



## LOOKING BACK AT CHESS LEGENDS: CATCHING UP WITH SAL MATERA

# Man On A Journey

Salvatore Joseph Matera, a native of Brooklyn, NYC, was once considered one of the rising stars in Jack Collins' *My Seven Chess Prodigies*, alongside legends such as Bobby Fischer and the Byrne brothers. Sal's impressive chess career included being crowned U.S. Junior Champion in 1967 and representing the U.S. team in the 1970s. Sal's passion for the game has remained steadfast and he has recently continued his chess journey by devoting his time to the organizational efforts of his beloved Marshall Chess Club.

■ By Joshua M. Anderson



” **...Time is a companion who goes with us on the journey and reminds us to cherish every moment – because they’ll never come again.**

*Patrick Stewart as  
Captain Jean-Luc Picard,  
Star Trek: Generations*

While we all may feel the pull of time, it is not the only thing that comes with us on the journey. If we are lucky, we find a lifelong passion, whether that be an activity or a sport, something that we connect with and pursue throughout our life. This love may change over time, but it is always with us. While Salvatore Joseph Matera is hardly alone in having a lifelong relationship with chess, his tale is unique and is a journey he feels lucky to have experienced. Sal Matera was taught to play chess by a cousin when his mom dropped him off at his aunt's house on her way to the hairdresser. Sal's first experience was a defeat from his cousin who quickly became bored of winning and refused to play him anymore. On the very same day, coincidentally, Sal's father bought him a gift that he worried might be a little too difficult for young Sal – a chess set. The set came with a book on how to learn chess in an hour, and Sal was soon ready to play.

A short time later, a chance after-dinner walk led Sal and his parents past the Marshall Chess Club. They went into the “bridge room” where Bill Lombardy and Arthur Bisguier, among others, were playing bridge. (This room is no longer there but was used from when the building was purchased in the 1930s until the 1960s, for people to play the card game Bridge.) They suggested that the Materas contact Jack Battell at *Chess Review*, and Battell suggested that Sal should meet with Jack Collins. Collins lived near Matera on Lenox Road, but his club was called the Hawthorne Chess Club, named after the street Collins had lived on when the club was founded.





Joshua M. Anderson is the President of Chess Journalists of America (CJA), chess writer, instructor, tournament organizer and director. He currently collects oral histories such as *Marshall Chess Club – 1950s – A Look Back* (on YouTube) and is writing a biography of the Byrne brothers for McFarland & Company, Inc., Publishers.

## NOW A STUDENT

Collins would give Matera lessons for \$3 a lesson (roughly \$28 in 2022) – and Matera began his formal chess instruction every Saturday at 1. There were traditional lessons on openings, middle games, endgames, and tactics, and then they would also play some blitz – all while Matera drank Coca-Cola. Jack's sister Ethel would feed them some dinner, and then people such as Lombardy, the Byrne brothers, and Bobby Fischer would stop by to play. Sal would typically stay at the club until about 9 at night. Collins would include Matera in his book *My Seven Chess Prodigies*.

## NOW A TOURNAMENT PLAYER

Matera's first tournament was the 1959 United States Amateur. As an 8-year-old, Matera was the youngest player in the event, and scored 3 losses and 3 draws. Frank Brady and Ken Harkness ran the event and sold books: Matera purchased *Bobby Fischer's Games of Chess* there, from Brady, the man who would later write the best-known biographies of Fischer. Though the tournament result was not to his, the family's, or Collins' liking, Matera was learning more all the time and would soon make a major jump forward in strength.

