

# The Chess Journalist

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May 2023



## CHESS JOURNALISTS OF AMERICA



"Pure Happiness! Venica Jain, 6, hugs the trophy she won at the Pennsylvania State Scholastic Chess Championships on March 18, 2023.

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The Chess Journalists of America seeks to encourage chess journalists, writers, editors, and publishers to exchange information and ideas for their mutual benefit, to promote the highest standards of ethics in chess journalism, to represent United States chess journalists in appropriate national and international bodies, and to influence policies affecting the promotion of chess.

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### Membership Dues:

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Outside the US—\$15 for 1 year

### Hello From the Editor

Its time again for another issue. I believe we have something that you will be pleased with. It was going to be pretty hard to top all those amazing photos we had in the last issue, but we gave it a try. Let me know what you think.

The call for the 2023 awards can be found inside. This is the back bone of our organization. Please consider submitting an entry or two. Some QR codes were added into this issue to make things easier.

The new website is up!! It looks amazing thanks to Grayson and Chris Rorrer. You can find it at <https://chessjournalism.org> We plan to interview Grayson and Chris about the process and what it takes to have a great site in the next issue.

Gene Salomon sends in another excellent article providing us more about his amazing life.

Last years Chess Journalist of the Year, Elshan Moradiabadi, was the subject of our “In the [Limelight](#)” interview.

We have the return of ChessKeys and Oddities and Peculiarities columns. Congrats to GM Ding Liren, the new World Chess Champion!

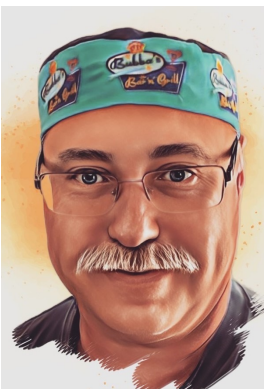
In addition to the website renewal, FM Grayson Rorrer sent in a very detailed look at an endgame he had played. Grayson also wants to see more junior players send in some articles. If you are a junior we want to see your name in print in TCJ.

Bob Basalla sent in a humorous article about ways any of us could become World Chess Champion. There were a few other humorous pieces in this issue as well.

You will find three reviews in this issue. One docuseries, one documentary film, and one book.

We have our second *The Queens’ Corner* in which we feature Carol Meyer, Executive Director at US Chess.

I realized recently that I messed up the numbering system for *The Chess Journalist*. If I had done things correctly, this issue would be numbered Volume XLVI (Issue 153). I previously issued one numbered XLVI, but with no issue number. I had increased the volume number instead of the issue number. I will start with where this issue should be and go forward using the issue number to distinguish.



We welcome aboard Rex Gray as another proofreader. Rex has made a large impact on this issue with his very excellent eagle eyes. Thanks to Diane Dahl as always for her excellent proofreading and suggestions.

Photos are all reproduced here with permission.

Please consider sending in an article or idea for next issue, deadline 7/5/23.

Please send your comments, suggestions, or even better, send me a story or idea for the next issue: [mcapron243@mchsi.com](mailto:mcapron243@mchsi.com).

—Mark Capron



“Life can only be understood backwards, but it must be lived forwards”  
— Soren Kierkegaard

## Letters to the Editor/President:

Joshua,

Thanks for the link to "The Chess Journalist." That was very thoughtful of you. I enjoyed the art articles. Your wife did a terrific and imaginative job with the Tri-Bridges Chess Club artwork. I was also glad to see my long-time acquaintance, Dwight Weaver, get some recognition for the incredible and extensive work he does with his creative and technically skillfully crafted publications for the Memphis Chess Club. That he's a serious comic book collector shows in his CAD artwork. Jon Crumiller's article on dating chess pieces using artwork caught my eye as well. I recently had a fairly involved conversation with Soviet chess set collector, Chuck Grau, about the obverse of that coin.... anachronistic chess sets in artwork, i.e. artists painting period pieces using chess sets that didn't exist at the time.

Concerning an observation you made about the lack of titles and lack of indexing by titles, I have a totally empirically-based opinion. Some artists title their works, though not as many as one might think. It seems that in order to readily identify an object d'art, museum curators, art galleries and such assign working names to them. That's why so many paintings have titles (unofficial, that is) such as "Chess Players" or "A Game of Chess" or something as unwieldy as "A Brother and Sister Playing Game of Chess in a Luxurious Parlor." My conclusion is that so many artworks lack official titles (and by extension, are sometimes called different things by different entities), that cataloguing by title would be arbitrary rather than scholarly. That said, "La Gioconda" is usually indexed under the title "Mona Lisa" and immediately and universally recognizable under the latter and what was originally inventoried at the time of the artist's death as "Painted in the Turkish fashion," then later catalogued as "Girl with a Turban," "Girl with a Pearl," "Head of a Young Girl," "The Pearl," "Vermeer's Head of a Girl" and probably other things is now more often called "Girl with a Pearl Earring." So titles are pretty iffy things at best and probably a can of worms best left alone.

Thanks again!

~Sarah Beth Cohen

Yes, I received it, and loved what you guys did! Thank you!  
Good chess

Jon Edwards

That issue of The Chess Journalist is incredible--a real "work of art" in itself! As a magazine editor myself, I know how much work it takes to put a solid magazine together. Mark is to be heartily commended.

Recently, in addition to my state chess magazine work, I self-published a book on Alabama chess history that just had its public release, so that's my big news.

-Scott Varagona

A beautiful collectors' item!  
Best – Tony Saidy

I will have to put some more time aside to read the entire magazine. I loved all of the artwork. The Opera Game is one of my favorite games to teach from.

Jim Hodina

Hello,

I have been thinking a bit about the Journal's timeline and the fact that we have our meetings in February and August and was wondering how you would feel rather about switching the early January, early April, early July, early October goal for issues to one late January, late April etc. My thinking is this... in January there is a lot of holiday stuff making it difficult and unpredictable for set timelines, and in late January we can promote the February meeting. In late April, it is much closer to the start of the award season on May 1, and hopefully taking away time people have to forget about entering and then either not entering or entering in June at the last minute. In late July we can push the meeting at the US Open and all of that sort of thing, maybe even some sort of social event like a dinner or something the night after or before the meeting. Then in October, I am so exhausted with awards, having a little more time wouldn't seem necessary, but well, I wouldn't object.

Since you are the editor, I will stand behind you 100% on whatever you wish to do, but it was just something that crossed my mind.

Take care,

Joshua

*This issue will start to follow the late in the Month schedule. –Ed.*

How about a best chess joke of the year category? I'll start with a joke from my grandson.

Mother: Why don't you and Billy play chess together anymore?

Jimmy: Would you like to play with someone who takes back moves, removes pawns when you are not watching, and cheats anyway he can get away with?

Mother: Certainly not!

Jimmy: Well, neither would Billy.

Ross Nickel

Continued from page 40

**Ding,Liren (2829) - Nepomniachtchi,Ian (2761) [A14]**

FIDE World Championship 2023 (17), 30.04.2023

1.♠f3 d5 2.g3 ♠f6 3.♙g2 e6 4.0-0 ♙e7 5.c4 0-0 6.b3 c5 7.cxd5 ♠xd5 8.♙b2 ♠c6 9.d4 cxd4 10.♠xd4 ♠xd4 11.♙xd4 ♙f6 12.♙d2 ♠f4 13.gxf4 ♙xd2 14.♠xd2 ♙xb2 15.♙ad1 ♙f6 16.♠c4 ♙b8 17.♠e5 ♙d8 18.♙xd8+ ♙xd8 19.♙d1 ♙e7 20.♠d7 ♙xd7 21.♙xd7 ♙f8 22.♙xb7 ♙d8 23.♙c7 a5 24.♙c4 ♙b4 25.♙c2 ♙d2 26.♙xd2 ♙xd2 27.e3 ♙b4 28.♙f1 ♙e7 29.♙e2 ♙d6 30.♙d3 ♙e1 31.♙e2 ♙b4 32.♙d3 ♙e1 33.♙e2 ½-½

## Call for the 2023 Awards

The Chess Journalists of America once again sends out a call for nominations for the annual Chess Journalists of America (CJA) awards. The CJA awards recognize the best in all facets of chess journalism, both print and online. The best chess articles, columns, photojournalism, layout, and online writing are honored within their respective categories. Recognized annually by their peers, the public, and members of CJA, the prestigious awards showcase American works published in English between June 1, 2022, and May 31, 2023.

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

CJA's annual awards are open to anyone. There is an entry fee of \$15 for the first entry — this includes membership or renewal to CJA — and an \$8 fee for each subsequent entry (unless otherwise noted.) State organizations may enter three entries in the Cramer Awards for free. Additional award details can be found online at [chessjournalism.org](http://chessjournalism.org). Interested parties can also contact CJA Awards Committee Chairman Joshua Anderson at [joshuamiltonanderson@gmail.com](mailto:joshuamiltonanderson@gmail.com). Awards winners will be announced first at the annual CJA meeting during the U.S. Open, followed shortly by a complete listing on the CJA website. Submissions must be made by June 18, 2023. Please use the QR code to go directly to our entry page.



### 2023 Awards

#### TOP THREE CATEGORIES (OPEN TO PRINT OR ONLINE)

**Chess Journalist of the Year (June 1, 2022 – May 30, 2023)**

**Best Story of the Year**

**Best Column**

#### BEST CHESS BOOK

**Best Book – Instruction**

**Best Book – Other**

**Best Self—Published Book**

#### BEST VISUAL ARTS

**Best Photojournalism Article**

**Best Single Chess Photo**

**Best Art**

**Best Single Chess Magazine Cover**

**Best Cartoon**

#### BEST PRINT ARTICLES (OPEN ONLY TO PUBLICATIONS)

**Best Regular Newspaper Column**

**Best Overall Magazine**

**Best Single Article of Local Interest**

**Best Feature Article**

**Best Interview**

**Best Tournament Report National / International**

**Best Tournament Report – State / Local**

**Best Club Newsletter**

**Best Instructive Lesson**

**Best Review**

**Best Analysis**

**Best Historical Article**

**Best Humorous Contribution**

**Best Personal Narrative**

#### BEST ONLINE AND SOCIAL MEDIA NEWS AND FEATURES

**Best Interview**

**Best Feature Article**

**Best Podcast**

**Best Single Podcast Episode**

**Best Tournament Report – National/International**

**Best Tournament Report – State/Local**

**Best News**

**Best Club Newsletter**

**Best Instruction Lesson**

**Best Analysis**

**Best Humorous Contribution**

**Best Historical Article**

**Best Personal Narrative**

**Best Overall Chess Website**

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## FROM ALEKHINE TO KASPAROV AND BEYOND

By J. Eugene (“Gene”) Salomon

*This article is a preview of my forthcoming book, “Sweet Memories: Family, Friends, Chess & Sugar” which focuses on several of the remarkable life events of my family, and was translated and edited by Diane Dahl. “Sweet Memories” was adapted from my original book “Jugando en el tablero de la vida”, written with co-author Javier Cordero, which focused on my 70 years of chess adventures.*



**Left**—Gijon, Spain, 1944 at a luncheon in Alekhine’s honor while he came to play the first Gijon International Tournament (I am standing, in the white jacket, and Alekhine is seated in the middle.) **Right**—Parsippany, New Jersey, 2014 Team Tournament—I am showing Kasparov the picture of his predecessor from 70 years before, since I knew that he was also inspired by “The Genius” (as historian Pablo Moran called him in his MacFarland book).

Throughout my 94 years, I have played a number of memorable games on “Caissa’s” board, the first being a game against World Champion Alekhine in 1944 in my hometown of Gijon, Spain; and another against GM Gabriel Sargissian in 1998 in Linares, also in my native Spain. Between those two games on the chessboard, there were more than 50 years of games that my family and I had to play on the Board of Life. Although I wasn’t born until the 1920s, generations of my family have lived through the Spanish—American War in Cuba (1898), the First World War (1914—1918), the Spanish Civil War (1936—1939), the Second World War (1939—1945), and the Cuban Revolution (1959). My last 62 years living in the good old U.S.A have been as full of excitement as my chess life was, and I wanted to share not only some more of my adventures over the chessboard, but also some of my adventures on the board of life.

### My Chess Life Begins– the 1940s

I’m forever grateful to the great Alexander Alekhine who, when I was 15 years old, gave me some friendly advice which marked my life. At the request of my uncle (who was Alekhine’s personal physician in 1944 in Gijon), I was walking “the Genius” from the Chess Club to his hotel while he was “under the influence”. All of a sudden, he stopped to give me what I interpreted as a message of gratitude for my assistance, “Young man, chess is not something to which one should dedicate his whole life.” I am certain he had no idea how profoundly those words impacted me, and he could never have imagined that they have influenced so many life decisions ever since.

1947 was a special year in my life. I had just finished my first year of medical school in Madrid, and was invited to play the IV International Chess Tournament in Gijon. After losing only two of the 13 games, defeating the then Champion of Spain, IM Antonio Medina, in what he called an excellent game, I tied for 7—8 out of 14 with child prodigy, future Grandmaster “Arturito” Pomar. Later that year, as a delayed consequence of the Spanish Civil War, I left Madrid for Havana. I had no way of knowing that just as I was leaving Spain, coincidentally, a new “chess star” had just been born—the late Miguel Nepomuceno. This famous writer—historian of chess and music, as well as a chess master of IM caliber, was born in 1947... on my 19th birthday. Seventy years later, we would meet for the first time, and our friendship would change the following years in incredibly meaningful ways: he inspired me to write a book that could become our “MAGNUM OPUS”.

