almost 150 points, but in my second year I gained almost 800 points(!). Since then I have gained 160 points.
1997 U.S. Amateur

Upper Left: Robert Canary accepts the Reserve Championship trophy from John Kay.

Lower Left: Leonard Dickerson tied for first in the Amateur South, but missed the playoffs on tiebreak.

Upper Right: WVCB Editor Tom LaBue, organizer John Kay, TD Jim Meyer, and WVCA President Mike Baker made it happen.

Lower Right: John Kay congratulates U.S. Amateur South Champion John Roush.
Above Left: North — Tom LaForge, winner of the U.S. Amateur North and subsequent playoff.
Left: West — Hernan Lopez (L) accepts the Reserve Prize from Paul Gold.
even by the high-hurdling standards of the New Jersey State Chess Federation, co-sponsors of the event with USCF. The event was organized by two champions in their own right. All-star Organizer E. Steven Doyle has put together more national championships than anyone else, ever—one each in a model of efficiency and fun. Director Ken Thomas is the guiding force behind one of the biggest chess clubs in the country, the 200-plus-member Viking Chess Club, in Hackensack, N.J.

This was the 55th annual version of the Amateur Championship, and all 187 players looked to be enjoying their shot at the record books. After all, one doesn’t have to win the Indy 500 to have bragging rights—just finishing makes you a part of sports history. Thomas Bartell, 14, of Colts Neck, N.J., scored 5½ to clinch clear second. Uri Ashuev, Carvas John, and Omar Aularr each collected five points, finishing by tiebreaks third through fifth respectively. Special prizes were captured by George Proll (top senior), Kazuyuki Saegusa (top under 18), Kelly Huang (top under 13), Juret Karatas (first Class A), Mark Schwartz (second Class A), Tom McKenna (first Class B), Roy Elkenenkoetter (second Class B), Alex Polyakov (first Class A), and Ryan Chorney (second Class C).

In the Reserve section, Luis Antilla, of Irvington, N.J., 22, a student at Bloomfield College, scored 5½ points to take clear first.

In the last round, Luis calmly lets his opponent make the mistakes, and then makes him pay the price. Luis chooses a flanetto version of Philidor’s Defense made fashionable for a few years in the 1970’s by the Great Dane, Bent Larsen. On move 21, Luis surprises his opponent with ... d5, winning the exchange by spearing a Rook in the center of the board! Then when his opponent plays 26. Nd5?, Luis Alertly forces the additional win of a full piece, and White capitulates.

PHILIDOR’S DEFENSE

W: Mike Hallinan (1527)
B: Luis Antilla (1649)

1. e4 e5 2 Nf3 d6 3. d4 exd4 4. Nxd4 g6

THE MAN WHO BEAT BOBBY FISCHER

On the last day of the U.S. Amateur East, Ernesto Labate, one of the players, drew attention to those meant to be honored on Memorial Day by wearing his 40th Bomb Group leather jacket, bronze star lapel insignia affixed to the collar. Ernesto was flying bombing missions over occupied France 52 years ago, when the whole world was at war, and the U.S. Amateur Chess Championship, with its more benign battles, was just three years old.

Ernesto didn’t quit flying or fighting when he returned home to South Plainsfield, New Jersey. He became a 5th degree Black Belt in Judo, winning many championships along the way by defeating some very tough customers.

And in the 1960s, he beat one of the toughest competitors the world has ever seen, Bobby Fischer. It wasn’t at some simultaneous, where Bobby’s attention was divided among fifty other boards. It was head to head—well, at least mano a mano. You see, Bobby and Ernesto—at the time both brown belts, the Judo rank below black belt—squared off in a dojo in Manhattan in the 1960s. Ernesto recalls that Bobby was good. But it turned out he wasn’t quite good enough to take the man from the 40th Bomb Group. Sounds like an idea for a possible rematch, if Ernesto’s willing to make the trip to St. Stefan. But can you imagine Bobby Fischer bowling?

Ernesto Labate
—he threw Bobby Fischer for a loss.

5. Nc3 Bg7 6. Be3 Nf6 7. f3
0-0 8. Qd7 Re8 9. d4-0 Nc6 10. Bg5 Nxd4
Rd3 Kg7 18. c4 f5 19. Re1 fxe4 20. Rxe4
c6 21. Ne3 d5 22. Rd4 Bf6 23. cxd5
Nd5 Bxd5 27. Bxd5 Re5, White resigns.

Luis’ opponent, Mike Hallinan, tied for second place in this 1800-and-below division with four others: Johathan Cohen, Tomo Fukui, Daniel Gandel, Mike Hallinan, and Evan Rosenberg.

There were many more winners in the Reserve section: William Campion (top senior), Alex Boccini (top under 16), Makani Nambu (top under 13), Evan Rosenberg (first Class C), Frederick Scille (second Class C), Douglas Proll (first Class D), Roger Inglis (second Class D), Charangi Way (first Class E), Gary Whitlock (second Class E) Bob Cummings (Unrated).

All of the winners—as well as all the rest who finished the race that was this premier national championship—have a lot of new boasting material the next time their nailpinless relatives gather round the grill.

EFFICIENT AND FUN

USCF’s 1997 U.S. Amateur East was a striking success for others as well...
MICHIGAN again hosted the U.S. Amateur North, this time at Boynton Middle School School in Detroit, organizer Peter Nixon’s home stomping grounds. Playing the role of Chief TD & Benevolent Dictator was NTD Dan Burg, assisted by Steve Rosenberg.

The first three events in this series featured few surprises in the outcome, each being won by a strong 2100 player. This fourth incarnation, however, looked to be wide-open from the start, as the field of 92 players included but five Experts.

There’s a tradition at Amatour tournamemts held in Michigan; the top board is generally a jinx ... for the higher-rated player. It started here in round one, when Andew Beider (2105) showed up late, got Assistant TD Steve Rosenberg (1923) as a fill-in, and could only draw. Philip Roe then settled into the top slot, but only lasted two rounds before this little disaster struck:

**OWEN'S DEFENSE**

W: Philip Roe (2093)
B: Paul Townsend (2096)

5.Nbd2 d6 6.0-0 e5 7.0-0 Be7 8.Qe2 Nc6

Figuring that the pressure on the a8-h1 diagonal and d-file will be worth a pawn.

15.Qe3 Qc7 16.Bxe4 dxe4 17.Qxe4


This appears to be panic; 27.Rd2 is awkward, butBlack doesn’t seem to have a way to win material immediately.


This is not the way of winning material immediately.

27... Qd4 28.Bf6 Qg4 29.Be7 Bxf1 30.Kxf1 Qxg3 31.hxg3 Re2 32.Rb1 Rac8 33.Kc1 Rc1 34.Rxc1 Rxc1+ 35.Kd2 Rg1 36.Kc2 Kh7

Refusing to be amusing: after 36... Rxc2 37.Kf1 Rh2 38.Kg1 Rh3 39.Kg2 the king actually traps the rook.

37.Bb4 Kc6 38.Kc3 Kf5 39.a3 Kg4 40.Be1 Kf5 41.Bc3 Ke4 42.f3 Kd5 43.Kf2 Rc1 44.f4 Kc4 45.g4 hxg4 46.Kg3 Rxc3+ 47.bxc3 Kxc3 48.Kxg4 49.Kg5 Kg5 50.g4 b4 51.axb4 axb4 52.f5 b3 53.f6 gxf6+ 54.Kxf6 Kd4 55.g5 b2 56.Kf7 Kxe6, White resigns.

The only Expert to survive Round 3 unscathed was Stan Jarosz, who has figured in this event before. Here, after getting the worse of a tactical scramble, he continues to play calmly and takes his chances when they arise:

**SICILIAN DEFENSE**

W: Justin Garant (1906)
B: Stan Jarosz (2035)


White seems to have survived the skirmish well, due to Black’s isolated d-pawn and somewhat bad bishop.

16.Re1 0-0 17.Raf1 Rd8 18.Re5

Not the order of priorities taught by Nimzowitsch: First blackmate, then attack and destroy.


There are rank troubles if he tries to guard the c-pawn directly.


Besides Townsend and Jarosz, four players in the 1900 range made it this far: Leonard Dangremont, Tom Laforge, Ron Williams, and Ray Garrison. The resulting top three games in round four were all decisive, with Jarosz, LaForge and Townsend advancing. Three players followed with 3½/3 each, all lower rated than those in the top group: A-player Richard Wisckol, and B-players Duane Croel and Raul Martell. Raul’s victory was the most impressive, as he ended Beider’s hopes once and for all:

**SLAV DEFENSE**

W: Andrew Beider (2105)
B: Raul Martell (1678)

1.d4 d5 2.Nf3 Bf5 3.g3 e6 4.Bg2 h6

Optically, White looks much better: he seems to be occupying and dominating the center, and Black’s king looks unsafe. But Beider is unable to come up with an effective method of breaking through, while Martell follows what he describes as usual style of sitting back and waiting for the other player to come and get him.

19... Rfd8 20.Be5 Re8 21.Qf1 Qe7 22.h3 Rad8 23.Kh2 Nh5 24.Bxg7 Kxg7 25.g4 Nf6 26.e5 Nd5 27.Ne4

Anxious to get on with it, but now his center gets blocked, attacked and destroyed.

27... Bxe4 28.Bxe4 Qg5 29.Bxd5 Rxd5 30.Re4 Re8 31.Rf4 Qg6 32.Kg3 Rf8 33.h4

Not the order of priorities taught by Nimzowitsch: First blackmate, then attack and destroy.


There are rank troubles if he tries to guard the c-pawn directly.


Swiss pairings can get weird sometimes. Here, the top two perfect scores, Jarosz and Laforge, played each other in the last round. Townsend actually got paired down to the top 3½ in Wisckol, while the other two 3½’s, B-players Croel and Martell, took on each other with a top placing at stake.

Townsend took a quick draw to reach 4½ and began the process of waiting. Martell reached 4½ also: Croel might have been able to hold the opposite-colored bishops ending one pawn down, but once it got to three pawns down, well...

The U.S. Amateur North has always ended in a tie for first, and a doozy was possible here if Board One should have been drawn. It was a tough, back-and-forth game, that kept everyone guessing for hours:

**SICILIAN DEFENSE**

W: Thomas Laforge Variation
B: Stan Jarosz (2035)


White seems to have survived the skirmish well, due to Black’s isolated d-pawn and somewhat bad bishop.

16.Re1 0-0 17.Rad1 Rd8 18.Re5

Not the order of priorities taught by Nimzowitsch: First blackmate, then attack and destroy.


There are rank troubles if he tries to guard the c-pawn directly.


Besides Townsend and Jarosz, four players in the 1900 range made it this far: Leonard Dangremont, Tom Laforge, Ron Williams, and Ray Garrison. The resulting top three games in round four were all decisive, with Jarosz, Laforge and Townsend advancing. Three players followed with 3½ each, all lower rated than those in the top group: A-player Richard Wisckol, and B-players Duane Croel and...
1997 US AMATEUR WEST

by Paul Gold

Tucson's sixth US Amateur West event was celebrated in style with a record turnout. Two hundred and twelve players converged on the Tucson East Hilton over the Memorial Day weekend, breaking the previous record of 176 in 1996.

It's not really a surprise if you are from Arizona where the numbers in scholastic chess are very apparent even at what are considered "adult" tournaments. Perhaps this year's hefty turnout reflected some of the furor in the media brought on by the Deep Blue rematch a few weeks prior. The irony here is that a friend asked me whether the triumph of the "metallic brain bucket!" might adversely affect human interest in the game.

We wondered if there was still an aura left by the Elementary Nationals held in Tucson just a year ago. Or maybe the Senior Olympiads held in Tucson that week, bringing thousands of senior athletes to town, carried in a few woodpushers? Whatever the reason, players representing seven states (Arizona, Texas, Colorado, New Mexico, California, Nevada, Louisiana) arrived in droves to this popular amateur event.

This year's tournament was organized by Susan Wallach, a "chess mom" turned organizer. A former executive at Tucson's electric utility, Susan combined her overseeing skills with a few helpful hints about running chess events from the members of the Southern Arizona Chess Association (SACA). The result was a picture-perfect national event, showcasing the strengths of the cospromoting local affiliate's people, our best asset. The TD staff included NTD Robert Tanner, of Phoenix, plus Tucson's own Kiki Huerta.

John Wright and Robby Adamson. The staff was rounded out by Susan's son, Aaron Wallach, and Wayne West behind the camera.

HIGHLIGHTS

Before getting into the chess playing, some of the highlights should be mentioned, the little extras that made this event special. Larry D. Evans, of the Mountain Lake Chess Camp, in San Diego, provided free analysis for the players, patiently coaching and entertaining for hours on end. IM Evans also gave a simul and the traditional Amateur West celebrity lecture, a rousing recounting of the famous game Botvinnik-Bolshatsky. This turned out to be an engaging lesson describing the chess action in regard to the flavor of the players' personalities and ending in an instructive Lucena position. In addition, SACA kept the players guessing by donating prizes for a drawing held before each round so that one might succeed if not by skill, then by a little good fortune.