## NOW A MARSHALL CLUB MEMBER

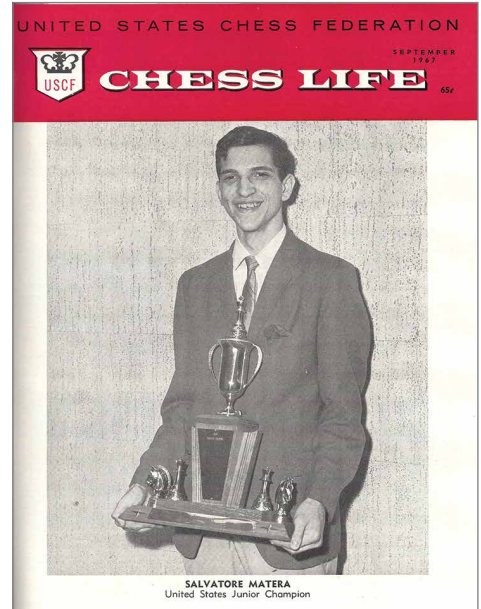
Along with the Materas and Collins, Carolyn Marshall (the *grande dame* of the club and its official secretary), purchased a membership for Sal and he began playing regularly at the Marshall. He would play in many events, including the Tuesday night rapid transit tournaments. In these events, every 10 seconds you hear a bell. When you hear the bell, you make a move. After another 10 seconds and another bell, your opponent would have to make a move. Often, the older players would let their hand hover over their piece for an extra second or two, but then insist that Matera (or other young players) move right when the bell rang. This resulted in the older player having more like 12 seconds, while Matera had only about 8 seconds.

## NOW A TALENTED JUNIOR

Matera was improving quite a bit, playing at the Marshall or the Manhattan (the other prominent New York club where he and others would also play), and participating in events like the 1963 U.S. Junior Open. Around this time, Collins wrote to Don Byrne (organizer, director, and former participant at the Hawthorne) and commented that Matera was a special player. While Matera did not win that event, he was soon winning events like the New York Under 16 Championship.

## NOW A CHAMPION AND REPRESENTATIVE OF THE UNITED STATES

Matera won the 1967 U.S. Junior Invitational. This event, founded and funded by Jacqueline Piatigorsky (of Piatigorsky Cup fame), and Ed Edmondson, (executive director of US Chess – then United States Chess Federation) was in its second year when Matera edged Walter Browne by half a point to become champion. This win earned Matera a trip to the 1967 World Junior Championship, in Jerusalem, Israel. He got off to a rocky start in this Holland-style tournament. (Today this event is a Swiss, but then the players were put in groups and the top players of each group were put into a Finals group.) Due to his rough start, he qualified for the B group where he tied for first with Gudmundur Sigurjonsson and Michael V. Woodhams.



U.S. Junior Champion Salvatore Matera on the cover of the September 1967 issue of *Chess Life*

## NOW AT COLLEGE

Matera enrolled at Columbia University in the late 1960s. As a junior, Matera led Columbia University to the 1971 Pan-American Collegiate Chess championship. He still was not sure what he wanted to do with his life, but as the Fischer boom took hold of the chess world and New York City, an option appeared to Matera that had not been open previously.

## E56

Sal Matera

Larry Gilden

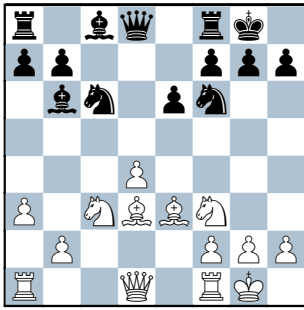
North Jersey Open, 1971

Notes by Sal Matera

Larry Gilden was an original player almost impossible to prepare against. We met in the penultimate game of a weekend Swiss tournament which I won thanks to this victory.

1.d4 ♘f6 2.c4 e6 3.♘c3 ♙b4 4.e3 0-0  
5.♙d3 d5 6.♗f3 c5 7.0-0 ♖c6 8.a3  
dxc4 9.♙xc4 ♙a5 Unusual at the time  
but very playable.

10.♙d3 cxd4 11.exd4 ♙b6 12.♙e3

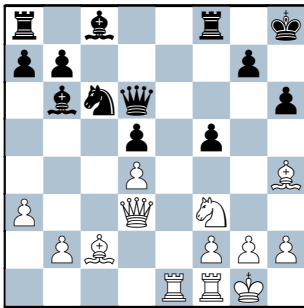


12...♔h8 The first cute king move attacking the IQP.

13.♖c2 ♘d5 14.♙g5 ♗d6 15.♗d3 f5 16.♘xd5 White relies on the hole on e5 for a slight advantage.

16...exd5 17.♗ae1 h6 Sounder is developing with 17...♗d7 or 17...♙e6.