### My Chess in the 1950s and 1960s

I spent the last few years of the 1940s and the decade of the 1950s in Cuba. Since I was studying at University while working at the same time (first grade teacher at the Jesuit famous school “Colegio de Belen”), there was little time left for chess.

In 1952, there was an Invitational Tournament to select the Cuban Team for the Helsinki Chess Olympiad. I was invited based on my Spanish credentials plus my frequent games with the best players at Havana’s “Club Capablanca”. Lo and behold, I finished in sixth place out of the 14 invited players (all of the highest players in the island at the time), and qualified as the sixth and last member of the team. Although circumstances prevented me from attending, I was very proud of my accomplishment. As a result of the Cuban revolution, in 1960, I made the decision to leave Cuba, and after sending my parents back to Spain. I emigrated to the U.S.

With my arrival in New York in 1960, chess had disappeared completely from my life since an immigrant only has room for one thing in life—survival! For most of the 1960’s, I concentrated exclusively on my family and business life. My lovely wife, Bea, and I were married in 1961, lived in New York and later New Jersey, where we raised our four children. Those years were also years of success in the U.S. sugar industry, thanks to my university studies and work experience in Cuba’s sugar mills. I advanced quickly and by the end of the 60s, I had been promoted to Vice—President of a major sugar company.

At the end of January 1968, I took the most painful flight of my life, the one I never wanted to take—I traveled from New York to Madrid to attend my father’s funeral, arriving just in time to accompany him to the cemetery. It was a sad trip and a painful goodbye to the man who had been my inspiration in life and who had instilled in me not only his great love of chess and music, but his example of family love, human solidarity and hard honest work. My priorities—family and a business career—were developing very well. Could it be worth trying serious chess again at age 40? After 16 years away from competition, I entered the NJ Open as unrated, and exited with a master’s rating.

### The 1970s— Discovering the Westfield Chess Club

At the beginning of the 1970s, the Westfield Chess Club in New Jersey was the strongest club in the region. Under the outstanding leadership of Denis Barry, its membership grew exponentially—somehow, Denis managed to attract the best players in New Jersey.

I was honored, when in 1972, Denis invited me to participate in the first of a new series of “Invitational Tournaments” limited to the strongest players in New Jersey. I finished in 3rd place, ahead of some well—known masters like Steve Stoyko, whom I beat in a rather interesting game.

Gene Salomon—Steve Stoyko—Westfield Invitational—3/24/1972

1.♠f3,♠f6 2.d4 g6 3.♠bd2 ♠g7 4.e4 0-0 5.e5 ♠e8 6.♠d3 d6 7.♠e2 c5 8.dxc5 dxc5 9.0-0 ♠c6 10.h3 ♠c7 11.a4 ♠e6 12.♠c4 b6 13.c3 ♠b7 14.♠d2 ♠c7 15.♠ad1

♠ad8 16.♠fe1 ♠d7 17.♠g5 ♠xg5 18.♠xg5 ♠xe5 19.♠xe5 ♠xe5 20.♠xe5 ♠xe5 21.♠xe5 ♠a6 22.♠xe7 ♠xd3 23.♠xd3 ♠xd3 24.♠xa7 ♠g7 25.♠b7 ♠a8 26.♠xb6 ♠xa4 27.♠f6 ♠h6 28.g4 ♠a1+ 29.♠h2 g5 30.♠d4+ ♠g6 31.♠xc5 ♠d1 ♠f8# 1-0

Playing in Westfield also gave me the opportunity to develop friendships for life. I also witnessed the growth of some very young teenagers into real Masters—GM John Fedorowicz and FIDE Master Mark Pinto are just two examples.

I frequently brought my sons to the club on Fridays after dinner. This became almost a sacred ritual for me. At 6 pm, I would sit at a table for dinner and, an hour and a half later, I would go to the club. On those evenings, I’d play a few games, discuss chess, and turn back into a teacher, sharing my knowledge of endgames with the younger players, often speaking about my experiences with Alekhine. In the following years, Steve Pozarek, Wayne Conover, and I formed the backbone of the Westfield team that prevailed every year in the NJ team league. (The three of us had been club champions, and developed such a close friendship that to this day, we still get together monthly after 50 years.)

At the end of the decade, in 1979, when my oldest son, Gene, became a member of his High School (CBA— Christian Brothers Academy) chess team, I became their volunteer coach. I was privileged to contribute to CBA becoming New Jersey State High School Champion for the first time...

### My chess in the 80’s

Due to my focus on my work, my participation in tournaments was limited to local events, almost always at the Westfield Club or in the quadrangular tournaments that my friend, the late Glen Petersen, organized on the weekends in New Jersey.

In 1980, I achieved a great result in the Westfield Chess Club’s Rapid Tournament, finishing in second place behind IM Mike Valvo. It was an entertaining fight in which I earned 14 points in 17 games, only giving up two losses. One of the losses was to an opponent who wasn’t even human—the computer, Belle (designed by Ken Thompson of Bell Laboratories fame), which finished in 5th place. Belle would soon become the World Champion of computers. The future was coming, and there was no stopping it.

That same year, 1980, I had one of my most cherished memories with chess, when I decided to enter the US Amateur Team Chess Championship with my three sons. We created a team with an odd name, “King Salomon and his Three Knights”, with me as the captain, well—supported by my three sons.

My son, Robbie, who hadn’t yet turned 7, was the youngest player in the event, and was interviewed during the tournament. The journalist asked him a few questions that Robbie answered with a simple “Yep”, until the journalist finally asked him this, “Do you know what ‘concentration’ means?” To which Robbie replied, “Yep, You sit on your hands and shut up.” Although our score in the tournament wasn’t worth mentioning, sharing the experience with my three sons will forever be one of my most treasured memories.



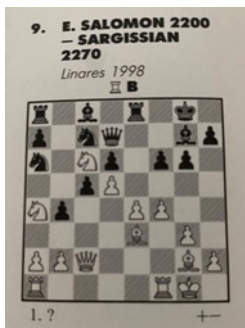
**King Salomon and his Three Knights 39 years later...It was Christmas dinner 2019 in New Jersey...a family tradition . I was ready to play my last Team Tournament in February 2020...so we decided to take this picture for the sake of beautiful memories.**

### Chess in the 90s and 2000s

My work was keeping me busy, and the 90s saw me retire from corporate life, and begin my consulting career, which gave me more free time to play. I played in the International Open of the Principality of Asturias (Spain) in 1993, where I was able to spend some wonderful time with my dear friend, Pablo "Pablito" Moran. It was the last meeting of two "lifelong and forever" friends, as Pablito himself described our friendship.

Back in the U.S., I started playing all the major Open tournaments (New York Open, World Open in Philadelphia, National Open in Las Vegas, Chicago Open) and as many others as I could attend. I especially remember the 1997 World Open in Philadelphia. It was a very challenging tournament, with a high number of titled players. In spite of all that, I finished above the midpoint of the standings, and with an even score.

In 1998, at age 70, I knew that the time had come to put an end to my competitive chess career. In light of that, I wanted to find a special tournament to close out this beautiful journey that had allowed me to have such enjoyable experiences. I knew that I wanted it to be in Spain, where it had all begun, closing the circle around the square board, and decided on the Linares Open, held in Linares Spain. I earned good results, especially the victory (after a beautiful tactical fight) against Gabriel Sargissian, World Youth Chess Champion (under 12). It may have taken me 54 years, but after my 1944 loss to World Champion Alekhine, I could now claim a victory against another World Champion (even if he was in the "Under 12" category.) I was honored that this game was selected by *Chess Informant* #71, a quarterly publication, as a game with one of the best combinations



of that quarter—year, from around the world. The entire game, published on page 360 of *Chess Informant* # 71, follows:

1.d4 ♘f6 2.c4 c5 3.d5 e6 4.g3 exd5 5.cxd5 d6 6.♘c3 g6 7.♘f3 ♘g7 8.♘g2 O-O 9.O-O ♘a6 10.♘d2 ♘c7 11.♘c4 ♘fe8 12.e4 b5 13.♘a5 b4 14.♘c6 ♗d7 15.♘a4 ♘a6 16.♗c2 f6 17.f4 ♘ec7 18.♘e3 ♗e8 19.e5 fxе5 20.fxe5 ♘xe5 21.♘xe5 ♗xe5 22.♘h6 ♘b7 23.♗f6 ♗e7 24.♗af1 ♗e1 25.♗xg6+ h×g6 26.♗xg6+ ♗h8 27.♘g5 ♗xh1+ 28.♘xf1 ♗g8 29.♘f6+ ♗g7 30.♗h6+ ♗g8 31.♘xe7 ♗xe7 32.♗g6+ ♗h8 33.♗f6+ ♗g7 34.♗xd6 1-0

As I was ending my competitive career, I succeeded in reaching one more pinnacle—I was awarded the title of Life Master by the U.S. Chess Federation. This plaque hangs on my wall, and I feel full of pride when I think of all the years, wonderful memories, and treasured friends I made along the way.



I had planned on ending my chess career in Spain where it started—but it didn't quite work out that way. I wound up playing a few more tournaments in the United States, and ending my individual chess career at the National Open in Las Vegas, in March of 1999.

Although my individual competitive chess career had ended, I always kept chess by my side. For the last couple of decades, I was quite active at the Toms River Chess Club, and my love of chess resulted in frequent lectures, simultaneous exhibitions and participation in any activity to promote "the royal game". One memorable event with the TRCC occurred in 2017, when I agreed to participate in the events the Toms River Chess Club had organized during the city's 250th birthday celebration, and played blind-fold chess.

The following year, I gave a conference for the club around the time of my 90th birthday. To my surprise, they organized a birthday party and next to the podium they displayed the Toms River Chess Club's Hall of Fame plaque. What an honor it was to see my name on the plaque alongside Botvinnik, Tal, Petrosian, and Karpov!





Steve Doyle and Gene Salomon with the Toms River Chess Club Hall of Fame plaque.



Plaque presented to me by the Toms River Chess Club

My last tournament was the 2020 US Amateur Team East, held in Parsippany, NJ. At 91 years of age, I was the captain of "The Oldest Team in Town", composed of veteran players from Toms River and Westfield—average age of 71: Gregory Coats, the youngest (at 61), Edd Knowles, 66, Richard Lewis, 77, Gene Salomon, 91 and Mark Pinto, 63. As captain of the team, I arranged in advance that the alternate player would play three of my games, so I only had to play one game per day. (That way, I could promise my friends and family that I wouldn't lose more than 3 games!) I was pleasantly surprised—I didn't lose any games (two ties and one win), and the team performed pretty well overall. The experience was most pleasant. I was able to return to competing after 21 years, and I did it alongside old friends from the Westfield Chess Club, and more recent friends from the Toms River Chess Club. For being the oldest player among the 1400 participants, I was recognized and given a book as a prize.

### 2017– Meeting Miguel

On April 5th, 2017, I met Miguel Angel Nepomuceno for

the first time in Madrid. He had contacted me inquiring if we could have an interview for a series of articles that he wanted to publish in his chess column at the web magazine "Zenda/ libros". During the meeting, it felt as if we'd known each other for many years, and that changed the direction of my last few years. I became a writer!

His five part series of articles—"Eugenio Salomón Rugarcía: De Alekhine a Kasparov o cómo jugar a la ciega en el tablero de la vida" came out over the next year. I was touched and humbled by his compliments, descriptions, and how he referred to me:

*"The protagonist of this story is not a Grand Master, although has defeated some of them. He is not a professional player...EUGENIO SALOMON RUGARCIA is an authentic self-made man..."*

Our 2017 meeting was the start of a deep friendship at age 89, a rarity to be sure. It was the coincidental meeting of two "almas gemelas" (soulmates): two friends from Spain, both born on September 29th, (Miguel Nepomuceno in 1947 and I in 1928) .

During 2018 when health problems made it difficult for him to complete the sixth and last chapter covering my 60 years in the U.S, we worked together to complete it. This article contains much of the information he requested from me and, in a way, is my modest way to honor him for all that he has honored me. He repeatedly asked me to write not only about chess, but more so about my family's story, and wanted me to include some anecdotes and achievements of my 60 years of life in the U.S. He especially loved my story about the World Trade Center: I was one of the founding members of the Club at "Windows on the World". The restaurant was open to the public for dinner, but during the day was a private club for businessmen located in the North Tower.

As proud as I am of my chess, I am even prouder of my wonderful family and what I have been able to accomplish in the business world. Here is a brief summary of the highlights of my life (some of my "sweet memories") since emigrating to the "good old USA". (These quintessential parts of my life are only briefly noted here, and I invite you to find out more by reading my forthcoming book, expected in the next few weeks.)

I worked for 30 years with Sucrest Corporation/Ingredient Technology Corporation (ITC), an industry leader in sugar, edible molasses, and specialty products. I started as a research chemist, was promoted to Assistant to the President two years later, and became Corporate Vice—President within 8 years of coming to this country.

During my tenure, I served as President of Grandma Molasses, (ITC's Canadian subsidiary), and President of ITC's largest division, Specialty Products. During those years, I traveled to multiple countries, spent an extended honeymoon while working a couple of months at Central Romana, in the Dominican Republic, dined with British royalty, and got to attend the 1976 Olympic Games, while I was President of our Canadian subsidiary, Grandma Molasses.

After 30 years, I retired from ITC. I joined Florida Crystals

as Vice-President of their sugar mills in Florida and the Dominican Republic to help them diversify. It was an exciting three year business experience. When I decided to retire and return to New Jersey, Flo—Sun offered me a 4 year contract as a dedicated consultant...and I started a new and most rewarding career at age 65!