The Open Section (U2200) and the Reserve Section (U1400) wound up with very different finishes. The Reserve was to have two perfect 6-0 scores, Hernandez Lopez, from Nogales, and Alexander Rosas, of Chandler, Arizona, with Lopez taking first on tiebreak. A large portion of this section was comprised of kids but there were adults as well, many being adventurous parents who were playing in their very first USCF event as part of a family team. The "old folks" seemed to have the most fun and when they left, perhaps a greater sense of empathy of just how hard it is to win a chess game.

The Open Section finish was suspenseful to the end. Local player Veikko Kanto, rated 1113, got things going early by defeating a 1600 player in the first round and then drawing with an expert in round two. Alas, he silenced the muttering going on around the tournament hall by garnering only another half point by the end of the tournament but he gained valuable experience and, for awhile, had the players talking. Another rising star story involved Joshua Green from Phoenix. Rated just 1236, Joshua was making upsets left and right, eventually going on to win a class prize.

Now on to the big boys. Going into the final round there were no perfect scores and it seemed like any of the top eight boards might produce a winner. In the end, five players would tie for first with Michael Reading of Mesa, Arizona claiming the title on tiebreak. Michael would finally take his first Amateur West championship after having been paired on Board One the three previous years in the final round, without a win. He will go on to represent the West in the Internet Chess Club play-off with the other regional champions.

Chuck Wallace of Sierra Vista, Arizona, came in second. Chuck, also known as "Mr. Lucky", continued his winning ways in 1997, a journey that has taken him through five of the six Amateur West events without a defeat. In third place was James Ely of Scottsdale, completing a Swiss gambit by losing in the first round to talented local Sameer Jain only to make the full comeback, winning five in a row. Fourth place was taken by Tucsonan Adam Colby, the unfortunate news being that Adam came in fourth last year as well — maybe third time fourth next year?! The final 5-1 score was that of Lior Lapid of Las Cruces, New Mexico. Lior is well known in scholastic chess circles, winning the K-9 National Championship this year at the Supernationals in Knoxville. He seems to have a bright chess future, tying for first here at age 14.

The following are some selected games from the tournament including a game by the champion and the best game prize winners for the Open and Reserve sections. All notes are by Senior Master Robby Adamson.

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Paul Gold is a mover and shaker in Arizona chess circles, and is primarily responsible for the live coverage of the Amateur Playoff by the Internet Chess Club.

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Black won the best game prize for the Reserve section with this fine effort. I was impressed by Black's ability to actually win the game once he achieved the winning position, a difficult skill to master.

This allows 8... Ng4. Better was 8... h3 first.
8. ... Ng4 9. Bd2
A good decision to not allow this bishop to be traded, otherwise Black's g7-bishop would rule the dark squares.
9. ... c6
For consistency, Black should play 9... c5 to make room for his knight on e5. Also 9... e5 is possible.
10. h3 Ngf6 11. a4 e5 12. d5 cxd5 13. cxd5 Nc5 14. Bg5
Better was 14. Qc2, with the idea of b4. 14. ... Qxb6! 15. Bxf6 Bxf6 16. Qc2 Qb4
A move that shows good understanding; Black will now be able to put pressure on the e-file.
17. Nd2 Bg5 18. Rd1?
Play should continue with 18. Nc4 f5!?
If 22. Rc7 Nf6 (with the idea of 22... Nd5) 23. Rd1 Ne8 and ... Bd7 holds nicely.
22. ... Ng5!
This is a classic example of when a player, ahead in material, should not trade material. Black foresees that White will play Rc7 if he trades knights.
Black should trade knights and play ...
Rc3.

KING'S INDIAN DEFENSE [E90]
W: Michael Reading (2093)
B: Jonathan Rapisarda (1125)
1997 U.S. Amateur West

1. e4 d5 2. exd5 N6f 3. d4 Bg4!? A new idea that has become popular at the GM level the past year. It always amazes me how new moves crop up after only a few moves.
4. Bb5+
A recent try that seemed to give White an advantage occurred in Ro. Perez-Sariego (Bayamo, 1996) where play continued 4. Nf3 Qxd5 5. Be2 Nc6 6. h3 Bxf3 7. Bxf3 Qf7 8. 0-0 0-0 9. c3 e5. 4... c6
Adams informed me later that 4... Nb7 with the idea of ... a6, ... b5, ... Nb6 is better.
5. dx6 Nxc6 6. f3 Bf5 7. c3
With White lacking in development, it seems Black needs to strike quickly in the center with ... e5 at some point. Perhaps 7... Qb6, ... Qb6, and then ... e5.
7. ... e6 8. Ne2 Bd6
8... Qb6 is another try; Black does not have sufficient compensation for the pawn. The advantage of 8... Qb6 is that Black can castle Q-side quicker and play for a quick ... e5, and possibly add pressure with Be5.
9. Nge3?
This seems to be somewhat of an awkward placement of the knight because of the threat of ... d6 followed by ... Qc7. A better plan for White is 8. Bf4 Bxf4 9. Nxf4 Qb6 10. Bxc6+ bxc6 11. Qc2, followed by ... 0-0.
White appears to have weathered the storm here.
This is inaccurate because it will leave White with a bad bishop versus good knight. Because White has the two bishops, he should have played 22. Bd2 and then tried to open up the position by playing a quick b4, a5, b5.
22. ... Bxe2 23. Qxe2 Rd5
White struggles for the next several moves, due to his very bad bishop.
24. Qh3 Rd8
24... h3 is more testing; after 25. g4 Ne7 (not 25... Nh6 26. Qxh6; or 25... Nh6 26. f5) 26. Be3 f5 when Black has counter chances.
25. Re1 Qb6 26. Qf2 Qb3
Black has finally achieved compensation due to White's bad bishop and because all of White's pawns are on dark squares.
27. Ra3 Qc4 28. Qe2 Qc6 29. b4 Nd6 30. Bc3 g6 31. Bf2 h3 32. gxh3 Rh8
Black is no worse than equal here — if his knight moves to f5 it cannot be dis-
1997 US AMATEUR WEST
May 24-26, 1997, Tucson, AZ

OPEN SECTION
U2200: 1st-5th: Michael Reading (Mesa, AZ), Chuck Wallace (Sierra Vista, AZ), James Ely (Scottsdale, AZ), Adam Colby (Tucson, AZ); Lior Lapid (Las Cruces, NM), 5.
1600-1799: 1st: Cory Evans (San Diego, CA); 2nd: Al Hardy (Tucson, AZ); 4.
1400-1599: 1st-2nd: Joshua Green (Phoenix, AZ); 4: Jeff Penninger (Littleton, CO), 4.
Best Unrated: Hry Clifford (Thatcher, AZ), 3.
Best U16: Richard Wagner (Tucson, AZ), 3.
Best U13: Clint Corcoran (Scottsdale, AZ), 3.
Best 50+: Dave Sawayas (Tucson, AZ), 1.
Best Combined Family Scores: 1st: Reading Family (Mesa, AZ), 7.
2nd: Wagner Family (Tucson, AZ), 4.

RESERVE SECTION
U1400: 1st-2nd: Hernan Lopez (Nogales, AZ), Alexander Rosas (Chandler, AZ); 6, 3rd-5th: Charles Fogelson (Scottsdale, AZ), Gabriel Rael (Phoenix, AZ), Adrian Caroloni (Tucson, AZ), 5.
1000-1199: 1st-2nd: Pieta Garrett, Payson, AZ), Ryan Martin (Tucson, AZ), 5.
800-999: 1st: Daniel Hill (Tucson, AZ), 4.
Best Unrated: John Cochran (Wellton, AZ), 5.
Best U16: Ana Castillo (Mesa, AZ), 5.
Best U13: Matt Pitch (Gilbert, AZ), 4.
Best U10: Jeffrey Garrett (Payson, AZ), 4.
Best 50+: John Pitch (Gilbert, AZ), 4.
Best Combined Family Scores: 1st-2nd: Garrett Family (Payson, AZ), Fitch Family (Gilbert, AZ), 3: Martin Family (Tucson, AZ), 8.
5th-6th: Hall Family (Tucson, AZ), 8.

UPSET PRIZES
Both Sections
Round 1: Velkko Kanto (Tucson, AZ), 547 points; Round 2: Cyber Varum (Tucson, AZ), 629 points; Round 3: Richard Wagner (Tucson, AZ), 458 points; Round 4: Joshua Green (Phoenix, AZ), 552 points; Round 5: David Hill (Tucson, AZ), 362 points; Round 6: Jeff Penninger (Littleton, CO), 632 points.

BEST GAME PRIZES
Open Section: Adam Colby
Colby-Lane, round.

Reserve Section: Jonathan Rapisarda
Lardizabal-Rapisarda, round 2.

Stopping any possible Nb5, Nd6.
14. Rb1 Nf5 15. g3 Rce 16.
Bd2 Na5
The beauty of Black’s position is that it plays itself, while White must come up with the tough moves.
17. Bb3 Ne7 18. 0-0 Nc4 19.
Rb3 Qc5+
Black is doing well here because it is hard to see how White will get out of this mess.
20. Rf2?
20. Kh1 is better.
21. ... Rh8 21. Bg2 Rxe2
22. Be1
If 22. Kxe2 Qxf2, where White’s pieces are all awkwardly placed and Black has Nf5, Ke7, Rh8 with threats looming.
Rb3 Nf5 25. Ne2 a5
Also possible is 25. ... d4.
26. g4 Ne3 27. Bc3?
27. ... Nxg4 28. Bd4 Nxf2
Bf2 Rcg8 32. Bf3 a4 33. Rc3
Kc7 34. Nd4 Rh2 35. Nxc6
Rg1+!! 36. Bxg1 Qh4+ 37.
Kd1 Nb2+ 38. Kc1 Nxc3+ 39.
Rxd3 Qe1+, White resigns.

ALMOST HEAVEN:
THE 1997 U.S. AMATEUR SOUTH

by John Kay
The state of West Virginia is well known as being “Almost Heaven”, gaining such a lofty title in a 1970s John Denver ballad. In a state of mountains, coal, Jerry West (the great NBA player was born and raised just south of Charleston), and the most irritating cheerleader in college sports (he shoots a long rifle in every building or stadium West Virginia University plays in), chess is not usually listed as a major statewide activity.

In the last several years the state has seen a revival of interest in the royal game. The West Virginia Chess Association then thought big: Why not have a USCF national tournament in the state? With the leadership of President Mike Baker, WV Chess Bulletin editor Tom LaBue, and others, the WVCA took on the project. The result: On Memorial Day weekend West Virginia hosted its first major national event, the 1997 U.S. Amateur South.

Eighty-seven players from ten different states converged on the beautiful Charleston Town Center Marriott hotel for the event, under the watchful eye of NTD Jim Meyer, to see who would join the championship playoff for the U.S. Amateur title. Twelve Experts and ten Class A players, led by 2162 rated Thomas Magar of Pittsburgh, were part of the forty player Championship section. Forty-seven players battled in the Reserve Section for players rated under 1800.

The five round Swiss was in some ways
a return to a different style of play, with a time limit of 50/2, 25/1. This was a common weekend Swiss time control in the days before Allegro Chess. Using it at this tournament resulted in both long tough games, and a tired directing staff! But it also led to a very interesting finish. At the end, two people found “Almost Heaven” to be very comfortable: Tied for first in the Championship section with 4¾ were John Roush of Ripley, WV and Leonard Dickerson of Knoxville, TN, with Roush winning on tiebreaks. Charleston, West Virginia, player Robert Canary steamrolled through the Reserve Section with a perfect 5-0 score.

The Championship section got interesting early on, since several players under 1800 in the section decided to have some fun. After 700 and 400 point upset wins and a 400 point upset draw in Round One, two of the top three rated players in the event suffered setbacks in Round Two. NY Expert Robert Feldstein held Magar to a draw in a long game, and Class A player Pat Kelly of Marietta, Ohio, defeated 2152-rated Mark Hathaway of Huntington, WV. The long draw took a lot out of Magar, who then lost in Round 3 to rapidly improving 1996 West Virginia Scholastic Champion David Olson, taking him out of contention.

However, the person who had the most fun in the round had to be Wheeling, WV, player Joe Lococo, whose stern concentration, intense focus, and banana in hand during his game ended up getting his picture on the AP wire and the front page of the Charleston Daily Mail Sunday edition (But alas, he lost).

When Round 3 ended, four players had perfect scores: Roush, Dickerson (who defeated the #4 player, Virginia resident Robert J. Fischer in Round 3), #2 rated David Saville, who recently came back to West Virginia after living in Los Angeles, and long time Charleston expert Donald Griffith. The 2½s were Feldstein, who had upset a fellow New Yorker, Joseph McDougal, in Round 3, and Olson.