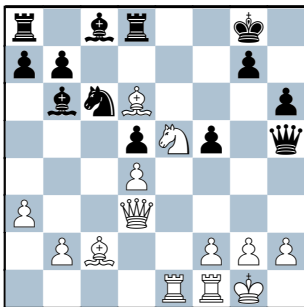
18.♙h4



18...♔g8 The second cute king move angling for ...f5-f4 making the white bishop on h4 uncomfortable. But now White's initiative grows quickly thanks to his well-coordinated pieces.

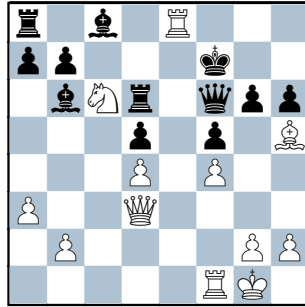
19.♙g3 ♗f6 20.♙e5 ♗f7 21.♙d6 ♗d8 22.♘e5 White's pieces keep exploiting the dark-square weaknesses.

22...♗h5



23.♙d1! ♗g5 24.♘xc6 ♗xd6 25.f4 ♗f6 26.♗e8+ ♔f7 The third king move is very bad. He had to play 26...♔h7 although White plays 27.♘e5 angling for 28.♙h5 exploiting the hole on g6.

27.♙h5+! g6



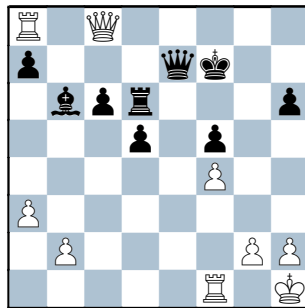
White has three pieces en prise but they coordinate perfectly attacking the black king.

28.♙xg6+! ♗xg6 28...♔xg6 29.♗g3+ ♔h5 30.♗g8 wins quickly.

29.♗xc8 bxc6 30.♗xa8 ♗f6 31.♗a6 Continuing the king hunt.

31...♙xd4+ 32.♔h1 ♙b6 33.♗b7+ The intermediate check followed by ♗c8 hitting the f-pawn wins quickly.

33...♗e7 34.♗c8



34...♔g6 35.♗g8+ ♗g7 36.♗e8+ ♗f7 37.♗h8 ♗f6 38.♗g8+ ♔h5 39.♗f3 ♗e6 40.♗h3+ ♗h4 41.♗g5 **Mate.**

**NOW A CHESS "PROFESSIONAL"**

As part of the Fischer boom in the 1970s, being a chess professional did have a 'play and study' component to it, but for the first time it also included an additional degree of professionalism related to being a chess

teacher. Several players became teachers during this time, with Bruce Pandolfini becoming the most well-known. Matera taught a variety of students, the most famous being Grandmaster Joel Benjamin who worked with Matera until Benjamin became an International Master (IM). After that, Matera felt he had nothing more to teach him. Reminiscing about his time with Matera, Benjamin did not remember specific lessons, but had fond memories of being treated kindly, respectfully, and always being encouraged, while learning a sense of fair play, sportsmanship, and giving proper credit to talented youngsters. These are all ideals Benjamin has passed on to his students.

**NOW CHAMPION OF THE MARSHALL**

Of course, Matera was also still playing during that time, and one of the major events of 1973 was the Marshall Championship which featured players like George Kane and Andy Soltis. Matera won the event. After the success of the Fischer-Spassky match, Shelby Lyman wanted to air another match on WNET and so a match between Matera (the Marshall champion), and George Kramer (champion of the Manhattan Chess Club) was arranged. Matera won this as well.

**C99**

Sal Matera  
George Kane

Marshall Chess Club Championship, New York 1973  
*Notes by Sal Matera*

George Kane and Andy Soltis were the favorites to win the 1973 Marshall Chess Club Championship. George was the 1972 Marshall Chess Club Champion AND the 1972 Manhattan Chess Club Champion – a rare double crown!

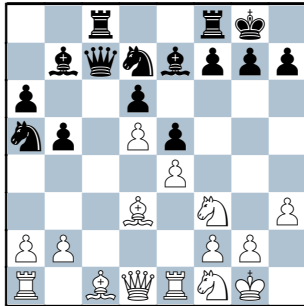
My victory over George was a big confidence booster and I went on to win the championship. As a result, I played George Kramer, the 1973 Manhattan Chess Club Champion, in a four-game match shown on Channel 13 with Shelby Lyman reprising his live commentary of the 1972 Fischer vs. Spassky World Championship.