While continuing to be active in the industry, I became the manager of my own time, playing some of my best chess games from age 65 to 70. I also started with “fury” a new passion—“Duplicate Bridge” ( I am now a “Silver Life Master”). I learned how to use a smartphone, indulged my love of photography, was rediscovered by the Spanish chess world via social media, learned (mostly) how to be on Facebook, was nominated by a dear friend for the Sugar Industry’s “Man of the Year” Award, and became a chess writer. (Aside from my forthcoming book “Sweet Memories”, and a previous chess book, “40 Years of Friendship: 100 Games of Chess” I have written numerous articles about chess, which have been published in English and Spanish in various print and electronic publications.)

Through it all, I have been blessed to have my wonderful wife, Bea, by my side for 62 years. We have 4 children and 7 grandchildren, and I am enormously proud to be the patriarch of this family. As my father did before me, I have strived to promote family unity, and remain in contact with my many family members around the world. I fervently hope that my children and grandchildren follow my example, and maintain these priceless family bonds.

Since they say that bragging after 90 is no longer a sin, here are some plaques hanging on my office wall...



**Left**—Life Master Title for bridge; **Center**—A plaque from Rutgers University in appreciation for my work as the Chairman of the Advisory Board of the Department of Food Science; **Right**—From ITC’s Canadian division, Grandma Molasses, a “merci”, for my 21 years of dedication to the company.



**Left**—Award from Rutgers in recognition of his service to the people of the State of New Jersey. **Right**—Members of the Harrogate Senior Chess Club



## My last chess hurrah

People have said that I don't understand the meaning of the word "retirement", but there are some things that I enjoy too much to give up completely. Yesterday, at age 94, I started a chess club in my senior community, which was attended by players/friends from the area. I am looking forward to teaching again, and giving lectures about this game I have loved for over 80 years. I am grateful I have the health to do it, and I say a big "THANK YOU" to the staff who allow me to run the club. I hope my fellow players enjoy it as much as I do.



Myself and my friend of 50 years (and co-author Wayne Conover, who was once a member of the US Olympic Team in Correspondence Chess.

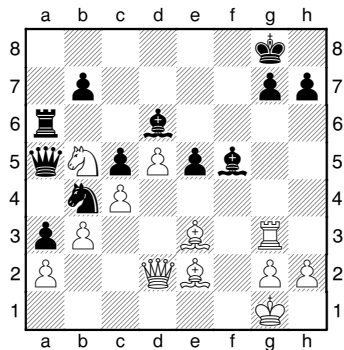
Since Miguel wanted for his "Chapter VI" highlights of my last 60+ years in the U.S., I feel that the best way to finish this article is with some games of my teammates from the Westfield Chess Club of the 70's and 80's, as well as the friends/teammates from the 2020 Amateur Team Tournament. It is indeed appropriate, because chess and friendships are among the sweetest memories of my long life.

### Conover, Wayne – Stoyko, Steve

Raritan Valley League, New Jersey 11.1986

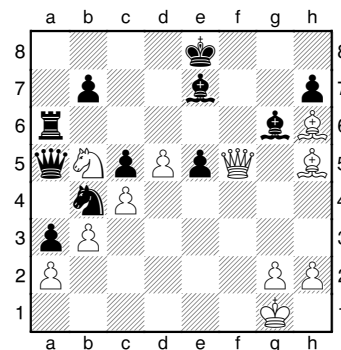
Annotations by Wayne Conover

1.d4 d6 2.c4 d6 3. d3 d7 4.e4 e5 5.d5 e7 6. d3 0-0 7. e2 c5 8. c2 a5 9.0-0 c6 10. e3 d7 11. f1 c7 12. d2 a4 13. d1 a5 14. e1 a3 15. b3 d8 16. d3 d3 17. d3 c5 18. f1 b8 19. f4 a6 20. fxe5 dxe5 21. f2 d4 22. d2 f8 23. b5 a6 24. e2 d6 25. f3 d7 26. g3 f5 27. exf5 fxf5 28. fxf5 exf5



29. f7+! With only 10 minutes left on my clock, I spent half of my time analyzing 29... f7 30. h6+ f7

31. h5+ g6 32. f2+ e8 33. f5?! (33. f6 h5 34. d6+ e6 35. f6 d5 threatening mate on e1 36. f5+ e7 37. h5+ g6 38. e2+ and White should win 33. d6+ e6 34. f8+ d7 35. g4+ c7 36. e7+ b6 37. f6+ a7 38. f5 e2 39. f4 a6 40. d6+ also wins for White) 33... e7 Black could have saved himself with 33... d5 34. f6+ h6 35. f6+ d7 and White has to look for a perpetual check.



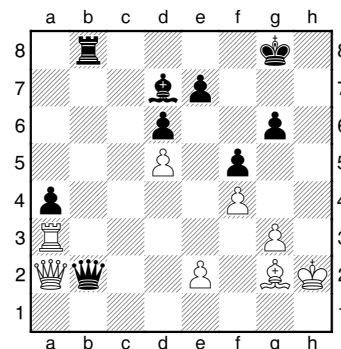
34. d6! demolishing 34... e6 35. d6+ e6 36. f6+ e7 37. g4 f5 38. f5 there is no defense to avoid 39. g8+ and 40. f8++ 1-0

### Denker, Arnold Sheldon – Conover, Wayne

US Open, Somerset 08.1986

Annotations by Wayne Conover

My first win against a grandmaster. After 20... d2, the route to victory was simple. 1. d4 f5 Fifty seven years before our game, Denker had a brilliant win against the Dutch Defense when he was only 15 years old. In those days the Leningrad variation did not exist. 2. f3 f6 3. g3 g6 4. g2 g7 5.0-0 0-0 6. c4 d6 7. c3 c6 8. c2 c7 9. d5 cxd5 10. cxd5 e4 11. d2 a6 12. f1 d2 13. f2 d2 14. f3 e8 15. d4 b6 16. f1 d7 better than capturing the b2 pawn 17. d2 f1 18. f2 An old time master as Denker may have thought that his position was better, but in reality, Black has reached an equal position. 18... f1 19. b3? White's 18th move was not good, but this move is just an error, as black will promptly show. 19... b4 20. f1 c1 d2 21. d2 b3 22. f1 c4 f2 23. c3 f3 24. bxc3 a5 25. f1 a4 26. f1 b5 27. h4 c5 28. f2 b8 29. h5 b4 30. cxb4 f2 31. h2 b2 32. h6 g6 33. f4 f2 With this



move there is a simple win, sufficient, but there was a

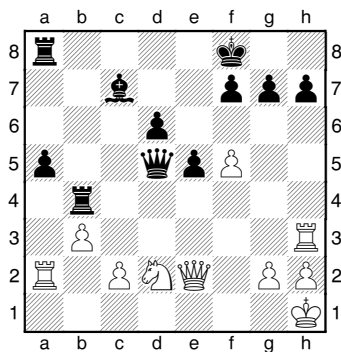
beautiful alternative with a spectacular finish (33...♖h8+ 34.♔g1 ♖d4+ 35.♔h2 [35.♔f1 ♖b2 36.♖a1 ♖b6 is demolishing] 35...♔f7 36.e3 ♖d1 37.♖a1 ♖b1 38.♖h8 [38.♖d4 ♖h5+ 39.♖h3 ♖e2+ 40.♖g2 ♖b2 wins the queen and later the rook] 38...♖g1+ 39.♔h3 ♖h1+ 40.♖xh1 ♖xh1+ 41.♔g2 ♖xh8+ ) 34.♖xa2 ♖b3 35.♖f3 a3 36.♔g2 ♖b5 37.♔f2 ♖c4 threatening 38...♖xf3+ 38.♔e1 This move is not really an error because: 38.♖a1 a2 39.♖xa2 ♖xf3+ wins a piece. If White does not play 39.♖xa2, then 39...♖b1 wins at once. The white bishop has just been an impotent witness of the fight 38...♖b1+ 0-1

### Pozarek, Steve – Dubeck, Leroy

US amateur Chess Team Tournament, New Jersey  
02.1985

Annotations by Steve Pozarek

This game was the first round of the tournament. On my team were my father and my uncle, playing together for the first time! 1.e4 c5 2.♖f3 d6 3.d4 cxd4 4.♖xd4 ♖f6 5.♖c3 a6 6.♖e2 e5 7.♖b3 ♖e7 8.0-0 0-0 9.a4 ♖e6 10.f4 ♖c7 11.f5 ♖c4 12.♖e3 ♖bd7 13.a5 b5 14.axb6 ♖xb6 15.♖h1 ♖fc8 16.♖xb6 ♖xb6 17.♖xc4 ♖xc4 18.♖e2 ♖b4 Dubeck has always been consistent in his openings. The Sicilian Najdorf is one of his favorites. This line of the opening was played by Fischer 19.♖a2 ♖d8 In Fischer's game against Geller, Curazao 1962 where they reached this same position with a slightly different order of moves, and they continued: 19...♖b7 20.♖a5 ♖c7 21.♖d5 ♖xd5 22.exd5 ♖b5 With an equal position. Dubeck changed here: 20.♖d2 (20.♖fa1±) 20...♖c6 of course not 20...♖xb2 21.♖c4+- 21.♖f3 a5 22.b3 ♖c7 23.♖d3 ♖f8?! (23...a4!? 24.bxa4 ♖b6) 24.♖d5! ♖xd5 25.exd5 ♖b7 26.♖h3 ♖xd5



I believe that we both were under time pressure at this point. After this move, Dubeck offered me a draw. On prior occasions I had accepted draw offers from him. Probably he was surprised that I did not accept the offer. 27.c4 ♖d4 28.♖xh7 ♖ab8? A fatal error. With 28...♖b6 the position would be equal. 29.f6!! A powerful move, one of the most satisfying ever. Black loses on the spot. 29...♖e8 (29...gxf6 30.♖h5! And the check mate can only be avoided with: ♖g1+ 31.♔xg1 ♖b6+ followed by ♖b7) 30.fxg7 ♖e7 31.♖h8 ♖b6 32.♖f1 of course not 32.g8=♖?? ♖g1++ 32...♖g4 33.♖xb8 ♖xg7 34.♖b7+ ♖e6 35.♖f3 ♖c5 36.♖h3+ f5 37.♖xg7 after this good beginning I ended up the tournament with a 6-0 result. 1-0

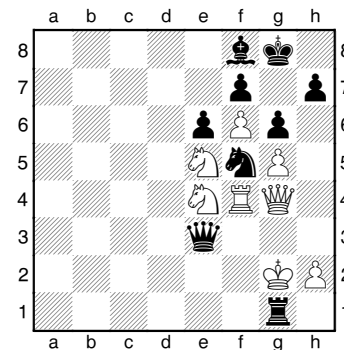
NOTE from the author: I was a witness to this beautiful combination! Steve, his father, and his uncle wanted to

enter the team as a "family team". However, they were missing one player and I was proud to accept their offer to be an "adopted" family member! We won first prize in the "Family Teams" category!

### Gabrielson, R. – Pozarek, Steve

Greater Ch, New York 12.1969

This game has interesting strategic content, but it is really unique because of the final position. 1.g3 ♖f6 2.♖g2 g6 3.e4 d6 4.d3 ♖g7 5.f4 c5 6.♖f3 ♖c6 7.0-0 0-0 8.♖bd2 ♖b8 9.a4 a6 10.♖h4 As it is standard in positions of this type, white attacks in the King's side and black counter—attack on the queen's flank. 10...♖d7 11.c3 b5 12.axb5 axb5 13.f5 b4?! Until now, Fritz preferred the black position and recommends 13...♖b6. The move b4 weakens the c4 square. 14.♖c4 ♖c7 15.g4 ♖a8 16.♖xa8 ♖xa8 17.♖e3 bxc3 18.bxc3 ♖e5 18...♖h6 is what Fritz recommends in this position. A move I would have never considered. But now 19.g5 is going to be strong, I thought the best, although Fritz evaluates the position as favorable to white already. 19.g5 ♖a4 A useful move as it permits the knight on f6 to go to d7 instead of e1 or h5. 20.♖e2 ♖fd7 21.♖d5 ♖d8 22.f6!? Al Horowitz published this game in his New York Times column. He commented that this move was premature as it permitted black to reinforce his king's flank. Fritz prefers 22.d4, but still indicates that White is better. 22...♖f8 23.d4 cxd4 24.cxd4 ♖c6 25.♖f2?! (25.fxe7 was better 25...♖xe7 26.♖f2 ♖f8 27.e5!±) 25...e6 Now White's attack on the kingside stops, while Black takes control of the queenside. 26.♖c3 ♖b3 27.♖f3 ♖c4 28.♖d1 ♖b6 29.♖f1?! Little by little the initiative has passed to Black. Perhaps White should have tried 29.d5? or 29.♖d2!? 29...♖xf1 30.♖xf1 d5 31.exd5?! The black pieces are gaining power with each move. 31...♖xd5 32.♖e4 ♖b6 33.♖f2 ♖b3 The white side is totally stopped on the kingside while black is invading the queenside. 34.♖f1 ♖a2 35.♖h4? The strategic black victory is complete. 35...♖e3 36.♖xe3 ♖xe3+ 37.♖h1 ♖xd4 38.♖e5 Here, 38.♖xd4 was needed...was White expecting to sacrifice the knight on f7? 38...♖f5 39.♖g4 ♖a4 40.♖f4 ♖a1+ 41.♖g2 ♖g1# An incredible final position.