West Virginia does not have any Masters currently playing in the state, which makes it hard for those who are Experts to move up in class to gain the title they deserve. On the positive side, it battle hardens those same Experts, since rating points get very hard to come by, and games between Experts usually mean much is at stake in a West Virginia tournament. The Roush–Griffith pairing has been seen many times before, in playing for state championships (both have won the state championship multiple times) and 1st prizes, and their game in Round 4 was a tough, well played battle.

**Prize List:** 1997 U.S. Amateur South May 24-25, 1997
Charleston, WV

**SICILIAN DEFENSE**

John Roush (2115)
Donald Griffith (2119)
1997 U.S. Amateur South

Notes by John Roush

In Beating the Sicilian 3 Nunn and Gallagher cite Romero-Martino (1990), which continued 11... Qd7 12. Bh6 Ne5 13. Qe2 as leading to a White edge.


The move 13. f4 may be better. The game might continue 13. ... Na5 14. e5 Ne8 15. Ne4 Nc6 16. Qe2 Nxe3 17. Qxe3 with advantage to White.
13. ... Ne5

The position is unclear after 13. ... Nd8? 14. Nxf6+ Bxf6 15. f4 Qb5 16. Bd4
14. Nf4 Qb5?

15. Bxe6+ Kh8 16. Qe2

16. ... Qa5 17. Bb3 Nd7 18. Bxd2 Qb6


The second wave of the attack begins!
24. Kb1 b5 25. Nc3 a4

After 25. ... b4 the move 26. N4d blockades the queenside nicely.
26. Bd5 Qb6

No better is 26. ... b4 27. Bxc6 bxc6 (27. ... Rxc6 28. Nd5 b3 29. cxb3 a3x3 30. a3 also gives White a big edge) 28. Qxc3+ Kh6 29. Bxd5 Nxe4 30. Qd4.
27. Bxc6 Rxc6

White is also winning after 27. ... Qxc6 28. Nd5 (with the idea of 29. g4 and 31. g5 driving the Black out into the open) 28. ... Kg7 29. Nd5 with the idea of 30. Nb4 and 31. a3 (28. ... e5? 29. xe5 when White is much better). 29. Nd5 Qb7 30. Nxe7+
The continuation 30. Nb4 Rcc8 31. Qxd5+ Qxd5 is also very pleasant for White.
30. ... Qxe7 31. Qd5+ Kh8 32. Qxc6 Nxe4 33. Qd5+ a3 34. Qd4+ Kg8 35. Qd5+ Kg7 36. Qd4−

I repeated moves to gain time on the clock.
36. ... Kg8 37. bx3 Rce8 38. Rxe1 Re8

Not 38. ... Nc3? Qxc3 losing move material.
39. Rxe4 Qxe4 40. Qxe4 Rxe4 41. Rxd6 Re2 42. Rb6 Rxh2 43. Rxb5 Rg2 44. Rb3 Kg7 45. a4 Ke6 46. Rd3 Re7 47. a5 Rg4 48. Ra3 Rh4+ 49. Kh1 b5 50. a6 Rb8 51. a7 Ra8 52. Kd2 Kd5 53. Ra6 Ke4 54. Ke2 b4 55. Ra4+ Kf5 56. gxe4 Kg4 57. Kf2 Kxb4 58. Kf3 Kh5 59. Kg3 Kh6 60. Kg4 Kg7 61. Kg5 Kf7 62. Ra6, Black resigns.

**SICILIAN DEFENSE**

Najdorf/Dragoon Variation
John Roush (2115)
Nicholas Barber (1886)
1997 U.S. Amateur South


The move 9... Nc6 may have been better as it would have reserved the d7 square for the f6-knight.
10. g4?! Nb6?
The continuation 10. ... 0-0 11. g5 Ne8 was better although 11. d5 leaves White in the driver’s seat.
11. g5 Nd7?
The move 11. ... Ng8 was the last chance to avoid heavy material loss.

The other moves are worse: (a4) 14. ... Qxe3 15. Ndc7 mate! (b4) 14. ... fx6 15. Bxc5 exd5 16. Bd4 when White has won a queen for two pieces.

AUGUST 1997 / CHESS LIFE 45
I am thirty-nine years old and have been a life long resident of West Virginia. I am an attorney at law. I received a B.A. from Marshall University with a major in political science in 1979. I graduated from the West Virginia University College of law with a J.D. in 1982. Later that same year I was employed as an attorney for the West Virginia School Service Personnel Association, an employees association, and have continued in that position through the present. In this capacity, I represent employees in various administrative law forums and in circuit court. I have also argued a number of cases before the West Virginia Supreme Court of Appeals.

In 1992, I married fellow attorney Kimberly Levy. We currently share a home near Ripley, WV (30 miles north of Charleston, WV) with eight (!) cats and a dog.

I first became acquainted with the game of chess at age six. Like so many others I learned from a scanty set of instructions from a "Dozen-games-in-a-box" set. I didn't understand the en passant rule nor did I understand that pawns moved and captured in a different manner. I remember an early game with a relative going 1. e4 e5 2. e5? - a classic mistake! In any event I didn't begin playing seriously until 1973 at East Bank High School. There under the mentorship of Mike Lewis (Chemistry teacher and club sponsor) I was introduced to the mysteries of openings, pins, forks, and all the other incarnations of chess.

I finished first or tied for first in the West Virginia State Championship in 1978, 1983, 1988, 1989, and 1990. In the past I have served as President of the West Virginia Chess Association and as Editor of its publication the West Virginia Chess Bulletin. I am a member of Charleston Chess Club and am currently its champion. (I would note that I have merely "borrowed" the title from its normal possessor, Donald Griffith.) My chief ambition is to push back over 2200 and stay there. Although I enjoyed the 1997 U.S. Amateur South very much, I hope it is the last one for which I will be eligible.

Chess is my chief hobby, but I also enjoy jogging. I have run in the Charleston Distance Run (15 miles) the last two years and plan to run again this August. I enjoy reading about the American Civil War and ancient Rome. I also read science fiction/fantasy and the mystery novels of Anne Perry and Lindsay Davis.

dxe5 27. Rxe5 Bg7
Of course Black avoids 27... Nxe5? 28. Qb6+ Kc8 27. Qxb7 mate.
28. Rc5+ Kb8
29. Qxd7
I could also win with 29. Qxg7 Nxc5 30. Qe5+ Ka8 31. Qxc5, but the text uses a windmill and cuts Black's counterplay to an absolute minimum.
29... Bxd7 30. Rxd7 Rc8
On any other move 31. Rxb7+ Ka8 32. Rd6+ Ka7 33. Rc7 mate.
31. Rxb7+ Ka8 32. Rxe7+ Kb8 33. Rb7+ Ka8 34. Rxf7+ Kb8 35. Rb7+ Ka8 36. Rxc7+ Kc8 37. Rb7+ Kc8 and Black is resigned.


White also has a nice mate with 38. Rcb5+ axb5 39. a6+ Rh3 40. Bg2 Rch8 41. Rh7+ Kxb8 42. a7+ Kc8 43. a8=Q mate.

— Asst. Ed.

The other undefeated players' pairing, Saville-Dickerson (a two-time Tennessee State Champion), developed into a long struggle that was to be decided in the endgame. When it was a pawn up, but still could lose the game. Dickerson was paired as a win, so he got Roush in Round 5. Saville, paired as a loss sat down across the board from Feldstein, who had won in Round 4 to stay half a point behind. Roush and Dickerson drew their game, then waited for the Saville-Feldstein game to finish. And waited, and waited... The advantage to having a tournament without allegro time controls is that there are no crazy time scrambles at the end of close games, where running out of time decides the game. The disadvantage is that the close games may not end. Add to that the fact that a national title is on the line, and the struggle over the board can exhaust spectators as well as players. In a difficult game for both players, Saville gained a small advantage in the endgame on Feldstein. The much traveled New York player grimly hung on, and ended up being slowly squeezed to death after a very long and hard battle of over nine hours duration.

Saville could not hold his game against Dickerson, who completed his win to tie Roush for first. The first tiebreak gave Roush the championship by a half point, and the chance to play in the ICC U.S. Amateur Championship playoff. By defeating another long time West Virginia Expert, Jim Walker, in Round 5, Griffith took third place on tiebreaks over Saville (4th) and Hathaway, who came back from his early loss to take fifth, all three scoring 4½.

The Reserve Section champ, Robert Canany, was on top of the wallchart at the beginning of the event, and proceeded to cruise through the field. Defeating both players who were also 3-0 after Round 3 in the last two rounds left Canany a point clear of the other place winners, David Michael, David Moneypenny of Beckley, WV, Glenn Donahay of Dunbar, WV, and Eric Berthound of Elco, PA.

So, when all was said and done, the first national event ever held in West Virginia was "Almost Heaven" for the local folks. On this weekend, John Roush, Leonard Dickerson and Robert Canany were at the top of their game, and are worthy champions. One of the classiest members of the legal profession anywhere, John Roush will be a great representative of West Virginia Chess in the playoff, and may well soon leave the Expert class for a long time to come. Robert Canany also seems destined to leave Class B chess his rearview mirror as well. The performance of young David Olson should be noted as well, going 2½-2½ as a 1720-rated player playing five Experts in the tournament.

If there is one other thing to be said about the 1997 U.S. Amateur South this year, it is that this was a great event for all who played in it. There was a definite enthusiasm among the players at the tournament, many of who played in USCF National Event before. The high quality of play, the conduct of the participants,

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If you already have a will, you can add a paragraph to your will known as a "codicil".

You may get further information on this matter by calling (914) 562-8359.
Thomas LaForge was the top finisher in the 1997 U.S. Amateur Playoff, held June 14 on the Internet. LaForge, 59, of Wyandotte, Michigan, posted an undefeated 2-1 score (one win and two draws) to secure top bragging rights among the four regional U.S. Amateur Champions.

The final order of finish was:
1st: Thomas LaForge (North)
2-3: Michael Reading (West)
        John Everett Roush (South)
4th: Matthew Traldi (East)

LaForge received a $100 USCF gift certificate, courtesy of USCF and the four regional U.S. Amateur organizers.

The 1997 U.S. Amateur Championship Playoff was made accessible to thousands of chess enthusiasts through a live simulcast on the Internet Chess Club. Chief TD for the event was Gary Prince.

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**Tom LaForge gives you a different perspective:**

I couldn't have asked for a better playing site. The T.D. Steve Rosenberg made his family home available and the family made themselves scarce for most of the play. Although the Rosenbergs are non-smokers, I was allowed to smoke. Who could ask for more?

The Assistant T.D. was chess master Bill Calton, who finished second in last year's USCF Amateur Internet Playoff.

Because of the requirement to play three games in one day, the time limit was set at game in one hour. I had not played chess on the Internet prior to the play-off. Internet experience would have been helpful two ways:

First: Late in the first round game, I discovered that there was a significant differential between the time remaining on my opponent's clock in Canton, Michigan, and the official time being maintained in Mesa, Arizona. In fact, Michael Reading's flag fell at least twice during the late stages of our game. After my third-round game was completed, we were able to watch the game in progress between Matthew Traldi and Michael Reading. Of course, we were rooting for Matthew. Adding to my anxiety was the Internet display showing Matthew with negative time remaining. Every few minutes, Matthew's negative time would be updated. In reality Matthew was in blitz mode, but the Internet was reporting in slow motion.

Second: I had agreed to a draw in my third-round game with John Roush. When I made the agreement, I had zero information as to the on-going game between Matthew Traldi and Michael Reading. It would have been nice to have had a second Internet station that would have enabled me to assess the other third-round game situation at a glance. I imagine that none of my opponents had this luxury.

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**Notes by Tom LaForge**

1. e4 d6 2. d4 Nf6

I was not particularly concerned with 2... e5 as I am familiar with GM Joel Benjamin's *Chess Life* articles “Unorthodox Openings”.

3. Nc3 g6 4. Nf3

More aggressive is 4... d4. Now we have a classical Pirc Defense.

4... Bg7 5. Bc2 0-0 6. 0-0 Na6

Black has numerous responses; e.g., 6... c5, 6... Nbd7, 6... Nc6, 6... Nd7, 6... a6, 6... b6, 6... c6, 6... Bg4. It is debatable which is best and is a matter of taste.

7. b3

Another interesting move, with the idea of developing my dark-square bishop without having to worry about being bothered by Black's f-knight. This additionally prevents Black's light-square bishop from immediately entering the game.