1.e4 e5 2.♘f3 ♘c6 3.♙b5 a6 4.♙a4



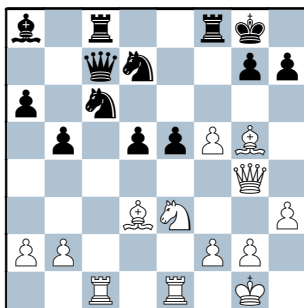


♭f6 5.0-0 ♗e7 6.♖e1 b5 7.♗b3 d6 8.c3  
0-0 9.h3 ♖a5 10.♗c2 c5 11.d4 cxd4  
12.cxd4 ♗b7 13.♖bd2 ♖c8 14.d5 ♖c7  
15.♗d3 ♖d7 16.♖f1



16...f5 This aggressive plan by Black in the Old Chigorin was well known to George and a big surprise to me. Black gets a big center, White gets space and attacking chances on the kingside and a battle royal is in store with all three results possible.

17.exf5 ♗xd5 18.♖g5 ♗xg5 19.♗xg5  
♗a8 20.♖g4 d5 21.♖ac1 ♖c6 22.♖e3  
Black's problem is that any move of the center pawns leads to a blockade.



22...♖d6 23.♖cd1 Probably another contribution to the annals of the wrong rook. White's prophylaxis is a good idea but 23.♖ed1 was a better choice. As the game goes on, the X-ray of the queen to c8 is dangerous for Black and a rook on c1 increases that danger.

23...♖d4 Natural but not a good move since two moves later, the knight returns to c6.

24.♖h4 ♖f6 25.♖g4 ♖c6 26.♖g3  
White combines attacking Black's center pawns and building a kingside attack.

26...♖xg4

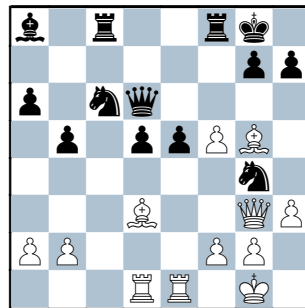


Sal Matera playing at the Marshall Chess Club in NYC.

Photo by Stevan Dobrojevic

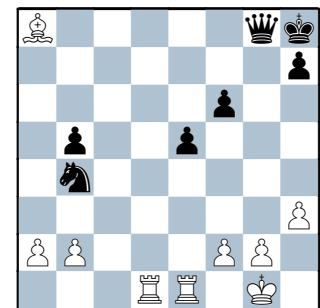
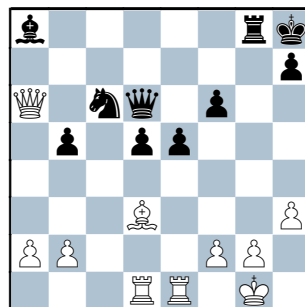
32...♖d7 33.♗e4 ♖g7 34.♗d5! The queen for two rooks "sacrifice" wins quickly since White's rooks attack the exposed black king.

34...♖b4 35.♖xa8 ♖xa8 36.♗xa8 ♖g8



27.♖xg4 27.hxg4 is also good but the text sets up tactical shots.

27...♖h8 28.f6! gx6 29.♗h6 ♖g8  
30.♗g7+ ♖xg7 31.♖xc8+ ♖g8 32.♖xa6  
White is winning.



37.♗e4 Dominating the black knight and setting up a mating attack on h7.

37...♖xa2 38.♖d7 ♖xb2 39.♖ed1 ♖g8  
40.♖b7  
Black resigned

## NOW AN OLYMPIAN

Matera, with a 2350 rating, was invited to join the American team sent to the 1974 Student Olympiad (an event that has since been discontinued), Matera served as board two when the 10<sup>th</sup> seeded Americans finished second to the Soviet Union, winning the team a silver medal. Matera upset IM Gyula Sax of Hungary, and GM Yuri Balashov of the Soviet Union, and finished with a +6=3-1 score and a



75% result, the best percentage among all second boards (tied with Stean.)