There are 17 pieces left on the Board and all of them are on the king's flank!, while the queen's flank is empty. I was kind of happy that white did not resign while his rook was on the square a1, because it would have ruined the visual impact! 0-1



**Anderson, Renard – Pinto, Mark**  
Palo Alto 1991

1.e4 c5 2.♟f3 e6 3.d4 cxd4 4.♞xd4 a6 5.♞d3 ♟c7 6.0-0 b6 7.♟h1 ♞b7 8.c4 ♟f6 9.♞c3 ♞c6 10.♞xc6 dxc6 11.f4 h5 12.e5 ♟g4 13.♟e1 ♞d8 14.♞e2 ♞b4 15.♟g3 ♞xc3 16.♟xc3 c5 17.♟g3 g6 18.♞xg4 h×g4 19.♞e3 ♞h3 20.♟e1 g3 21.♞g1 ♟e7 22.♞f3 ♞xf3 23.gxf3 ♟h4 24.♟e2 ♟xf4 25.♟g2 ♞h5 26.♞e1 ♞d2 27.♞e4 ♞xg2 28.♞xf4 ♞xb2 0-1

**Dlugy, Maxim – Lewis, Richard**  
Simultaneous, Kenilworth 1990

1.d4 ♟f6 2.c4 c5 3.d5 e5 4.♞c3 d6 5.e4 ♞e7 6.♞d3 0-0 7.♞ge2 ♞bd7 8.f3 ♞e8 9.♞e3 ♟f8 10.♟d2 ♟g6 11.g3 a6 12.h4 ♞h5 13.0-0-0 b5 14.cxb5 axb5 15.♞xb5 ♞d7 16.♞xd7 ♟xd7 17.g4 ♞hf4 18.h5 ♞xe2+ 19.♟xe2 ♟f4 20.♟d2 ♞g5 21.♟b1 ♞eb8 22.♞h2 c4 23.♟a1 h6 24.♞b1 ♟b7 25.♞hh1 ♟a6 26.♞xf4 ♟xa2+ 0-1

"My life has been just 94 years of coincidences"...and I often wonder what Einstein meant when saying that "Coincidences are the way of God remaining anonymous"

Here is a draft of the front cover of the book.

## SWEET MEMORIES: Family, Friends, Chess, and Sugar

By J. Eugene Salomon

Adapted from "*Jugando en el tablero de la vida*"  
by J. Eugene Salomon and Javier Cordero



Translated, adapted and edited by Diane S. Dahl

Hi Mark-- Had you seen this article? <https://archive.li/OVRwb> It gave me an idea for a humorous follow-up.

The Top 10 Signs Your Child Has a Chess Addiction

1. When his friend said that he does not know what to do, he replied: When I don't know what to do, I castle.
2. Instead of counting sheep in his mind to go to sleep, he does the knight's tour.
3. He won't leave the house without two queens in his pocket, in case he gets to promote a pawn.
4. When asked why his girlfriend is not around anymore, he replied: We're like opposite colored bishops.
5. He does not know any baseball statistics but knows the % of GM wins with white in the Ruy Lopez for last year.
6. He pretends to be reading *Playboy* magazine but has a copy of *Chess Life* inside.
7. On Halloween, he goes out dressed as a pawn.
8. The next year, his friend does the same and your son follows right behind him. They are portraying double pawns.

Perhaps the CJ readers can come up with a few more signs. Regards, Ross Nickel

Continued from Page 5

Best Overall Website Small Organization (group of less than 500)

Best Online Blog

Best Educational Lesson

Best Online Review

Best Non—Instructive Chess Video

Best Twitter Feed

Best Twitch Channel

Best Instagram Feed

Best Weekly Video Program

Best Documentary

Best Tournament/Match Coverage (This may be a series of videos)

Best Coverage by Mainstream Publication (free entry)

JUNIOR (UNDER 21 at time of writing)

Best Print Article by a Junior

Best Online Article by a Junior

Best Personal Narrative by a Junior

SPECIAL ACHIEVEMENT

CRAMER AWARDS

Best State Championship Report

Best State Tournament Coverage

Best Scholastic Coverage in State (may be multiple articles)

Best Overall State Website

Best State Magazine/Newsletter – Print

Best State Magazine/Newsletter – Online

Best Personal Narrative

Best Photograph

## ChessKeys

### *The King Who Would Be Pawn*

*By Rachel Schechter*

It's my first chess class since moving to the Minnesota Snow—Franklin Elementary School's after-school program on an a8 square in Minneapolis.

And I'm blessed with an e1 student.

Carl Karlsen is 7. He's smart, silly, wily, witty, endowed with what we refer to as 'chess sense': he knows what to do with the pieces. You can't teach this—you can only improve on it, refine it. One plan on the board, two in the wings. Combining, flipping forks, setting skewers—without knowing what a tactic is. I catch my breath watching him play. A natural.

Boorish over—the—board? Quite the contrary. Carl's the consummate gentleman. An engaging, lopsided grin. Always smiling or giggling, he lets his opponents replay bad moves, plays queen down or queen/rook down when I ask—and still wins decisively. A gracious tiger. A chess instructor's dream. Good—natured, good sportsman, he completes 50 mate—in—one puzzles in an hour.

During one class I ask him to monitor a game of *half—board chess* with two very inexperienced players.

"Sure," he grins, "What's *half—board chess*? We cut the board into pieces?"

"No, no," I laugh, "You play with your king, queen, and half the other pieces. One rook, one bishop, one knight, four pawns. Place them appropriately according to the rules—white rook on h1 or h8, black bishop on f8 or c8, same with knights, and place the 4 pawns on the second and seventh ranks, wherever.

He studies the demo board—I hadn't introduced notation yet.

"Oh, okay, I get it," he nods.

I sigh... he'll be surprised how much he "gets" if he stays with the game.

Then he grins again: "But isn't *half—board chess* like playing with half a deck?"

I smile, pause, he has a point—but my experience proves that the fewer pieces on the board (for beginners) the fewer issues, the quicker they learn.

It's an ideal chess environment—the Franklin Media Center—lots of space and equipment for the kind of chess workshop I like to run: over—the—board play with demo instruction, knights' tours, eight queens boards, several large and small screen computers, a nice area to set up 4—way and floorboard chess, *and* an adjacent, yet open, chess art corner. Perfect.

And so went the class. Smart, upbeat, and into the game. Of course, there are always kids (in beginner groups) who seriously argue for the rights of pawns to move sideways. I smile, uncon-

vinced.

"Forget sideways. Think of how much more *interesting* pawns would be—if they could move *even* backwards!" This from Henry Lawson, Carl's best buddy.

"But they *can* move backwards," grins Carl, "And sideways."

I turn to the class:

"Carl is correct. Under what circumstances can pawns move backwards and sideways?"

"When they go home?"

"If they stumble?"

"If a castle falls on them and they have to escape?"

"When they promote!" yells Mindy Applebaum. I nod, lightly applaud. Thank goodness there's at least one girl in the class. 11 boys and 1 brave girl.

"Yeah, when they promote!" echo the other students.

And so goes this marvelous class... We're four weeks into the eight—week session and it looks like the Minnesota Vikings are going to make the NFC North playoffs. Everyone in the state has Vikings fever, including the children. A pack of about a dozen kids has taken to decorating bathroom mirrors, windows, walls, lockers, floors, desks, whatever surfaces they can, with yellow and green (Franklin's school colors) markers, paints, lipsticks: GO VIKINGS!

After about two weeks, the pack is 'nabbed', 'caught in the act'. The principal makes a loudspeaker announcement: "Going forward, any and all students caught defacing school property will be subject to a three—day suspension and washing the bathroom floors AND toilets for six weeks."

The chess class turns to me, grumbling: "Is that *fair*, Miss Rachel?"

"Yeah, we were just having fun—what do you think?"

Ah, to be seven again. I suppress a smile, switch gears to 'stern Miss Rachel':

"Well, I know how much you support the Vikings—I do too—but let's suppose someone comes to *your* house and paints slogans on *your* windows. How would *you* feel? What would *you*—"

"We already *did* that!"

"Yeah, it's done," echoes the class.

Ah, yes, seven. I look to the board.

<p>"What happens if you leave a piece undefended?" I ask.</p> <p>"You lose it," says Henry.</p> <p>"What happens if you don't leave a "trapdoor escape" off the back rank for your King?"</p> <p>"He can be back rank checkmated," says Carl. Everyone nods.</p> <p>"Okay, so it's action and consequence, on the board, and in life. Always. What happens, say, if you hit your little sister? You might lose TV privileges or your allowance, or be sent to bed early, right?" The kids nod. Action, consequence.</p> <p>"My father would <i>hit me</i>," says Jacky D, the proverbial class clown.</p> <p>We all laugh. But I'm serious:</p> <p>"That's how it goes—for your entire lives—action and consequence. Realizing this is <i>key to living a good life and playing a good game of chess</i>. You can prepare for it."</p> <p>"How do you prepare for it?" asks Paul C., quiet, studious.</p> <p>All eyes on me, questions, seven years old, so many questions.</p> <p>"By <i>knowing</i> the potential consequences of your actions beforehand," I say evenly. "Knowing what <i>could</i> happen, what will <i>likely</i> happen if you take a particular action." I look again to the board. "Why can't you castle <i>through</i> check? Or castle to get <i>out</i> of check?"</p> <p>"Because it's against the chess rules?" offers Mindy Applebaum.</p> <p>"Yes!" I say resoundingly. "And why can't you deface public or private property?"</p> <p>They students look searchingly at each other then back to me:</p> <p>"Because, well—"</p> <p>"It's, isn't it—?"</p> <p>"<i>It's against the law!</i>"</p> <p>"That's right—<i>it's against the law</i>," others chime.</p> <p>"Right," I say, "And what do you have <i>without</i> the law?" I throw a fully set board into the air. Pieces fly every which way. "Anarchy. Without law—there is only anarchy."</p> <p>Paul C googles it. "Anarchy: a state of disorder due to absence or non—recognition of authority or other controlling systems."</p> <p>"What—what does that mean, Miss Rachel?" asks Jacky D, suddenly serious.</p> <p>"Chaos," I say calmly, "No laws, no control, vandalizing, stealing, crime, confusion..."</p> <p>Pin—drop quiet. Carl starts picking up the scattered chess pieces. One by one, the other students join him. Henry Lawson</p>	<p>stands, boldly says:</p> <p>"May I go to the bathroom?"</p> <p>All eyes turn to Henry. I draw a sharp breath. Henry had something to prove—to himself, to his peers, to his father, and especially to his smarter, taller, more popular, and better—looking, older brother Victor.</p> <p>"Uh, the bathroom?" I say, "You, uh, you want to go to the <i>bathroom</i>?"</p> <p>"<i>I have to use the bathroom</i>," Henry says defiantly. "<i>Is that a crime?</i>"</p> <p>"No," I say calmly, "But you do know the consequences of defacing it?"</p> <p>Henry turns on his heel and exits the Media Center.</p> <p>"Okay," I say to the class, "Let's finish picking up the chess pieces."</p> <p>Five, ten minutes pass. Five boards are set, four are being played, two kids are on the computers, and Carl is waiting on his buddy, Henry. I'm considering sending another child after him when he strides into the room.</p> <p>"What do you think of this?" he says, swinging his arms, smiling broadly. Everyone stares. Henry has written GO VIKINGS on both sides of his jeans in thick black magic marker. Silence—then laughter, nervous at first, then louder, then raucous. A few kids applaud.</p> <p>"You're too much, dude, too <i>much</i>," says Carl.</p> <p>"Did you know that the ancient Vikings used to chop their enemies' heads and drink blood from their skulls?" says Henry.</p> <p>Responses range from 'cool' to 'how disgusting'.</p> <p>I stop Henry before he sits at the board:</p> <p>"So much for 'skoal'. Who does your laundry?" I ask.</p> <p>"My—my mom," Henry answers. "Why?"</p> <p>I turn to the demo. Queen takes pawn.</p> <p>"Then there's your consequence," I smile.</p> <p>.....</p> <p>We're into the seventh week and the class is progressing well. Except for two students who just "can't grasp it," all of my goals for them are being met and/or exceeded, as with Carl.</p> <p>"But you already scored a 64 on the Knight's Tour," I say to him, "Twice. And you got a 64 on the <i>Double</i> Knight's Tour. Why not practice some notation? Just the first ten moves. You'll play a better game."</p> <p>He reluctantly grabs a notation pad and sits at the board with</p>
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Henry.

"It *slows down* the game," he says.

"That *is* the point," I smile. Fifteen minutes pass. I look at the clock. 45 minutes left. An idea occurs. Most kids have finished at least one game. So, there's plenty of time for... "Okay," I said to Carl, who'd just trounced Henry with an unexpected, smothered mate, "I have an idea. I want *you* to do—a *simul*—in chess this means you play, uh," I look around, "you play three opponents at the same time or *simultaneously*. Are you up for it?"

He nods, uncertain. I explain the rules, three students volunteer. The boards are set. Carl opens with his usual lighthearted banter, but his opponents are serious. He finishes one round, then two, standing, smiling, trying to make conversation—but it's a no go. His opponents are focused, silent, trying to win. He plays one more round then pulls me over, away from the action.

"I don't want to do this, Miss Rachel," Carl says quietly.

"But why? You've beaten these students all term. *I'm trying to show you how good you truly are.*" He squirms, shy, uncomfortable, clears his throat.

"Oh, I'm really not that good," he whispers. "And I'm a little tired." His lower lip trembles.

"Carl—"

"I, I really don't want to play this *simul thing*, I'm sorry." He looks like he might cry.