7... c5 8. d5

In this position Garcia–Keene (Palma de Mallorca, 1977), White played 8... e5 and achieved a slight plus. Instead we are following Karpov–Korchnoi (Baguio, 1978). The move order through White's 6th move is identical, when K–K continued 6... c5 7. d5! (GM Mednis mentions that at that time theory held White gains an endgame advantage after 7. dxc5 dxc5 8. Qxd8. However, Korchnoi had discovered that White's advantage, if any, is of the most fleeting kind.) 7... Na6 And now Karpov played 8. Bf4! (rather than my earlier 8. h3).

8... Nc7 9. Bg5?

A strategic error. From time to time I have played the Black side of the Benoni.
Don’t Be Scared, It’s Still Chess
Expand the Board, Expand Your Mind
By Burt Hochberg

Chessplayers are nothing if not loyals to the game they love. Trying to explain an unorthodox variant to most of them is like shouting obscenities in church — a sure way to provoke reactions ranging from patronizing condescension to contempt or even hostility.

I recently became acquainted with a fascinating variant known as Grand Chess, and I’m about to tell you about it.

Before you stop reading and turn the page, let me assure you that there is nothing to fear: Grand Chess is really a natural extension of chess, with an expanded board, two new pieces and two extra pawns per side, and a couple of very simple special rules. It is not intended to replace chess but to coexist with it. For lovers of tactical play especially, Grand Chess is a game to revel in. For all players, Grand Chess will make you think about what chess really is.

Grand Chess did not suddenly appear out of nowhere. The first seeds were planted in the early 17th century, when the Sicilian priest and chessplayer Pietro Carrera proposed adding two new pieces, one combining the powers of rook and knight, the other the powers of bishop and knight, and using an enlarged board. In the 19th century the English master H.E. Bird (popularizer of the opening that bears his name) experimented with a similar idea.

10×10, 10×8

In the 1920’s, Capablanca and Edward Lasker proposed a variant, first on a 10×10 board and then on a 10×8 board, that used the same two extra pieces. Capa agreed with Emanuel Lasker, who believed that chess had been essentially solved and that since grandmasters could draw with one another virtually at will, top-level chess would soon lose its appeal to public and player alike and would die a “draw-death.”

He was not the only leading player to express dissatisfaction with chess. Emanuel Lasker also suggested that castling be abolished; Reti (and others) believed that draws should not necessarily be worth half a point per player but that varying fractions of a point should be apportioned according to whether the game ended in stalemate, perpetual check, insufficient material, etc.; Frank Marshall’s idea was to have the opening of each game chosen by ballot. And so on.

Capa’s opinion, and that of other reformers, did not prevail, as events proved (or at least they were premature, which future events will prove or disprove), and his experiment remains a curiosity of interest only to lovers of chess variants. (Among them was Edward Lasker, with whom I had the good fortune to play a number of games of Lasker–Capablanca chess in the late 1970s, toward the end of his long life, when we were neighbors on Manhattan’s Upper West Side. His advanced age notwithstanding. I invariably lost, of course.)

Lasker–Capablanca chess had two theoretical objections. One was that on a 10×10 board it took too long for the forces to engage, and players could develop their pieces virtually irrespective of what the opponent was doing. This was solved by substituting an 10×8 board, but the other problem remained: with two additional pieces on the first rank, it was more difficult to bring the rooks into play than in regular chess.

FAST FORWARD

Fast forward to the 1980s. Here let me quote the creator of Grand Chess, the Dutch game inventor Christian Freeling (from his “cyberbook” Grand Chess & Co., a mind-opening collection of Freeling’s chess variants: “…the casting rule derives from the fact that rooks initially are obstructed by their own pawns and pieces. It’s easy to get bishops and knights out, but without casting, rooks would be troublesome. Grand Chess was invented a few minutes after I realized that putting all the pieces except rooks on the second rank would solve [several] problems simultaneously…”

[Diagram of Grand Chess starting position]

First, the board is a 10×10 square, as in the original version of Lasker–Capablanca chess; in that game, pawns could advance three squares on their first move to compensate for the extra distance between them. Placing the pawns on the third rank instead of the second keeps them at their normal distance and allows them to move as usual and to engage the enemy as quickly as they do in orthodox chess. Freeling has an interesting comment about pawns: “Chess systems, ultimately, are about pieces attacking the king. There’s no fundamental reason why they should be able to attack one another. If they do, however, pawns are needed to initially separate the forces, lest an onslaught of exchanges would result, that ultimately would leave the contestants totally amputated and impotent.”. And the two sets of pieces are the same distance apart as in regular chess.

Second, the rooks are free, so castling is unnecessary. King safety is a concern, especially with three industrial-strength pieces on each side, but as Freeling writes: “The king’s safety would hardly constitute a plausible argument in a chess game.” When I challenged him on this point via e-mail, his response was: “Why should the king be safe?”

Grand Chess, like its father and grandfathers, adds two new pieces and two extra pawns for each side. The two new pieces are natural extensions of the powers of the queen, which combines the moves of rook and bishop. The cardinal (abbreviation C) combines bishop and knight, and the marshall (M) combines rook and knight, thus completing a “set” of pieces that combine all possible piece moves. The cardinal, by the way, has the unique ability to give mate all by itself (e.g., king on a1, cardinal on c3, attacking the king and all its escape squares).

Because of their great mobility and unique abilities, the cardinal and marshall are roughly as powerful as the queen, although the cardinal seems slightly weaker and the marshall slightly stronger. The cardinal can use its bishop-half to move its knight-half all the way across the board, and its knight-half lets its bishop-half change colors, which means it can cover every square on the board. The marshall’s knight-half gives its rook-half the ability to jump over other pieces, “a really dangerous capacity,” says Freeling.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

The other pieces are affected by the increased board size. The bishop gains in power, especially on an open board, but the knight is slightly demoted because of its even more limited range relative to the board size. It works well as a sacrificial lamb to clear pawns out of the way of the heavy pieces. The minor pieces — I now include the rook along with the knight and bishop — have, however, the annoying capability of continually harassing the heavy pieces, which must therefore be deployed with care.

In addition to the new pieces, a couple of rules have been added. There is no castling, as already mentioned, and there is no en passant capture (although a pawn may advance two squares on its first move). The other new rule applies to pawn promotion: A pawn may optionally promote on the eighth or ninth rank, but only to an already captured piece belonging to the same player (you can’t have two queens, for instance). If a pawn moves to the eighth or ninth rank and there are no captures present (about as likely as Kasparov sending IBM’s Deep Blue team a Valentine card), it remains

Burt Hochberg, Senior Editor of Games magazine, was Editor of Chess Life from 1966 through 1979.
a pawn. A pawn advancing to the tenth rank must promote or it can’t advance (although it can give check to a king on the tenth rank).

Here are some practical examples to demonstrate the powers of the new pieces. All are taken from a Grand Chess tournament organized among several masters during the Yerevan Olympiad in 1996. The time limit was game-in-20, plus 15 seconds added per move. The fast time limit, along with the players’ unfamiliarity with the new game — not to mention its inherent complexity — undoubtedly accounted for the abundance of blunders.

If 56. c8=Q Qf2+ 57. Kb3 Md2+ 58. Ka4 Qxa7+ and mates.
56. ... Kd4 57. Md6+ Ke3 58. Md1+. Unfortunately, 58. c8=Q still doesn’t work because of 58. ... Qf2+ 59. Kb3 Kf4+ 60. Ka4 Qxa7+ 61. Kb5 Mc3 mate.
58. ... Kf4 59. Md5+ Kg4 60. c8=Q Too late.
60. ... Qg2+ 61. Ke1 Mf1+ 62. Md1 Qd2+, White resigns.
Here’s another example of the marshall doing its thing.

The cardinal kindly consents to play an encore.

E. Hanim-Tan Wei Sin
1. e5 e6 2. Mg4
Opening theory in Grand Chess doesn’t exist, but, as in chess, it’s usually a bad idea to bring out the heavy pieces too early.
2. ... Rae10 3. Ral Kd10 4. f1 Nc7 5. Kd1 "Castling" by moving a rook to a center file and retrieving the king from any immediate danger is a typical maneuver in Grand Chess.
5. ... Nht6 6. Nc4 f6 7. exf6?
Black now develops serious threats by kicking around the White marshall. White should probably develop by, say, Rf1.
The sac comes too late.
10. ... exd5 11. Nb6 Cxa3 12. Nxd5

12. ... Cb2 mate.
Bod-a-bing! White seems to have been dozing through the whole game, and at the end he was sound asleep.

I hope these examples give you some idea of what the new pieces are capable of and how lively Grand Chess can be.

To play these examples — and to play Grand Chess — you’ll need a 10×10 board and the new pieces, which you can cheaply and easily create. Buy a piece of oak tag in a stationery store and simply draw the necessary lines and shadings, making sure the squares are the same size.

You’ll need two old chess sets (or cheap ones you can buy in a toy store), to get the extra pieces and two extra pawns per side. Glue a rook on top of a knight to make the marshall, and do the same with a knight and bishop (you may have to shave the knight’s head to make it flat). Alternatively, you can find some makeshift way to represent the new pieces, like drawing symbols on checkers, for instance, but I strongly recommend creating them as described above. It’s the best way to visualize the pieces’ moves.

For more Grand Chess games and several problems, as well as information about Christian Freeling’s other games, visit his web site: www.minchamps.net. If you have a Java-enabled browser, you can download and read Grand Chess & Co.
A living legend is no more. Miguel Najdorf died on July 4, while visiting in Spain. Born on April 15, 1910, he was 87. He was a fixture at almost every world championship match for the past 25 years, holding court in the press room, analyzing, playing blitz, and just enjoying the moment. Exuberant is how Arthur Bisguier described him. His love for the game may be matched, but it will never be surpassed.

Perhaps the first mention of Najdorf in the west came after the 1935 Olympiad held in Warsaw, where he scored 9-2-6 (70.6%). It was enough to get him invited to his first international tournament, the Hungarian Championship, in June of 1936. The following is reprinted from The Chess Review, August, 1936.

**The Hungarian Championship Tournament by Lajos Steiner**
The Hungarian Chess Federation always invites about four foreign players to its championship tournament, who may compete for the prizes but are ineligible for the title. This year’s selection comprised Glass of Austria, May of Czechoslovakia, Najdorf of Poland, and Sacconi of Italy. While Glass, May and Sacconi were reliable and experienced veterans and were expected to show to advantage, Najdorf was the dark horse. Never had he participated outside of his native land. At the age of 26 he had achieved several fine successes over redoubtable opponents, culminating in a 3-2 victory over Dr. Tartakower. At second and third board in the International Team Tournament at Warsaw, Najdorf more than contributed his share to Poland’s preeminent position. But there were (and are) many other young players who do well at home, only to fail miserably when faced with the acid test of international competition.

Never before in chess history did we number so many chess masters, and never before did so much hidden talent exist.

In the interest of better chess every promising player should be given an opportunity to prove himself. And for this purpose the Olympic Team Tournaments may be used as a proving ground. While these do not truly indicate real ability (only tournaments and matches do), they may serve as a guide. If I had a free hand in running tournaments, I would invite in addition to the acknowledged masters, players of the calibre of Book, Kerest, Najdorf, Trifunovic, and the young Estonian, Schmidt. Though Schmidt did not play at Warsaw, he is a keen rival of Kerest at home. Kerest, in fact, has been given his opportunity and proved worthy of it.

It is difficult to follow the progress of all the youngsters, and not to digress too much, let us get back to Budapest, where Najdorf for the first time was on his mettle. I am gratified to testify that he acquitted himself nobly. True, it was only an Hungarian affair with a slight international flavoring. But then, the Hungarian class is on a respectable level. This has been proven time and time again in various tournaments.

Najdorf played colorful chess, with amazing combinative power, good position judgment and chess intelligence. Rumors as to his ability emanating from Poland were not in the least exaggerated. His youth and ability will carry him far in Cais-sa’s firmament.

On hand I did not yet see the flaw in his play. The height to which any player will rise depends upon his ability to eliminate or lessen his weaknesses. Perhaps a little more exactitude in the opening, necessary, or control of his excitement at critical moments. This last factor cost him half a point in the last round of our championship tournament, when after an excellently played game he missed an easy win.

It would be futile to compare Najdorf to other players at this date. In chess long years of experience are necessary to determine whether a player has definitely arrived. Some players shine for a while only to have their brilliance quickly dimmed. Others shine intermittently. But players of the first rank shine steadily — year in, year out. I am not a prophet, but I believe Najdorf has an excellent chance to become a star of the first magnitude.

**[Najdorf shared first place in this event with Lajos Steiner, both scoring 10-1-4.]**

**Artwork by David J. Torrellas**
The following game was annotated by Lajos Steiner. Najdorf’s first international tournament outside of Poland.