## B62

Gyula Sax

Sal Matera

World Student Olympiad, Teesside 1974  
Notes by Sal Matera as published in the November 1974 issue of "Chess Life & Review".  
Notes in blue are Sal's of the present day.

This game was played in the 1974 World Student Olympics. The U.S. unexpectedly fought for medals and surprisingly we beat out the Hungarian team by ½ point which added to the importance of this game. I knew that GM Sax was a strong attacking player but challenged him by playing the Sicilian. He unleashed a dangerous looking attack by sacrificing an exchange. But my surprising counterattack with 20...g5! and 21...h5, forced an endgame where I had an advantage due to my active pieces and White's back rank issues.

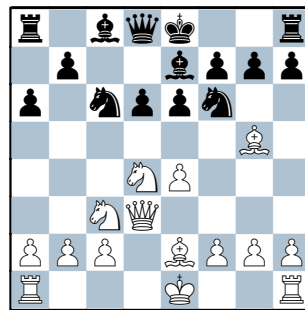
1.e4 c5 2.♘f3 d6 3.d4 cxd4 4.♗xd4 ♗f6 5.♗c3 a6 6.♙g5 ♗c6 Transposing to the Richter-Rauzer, a trick I learned from the Karklins - N.Weinstein game at Chicago 1973. Looking at Sax's games the night before, I found that he favored the Velimirovic Attack, which is less effective against the Najdorf.

7.♙d3 An old move of Keres' and a favorite of Robert Byrne's. One idea is to swing the queen to g3, trying to stir up an attack on the kingside. Because of the unusual move order (Black usually has played ...e7-e6 instead of ...a7-a6), this position is completely unexplored. Interesting here would be 7...♙d7, which is a modern anti-Rauzer system when White's queen is on d2. But I was not in an experimental mood, and my next move brings the game back to normal channels.

7...e6 8.♙e2 ♙e7 A good waiting move. Black does not want to commit himself until it is clear where White will castle or whether his knight will remain on d4 or retreat to b3. The latter option is the reason Black prefers the text to 7...♙d7, since he wants to answer ♗b3 with ...b7-b5 and ...♙b7.



▲ Gyula Sax in the 70s



9.♙d1? This move, played instantly by Sax without even sitting down, commits White to kingside castling. It also permits Black to develop easily long before he has to worry about White's kingside attack. More complex play results from 9.f4.

9...♙a5! Gaining an active post with tempo, as here the queen not only attacks White's bishop but also influences the center and ties White's knight to the defense of the a2 pawn. Another useful purpose served by the queen is that if White castles, Black has ...♗xd4 followed by ...d6-d5, threatening ...♙c5.

10.♙h4 The alternatives are not dangerous:  
A) 10.♙e3 ♗e5 11.♙d2 b5 with a good game, e.g. 12.f4? b4! 13.fxex5 bxc3 14.bxc3 ♗xe4 winning.

B) 10.♙d2 ♗xd4

B1) 11.♗d5 ♙d8 12.♗xe7 ♗xe2 (12...♗xc2+? 13.♙xc2 ♙xe7 14.♙b4! with a winning attack.) 13.♗xc8 ♙xc8 14.♙xe2 ♙xc2, when White does not have enough for the pawn.

B2) 11.♙xd4 ♙c7 with a comfortable position.

C) 10.♙xf6 gxf6, and Black's two bishops and his potential attack on the g-file are more important than his slightly weakened pawn formation. The queen on a5 also prevents White from playing ♙h5, an annoying move against such pawn structures.

D) Finally, after the passive 10.♙c1, Black continues as in the game, with good play. These variations, though not definitive or exhaustive, do show the various forms of Black's counterplay can assume, and that White's pieces are less effectively placed than appears at first glance.

10...♗xd4 Not allowing White time to drive the black queen from a5 by 11.♗b3 followed by 12.a4. However, without a rook on a1, White's a-pawn cannot get to a5 where it is cramping.

11.♙xd4 0-0 12.0-0 ♙d7 Black has an excellent game. White's pieces alone do not bring sufficient pressure to bear on Black's position to prevent a strong queenside attack by, for instance, ...♙c6, ...b5, ...♙ac8 or ...♙ad8. Therefore, White tries to get his kingside pawns moving.