I stand back, assess. I am pushing him, too much, too soon. An arm about his shoulders.

"That's okay, honey. Why don't you and your friends play four—way chess, have some fun, okay?"

He grins. And they do.

.....

Last class coming up. I always reward *all* students for their chess efforts. Now, I don't believe in awarding trophies just for showing up; but chess is the intellectual gymnasium—the most difficult, most challenging game on the planet. Those who choose to study it *deserve* to be rewarded—particularly at this level—to build confidence and increase their interest in the royal game.

I decide to award actual *Chess Keys*. These are variegated chess piece key chains I buy at US Chess Sales and attach them to write—on keys I buy at Home Depot. The idea is: "Chess is the *key* to achieving your now and future goals, the *key* that can unlock a better life." I ask the recipients to think of a goal—what they want to be when they grow up, something they need, a dream, a wish. What do they write? Oh, grandmaster, new puppy, girlfriend, scientist, tech hack, money, inner peace, and so on... Linking the 'concept' to a physical piece they can backpack, save, and look upon in 20 years provides continuity. And those of us connected to the royal game know that it's true. Chess *can* unlock that better life we *all* seek.

I base this group of awards on the Knight's Tour results. Carl

finished first with 64, Mindy 60, Eric 58, the rest were low fifties and forties. I have one king, one queen, one knight, and 9 pawn *Chess Keys*. Assorted colors. I arrange them handsomely, with copies of *Chess Life for Kids* magazines. When the youngsters arrive, they surround the awards table:

"Wow!"

"What're these?"

"Are those *real* keys?"

"I want that one!"

"Hey—I want *that* one—"

"Do we get the magazines too?"

"Okay," I smile, "*Everyone gets a Chess Key and an issue of Chess Life for Kids* magazine. Now, it's our last class of the semester. Let's review the Four Knights Game, play 2 games over—the—board, do *other* workshop activities, *then* I'll award the prizes."

And so, they do. Towards the end of class, we gather around the awards table; we discuss the *Chess Keys* and the idea of achieving goals, of chess unlocking the future, what their dreams and hopes are, how chess can assist them in these endeavors. The kids lean in. You can sense the anticipation:

"Hey—no breathing on the keys!"

"You can't touch the keys—"

I intervene:

"Everyone, please stand back. I want to congratulate *all of you* for electing to study chess. And I hope you will *continue* to study chess. Now, there's a *Chess Key* and an issue of *Chess Life for Kids* for each of you to take home. The results are based on our Knight's Tour competition. When I call your name, *you select* the *Chess Key* and the magazine you want." Everyone nods. "First place, Carl Karlsen with a perfect 64 on the Knight's Tour *and* the Double Knight's Tour." Applause. "Okay, dude, you first—choose your *Chess Key*!"

Carl grins, looks around, smiles at his buddy Henry, looks at me, then knits his brows and leans in toward the keys. "Oh, I think I'll take this one," he says, choosing a pawn. I stand back startled. My e1 King has chosen a pawn *Chess Key*.

But Carl, I blurt, "You won. You *won* the *King*. *Fair and square*. Take it."

He shakes his head, shy: "No, I like this one," he says. "This one's fine."

Mindy takes the Queen, Eric grabs the King, and the Knight and other pawns quickly disappear. Henry hugs Carl. Tears catch my eyes. Seven, seven, and true best friends. I look to the window, swallow, unable to speak. Moments, ah, pinnacles like these—too few and far between—are why we teach. I fumble for a chair, sit quietly while the students jump around the Media Center, twirl-



ing their *Chess Keys*, writing their goals, flipping through their magazines—the bell sounds—grabbing their hats, coats, and backpacks, filing through the double doors— “Bye, Miss Rachel!” “Really liked the class, Miss Rachel!”

Carl is among the last to leave.

“What—what did you write on your *Chess Key*?” I ask, helping him into his boots.

“Oh, I couldn’t think of anything to write,” he says, arms into his jacket.

“What do you want to be when you grow up?”

He shrugs:

“I really don’t know,” he says, searching for his mittens.

“But there must be something,” I say lightly, “Something you want, need?”

“I—did you see my hat? —I, you know, I really don’t *want* anything,” he says, “and there’s *nothing* I really need.”

I hand him his Vikings cap.

“Oh, there has to be *something* you want to do—”

He thinks for a minute:

“Play more chess?”

I tap his hat:

“Now that’s a *great* idea—that’s what you can write on your *Chess Key*.”

He nods, walks toward the door:

“Are you going *to be here* next semester, Miss Rachel?”

I look through the windows...blend and drift with the Minnesota snows.

“Yes,” I say.

Carl spins back around, steps toward me:

“Are you *sure*?” he asks.

“As sure as I *can* be,” I smile. His half—zippered backpack slides from his shoulders, nearly all its contents spill onto the floor.

“Damn!” he says, sitting on the floor, re—stuffing his backpack. “It was only half—zipped!”

I kneel to help him:

“Like playing with half a deck?” I laugh. We both laugh—pure, fresh, deep—like the Minnesota snows. And stand silent for a minute. Then: “We’re taking my grandmother to Florida over vacation, because she’s been sick,” Carl says quickly, quietly.

My heart skips. I check his pack, hug his shoulders.

“There you go—fully zipped,” I say to this remarkable young man. “I’m sure the Florida sunshine and warm ocean waters will help your grandmother feel *a lot* better.”

Carl nods then runs through the double doors:

“Thanks, Miss Rachel. See you next semester.”

“See you, Carl. Have a good vacation.” I spy something shiny on the floor. It’s his key, Carl’s *Chess Key*. I move quickly through the double doors: “Carl!” I shout, “Your *key*, you dropped your *Chess Key*—” But he is almost outside, nearly out of earshot.

“Keep it *safe* for me, Miss Rachel—my family’s waiting in the car—I’ll get it next semester—you’ll be here, right?”

All doors close to the breathless majesty of the Minnesota snows. I pocket Carl’s *Chess Key* close to my heart.

“Yes,” I whisper to the stately snows, “You’ll *always* play chess at Franklin Elementary, Carl Karlsen. And I’ll *always* be seven. Thanks for teaching me.”

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Finis



My Affiliate FB Treasure Chess photo



## *In the **Limelight**:* GM Elshan Moradiabadi

2022 Chess Journalist of the Year

Interviewed by Mark Capron

### **Please tell us a bit about yourself and your family.**

I was born and raised in Tehran, Iran. My parents are still living there. We were a regular Iranian, middle-class family. I have a sister who lives in Vienna, Austria. She is a piano teacher.



Photo by IM Eric Rosen

### **Where did your story with chess begin?**

I was 7 when I saw my dad playing with our neighbor. I figured how the rook and bishop move by just watching them playing and once my dad saw my interest in chess, he began teaching me the basics. It was a good thing that he knew the basic rules well and he taught them to me real well. When I first went to a chess club, I knew all the rules about castling, *en passant*, stalemate, and checkmate.

### **Who taught you to play?**

My dad taught me the basics. Then I went to the only chess club in the city of Tehran (Chess was banned just two years before I even began learning it.), and there I learned more about tactics. The class was a one—for—all. We had kids of all ages and levels. I began getting better and started taking part in other group lessons.

### **If chess had been banned, was it reinstated in time for you to go to club or how were you able to attend?**

Chess was banned from 1980—1988 in Iran. I began playing in the summer of 1992.

### **Please describe how chess training happens in Iran where you grew up. Were you identified early on as someone with talent for the game? Did you have ac-**

### **cess to some of the great instructors?**

With chess culture having been reinstalled into the Iranian society in the past twenty-six years, now things are the same in Iran as anywhere in the world with chess tradition. However, it was way different thirty years ago. There was almost no proper training at the time, but there was a lot of enthusiasm and passion. The good thing was training was free for those who were making it to the top-five or top-four of their age group. So, I managed to get a lot of training for which I did not have to pay. I was very lucky. Later on, the federation found some sponsors and hired a number of GMs (Alexy Kuzmin, Igor Zaitsev, Sarhan Guliev) to coach part-time and full-time. GM Sarhan Guliev was in Iran for a two-year period and I was very fortunate to take part in his classes. He is the one who elevated my knowledge to the GM level. Later on, I had a chance to work with the likes of GM Nigel Short, GM Viktor Kortschnoj, GM Vitaly Tseshkovsky, GM Pavel Tregubov, GM Andrei Sokolov, GM Konstantin Landa, and GM Alex Onischuk. So, I find myself quite lucky.

### **Viktor is one of my favorite players. Any good stories of working with him you would like to share?**

We played a training game in a French, McCutcheon variation, which was considered his pet line, and I won the game. He was pretty furious and considered my novelty idiotic! He kept me and everyone in charge of the building there until 1:30 am to prove his concept. Later analysis proved that he was right!

### **I saw you have a degree in chemical engineering. Have you worked as a chemical engineer? Or did Chess take over as your occupation?**

I never worked as an engineer, except for three months during my internship. Chess did not take over, but its income was far higher than an average engineer in Iran.

### **What do you believe you gained and what do you believe you lost or missed by emigrating from Iran to the US?**

I gained some form of freedom of choices that is the pillar of Western society, which I cherish a lot. I miss the food in Iran.

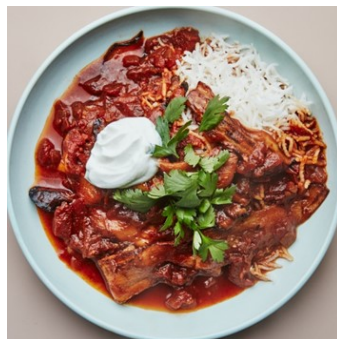
### **What are some of your favorite foods from Iran?**

All Khorests (Persian stews), and they require 'grandma' recipes. No matter how good they make them in Persian



restaurants, it is hard to get them the way you wish, so they remain my favorite and most coveted ones!

Here are a couple pictures of Kherests from the internet:



Iranian chess players (especially women) have been in the news lately choosing to leave Iran. Are there any specific recent events that are contributing to this (why now)? Any other comments you have about this?

In a despotic, theological regime where women, according to the law, inherit only half what the men inherit, it is natural to see that educated, talented women would protest and fight their way out of the suppression imposed by the Islamic government.

What is your perspective on female representation in chess?

Heavily under represented. The chess community needs to take some actions about it.

You recently won the Chess Journalist of the Year award from the CJA. What did that mean to you?

It was a very dear achievement and it is close to my heart. I would like to thank all those, especially John Hartmann of USCF, who supported me as an author who speaks and writes in English as his second language. I had never had any formal education in English prior to moving to the US,

so you can only imagine how much it meant to me.

You have been very active in the writing on various aspects of Chess recently. What inspires you to write?

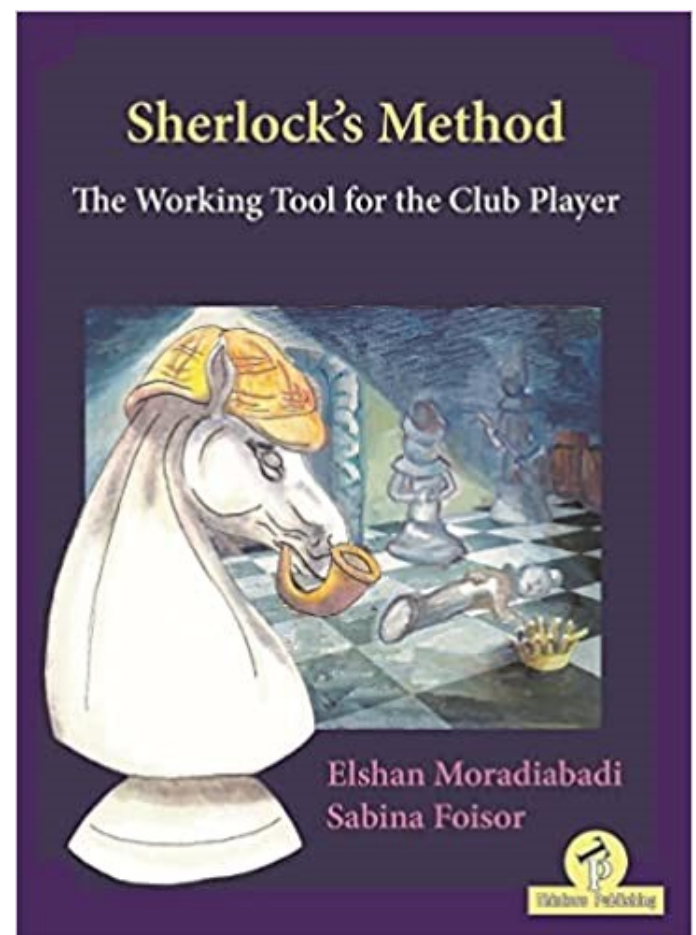
A good story and the passion to educate and share. I always craved to have a mentor, something that was absent in my life. So, the chance to take that role for others, inspires me to create content.

What inspires you in general?

In all fairness, I do not know! At times, things make me keep going!

What has been your greatest success in Writing? In writing in Chess?

Hard to be exact, but probably the book I coauthored with WGM Sabina Foisor, *Sherlock's Method*. I am also very proud of my quasi-outpost article for *Chess Life*. (June 2021)



Sherlock's Method: The Working Tool for the Club Player  
<https://a.co/d/6Jt3XDE> Amazon.com link

What has been your greatest writing challenge?

Right now, I have three articles that I really want to finish

and send out, but I keep having these writing blocks. So, the biggest challenge is when I know what I want to write, but I do not know how to write the story around the concept.