**Sicilian Defense**

**Notes by Lajos Stein, from Chess Review, August 1936.**

1. e4 c5 2. Nc3

This move indicates that White is determined to play a close game. Should Black, however, decide on rapid counterplay he may continue with 2. ... e6 3. g3 b6! 4. Bg2 Bb7 5. Nge2 Nf6 6. 0-0 d5!, and after 7. exd5, Black is able to recapture 7. ... Nxd5, thus eliminating the effectiveness of 8. d4.

2. ... Nc6 3. g3 d6 4.Bg2 Bb7 5. Nge2 Qc8 6. 0-0

A bit careless. It was imperative to save the fianchettoed bishop. 6. Nf4 was indicated. White will soon suffer from weakness on his white squares.


Disturbed over the loss of his bishop, White, who generally manages this opening skillfully, is at a loss for the proper continuation, and chooses a move which only results in the loss of time. A better plan would be the advance f2-f4-f5, and the development Bf3 and Qd2 arriving at a natural formation.

10. ... e6 11. Nde3 Nge7 12. c3 d5 13. f4 d4!

Rare judgment. Black perceives that the adverse knight cannot be maintained on d6 for any length of time as its base (the pawn on e5) can be successfully attacked.

14. Nc4

Not 14. cxd4, as after 14. ... B (or N) xd4, the open d-file would tell against White.

14. ... Qd7 15. e5 0-0 16. Qe2 Rad8 17. Nd6 dxc3

Important, as after c3-c4 White would be relieved of the defense of the d-pawn. Now the knight is bound to the d-file, indirectly mitigating the pressure on the pawn.

18. bxc3 b6!

To be able to play ... Nc8, which would now be met by 19. Ne4 Qxd3 20. Qxd3 Rxd3 21. Nxc5 Rxc3 22. Nxb7, etc.

19. Rd1 f6 20. d4 cxd4 21. cxd4
The fact is, judging from naming conventions, you won’t find Najdorf as a big innovator; he was first and foremost a player, make that a great player.

He was the sort of player who had a varied enough repertoire that you could not expect a particular move. And he paid attention to the current openings. But he did have certain conspicuous preferences.

As White, he distinctly favored e4, with a secondary interest in the English/Reti complexes; 1 e4 was far less common.

As a rule he leaned towards the more combative choices, especially as Black. So you see lots of King’s Indians and Sicilians. But he also had a love of the Queen’s Indian, and liked to play the Philidor Defense on occasion.

But perhaps I’m forgetting a certain little pawn move in the Sicilian? That would be 5... a6 after 1 e4 c5 2 Nf3 d6 3 exd4 4 Nxd4 Nf6 5 Nc3. It would be best to just quote Najdorf from the introductory chapter of “Understanding the Najdorf Variation” in the book The Najdorf Variation in the Sicilian Defense (RHM Press, 1976):

I began to play the Sicilian in the years 1937-38, since it suited my temperament and my status as a player always looking for a fight. It was then that I put into practice the move ... a6 which had been previously played by Opocensky and other players. The frequency with which I employed it was the reason for its subsequently becoming widespread under my name.

Some insight into Najdorf himself, too.

Here’s one of those very early games:

SICILIAN DEFENSE

W: C. Poulsen
B: Miguel Najdorf
Buena Aires Olympiad, 1939

1. e4 c5 2 Nf3 d6 3 d4 exd4 4 Nxd4 Nf6


He could offer greater resistance by 29. Rxd8 Rxd8 30. Qxf3 Qc3 31. Qxc3 Bxc3, but even in that event ... b5-b4 should quickly decide the issue.

29. Rfx3 30. Rxd8+ Kf7 31. Nh4

If 31. Rd7+ Ke8!

31. Qe3+ 32. Rf8+ Kg7 33. Nf3 Qxc4 34. h4 Bb2 35. Be7 Qc7 36. Bb4 a5 37. Ng5 Qe6+, White resigns.

Najdorf played for Poland in the 1935, 1937, and 1939 Olympiads, and also at the “unofficial” team tournament in Munich in 1936. When the Olympiad was revived in 1950, Najdorf was by then a citizen of Argentina, and he played for that country in 11 more Olympiads, through 1974. He also won the Argentine Championship in 1949, 1951, 1955, 1960, 1964, 1967, and 1975.

Other results during and after the war clearly marked him as one of the top players in the world.

1941 Buenos Aires: 5-14
1946 Groningen: 6-11
1946 Prague: 9-13
1947 Buenos Aires: 4-15
1950 Amsterdam: 11-14
1950 Bled: 8-15

Equal 1st with Stahlberg Tied for 4th with Szabo, behind Botvinnik, Euwe, Smyslov
1st place
2nd behind Stahlberg
1st place, ahead of
Roshlevsky, Stahlberg
1st place

When Reuben Fine withdrew from the FIDE World Championship in 1948, FIDE declined to invite Najdorf, although he was clearly one of the top ten players in the world. In 1949 he drew a match with Reuben Fine (2-2-4), and Trifunovic (1-1-10). Later, although not promoted as such, he lost two matches against Reshevsky in what became known as the Championship of the Western Hemisphere.

We think Steiner was a prophet. Miguel Najdorf was a star of the first magnitude.
Annotations by IM Jack Peters
1. e4 c5 2. Nc3 Nc6 3. f4 g6 4. Nf3 Bg7 5. Bb5
The other popular variation of the Grand
Prix Attack, 5. Bc4 e6 6. f5, can be handled
smoothly by 6... Nge7.
5. ... Nd4 6. Bxd3 e6?! Much safer is 6... d6.
7. Nxd4 exd4 8. Nb5!
Black has no problems after 8. Ne2 Ne7, as
he meets 9. e5 with 9... d6, and 9... c3 with 9.
... Nc6.
8. ... d6
Now 8. ... Ne7? 9. Nd6+ Kf8 10. e5 leaves
Black badly tangled.
9. c3 dxc3?!
This natural capture gets Black into seri-
ous trouble. Yefim Geller, whom Gufeld for-
merly coached, managed to equalize against
Joel Benjamin in Lone Pine, 1980, with 9...
ex5 Nxe5. Probably White can improve at
Move 12.
10. dxc3 Nf6
Best. Black would drop a pawn by 10...
Ne7? 11. Nxd6+, as 11. ... Qxd6? loses the
queen to 12. Bb5+. Nor can Black escape by
10. ... a6?, because 11. Qa4! Ke7 12. e5! dxe5
13. Qb4+ Ke8 14. Nd6+ Kd7 15. Nxd7 picks up the
Exchange.
11. Be5
This keeps Black's king in the center. If 11.
... d5, then 12. e5 Nd7 13. Nd6+ is very
unpleasant for Black.
11. ... Ke7 12. Be3 a6 13. Nd4
White has much the better of it. He will
castleside, then blast open the position
by pushing e4-e5 or f4-f5.
13. ... Qc7
Black plans to bring his king rook to d8,
then retreat his king to g8. But he will never
complete the second phase of this maneu-
ver. He should consider 13. ... e5?! 14. fxe5
dxe5 15. Nb3 Qxd1+ 16. Rxd1 Nd7 17. 0-0 b6,
when his solid position offers him more
hope of completing his development.
14. 0-0 Rd8 15. Qf3 Kf8 16. f5!
Threatening 17. fx6 fx6 18. Bg5.
16. ... gx5
Now White gets the open lines he needs
for his attack. However, Black has no satis-factory defense. If he bolsters the f4-f6 by 16.
... Kg8 17. Bg5 Rf8, White increases the pres-
sure with 18. Qg3 and 19. Qh4.
17. Bg5 b5
Black dangles the rook at a8, trying to dis-
tact White from his attack. Neither 17. ... e5
Bxg8 will survive.
18. exf5 e5
19. Ne6+!
White insists on an open f-file. Much less
convincing is 19. Qxa7 exd4.
19. ... fx6 20. fx6 Qc5+!
Looking toward g5. Probably 20. ... Qc7
holds out longest, although both 21. Bx6
and 22. Qxa8 will win for White. Useless is
20. ... Kg8 21. Bx6 Rb8 because 22. e7 wins.
21. Kh1 e4 22. c7+ Kxe7
If 22. ... Kf7, one method is 23. exd8=N+,
23. Bxe6+ Kd7
White can dispatch 23. ... Bx6 24. Qxe6-
Kd7 most efficiently by 25. Qf7+ Kc6 26.
Qxd5+ Kxd5 30. Rd1+.
24. Qg4+, Black resigns.

FRENCH DEFENSE
W: FM Luis Busquets
B: IM Igor Ivanov
1997 Memorial Day Classic

Annotations by IM Jack Peters
1. e4 e6 2. d4 d5 3. Nc3 Nbd4 4. e5 c5 5. a3
Bxc3+ 6. bxc3 Ne7 7. Qg4
This move turns the Winawer variation
into a gambit. The alternatives 7. Nf3, 7. a4,
and 7. f4 lead to a more strategic struggle.
7. ... cxd4 8. Qxg7 Rg8 9. Qxh7 Nbc6 10.
Nf3
More active than the main line, 10. Ne2
Qc7 11. f4 Bd7 12. Qd3 dxc3.
10. ... Qc7 11. Kd1
Not 11. cxd4 because of 11. ... Nxd4 12.
Nd4 Qc3+.
11. ... dxc3 12. Ng5 Qxe5?!
A recent discovery. For decades, Black has
refused to accept 12. ... Nxe5 13. fxg5 14. fxg5
Ng6, with good compensation for the
Exchange.
13. Qxf7+ Kd7

18TH ANNUAL LINA GRUMETTE MEMORIAL DAY CLASSIC
OPEN: 1st: Igor Ivanov, 2nd-5th: Jack Peters,
Cyrus Lakdawala, Levon Altounian, Andrew Kras-
nov; 6th-11th: Eduard Gufeld, Gregg Small, David
Vigorito, Robert McGuire, Vinay Bhat, Patrick
Humell; Under 2450: John Watson; Under 2300:
Steve Ramos.
UNDER 2200: 1st-3rd: Carlos Garcia, Rickie
Simms, John R. Williams, 4th-5th: Sharon Ellen
Burtman, Chris Leesararanuku; 6th-10th: Ed Cohen,
Charles Cole, Francisco DaSilva, Antonio Martin,
Mehrdad Miralai; UNDER 2000: 1st-5th: Jamin
Baig, Miodrag Dostanic, Alfredo Insigne, David
Portwood, John W. Williams; 6th-11th: Neil Bershad,
Herbert Faeh, Timothy Kasper, Lupe Lopez.
UNDER 1800: 1st-2nd: Peter Joseph, Xiaosong
Zhu; 3rd-5th: Charles Berman, Brian Havey, Arda
Renkver; 6th-12th: Vieker Ahmed, Feliks Akopian,
John Harwell, Ray Milovanovich, John Parson,
Steve Skuljan, Artunyan Varoukhanian.
UNDER 1600: 1st: Klaus Schmalie; 2nd: David
McDaniel, 3rd-5th: Michael Jeffrey, Ed Portillo,
Carrell Ricc; 6th-10th: James Benway, John Brei-
denthal, Paul Butt; Richard Chang, Cesar Guellar.
UNDER 1400: 1st: Samuel Arabyan, 2nd-4th:
Andrei Ionescu, Samuel Rees, Santy Wong; 5th:
Robert Dickson; Under 1200: 1st: Chad Yodvis-
sak; 2nd: Austin Ong.
The 45-player Memorial Day Classic Blitz Cham-
pionship was won by U.S. High School Champion
Harry Akopyan, scoring 9-1.
Logical. Another option is 11... c5, anticipating 12. a3 f5 or 12. h3 Nh6 13. a3 Nf7 14. Rh1 f5.
Hypermodern strategy. White cedes Black a broad pawn center, then tries to demonstrate its vulnerability.
15... Qc7 16. Rad1 Rd8 17. Rfe1 Be6 18. Bf1 Qf7 19. g3
18... Ne5!
Black chooses the wrong moment to bring his knight back into action. First 19... Rb8 would prepare... Na6-c5. Another idea is 19... Rd7, which reduces the danger on the d-file and the h4-d8 diagonal. Ideally, Black would like to push... c6-c5, then maneuver his queen knight to d4.
20. b4 Nce4 21. Nxe4 bxc4
22. Bxf6 exf3?!
Black must try 22... Qxf6 23. Ng5 d5, when 24. Nxe6 Qxe6 25. h5? dxc4 (or 25... d4 26. Bg2 Rac8 27. Bxe4 gives White a big edge.) 26. Qxd8+ Rxd8 27. Rdx8+ Kf7 28. bxc6 Qxc6 29. Bg2 produces a sharp endgame. White has the advantage, but he will have to capture several Black pawns to create a winning passer.
23. Bxd8 Rxd8 24. Rxe5!
Black's center collapses. Black must have overlooked this shot, which relies on 24... Bxe5 25. Qxe5-.
24... Bxc4 25. Qg5!
White forces a decision in the middlegame, as 25... Rf8 drops material to 26. Re7.
25... Rd7 26. Bxc4 Qxc4 27. Re8+, Black resigns.
After 27... Kf7 28. Rde1, White threatens deadly checks at f5 and at e7.

 annotations by IM Jack Peters
1. d4 d6 2. Nf3 Nf6 3. c4 g6 4. Nc3 Bg7 5. e4 0-0 6. Be2 Nf6!?
Alottanian sidesteps Igor's beloved Petro- sian system, 6... e5 7. d5.
7. 0-0 e5 8. Be3 c6 9. d5 Ng4?! Black must strive for... I-f5. After 9... cxd5 10. cxd5 Nc5 11. Nd2, White will make progress on the queenside with b2-b4, or induce the weakening... a7-a5.