13.♙h1 During the game I was worried about 13.♙d3 until I realized that White has no real attack after 13...♙c6 14.♙g3 ♙h8!

If 13.♙xf6 ♙xf6 14.♙xd6 ♙xc3 (14...♙c6! 15.b4!? ♙e5! 16.♙xe5 ♙xe5 17.b5 axb5 18.♗xb5 ♙xa2 is also strong.) 15.♙xd7 ♙xb2 16.♙xb7 ♙xa2 leaves White fighting for the draw, since the a-pawn is more dangerous than the c-pawn.

Finally, on the immediate 13.f4, 13...♙c6 should transpose to the next note (13...d5 14.♙h1 ♙c6 15.e5 ♙c5 16.♙d2 ♗d7 17.♙d3 is less clear).

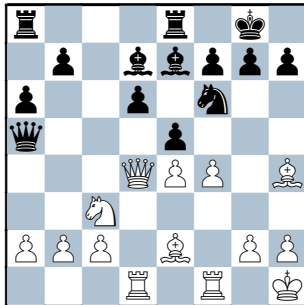
13...♙fe8 Until I began to annotate this game, I thought this move rated an exclamation mark. Now I think it is an overfinesse and inaccurate. But the move is not bad and does not ruin anything. The idea is, first, to defend the bishop and unpin the knight, and second, to continue as in the game with ...e5 and ...exf4 (anticipating White's next move), when I wanted to use the light-squared bishop on e6 to defend the f7 pawn and to keep White's light-squared bishop off his c4 square.

But 13...♙c6, as I originally intended,



is more active and stronger. Then, 14.f4 is answered by either 14...e5 or 14...♞ad8 with a fine active game for Black. 13...♙c6 would have retained options of rook placement and would therefore have been better.

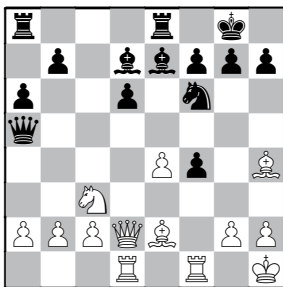
**14.f4 e5?** The wrong plan. Correct is 14...♙c6 and 15...♞ad8 as above. The fact that it works doesn't mean it's good.



**15.♞f2?** At least he should play 15.♞e3 with the option of recapturing on f4 with the rook, since 15...♗g4 16.♙xg4 ♙xg4 17.♞d5 ♞b4 18.♙xe7 ♞xe7 19.f5 lands Black in hot water.

Best is 15.♞d2!, looking for ♗d5 shots. Then, if 15...♗xe4 16.♗xe4 ♞xd2 17.♞xd2 ♙xh4 18.♗xd6 ♞e7 19.fxg5 is winning for White.

So the crucial line is 15...exf4.



**A)** Then, after 16.♙xf6 (not 16.♗d5? ♞xd2 17.♗xe7+ ♞xe7 18.♞xd2 ♗xe4! 19.♙xe7 ♗xd2 20.♞d1 ♞e8 and wins, whereas 19.♞xd6?? runs into 19...g5!) 16...♙xf6 17.♗d5 ♞xd2 18.♗xf6+ (18.♞xd2 ♙g5!) 18...gxf6 19.♞xd2 ♞xe4 20.♙f3 ♞b4! leaves White only with drawing chances.

**B)** However, 16.♞xf4! is better, retaining all threats. Then, 16...♗h8 is passive, and 16...g5 17.♞xf6 ♙xf6 18.♗d5, though risky for Black (e.g. 18...♞d8 19.♗xf6 ♞xf6 20.♙xg5), may be his best practical chance.

The point of all this is: had Black played



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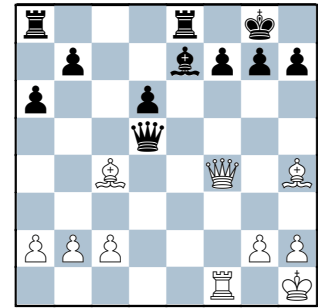
13...♙c6 instead of 13...♗h8, and then followed with 14...e5, he could have answered 15.♞d2 with 15...♗xe4, as the white knight arriving at d6 threatens nothing, and the black light-squared bishop would be securely posted.