**If you read about Chess, what aspect draws you in most? History, openings, endings, biographies, tournament books, etc.?**

Just the chess side of it. I also like biographies and historic events, but mainly the chess itself.

**Who is your favorite author? Favorite book? Poetry?**

Arthur Conan Doyle, Sherlock Holmes, not much into poetry.

**What types of books do you read for fun?**

I used to read the Jack Reacher series by Lee Child, but they are getting real boring. I need to find new ones to read!

**Besides books, you do a lot of other writing for magazines. Are these mostly articles you write and submit on your own? Or are they requested by the magazines?**

I am sometimes asked for specific content and at times I write about certain things on my own and then share them with magazines and publishers to see if they are interested.

**What is your chess library like?**

Pretty light. Maybe 30–40 books.

**I know you have written for Chessbase previously. Have you moved to more electronic than paper for research?**

That is a sad yes. People do not like paper that much anymore.

**Also, is there a website we can link here for anyone who wants to check out your teaching?**

I just recently launched my own website and I hope to contribute to chess literature via it. It is at this address:

<https://gmelshan.com/>

**Congratulations, the website looks very inviting and well done.**

Thank you, I intend to have more content there at some point. I hope to turn it into a reliable, educational source.

**I also saw you received your MBA. Has this helped you with the business side of Chess?**

I would say I am better at managing my one-on-one interactions.

**Do you have a favorite opening? Ending?**

Not really, chess is beautiful as a whole!

**I love quotes as can be seen by the fillers I put in *The Chess Journalist*. Do you have a favorite quote?**

I have one of my own: Chess is an equalizer.

**What are some key lessons from chess that you have applied to your life outside the game?**

One word: Patience!

**What's the best thing about Chess?**

It is absurd, yet it is beautiful and a helpful tool.

**What will your chess legacy be?**

I do not know. I do not think about it!

**Lastly, I would be amiss, if I didn't ask about the "man with the hat". Any insight you would like to provide?**

I look good with a hat! However, I have given up wearing fedoras altogether!

**In the March 2023 issue of *Chess Life* there were pictures from the K–12 Grade Championships on page 32. One of the young players is wearing a fedora. Maybe you started a trend?**

I don't think so. However, I would take the credit for it anytime! :)

**Thank you for agreeing to this interview. It has been fun to get to know you a bit better. Any final parting words for our audience?**

Thank you for the opportunity!



Photo by IM Eric Rosen



## Through the Mirror of Chess: A Cultural Exploration

A four part docuseries by **Howard Burton**

Reviewed by Mark Capron

[Through the Mirror of Chess: A Cultural Exploration](#) is a set of short film documentaries by Howard Burton from the Ideas Roadshow initiative. From their website: "Ideas Roadshow is an award-winning multimedia initiative dedicated to harnessing the benefits of modern technology to explore ideas across the arts and sciences through thoughtful and seriously-entertaining documentary films, books and podcasts."

Last issue of *The Chess Journalist* we reviewed the thought provoking and humorous book *Chessays: Travels Through the World of Chess* also by Howard Burton. Expectedly, many of the ideas and topics presented in the book also appear in the films. Which came first would be trying to solve the chicken and egg paradox, so we will say that they just complement each other like chicken and waffles. Each substantial on its own, but together they make something unique.

Aptly the first part is entitled, *Uniqueness* (57:55)

It features theories, myths and legends on the origin of the game of chess.

Games have been around as far back as we can see in the historical records. But why do we play games? Two possible answers postulated were for community reasons (Plato) and individualist interpretations or biological reasons (Aristotle). This has been a debate going back and forth for 2500 years.

Friedrich Schiller, a German poet, playwright, and philosopher said "Man only plays when he is in the fullest sense of the word a human being; and he is only fully a human being when he plays."

Later, in his ground-breaking book, *Homo Ludens: A Study of the Play-Element in Culture*, Johan Huizinga wrote, "For many years the conviction has grown upon me that civilization arises and unfolds in and as play." Basically, Culture comes from game play. Everything starts with the instinct to play. See nature, for example. Play is observed everywhere from elephants, to great apes, to dogs, etc. In game theory, chess equals a game with fixed rules thus making it the ideal game to attempt to explain this in humans.

Eventually, in 1913 HJR Murray's book, *A History of Chess*, came out. It was, and still is, the most comprehensive and scholarly work on the history of chess.

What makes chess, chess? Chess features the nuance that each piece's value changes throughout the game, depending upon its position on the board and the specific situation. The film shows several game fragments from some of the most famous games ever played using a cool graphic, gold and silver pieced chess board. Complex coordination of the pieces in ingenious and artful ways gives chess its beauty.

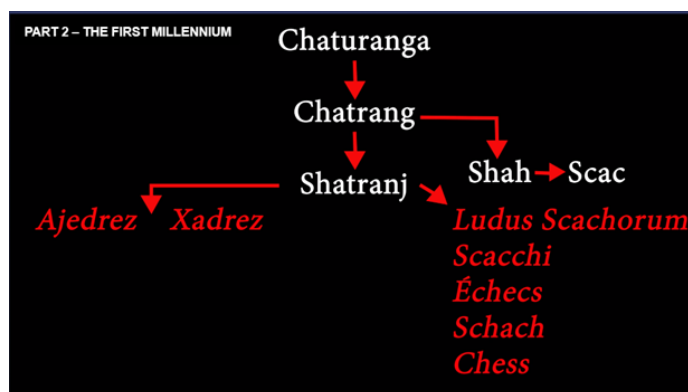
There was a short section on "Hollywood Chess" and why it irritates most chess players. Think black-square on the right. Think queen on the wrong color. Even with these atrocious errors, chess seems to show up in more and more films.

Another short section introduced variations of chess from around the world such as "Go," "Shogi," and "Xiangqi" among others. Burton notes that even in those variations the basic concept is the same, use coordination of the pieces to deliver "checkmate".

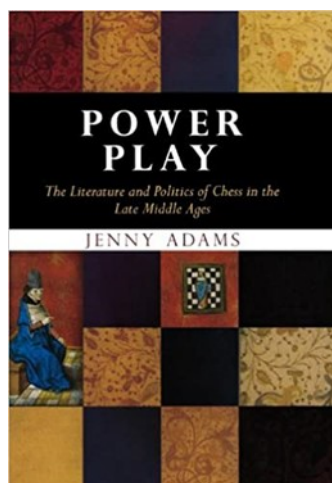
The pictures and photos in the film are amazing and worth getting the film just to see all of them. Getting all the permissions to use them must have been quite a task in and of itself. The sound quality of the narrator (Burton) was excellent. The background music was tasteful and clear. Even the sound of pieces being moved on the board was artful.

Second part: *The First Millennium* (54:04)

The second part starts out with Chaturanga in India and moves to Chatrang in Persia. Here it looks at the history of chess through the writings, art, and chess pieces of the times. Burton discusses some of the strategy of Chatrang and the depth of calculation needed even back in the day. Every noble person was expected to know how to play. The game was used to teach war to young soldiers. Chess then moved into Europe where it evolved into the game we all know. An example of the tasteful graphics can be seen below that shows the evolution of chess.



Winding up part two, there was a fairly long interview with Jenny Adams, Professor of English, University of Massachusetts, Amherst. She wrote the book "Power Play: Literature of Politics and Chess in the Late Middle Ages"



She discusses chess as a state. Chess was shorthand to describe the coming together of power that was no longer centrally organized. In other words, diffuse power. More attention was paid to the other pieces rather than just the king.

Part 3: *Art, Science, Sport* (58:11)

I enjoyed part three the most. It begins at the start of the 15<sup>th</sup> century. Sometime around here the chess moves were modified

so that the game was faster. For example, the Queen went from moving one diagonal square move to moving any direction, any number of squares. During this time multiple chess variations were coalescing into one far reaching version. Burton explains the name of “Caissa” originated from a game of chess between Apollo and Mercury.

Although chess was well respected, several statements were made that inferred you had to spend a lot of time to be really good at chess. However, you should have used that time for something more valuable like a natural science.

During the Enlightenment Period, people started to wonder where chess came from and its history. Sir Thomas Hyde did the first examination of the old game (before the “faster” moves showed up).

The concept that chess is part art, part science and part sport arose. I found it funny Burton described Philidor as having public “Rock Star Status” due to his ability to play blindfolded. Especially due to Philidor’s own musical career and the fact we don’t use the phrases “you’re a Classical Music Star” or “you’re a Jazz Star” to describe someone’s “great job done.”

The sport aspect—winning is everything—applied to the occasion when Denis Diderot, a much weaker player, wanted to play Jean—Jacques Rousseau. Diderot asked to play odds with Rousseau, but Rousseau said, “Does it pain you so much to lose?” “Not at all, but I could defend myself better and you would enjoy the game more.” responded Diderot. “That may be, but I’d prefer to leave things as they are.” stated Rousseau.

Diderot, the unperturbed rationalist, suggested a way to improve the experience of the game, whose only purpose, in his eyes, was mental stimulation. Rousseau, emotionally invested hyper-competitor, was unwilling to do anything to jeopardize his chances of winning.

The question in the 18<sup>th</sup> century became what did chess provide to science? A couple mathematical problems such as the knight’s tour and the eight queen problem still exist today.

The next section was on the Turk and the beginnings and foreshadowing of the Kasparov Deep Blue match. The Turk lasted several decades under a few owners before the ruse was identified. Cogs and springs could not think was the scientific sentiment. However, the father of computer science, Englishman Charles Babbage, was not dismayed after losing to the Turk and thought that it was possible to develop a machine that could “think” (even though he believed the Turk to be a hoax).

In the era of romanticism, artistic problems arose for purely aesthetic rather than scientific reasons.

The question arose, are the great musicians, mathematicians, and chess players using the same cognitive abilities and how do those underlying mechanisms work? Can anyone, given proper training, do these things? A paper on linguistics appeared that referred to chess multiple times.

Language changes depending on many factors and how it is meant to be said. As described earlier chess piece values change with every move. The only real difference between Chess and Language being that in chess, everything is done intentionally, whereas in linguistics it is random and spontaneous.

PART 3 – ART, SCIENCE, SPORT		
	Language	Chess
External	Transmission from one culture to another	Transmission from Persia to Europe
Internal	Systematic structure and grammar	Rules of the game

ous.

Part 4: *Contemporary Impact* (1:10:18)

Burton states that the most important concept of how chess and culture interact is internationalism. Chess can be found everywhere. Burton goes on to say “This Universality, as we shall soon see, is linked to a wide range of powerful and inspiring chess related applications, from schools to prisons, to social integration, and personal empowerment. But it also provides us with a unique opportunity to better understand key aspects of our particular beliefs and values through a careful observation of this one, globally practiced activity...chess.”

There is a section on the computer’s impact to chess and in turn how that affects us. Again this is where game theory can really be explored via chess.

Next came a large section on gender in chess. Here it was most obvious that the film and the book overlapped.

There was a good portion about the learning process where chess was used as the tool. For example, in the Bangladesh study, some young students were taught chess and others were not. The kids who learned chess took more risk later in life. It is believed that chess teaches you to lose and better prepares you for life. Most lessons in elementary and high school give positive feedback and celebrate continued success. But then University hits, and it’s hard and students fail spectacularly and don’t know why. They never learned how to lose or plan.

Another example of chess contributing to culture is in prison chess. Chess gives people a way to change their thought process. Thinking multiple moves ahead as opposed to thinking minute to minute to minute is a new way for many of these folk. If they think ahead, they might realize other consequences could happen, and this may enable them to choose differently.

Chess gives people a common language and can give them an identity. Chess is a universal language due to its internationalism. For example, in underdeveloped countries chess has the power to give people an identity that isn’t poverty. Doesn’t matter what you look like or where you’re from, it’s about what you have the ability to do, an intellectual identity. “Talent is universal; opportunity is not.” –Tunde Onakoya

I enjoyed the films. I especially enjoyed all the art and photos shown. Burton, the narrator, has a pleasant voice and is engaging. I have only covered a very small part of the films and there is so much more to see and hear. I agree with the statement from the Ideas Roadshow group that the films were “thoughtful and seriously—entertaining documentaries.” I recommend the films.

## ENDGAME DEEP DIVE

By FM Grayson Rorrer

While it can't quite be said that the endgame was ever my favorite stage of the game, I have never had the same disdain for it that some other youngsters might feel. In the past it was a rarity for one of my games to reach this final, decisive phase, and therefore I was never able to form a clear opinion one way or the other. Recently, having gained experience and maturity as a player—and also coming up against more and more, strong opponents who refuse to buckle under middle game pressure—I have found myself entering an unexpectedly large amount of difficult, complicated endgames that have been intriguing both to play and analyze.

Endgames have massive instructional value and are, in my view, an area underappreciated by many chess players. In this primarily scientific phase of the game, exceptionally deep and accurate calculation is more possible and often required for success. The inevitable search for truth, both at the board and in postmortem analysis, has proven to be a quite worthy pursuit that I feel has deepened my understanding of the game of chess considerably.

With this in mind, I felt compelled to share the very particular endgame that was reached in my 7th-round game of the 2022 Charlotte Chess Center Fall IM Norm Invitational. In hindsight it can be observed that the precise pawn structure and material configuration has only occurred in high level practice once before, according to Chessbase's similar endgames/similar structures search in their 2020 Mega Database (I use version 14 of the program). While surely not perfect, after sorting through the examples it spit out, I consider the search function to be a very useful tool for research. It certainly saved me a significant amount of time and effort!