NM Andrew Krasnov
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AUGUST 1997 / CHESS LIFE 53

KING'S INDIAN DEFENSE [E91]
Classical System
W: IM Igor Ivanov
B: FM Levon Alottanian
1997 Memorial Day Classic
USCF NATIONAL EVENT

Three New National Champions

by Garrett Scott

Illinois Wesleyan University in Bloomington, Illinois was the site of this year's Maurice Irvin Memorial Chess Festival. IM Tal Shaked was crowned U.S. Junior Champion, Shearwood McClelland took the U.S. Junior Open crown and Lawrence Butler is the new U.S. Game/10 Champion.

The Maurice Irvin Memorial Chess Festival added the word "Memorial" this year to acknowledge the passing of the honoree of the Festival. Maurice Irvin has been honored five previous times by his son and daughter-in-law, Dan and Karen, in this series of six chess festivals. Dan is a chess player who wanted to bring a chess festival to the twin cities of Bloomington and Normal. The Maurice Irvin Chess Festivals have included 17 national chess tournaments, four other tournaments and several chess camps.

U.S. JUNIOR OPEN

One hundred and five players from 14 states and one foreign country entered two sections at the 1997 U.S. Junior Open. Shearwood McClelland, a young master from New Jersey, journeyed to central Illinois to claim the first title of the festival. McClelland's 5½ points made him a clear first in the 56-player Open Section. John Cole of Indiana won the Under 13 section. He also had a 5½ points for a clear first in the 49-player section.

McClelland was joined by one expert and six A players at the top of the chart. When the fourth round was done, only McClelland stood alone with a perfect 4-0. In the fifth round he was drawn by Tony Ostler allowing Thomas Hartwig to join him at 4½. McClelland beat Hartwig in the last round to finish with his 5½ points. In addition to the $200 and a trophy, Woody wins a seed into next year's Junior Championship. Matthew Hoekstra, John Klein and Robert Seipel each scored five points. Hoekstra and Klein took the second and third place trophies respectively and took the Class B trophy.

John Cole entered the Under 13 section as the top rated player and played king of the hill all weekend. After John prevailed and won the title with 5½. Chen, Daniel Leung and William Ferguson each scored five. Leung was awarded the second place trophy on tie-breaks and Chen got third. Ferguson took home the E trophy.

Garrett Scott was the Tournament Director and was assisted by William Johnson.

Notes by Shearwood McClelland III

One of the most important games of the 1997 U.S. Junior Open occurred in round four, when I was paired against 12-year-old phenom Matthew Hoekstra of North Carolina, who had already beaten me at the New York Open earlier in the year. The importance of this game was evident in the final standings, as I took first place with a score of 5½, and Matthew took second place with 5.


This move is dubious, as it places the knight on a bad square, where it blocks his pawns on the queenside. The move 10... Ne5 would have been better.


This move places Black in some trouble, as he must struggle to find moves which do not lose material. White is already threatening 13. Bxb6 followed by 14. Qxd6 with a winning position.

12. ... Nfd7 13. Bg5 f6 14. Be3 Kh8 15. h4 d5

Although this move loses a pawn, it aids Black tremendously in loosening the noose that White has around his position.


This move is dubious, as it gives Black the future option of ... Rb3 in some variations. Better was 30. Nxb7.

30. ... Rb6 31. g4 Ke7 32. Nc8+ Bxc8 33. Rxc8 Kd7 34. Rh8?

This allows Black to simplify into a bishop of opposite color endgame. I saw Black's reply, but I overestimated my chances in the resultant endgame.

34. ... Rxb2! 35. Kxb2

36. Bg7+ 36. Kb3 Bxb8 37. Bxb7

38. Bc8 39. Ke4 Bb2 40. a4 g5 41. h5

Better than 41. hxg5, which would serve only to remove a potential Black target: the pawn on h6.

41. ... Kc6 42. c3 Kd6 43. Kd4 Ke7 44. Kd3 Kf6 45. Bd7 Ke5!

This is the point of Black's defense. White would like to play 46. c4, but if he does so now, then Black will play 46... Bd4!, preventing 47. c5, and virtually ensuring a draw. For White to win, he has to be able to play c4-c5 immediately after c4. For Black to draw, he must be able to prevent White from playing c5 after the move c4 by either Ba3-c5 or Bd4-c5.

46. Bf5 Ba3 47. Ke4 Bb2 48. Bc6 Kd6 49. Kd4

The second time around.

49. ... Kc7 50. Bb7 Ke6 51. Bd5+ Kf6 52. Ba3 Bb3 53. Kd3 Bd2??

The decisive mistake. With 53. ... Ke5! (preparing 54. ... Bd4 if c4), Black would have been very close to a win.

54. c4! Ke5 55. c5!

Decisive. Now White will be able to create enough space to either queen the c-pawn, force Black to sacrifice his bishop for the c-pawn, or win the a-pawn with his king.

55. ... Ba3 56. Kc4 Ke6 57. Kb5+ Kd7 58. Kd6 Bb4?

This move speeds up the end, but the end is not in doubt; after 58. ... Ke5 59. Bd4 e5 60. Kxa5 wins.

59. c6+ Ke6 60. c7 Be5+ 61. Kb7, Black resigns.

[The U.S. Junior, the U.S. Junior Open, and the U.S. Game/10 Championships are three of over 25 national title events co-sponsored by the USCF and participating affiliates.]
Black cannot stop the c-pawn from queening.

This victory was a big step towards my eventual result of becoming the 1997 U.S. Junior Open Champion. Winning this tournament gave me my fourth national scholastic championship (the 1993 National Junior High School, 1994 National 11th Grade, and 1995 National 12th Grade championships being the other three), as well as the automatic invitation to a tournament that I have been dreaming about playing in since my rating was 1600: the Interplay United States Junior Closed Championship.

The prizebox appears on page 79.

**U.S. GAME/10**

The 47 players from ten states who showed up for the U.S. Game/10 Championship graciously endured a failed air conditioning system in the Main Lounge of the Memorial Student Center at IWU. The games were, as expected, fast and furious. Everyone yielded something somewhere along the line in this eight round tournament.

Only one Quick Master appeared to try to garner a national title, but five Experts joined the field to challenge. Eight rounds for 47 players allows the top players some latitude for error. But it was not to be. First-ranked Alan Watson was stopped in the third round by last year’s Denker winner, John Bick. The new chart topper with a perfect score was David Mote. However, **Lawrence Butler** stopped him and Bick fell to a 2½ pointer, leaving Butler alone at the top. Butler played king of the hill the rest of the way with a draw and two wins. After seven rounds Butler was a point and a half ahead. Watson came back to top Butler in the eighth, but he had suffered an additional defeat in round 4. Garrett Scott directed this Grand Prix/National Championship event.

The prizebox appears on page 11.

**INTERPLAY U.S. JUNIOR**

The highest quality tournaments of the Maurice Irvin Festivals have always been the invitational events. This year’s Junior Championship filled the bill. Topping the invitational list were IMs Tal Shaked (AZ) and Igor Shliperman (NY). Other invitees included Dmitry Zilberstein (CA), Eugene Perelshteyn (MA), Michael Mulyar (CO), Dean Ippolito (NJ), Gregory Shahade (PA), Charles Gelman (VA), Ljupco Steriev (IL) and James Allen (WI).

A note of information. James Allen was James Wheat, but has legally changed his name.

The first round saw Shahade, Zilberstein, Shliperman and Mulyar winning while Gelman held the draw against Shaked. The second round began to sort things out early as Mulyar and Zilberstein added one each to stand alone at 2½. Shaked added 2½ on the IM battle and stood alone at 1½. In the third round, Zilberstein defeated Gelman. That, combined with the draw between Mulyar and Shaked left Zilberstein alone at three and Mulyar a half point off. Shaked fell a full point behind and was joined by the three other winners of Round 3, Ippolito, Shliperman and Shahade. Round 4 saw the leader give some ground with a draw to Shliperman, but Mulyar’s draw with Perelshteyn allowed Dmitry to stay clear at 3½ while Shaked’s defeat of Steriev allowed Tal to draw into the two person tie a half point off the lead.

The field tightened considerably in round five, as two of the leaders, Mulyar and Zilberstein, drew and Ippolito held Shaked to a draw to keep him a half off the lead. Shliperman and Shahade defeated Allen and Gelman respectively to create a four-way tie for second, a half point behind Dmitry.

Sixth round pairings assured Zilberstein’s lead. His pairing against Steriev assured him of the point—Steriev’s lack of high level experience showed. Shahade defeated Shliperman to maintain a second place tie and pushed Shliperman a point and a half off the pace with three rounds to go. Mulyar and Shaked stayed a half point off with wins over Allen and Perelshteyn respectively.

Battle royale loomed in round seven with pairings of Shaked–Zilberstein and Mulyar–Shahade. Shaked and Zilberstein drew as Mulyar defeated Shahade. Mulyar rejoined Zilberstein as co-leader and Shaked stayed a half point out of the lead. Shliperman’s win over Gelman allowed him to join Shahade at 4½, a point off.

With two rounds to go, half the field was grouped within a point of one another.

The eighth round was somewhat topsy-turvy. Perelshteyn, playing from the lower half of the field, held co-leader Zilberstein to a draw. But the other co-leader, Mulyar, was beaten by Gelman, who was four points behind Mulyar going into the game. Shaked, the 1995 winner in Bloomington, drew even for the lead with a win over Allen. Shaked had never held or shared the lead of this tournament until the end of the next to last round. Shahade got his point from Steriev and pulled back to within a half point of the lead.

The eighth round was played Saturday evening. On Friday evening, a cheerleader camp came to campus. It was reported to this writer that several players had become acquainted with some of the cheerleaders. That may have explained the haggard looks of some of the players at the 10 a.m. start of Sunday’s round.

Entering the last round Zilberstein and Shaked were tied with 6 points and Shahade and Mulyar were within range at 5½. Shaked–Shahade appeared to be the featured game. Zilberstein was 1½ ahead of Ippolito when they sat down to play and Dmitry was tied for the lead. Mulyar was a half ahead of Shliperman as they joined the battle.

Those assembled were mildly surprised when Mulyar and Shliperman drew early after 12 moves and even more surprised when the Zilberstein–Ippolito contest drew after move 17. Shaked and Shahade stretched the first time control as an interesting endgame took shape. They continued to thrust and parry for another two hours. At the end of the six-hour, sudden death playing session, Greg Shahade’s flag fell in a losing position.

The sole leader at the end of the tournament, and the re-crowned Interplay U.S. Junior Champion, was Tal Shaked with seven points. Dmitry Zilberstein was clear second with 6½ and Michael Mulyar was a clear third with six. Fourth and fifth were shared by Gregory Shahade and Igor Shliperman with 5½. Eugene Perelshteyn (5), Dean Ippolito (5), and Charles Gelman (3½) had all scored draws and/or wins that affected the final standings among the leaders. James Allen got his point against Lubjco Steriev. Ljupco was clearly out of his league.

Robert Singletary drew compliments from the players for his fine job of directing the event. Interplay Productions, Inc., was the primary sponsor of the U.S. Junior Championship. U.S. Chess is also a sponsor. Dan and Karen Irvin provided local sponsorship for the U.S. Junior Championship, as well as for the Maurice Irvin Memorial Chess Festival. The Twin City Chess Club was the local affiliate sponsor. TCCC members Dennis Bourgeois and Dale Elder assisted Garrett Scott as Festival Director.

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AUGUST 1997 / CHESS LIFE 55
DUCKWORTH TAKES GAME/60 HONORS

by Randy Hough
International Arbiter

History increasingly repeats itself when it comes to the U.S. Game/60 Championship. The Southern California Chess Federation has now hosted it for four straight years. This year’s edition, June 21-22, drew 98 players, up one from 1996, and Mark Duckworth, a colorful local FM, again started off with a 6-0 blitz.

U.S. GAME/60 CHAMPIONSHIP
June 21–22, 1997 • Irvine, California


ENGLISH OPENING

[A10]

W: Emmanuel Perez (2396)
B: FM Mark Duckworth
1997 Game/60 Championship


Wins over Ivanov and Peters then left Duckworth in the driver’s seat. Jack had taken Mark’s measure in the last two Game/60’s (both French Winawers), but this time the variation and result were different, as Black’s attack proved the stronger.