**15...exf4 16.♞xf4 ♙e6 17.♗d5!?** The position resembles Karpov - Polugaevsky games 2,4,6 and 8. But here White has no bind on the queenside with a cramping pawn on a5, nor does he have a knight on b3 which can get to f5. Black is solid and has the annoying threat 17...♞b4. More restrained are 17.a3 and 17.♙d3 with an even game, but Sax felt the text was winning for him. It barely draws!

**17...♗d5!** After 17...♙xd5 18.exd5 ♞xa2 19.♙d3 (Lombardy), threatening 20.♞f5, is strong.

**18.exd5 ♙xd5 19.♞xd5** Having said "A"... If 19.b4, then 19...♞xa2 wins.

**19...♞xd5 20.♙c4**



**20...g5!!** A stunning counterattacking pawn advance in front of the black king. This quickly forces an ending.

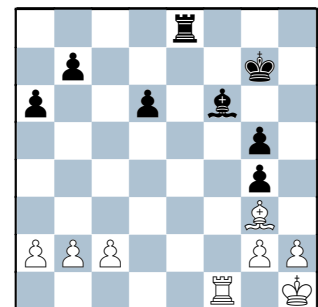
A spectacular move which I'm sure my opponent overlooked. Without this resource Black would be busted, e.g. 20...♞e5 21.♙xf7+ ♗h8 22.♞xe5 dxe5 23.♙xe8 g5 24.♙g3.

**21.♞g4** Better is 21.♞xf7+, playing for the ending, but as the game goes, Black's h-pawn reaches g4, considerably freeing the black king.

**21...h5!** The same theme as 20...g5!

**22.♙xd5** Forced. If 22.♞e2 ♙f8! 23.♞xe8 ♞xc4 and all White's pieces, including his king are en prise.

**22...hxg4 23.♙xf7+ ♗g7 24.♙xe8 ♞xe8 25.♙g3 ♙f6**



**26.♙xd6** Black's pieces are much more active and the doubled g-pawns cramp the white king. Sax has gone from what looked like a dangerous attack into an endgame where he is on the defensive.

The decisive mistake. White has the worst of it, but 26.c3 ♞e2 27.♙xd6 ♞xb2 28.a4 should draw. White was in tremendous time pressure, however.

**26...♙xb2!** Now the position is a win





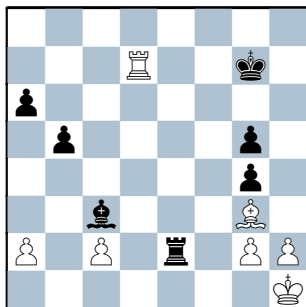
because of the mating threats and White's pawn weaknesses.

**27.♖b1** Better is 27.h3 b5! (not 27...♗e2 28.♖b1 ♗xc2 29.♖xb2.) Chellstorp and I analyzed this position later and concluded that, although White has many resources, Black's active pieces generate an unstoppable initiative.

**27...b5! 28.♙g3** 28...♗d4 maintains the bind both after 28.g3 and 28.h3, but White should play 28.h3 anyway, as the white king is suffocating.

**28...♗c3** This bishop dominates the board and now guarantees access to the second rank.

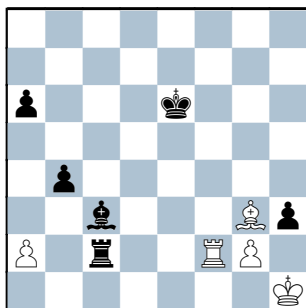
**29.♖d1 ♗e2 30.♖d7+**



**30...♔g8!** Winning. Now White's queenside pawns must fall and the bishop on c3 escorts the black pawns through. Less clear is 30...♔f6 31.♖d6+ ♔f5 32.♖xa6 ♖xc2 33.h3 gxh3 34.gxh3 ♔e4.