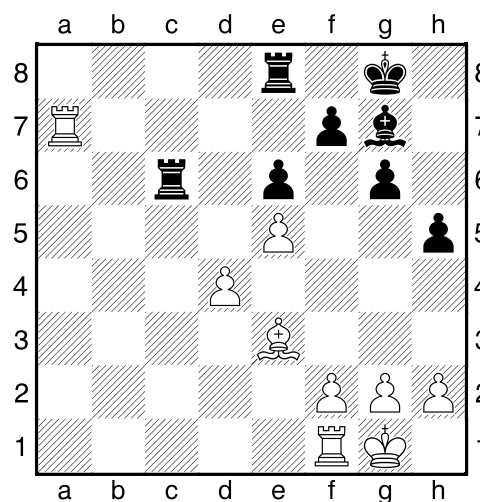
Before diving into the action, allow me to first give a little context regarding the tournament situation. I had started off with a spectacular 3.5/4, including a stretch of three straight victories which already clinched the FIDE Master title. There was a whole tournament ahead, though, and a precious norm to fight for, and understandably no room for complacency! After the quick start I had slowed down a bit with two draws and came into this game hungry for a win against one of the few remaining competitors in my section who was also in contention for an IM Norm.

Experimenting with the Grünfeld for the first time in my career in such a critical game was, in hindsight, a poor judgement call. After getting through the initial surprise, my opponent chose one of the many challenging variations... and, perhaps most importantly, one of the very few I had not refreshed my knowledge of before the event. It soon showed, as I misplayed the opening quite badly, and was arguably lucky to escape the middle game alive.

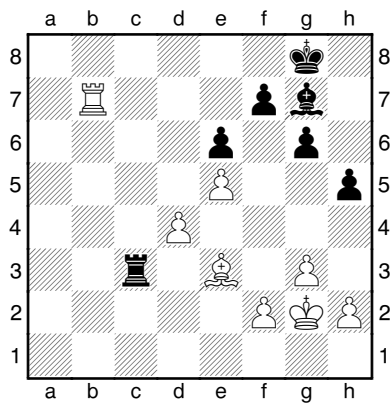
Missed chances aside, it was time for the endgame—the proverbial moment of truth. It would have been easy to fall under a cloud of despair after the unfavorable conclusion of both the opening and middle game, resulting in a one-sided game where I could

only hope to draw after a long, grim defense. It has never been in my nature to give up the fight prematurely, though, and this battle carried extra significance in that a loss would extinguish any remaining chances I had for an IM Norm. I resolved to put up the best defensive line of my capabilities, realizing that, regardless of the objective evaluation of the position, extended resistance was still possible.

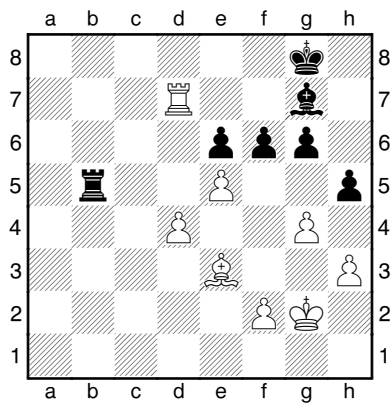
**Putnam, Liam (2161) — Rorrer, Grayson (2230) [D85]**  
CCC Fall IM Norm Invitational (7), 21.11.2022  
[GR]



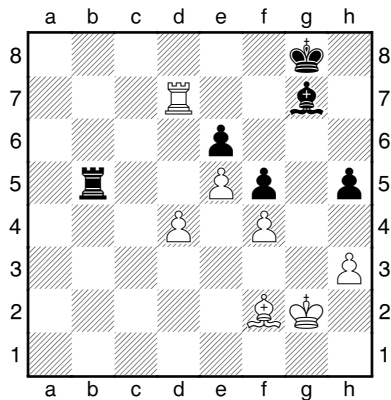
With the dust that rose from the middle game settled, it is the perfect time to provide a general summary of the ensuing position. From White's point of view he has plenty of reason to be optimistic, with a clear extra pawn and same color bishops. The torture will no doubt continue for as long as he wishes. Unfortunately, I was obliged to take the black pieces. I knew I was in for a long, miserable defense, but also recognized a few key characteristics that could make it difficult for White to eke out a win. The remaining pawns are all on the same side of the board, which greatly benefits the defender in most cases. My last move (...h5) also makes it much more difficult for White to advance on the kingside without leading to further exchanges, which should, once again, favor the defender. I concluded that, though White certainly has a permanent advantage, with stubborn defense I would be able to create difficult problems for him to solve, and a successful conversion was far from guaranteed. Now it is possible to conclude that Liam had an objectively winning position, but even so, I was going to make him fight hard for the full point. **24. ♖b1 ♜ec8!** The tactical point that my position was hinging on, since if White had managed to install both "pigs" on the 7th rank the game would have been as good as done. **25. g3 25. ♖bb7?? ♜c1+** would be a tragic finish. **25... ♖8c7 26. ♖b8+ ♜h7 27. ♖bb7** My two rooks could be pesky had White tried to turn down this trade, and the method used also allows him to gain a tempo, for what it's worth. **27... ♖x b7 28. ♖x b7 ♜g8 29. ♜g2 ♖c3**



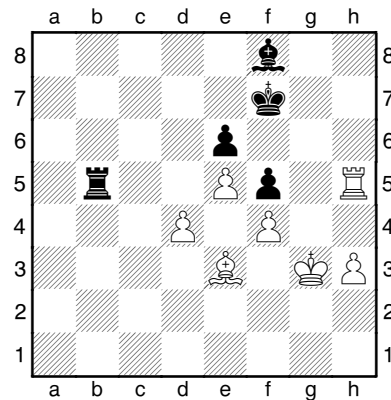
From now on, in essence, every move from Black is of equivalent value until he has potential threats to counter, and it is up to White to find a way to break through. 30. d7 Bb3 31. h3 No harm can come from making a small improvement. 31... a3 A natural waiting move. The computer sees 31... b5 as best, though it is clear to me that White would be able to break through anyway with 32. g4. The the engine's idea is 32... f6?, but a human can see that such a tenuous fortress will be unlikely to hold for long.



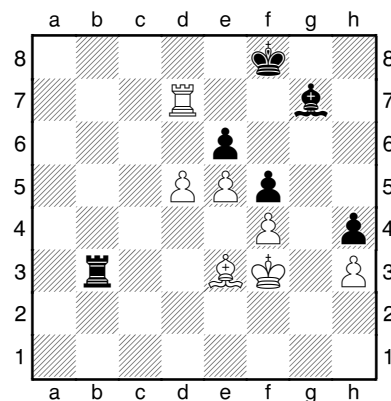
33. f4 f5 The best attempt to keep the position closed. (33... h4? is no better, as the exchange only helps White open up the position further. 34. h4 g4 f5 35. e7 Bb6 36. d5! A concrete resource that speeds things up, though as we will see later White would also wind up on top with slow play. 36... b2+ 37. f3 exd5 38. g5 f8 39. d7+— After winning the d5 pawn back it will only be a matter of fairly simple technique.) 34. g4 h5 g4 h5 35. f2!



An important move, introducing the idea of g3 h4 without allowing any pins on the third rank. 35... f8!? Otherwise the above plan would decide the outcome. As it is, Black prevents it for the moment, and thus other means of making progress must be found. (In contrasting with 36. g3 below, 35... a5? is ineffective thanks to 36. g3 h6 37. h4 f4 38. xh5 a3?! 39. g6!+— coming with a threat of mate!) 36. f3! Switching to the other side! (36. g3? would present White with serious difficulties in converting his edge to a win, since after 36... h6! 37. h4? fails to keep the pressure up. 37... x4 38. xh5 b3! 39. h4 g3!=, and thanks to sudden counter play with the f pawn Black saves the day.; 36. g3 h6 37. e3 would be a better try, reverting to the above plan, but Black can try to throw up a more water-resistant fortress with 37... e8! 38. h7 f8 39. xh5 f7±, when White has no immediate breakthrough, and it is unclear to me if he will be able to win, despite the two extra pawns.

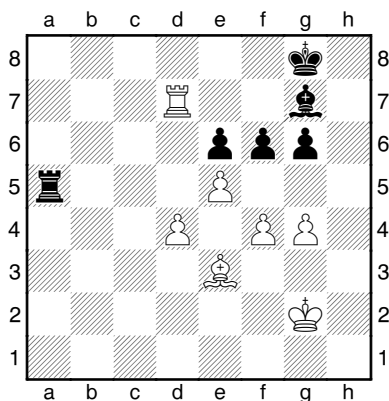


A remarkable position! One key point is that 40. f3 Bb3 41. h4? a3! comes with a much more significant effect than after 36... h6 below. 42. e2 a2+ 43. d3 a3+ 44. d2 b4+! 45. e2 a2+ 46. d3 a3+ 47. c4 and, with the rook keeping sufficient distance, there is time for 47... e1!=. This version of the end-game certainly deserves more attention, but suffice it to say that this sort of line gives you an idea of the problems White has in conversion.) 36... b3+ allowing the decisive break, but there was nothing else. (36... h6 37. h7 g7 38. xh5 f7 isn't working as well as before, since White's pieces are much better positioned for the work to come. 39. h4 f8 40. e3 Bb3 41. e2+— The king enters the battle, which will soon decide the outcome.) 37. e3 h4! Once again, it is hard to make a better suggestion. (37... b5 38. h4! would fix White's weakness on h5, after which the breakthrough is only a matter of time. 38... a5 39. e2 b5 40. d3+—) 38. d5!

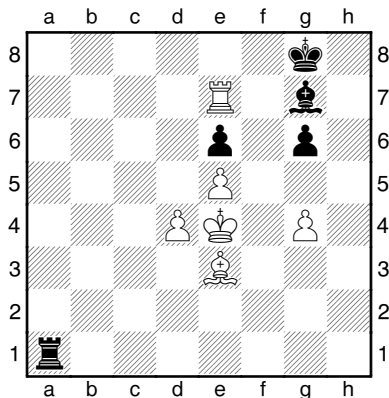




Just in the nick of time! 38...exd5 39.♖xd5 ♕f7 40.♗d7+ ♕g6 41.♗d6+ ♕h7 42.♕e2+- White will eventually shepherd his passed e—pawn to victory, though I submit that the process won't be automatic. Still, I see no reason that Black should be able to survive its march. **32.♗g5!?** Unnecessary. 32.g4! was already very strong. 32...h×g4 33.h×g4 ♖d3 34.♗g5+- See the main line of 36.g4. In essence we have reached the same type of position, where White convincingly demonstrated dominance. **32...♖d3** Continuing to wait, but in doing so I missed a second chance to return to the previous idea in a somewhat superior form. 32...♖a4! would more or less force White to return the bishop with 33.♗e3 (I see no other plan that makes any headway), after which 33...♖a5 seems to be a much better version of 31.. ♖b5 above. With the rook better placed on the a—file, Black is able to pose many more challenges after the natural 34.g4—how else does White make progress? —34...f6 35.f4 h×g4 36.h×g4. The first player should still be able to convert such a huge advantage, but this time the margin is less comfortable. Several different plans can be considered.

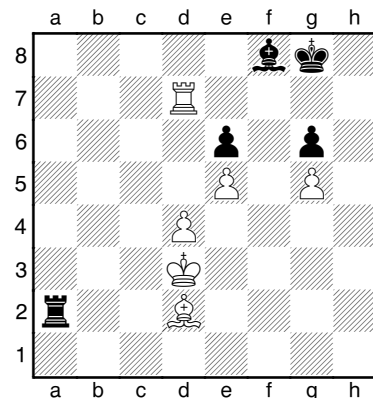


First of all, the straightforward 36...f5!?. Without a direct win, White will have to achieve the key central break, after which the passivity of Black's position will soon tell. 37.g5 ♗f8!? Activating the bishop gives Black more hope than waiting passively. Even so, after 38.♕f3 ♗a3 39.♕e2 ♕f8 40.♗d3+- Black is helpless to stop White from achieving the d5 break in the long (or short) run; 32...♖a4 33.♗e3 ♖a5 34.g4 f6 35.f4 h×g4 36.h×g4 Next up is the natural 36...f×e5, reducing the pawn count by one. Despite this fact, the position becomes a bit too open and White has plenty of space in which to bring his king into the battle. 37.f×e5 ♖a4 38.♕f3 ♖a3 39.♕e4 ♖a1 40.♗e7!