FRENCH DEFENSE

[00]

W: IM Jack Peters
B: FM Mark Duckworth
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1997 U.S. Game/60 Championship


Ivanov and Perez showed that there’s life after losing to Duckworth, tying for second with 6½ scores. Ivanov downed Jim Maki in the final round, while Perez beat Perez (Ronald, that is — no relation). FMs Levon Altounian, Thomas Wolski (who accounted for Duckworth’s sole draw), and Charles Van Buskirk (last round conqueror of Vucic) joined Northern California wunderkind Vinay Bhat (who upset Peters in the finale) to round out the place winners with 5½.

All the prizewinners are listed in the box. Rapidly-improving Lonnie Neal lost the Under-2200 trophy on tiebreaks, but his result included draws with Peters and tenth-seed Maki. Another who merits special mention is the Under-1400 trophy winner. Sixteen-year-old Andrei Ionescu arrived very late for the fifth round after discovering that his car had been broken into. Upset, with 47 of his 60 minutes already gone, and playing 232 points “up,” Andrei eventually… won on time!

Alina Markowski, at 86 (by the time you read this, and proud of it!) the doyenne of Southern California chess, was paired with four players who were at most barely in their teens. And speaking of young players, two who utilized the $25 entry fee, no money prize” option had second thoughts. Brian Havey and Casey McCracken tied for first in their categories, but others took the prize money! Brian got the trophy at least.

Randy Hough and Elie Hsiao directed, doing pairings and posting results the old-fashioned way after a bout of “I thought you were bringing the laptop!” Numbers cruncher par excellence Mike Carr performed most of the organization tasks for SCCF. Maybe we’ll do it again next year!

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SNAPSHOT

Tom LaForge

I was born and raised in Manchester, Connecticut, where I spent many a winter evening playing checkers with my dad. My dad’s advice attack the center and do not unnecessarily weaken your back rank. Sounds a lot like chess. I was nearly 19 and a second semester engineering student at the University of Connecticut at Storrs when I played my first chess game. That game was a precursor of the challenge and the good fortune that lay ahead (the game was left unfinished when I could not make the lone king on an open board).

In 1957 I organized what may have been the first UCONN All Campus Chess Championship. After graduation I took an engineering position with GM’s new Department Division, in Bristol, Connecticut. Within a year all three of the new GM Engineers were laid off during a business downturn. I became a regular at the Hartford Chess Club. Although unrated I was probably 1700 strength.

I recall playing a skittles game with Dr. Joseph Platz, who was many times state champion. The doctor noted my nervousness and reminded me that he would only make one move at a time. Simultaneously with the receipt of a U.S. Army induction letter, I volunteered for the U.S. Navy. I completed boot camp at Great Lakes, Illinois, and applied for OCS. As an ensign and later at LTJG, I competed in the fifth Naval District (Norfolk, Virginia) Chess Championship three consecutive years but could only tie for second.

In 1964, I played in my first rated tournament, winning the unrated trophy at the Virginia State Chess Championship in Richmond. One of my wins was over the previous year’s champion. In 1965 I received a masters degree in Personnel Administration from George Washington University, and I completed my military obligation. Speaking of good luck, I was actually released from the service about a month early. Later that same year many military men were forced to extend as part of the Vietnam build up. That year I worked as an Industrial Engineer for Lukens Steel Company, in Coatesville, Pennsylvania. A year later I got another lucky break when I was offered a civil service position at Ft. Meade, Maryland, and a pay raise. I became a regular at the Washington Chess Divan where I frequently competed with master strength chess and poker players.

It is always good fortune to have a boss that you can call your good friend. When we weren’t crashing on a project, we both loved to play blitz chess and sip good Scotch. In 1970, my wife and I moved to Detroit where I worked for the U.S. Army Tank Command — Project Manager M60 Tanks. There are interesting similarities between chess and project management. Some of the more obvious similarities: you and you alone are responsible for the success or failure of your project and no amount of hard work or proactive planning can preclude nasty surprises and of course blunders are always possible when working against unreasonable time constraints.

My first success in Michigan may have been the most prestigious. In 1973, I tied for the Michigan Open Chess Championship. Jim Marfin, noted author, won on tiebreaks. Since then I have twice won the Michigan Amateur Championship and once each the Michigan Senior and Michigan Upper Peninsula Championships. In 1991, I won the Class A prize at the Canadian Open.

I have three grown daughters — Betsy, Lorraine and Maureen — and I am twice blessed with grandchildren. Two years ago I married my second wife, Yolanda, in Quito, Ecuador. We plan to take our vacations in enchanting Ecuador.

Time pressure presented me from determining the best of the three candidates that I considered; 24. b3, 24. Nd4, and the game move 24. Nd4 is the trickiest, e.g., 24. ... e6 25. Nxe6+ wins.

24. ... Qd5 25. Rfc1
If 25. Qf5 Black holds with the solid 25. ... Bd7 or even 25. ... f6 which leads into a wild position.

25. ... Qxe4 26. Bxe4 Rd2 27. b3 Bb5
28. Bc6?
Better is 28. R7 creating threats on his seventh rank.

28. ... Bxc6!
Better is 28. ... Be2. Time pressure is affecting both players.

29. Nxe6 e3 30. Nxh4
Regaining the pawn. The remainder of the game was played in the blitz mode.

Thus, further comments are futile. I felt that I had not played my best but was satisfied with the draw.

In all, honestly I must admit that my greatest fear was behind me — the three regional experts could not shut out the lowly Class A North representative!

FRENCH DEFENSE

[13]
Classical Variation
W: Matthew Traldi
B: Tom LaForge

1997 U.S. Amateur Playoff

Notes by Tom LaForge
1. e4 e6
My favorite response to 1. e4.
2. d4 d5 3. Nc3 Nf6 4. Bg5 Be7 5. e5
Ne4
GM Alexei Suetin in the book French
Defense (1988) states that, 5... Nd7 is the logical reply. From d7 the knight is able to support counterplay in the center by c5 and f6. Other moves are less reliable 5... Ne4?! Tartakower’s strange idea did not enjoy great popularity.

The book Viktor’s Pupils American Master by Larry Parr (1983) states, “Playable is 5... Ndf7 in which event Black should play ... b6 before breaking with ... c5.” Ideas change. The French is a complex defense offering alert Black players many opportunities to surprise their “booked-up” opponents.

6... Bxe7


6... Nxe5

Another line is 6... Qxe7 7.Nxe4 dxe4 8.Qe2 b6 9.0-0 Bb7 etc.

7... Bxd8!

Twelve-year-old Matthew finds the best line and follows Grefe-Pupils (1979). Parr explains, “Grefe’s safe move may be better part of value. After 7.Qg4 Qxe7 8.Qxg7 Qb4 9.Qxb8- Kd7 10.Rd1 Nxd1+ 11.Kxd1 the normal move is 11... Qxd4+ but Pupils believes that 11... Qxb2! is more flexible and may give Black the better game.”


Still following Grefe-Pupils. With the game time control it is difficult to pass on the opportunity to win the c4-pawn. Now my prepared line which I worked out this past winter in Quito, Ecuador, wins rook for knight and pawn. IM Grefe played 11.Nf3! (Parr’s exclamation mark).

11... Na6 12.Nxc4 b5 13.Rc3

Better is 13.Rc6 when White obtains a knight for the rook.

13... Bc4 14.Rc4

Missing the last chance to play 14.Rc6.


Activating the bishop and winning a vital tempo. Obviously, Matthew is rattled.

My surprise weapon came through for the second time in three weeks! GMs are known to keep their innovations secret, sometimes for decades, waiting for the right opportunity. Here I had an easy win against the highest rated of the four regional amateur champs.

Matthew held no grudge and achieved a beautiful third round win over my primary rival Mike Reading. Reading’s loss dropped him into a tie for second and delivered the internet playoff championship to me. Thank you young man. (In the critical third round game North Amateur USCF Championship, Detroit, May 24, 1997, I employed this same line against Rotberg (1730). That day I had already played nine hours of chess. In that game after 13.Rc3 Rotberg had used 24 minutes to my two.)

The proverb, “the harder I work the luckier I am,” seems to apply.

French Defense

Advance Variation

W: John Roush
B: Tom LaForge

Notes by Tom LaForge

If Roush had had knowledge of my second-round win playing the French Defense would he have varied from 1.e4?

1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5 3.e5 c4 4.c3 Bd7

The move 4... Nc6 is more normal. I wanted White to consider whether Black intended 5... Qb6 (or even 5... a6) followed by 6... Bb5, exchanging the “bad” French bishop.

5.Nf3 Nc6 6.dxc5

This move surprised me.

6... Qc7

The move 6... Bxc5 is also good. Black doesn’t have to immediately capture the c5-pawn. Now White must decide which pawn to defend.

7.b4 I believe 7.Bf4 is better.

7... Nxe5 8.Nd4

Seems logical. Centralizing the knight, supporting the possible queenside pawn roller and making possible f2-f4 driving my knight to g6 (only later did I discover that ... Ng4 is okay for Black). On the other hand, moving a developed piece for the second time in the opening is often suspect.

8... Nf6 9.Be2 Be7 10.Be3

The move 10.f4 is very sharp.

10... 0-0 11.0-0 b6! 12.cxb6

Black initiates a minority attack against the queenside pawn majority. White should consider 12.f4 or 12.Nb3.

12... axb6 13.Re1

I don’t understand this move. Better is 13.h3.

13... Rfc8

My move is okay, but better is 13... Ne4 and White’s position is critical.

14.h3

The move 14.Bf4 doesn’t work since Black can unpin the knight tactically with 14... Nf3+ 15.Bxf3 Qxf4.

14... Ne4 15.Bd2 Ne4

Better is 15... Ba4. Then all of Black’s pieces participate in the attack and the strangle hold on the White position tightens.

16.Bx4 Qxc4 17.a3 Bf6

When you find a good move look for a better one. 17... Bxb4 is deadly (18.Nxe6 Bxe6 19.cxb4 Qd4). 18.Nf3 Nxe3

The move 18... Ba4 is better.

19.Bxc3

The continuation 19.Nxc3 Bxc3 20.Rc1 Rxa3 is not any better.

19... Bxc3 20.Nxc3 Qxc3 21.Re3

White makes his first aggressive move of the game and Black fails to meet the challenge.

21... Qc2?

Much stronger is 21... Qf6 since it controls the long diagonal and prevents the White queen from leaving the first rank.

22.Qd4

White grabs his opportunity.

22... Qc7

Psychologically Black is not prepared to defend and offers to exchange the b-pawn and bishop for the strong knight.


26.Rg3 Rc6

The chances are about equal. The immediate 26... Kh8 is better.

27.Qe3 Kh8 28.Qb3 d4 29.b5

White’s queen-side pawns can not advance beyond the fifth rank without the support of all three heavy pieces.

29... Rab6 30.Rb1

The move 30... a4 is a mistake and allows 30... Rxb5.

30... e4 31.Qb4 f5 32.a4 d3

Passed pawns must be pushed!

33.Re3 Rab8 34.Rd1 Qd6 35.Qxd6 Rxd6 36.f3 Rd4 37.g4 g6

An automatic response. Now a back row mate is not likely.

38.gxf5 gxf5 39.exf4 exf4 40.Ra1 d2 Premature. The king is a fighting piece in the endgame! Black has a good winning chances after 40... Kg7 followed by ...Kf6-e5.

41.Rd1 Rc8 42.Kf2 Rx4a

The White pieces with the support of the king gobble the d- and e-pawns.


In the past, one of my traits has been that I am a fighter when I stand worse. Now I must investigate whether I am a fighter when I stand better and I receive a nasty surprise.

I have mixed feelings about my overall performance. Certainly I was very fortunate to win the Internet Playoff.
Another one of my efforts in this line is against Shalabov from the World Open in 1995 which continued 9. ... Be7 10. f3 Nxd4 11. Bxd4 e5 (with above game in mind I was not afraid of weakening d5) 12. Be3 Be6 13. Kh1 b4 14. g4 Rb8 15. h4 Qa5 16. Be2 Kd7 (with the idea of ... Rhc8 to put pressure White’s queenside without allowing him counterplay against my king which he would have after 16. ... h6) 17. g5? hxg5 18. hxg5 (see diagram)


10. f3 Qa5 11. Kb1 b5 12. Qf2 Rb8 13. g4 Nxd4 14. Bxd4 b4

Black usually plays this move before he plays ... e6-e5 to stop the White knight from coming to d5.

15. Ne2 c5 16. Ba7 Rb7 17. Nc1 Qc7

I offered a draw at this point.