**31.h3 ♖xc2 32.♖c7 b4 33.♖c5 gxh3 34.♖xg5+ ♔f7?** After 34...♔h7! White cannot get the rooks off.

**35.♖f5+ ♔e6 36.♖f2**



**36...♖xf2** Black loses a tempo on 36...hxc2+ 37.♔xg2 ♖xf2+ 38.♔xf2

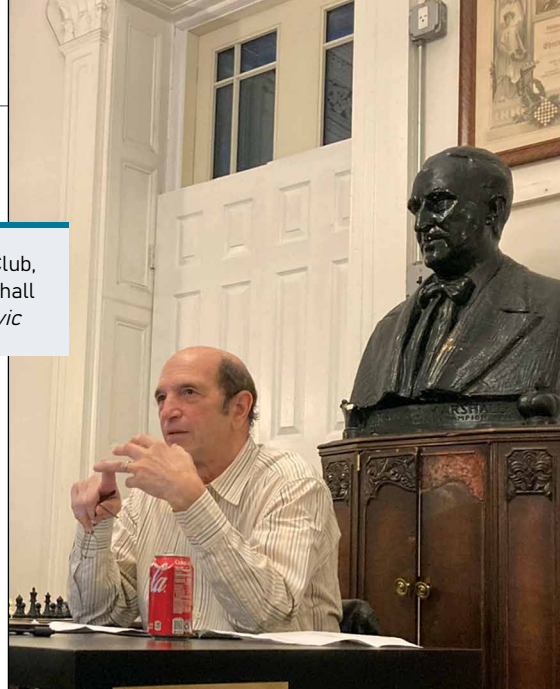
Matera holding a lecture at the Club, sitting in front of the Frank Marshall statue. Photo by Stevan Dobrojevic

because the white king is one square closer to the queenside.

**37.♙xf2 hxc2+ 38.♔xg2 a5** Threatening 39...a4, 40...b3, 41...a3.

**39.♙c5** Better is 39.♙e3, but it's hopeless anyway.

**39...♔d5 40.♙e7 ♔c4!**  
**White resigned**



### NOW A TITLED PLAYER

Beyond the excellent result in the student championship, Matera needed to play in several other events to achieve the International Master title. He was awarded the IM title after achieving IM norms in tournaments at Birmingham 1975 and Reykjavik 1976. He later achieved a GM norm in a Goichberg event but decided to go back to Columbia University and give up chess.

### NOW A COMPUTER ANALYST

After earning a GM norm may seem like an odd time to stop playing, but as the Fischer boom died off, Matera recognized that only the rich were paying for lessons (and there weren't many of them), so he went back to Columbia and got a degree in computer science. While Matera did not play much chess, he applied his experience to large Financial Services projects. He was able to apply skills he had learned in chess, such as the ability to make decisions under time pressure and solve problems with missing or inexact information by drawing conclusions.

These skills made Matera good at his job and he did well, working for several companies in his career including Bankers Trust and Depository Trust Clearing Corporation (DTCC). Matera was far from the only chess player to do well in the trading industry – Norman Weinstein, Maxim Dlugy, Ron Henley, and Nick de Firmian were among the other notables who worked in the trading industry.

### NOW A MAN GIVING BACK

In 2019, Matera, who had retired in 2015, joined the Board of the Marshall Chess Club. He took the position in charge of the tournament committee, a position that most times would have been straightforward. However, it turned massively chaotic when COVID-19 forced the Marshall to close its doors, and Matera quickly had to determine how to run online chess tournaments. The idea was initially met with great resistance amid concerns about online cheating, but over time, the Marshall was able to offer an online tournament schedule similar to when the physical club was open to over the board play.

Matera is also president of the Marshall Chess Foundation. This is a 501c3 charity that runs educational programs for children, has offered financial assistance for low-income players to attend tournaments, sponsors some national and international programs, and accepts donations to supply schools, prisons, and children's programs in Africa with chess sets. Among the donations they have received include 15 boxes of Fischer memorabilia, known as the Fischer Archive, from Bobby's sister, Joan.

What the future holds for Salvatore Matera is unclear, but his chess journey is far from over. He has begun writing a book on U.S. Junior Closed, much like Dr. Alexey Root's work on the Women's U.S. Championship or Soltis' work on the U.S. Championship. In chess, there are always new projects, and there is always more to do and learn. That is precisely what allows players like Sal Matera to continue growing and changing with the game. ■