18. Be3 a5 19. h4 Be6 20. g5 hxg5 21. Ba6?

Here is the idea behind White’s last move to follow up with 21. ... Rb2 22. hxg5 without losing time by defending his rook on h1.

a good example of how to activate Black’s center/kingside pawn mass see the Ivanchuk-Anand game in the note to move 9.

24. ... gx6 25. Qxf3 f5 26. Qf1 fx6 27. Nb3 Qb6

Black must avoid 27. ... a4 when 28. Nc5 Qe6 (worse is 28. ... dxc5 since it opens up a file for White’s rook on d1 and allows 29. Qf6 when will lose at the Exchange.) 29. Nxex6 fx6 eliminates Black’s bishop pair and reduces the value of his pawns.

28. Nd2 e3!?

A much stronger idea is 28. ... d5, but I was afraid of 29. Qf6 when I did not see a riskless way to defend both the rook and e-pawn. However, after the game we discovered 29. ... Rh5 (Basescu) 30. Rh1 Rf5! 31. Qh6 when Black central/kingside pawn mass appears to be on the move.

29. Ne4 Be7 30. Nf6+ Kf8

While I was unhappy at the prospect of letting his knight stay at f6. I believed that my best chance for reestablishing control over f6 was a later ... Qe8 (when the knight would have to move or after a rook move f1 allow a queen trade [1. ... Bxf6 2. Qxf6 Qxe6 3. Rxf6] which would give Black all of the winning chances).

31. Qf3 e2

Now we see the idea behind my 28th move which was to deflect a White piece from its current duty. However, I was not quite happy the square White found for his threatened rook since it might give him attacking chances.

32. Rd1 Qd8 33. Nh5 Qc8

Better is 33. ... Bxh4 eliminating White’s passed pawn, however at the time I was afraid of pinning my rook (in the event of Ng3) and the fact that White might take a tactic like 34. Rxe4 Qxh4 35. Qa8- Ke7 36. Qxh8 at some point (which does not work here because of 36. ... e1=Q winning). It is clear now that my judgement and objectivity was impaired by time trouble.

34. Qxe2 Qc4 35. Qg2 Qxa2+ 36. Kc1 Ke8 37. Ng7+ Kd8 38. Nxe6+ Qxe6 39. Qa8+ Qe8 40. Qxa6+ Kd7 41. Qxb4 Qa6 42. Qg4+ Ke7 43. Rh3 d5 44. Qg7 Kd7

While it has been clear that for the last ten moves that Black is lost, this move gives White a chance to go wrong with 45. Qxh8 Qa1+ 46. Kd2 Qxg1 47. Rd3 Qg2-48. Kc3 Qe4 when Black has good chances for a perpetual check.


However, there is one small problem.

22. ... g4! 22. Bxb7 Qxb7 23. Bg5 gxf3 24. Bxf6

Now White offers a draw because of the position after 24. ... gxf6 25. Qxf3 f5 (and subsequent capture on e4) when Black will have two pawns and the bishop pair versus a knight and a rook. Which would give Black a slight material edge, but when you consider the pawn structure Black has a huge edge because of central mass of pawns. They are currently providing his king with shelter, however if they start moving as a mass down the board White is in serious trouble. For
ALL AMERICA CUP

With a participation of over 550, the 1996 All America Cup demolished the 1995 record attendance of almost 100 players. It seems only fitting that the scholastic tournament with the largest trophies is also the largest fall scholastic tournament in the history of the western United States.

Harutyun Akopyan won his ninth National Championship, tying David Peterson's all-time record. He finished 8-1, but the loss gave Joe Mollica the Most Brilliant Game award.

PIRC DEFENSE

W: Harutyun Akopyan
B: Joe Mollica

1996 All America Cup


18TH ANNUAL MICHAEL SARNOFF MEMORIAL

by Bill Moushey

The 18th Annual Michael Sarnoff Memorial was held on April 5, 1997, in Saint Louis, Missouri. The tournament drew a total of 118 players in two sections. This tournament was named after a young man who was killed 18 years ago by a drunk driver. Mike was on his way home on his bicycle from a chess tournament when he was taken from us. Just three months prior to his death, he held Victor Korchnoi to a draw in a highly publicized exhibition game.

As long as I am alive, there will be a Mike Sarnoff Memorial. It was not that he was good (his last rating of 2086 came in two months after he was killed), it was more to the point that he was a special kid. He cared about the people around him, and truly lived an altruistic way of life. We were all better people because we knew Mike Sarnoff.


I had a consolation Master's prize of $50 just in case a master did not place for the first Overall. Four masters attended, and Jim Voelck (2211) took home that prize with three points. His only loss was to Bob Jacobs in the last round.

WISIESNIEK MEMORIAL SECTION

One of the reasons this bottom section drew so many entrants (96) is because the prizes were equal in both sections. I offered a guaranteed $300 first place award to both sections. Chess players here realize, as I do, that their entry fee is just as good as someone with a higher rating. They may play better chess in the Open section, but their entry fee is just the same.

1st-2nd: Phil Furtaw (1776) $200, Carl Purlce (1712) $200.

5-Way tie for first Class B. No money was given out in Class B because the 1st Overall and 1st Class B prize money was split evenly between the above two Class B players. The five Class B players, all at 3½/4, are:

Class B: 1st:5th: Xiao-Feng Ye (1797), Rich Pope (1747), Dennis Brown (1735), Pablo Molina (1689), Kevin Schmitz (1600).

Class C: 1st: Darryl Rue (1576) $100, 1½/2. There was a five-way split for top Class D. They were all 3-1. They are:


There was a two-way split for the Class E and below prize. Both are youngsters, and both went 3-1.

Class E: 1st-2nd: Robert Davis (1130) $50, Tommy Rohraugh (929), $50.

The top Unrated prize of $50 went to 10-year-old Alex Borodyansky who just came over from Russia. Alex went 2½/1 with his biggest win being over Mitch Jordan (1730). Alex's performance rating rounded at 1601.

We have in Saint Louis the third highest-rated Kindergartner in the United States in Jack Regenbogen (977), plus one of the highest-rated 1st graders in Ian Smith, both youngsters went 2-2. Jack's biggest win was over Keith Bass (1235), while Ian scored a monumental upset over the President of the Rolla School of Mines Chess Club, Mike Nitzband (1549).

Jack received extensive newspaper coverage before the match, while both the NBC and FOX TV affiliates interviewed him during the tournament.

Because St. Louis is the hub for TWA, this city has become a stopping place for many people from many countries. Following are the players who played in the Sarnoff and the children were born in. All are now living in Saint Louis.

Pavel Bereza (Israel)
Zoran Lipovac and Hazim Cekic (Bosnia)
Edward Averbukh and Alex Borodyansky (Russia)
Bala and Sekar Swaminathan (brothers from India)
Eric Lim (Taiwan)
Xiao-Feng Ye (China)
Jose Clarin (The Philippines — Luzon)
Pablo Molina (Mexico)
Salim Alhalhali (Saudi Arabia)
Vivek Joshi (Pakistan)
Philip Von Koller (A 16-year old exchange student from Germany)
Chansamone Khotysphom (Cambodia)
Behrouz Vakil (Iran)
And 103 players from good old USA.

Finally, it must be noted that 13 players playing in their very first tournament played in the Sarnoff! I was told that all the local clubs, chess clubs and schools have been getting new memberships due to the tournament in Saint Louis. We have had the highest attendance this year in Saint Louis for a tournament. The reason is that we were offered the highest first prizes in the country for the first time this year.

Organizers need to avoid themselves of the self-sticking labels offered by Traci Lee at the USCF. By sending out announcements to all current USCF members within a 100 mile radius of the playing site, in addition to sending announcements to all members who have let their memberships lapse for more than one year (I went as far back as five years for the Sarnoff), you can be sure a lot of people will play in your tournaments. Using this method, I have been averaging 120 players during the last three years. Believe me, these personal invitations do work. I also flood all local newspapers one month ahead of time with chess flyers. Local newspapers like to receive chess staff. And since we had the third highest-rated kindergartner in the country, they gave us extensive coverage. But it does take work, and lots of it.

CORRECTION

Using the official tournament crosstable, we mistakenly credited WE'RE NOT RAPPAPORT with having tied with KLOVSKY'S KILLERS for first place in the U.S. Amateur Team East (Special Summer Issue 1997, page 52).

Nothing could be further from the truth. KLOVSKY'S KILLERS was the only 5-0 team going with the last round and the only team to finish 6-0. Our apologies to the organizers, to the winners and to anyone else who is offended by the inaccurate reporting of an inaccurate report — Glenn Petersen, Chess Life Editor
15 WHAT'S THE BEST MOVE?

A. The game ended abruptly after 1. P-KR3?? N-K4?! (2. PxN QxP mate). An amazing blunder at the highest level!
B. White drops the extra pawn — his only advantage — with 1... N-QR4? BxN (stronger than 1... R/NxN 2. BxR RxP 3. B-B3 followed by P-B5) 2. BxBRxR.
C. White must find a way to consolidate and neutralize the pressure without giving back the pawn. A reasonable try is 1. N-K1 intending N-B2. If 1... N-K2 2. B-P2 P-B3 3. N-R4 holds.

A. Fixating on the direct attack by 1. B-B7c K-B1 achieves little.
B. Unexpectedly switching the queen from one flank to the other with 1. Q-N1 prepares R-K1 as well as N-QNc6, and ended all resistance after 1... Rxa2 2. B-N5 K-B1 3. Q-N6.
C. Black gets time to catch a breath after 1. Q-N5 R-B5.

3. B. Marc Plum (2294)—Rick Bauer (2345) (Connecticut State Championship, 1996).
B. Stephen Orio, New Haven, CT, points out White missed a win by 1. B-N2 K-Q5 (if 1... QxpQ 2. Q-K6c (!) 2. Q-Q6 QxQ 3. PxQ N-K3) 2... K-Q1 3. B-R6 etc.
C. White tosses away his passed pawn with 1. P-N3? N-K7c 2. K-N2 Qxp. Anticipate your opponent's best reply and plan your answer to it before making a move.

4. A. Roy Jackson (1600)—Francisco Carillo (1763) (Northern California Championship, 1996).
B. Going for mate is better than pawn-sacrificing by 1. QxpQ RxN 2. BxR RxR 3. QxB(N3) which needlessly allows Black to stagger into a lost ending.
C. Black gets drawing chances after 1. QxpQ 2. RxQ BxN.

17 1728 (Rubin): This is a practical endgame.
White is winning by zugzwang. 1. Rd5 Kg3
2. Rd2 Kg4 3. Rd6 Getting the starting position, but Black to move. 3... Kg3 (or 3... Kh4 4. Kf3 Kh5 5. Kg3 Rc8 - 6. Kh2 Rd8 7. Kh3 wins) 4. Rg6+ Kh2 5. Kf2 Kh3 6. Kg3 Kh2 7. Rh6+ Kg1 8. Rd6 Kh2 (or 8... Kh1 9. Kf2) 9. Rd1 wins.

27 DRAWING COMBINATIONS
4. Kramagge—Tregre (Augsburg, 1938): 1... Kg5- 2. Kh3 Kg4+ 3. Kh4 drops the queen. 3... g5- 4. Kg3, stalemate.
5. N.N.—Juhly (Zurich, 1900): 1... Rxf4! 2. gxf4 Qf7!! 3. Qxf7, stalemate.
6. Bootyaro-Szabo (Rumania, 1956): 1. Qxg7+ Rxe7 2. Rxe8+ Rg7 3. Rh7 Rf7 4. Rxf7+ with a draw, since 4... Kg8 5. Rh7+ etc.
9. Smirin—Ivanov (USA, 1990): 1... Rf5! 2. Qd7+ Kh6 3. exf5 Nh3+ with a draw because of 4.gxh3 Qxh3- 5. Kh1 Qxh3+ with perpetual check, or 4. Kh2 Nh2 5. Kg1 Nc3+ repeats the position.

33 ABCS OF CHESS
I. PIN: Black wins a piece by 1. ... Bxc3 2. Bxc3 b5. Corresponds to note (h).
Degree of Difficulty: 2
II. PIN/FORK: The Exchange is won after 1... Qh4- 2. Kg1 Ng3+. Corresponds to note (j).
Degree of Difficulty: 1
III. FORK: Black gains the knight by 1... d4. If the knight moves to safety, a deadly pawn fork follows at d3. Corresponds to note (k).
Degree of Difficulty: 1
IV. FORK: A piece falls to 1... Nbxd4 2. NxN c6. Once the bishop retreats, Black picks up the knight with 3... Qd7-d4+. Corresponds to note (p).
Degree of Difficulty: 1
V. PIN: The simple 1... Qd4 gains at least a piece regardless of White's response.
Corresponds to note (s).
Degree of Difficulty: 1
VI. UNPIN: Black scores immediately with 1... Bxc6. If White takes Black's queen, it's mate at h1. Corresponds to note (t).
Degree of Difficulty: 1