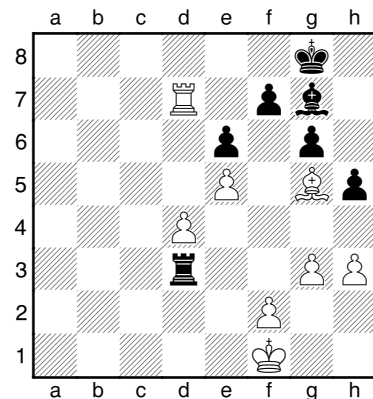


Very clinical. By attacking Black's main weakness, White stops any activity the rook may have been considering on a1. 40...♖a6 41.♗g5+- The position will soon open up further, with the bishop landing on f6. Black will not survive; 32...♖a4 33.♗e3 ♖a5 34.g4 f6

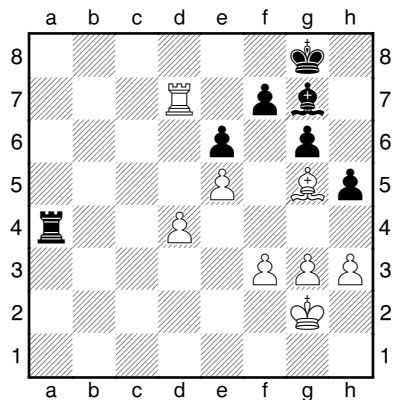
35.f4 h×g4 36.h×g4 Finally, having dispensed with the previous two structural changes, the question becomes—how does White make progress if Black stands still? 36...♕f8 is one such continuation, but it may be a bit premature. 37.♕f3 ♖a3 38.g5! f×g5 39.f×g5 ♕g8 40.♕e4 ♗f8 41.♗d2 ♖a2 42.♗d3+-



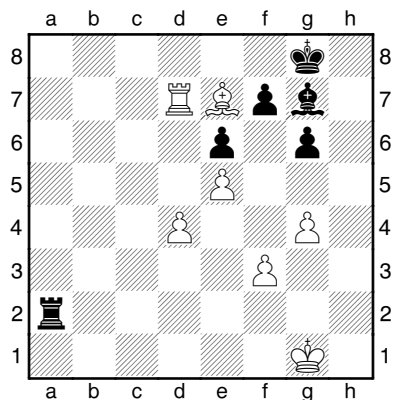
Black has been entirely deprived of counter play and will be faced either with a decisive d5 break or the invasion of White's king.; 32...♖a4 33.♗e3 ♖a5 34.g4 f6 35.f4 h×g4 36.h×g4 As a last ditch effort, Black can also try waiting with the rook. 36...♖a3!? 37.♕f2! This time the king needs to stay out of any third rank pins. With d5 a decisive threat, Black has no alternative other than to return with the rook. 37...♖a5 38.♕f3+- Black will soon be forced to return to one of the previously examined structures. The outcome is clear. Having worked our way through these winding paths, I am more or less happy with the method of defense I chose in the game. **33.♕f1!?** A small step that can't do any harm in the worst case, but there was a simpler way forward.



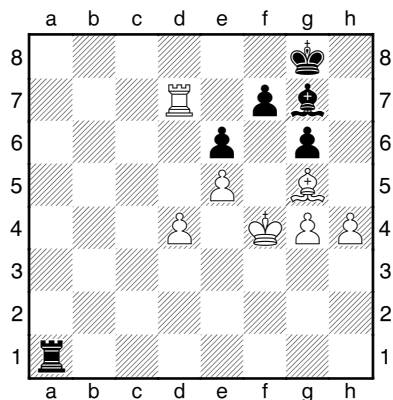
33.g4! would soon lead us back to 36.g4 below. **33...♗d1+?** Liam proved quite nicely that my rook tour did absolutely nothing, and in fact helped White improve his position. 33...♗×e5?? 34.♗d8+- was an important point.; 33...♖a3!? would have been more cautious—Black should keep waiting, after which White would need to find a plan. 34.♕g2 Should the king exit via e2 he will be hit with a barrage of checks. 34...♖a4! An important point—White is prevented from playing g4 for the time being. I would like to extend an invitation for you, the reader, to delve into this position in greater depth. My efforts have been in vain, as far as finding a clear winning plan for White. 35.f3!? A very good try.



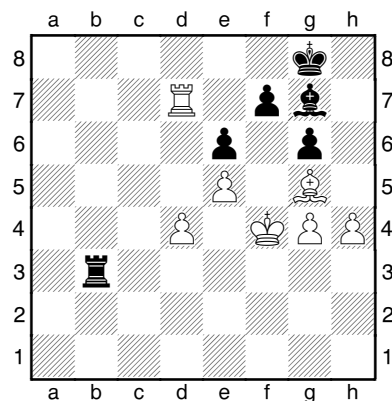
(35.g4?? hxg4 36.hxg4 Qxe5!= is Black's main point.; 35.Qf3 would lead to play similar to 35.f3 below. 35...Ba3+ 36.Qf4 Ba2 37.f3 Bh2 38.h4 Ba2 39.g4 hxg4 40.fxg4 Ba1 with a direct transposition; 35.Qe3! is surprisingly best, admitting the mistake and returning to the correct plan of achieving g3–g4 directly. It takes a strong minded individual to make such a concession, though!) 35...Ba2+ 36.Qg1 Ba1+ Black should keep checking and force the king to come out. This way the second player is able to force a more favorable structure. (36...Be2?! It is also important to consider the consequences of Black keeping the White king cut off. It seems to be less challenging, surprisingly enough! 37.g4 hxg4 38.hxg4 Ba2 39.Qe7!



An important nuance! White threatens to check on d8, play g5 and Qf6, achieving similar dominance to the main line. 39...Ba8 Sadly, forced. 40.Qg2 Bc8 41.Qg3 Ba8 42.Qf4 Bc8 43.Qf6+ Black has been subjected to utter passivity, and an eventual f4–f5 will decide the issue.) 37.Qf2 Ba2+ 38.Qe3 Bh2! Another important nuance, as this time Black successfully forces the h–pawn to move ahead. 39.h4 Ba2 40.g4 hxg4 41.fxg4 Ba3+ 42.Qf4 Ba1

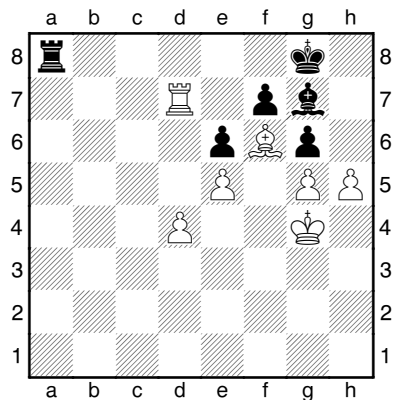


We have reached a nearly identical endgame to 35.h4 below, on which I have not been able to reach a clear verdict. The job is yours to carry out! 34.Qe2 Bh1 35.Qf3! Nicely executed. 35.h4?! could also be played, though I felt White would lose some flexibility. As will soon be seen, White could follow a plan given later on in the main game, but with less clear consequences. Practically I see my opponent's choice in the game as by far the best—by retaining flexibility White can decide for himself whether to change the pawn structure with h4 or g4 at once. Later on, we will see that only the latter leads to a clear win for White, thus justifying his choice further. 35...Ba1 36.f3 Ba3 37.Qf2 Bh3 38.g4 hxg4 39.fxg4 Bb2+ 40.Qe3 Bb3+ 41.Qf4

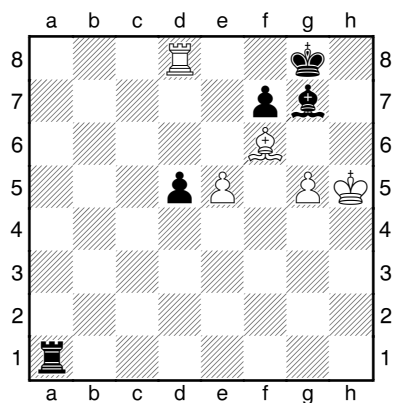


41...Bb2? I make this the main line because I am enchanted by the stunning variations that follow, and since it shows quite clearly the difference between the two squares. (41...Bb1! is an important nuance that allows Black to put up a great deal of resistance still, and probably what I would have played. I haven't been able to find any way for White to make progress, despite Stockfish telling me the position is "+3.66." A computer tip—in endgames, at least, if the engine's evaluation is exactly the same in three or four different lines, regardless of how high, it's a strong signal that the position could be unbreakable. A good exercise for the reader would be to try and find a winning plan for White, an aim in which I have been unable to succeed. Far from a simple task, particularly considering Stockfish 15, my engine of choice, is quite useless in such positions. I'm not sure about others, but I suspect the situation is much the same. Feel free to contact me if you feel you have managed to solve this problem, I am very interested!) 42.Qf6 Finally, after a bit of maneuvering, White's advantage is clear. With the pawn structure as it is, the simplest path to victory is playing on the kingside—g5, Qg4, h5, etc. 42...Bb8 (42...Bf2+, the move that would have saved Black after 41...Bb1 above isn't as effective here. 43.Qe3 Now the rook is under attack, and White keeps his winning domination. 43...Bf1 44.g5 Bb1 45.Qf4 Bb8 46.Qg4+, and we will soon be back to the main line.) 43.g5 Bc8 44.Qg4 Ba8 45.h5

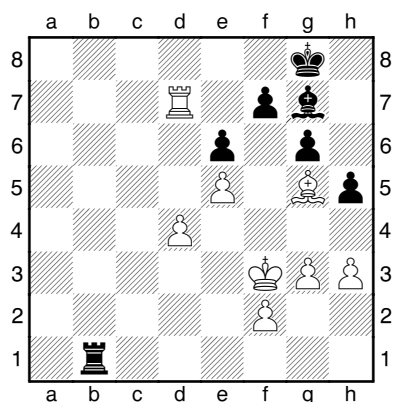
Endings of one rook and pawns are the most common sort of endings arising on the chess board. Yet though they do occur so often, few have mastered them thoroughly. They are often of a very difficult nature, and sometimes while apparently very simple they are in reality extremely intricate. ~ Jose Capablanca



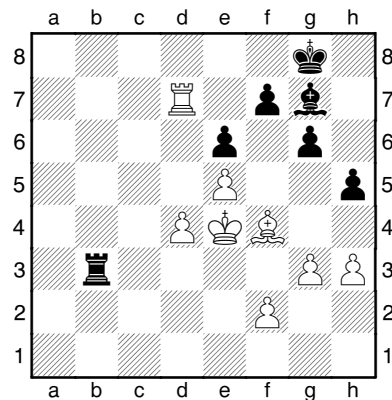
Black is defenseless. An example – 45...g×h5+ 46.♖×h5 ♜a1!? A last effort, but it falls short. 47.d5! e×d5 48.♞d8+! It was important to not fall for the incorrect move order.



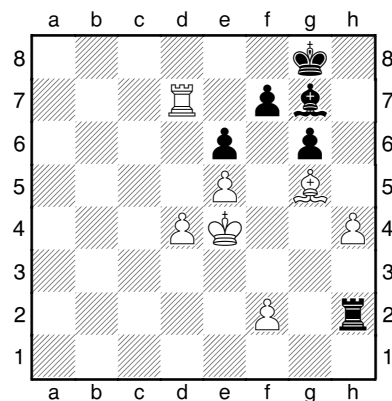
(48.e6?? ♜xf6! 49.exf7+ ♜f8=) 48...♞h7 49.e6 ♞h1+ 50.♞g4 f×e6 51.♞d7+– An analysis in the style of the old Soviet masters, who utilized adjournments to the fullest – though Black's improvement back on move 41 puts a tiny dent in that picture. White placed his pieces in precisely the right spots, and broke through at just the right time, but needless to say, it is far from simple to work out such a variation at the board! 35...♞b1 There was nothing better.



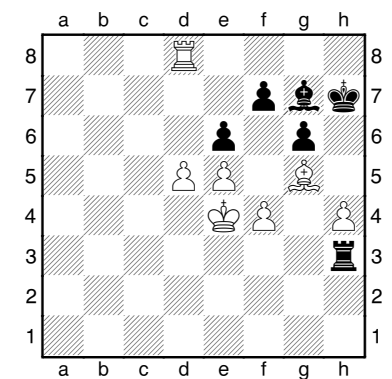
35...♞xh3?? 36.♞g2+– It was time to advance with 36.g4!. I can understand his continued reluctance to exchange pawns, but with White having improved his position to the maximum there was no other way forward. 36.♜f4? was played in the game. A big step in the wrong direction, and more importantly giving me a chance to set a small trap of my own. 36...♞b3+ 37.♞e4? A serious technical mistake, allowing me to reduce the number of pawns. This should always favor the defending side.



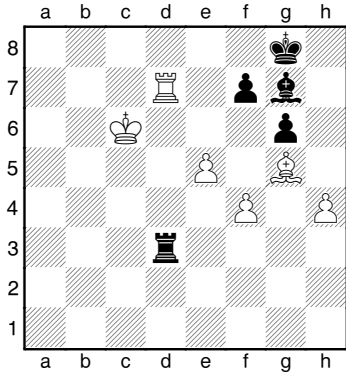
(37.♞g2 was needed, returning to the previous plan, though having lost some time. 37...♞b4 38.♜g5 ♞a4 This is the same position as after 33...♞a3 above.) 37...h4! The trick I was playing for all along! 38.g×h4 If not for White's unfortunate king position, he could attempt to play for the win. For instance, if the monarch was on g1 all would be in working order. (Keeping the kingside structure connected with 38.♜e3!? was the first thought that came to my mind, but for concrete reasons Black is able to liquidate enough to draw. 38...h×g3 39.f×g3 f5+! 40.exf6 ♜xf6±. White will try, but I find further progress unlikely to be made.) 38...♞xh3 39.♜g5 ♞h2



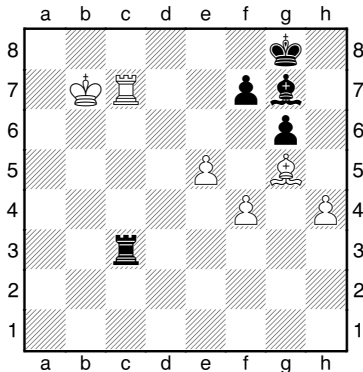
The situation has changed drastically over the past few moves. In allowing a pair of pawns to come off the board, it is becoming clear that White very well might not have enough material to win the game. That was my feeling at the board, at least. (There was a trick based off the h4 pawn's vulnerability combined with a fork after 39...♜h6!?, but it does very little. After 40.♜e7± the situation remains the same—White needs to make progress somehow but seems unable to do so without executing the d4–d5 break at some point.) 40.f4 ♞h3 41.♞d8+ ♞h7 42.♞d7 ♞g8 43.♞d8+ ♞h7 44.d5



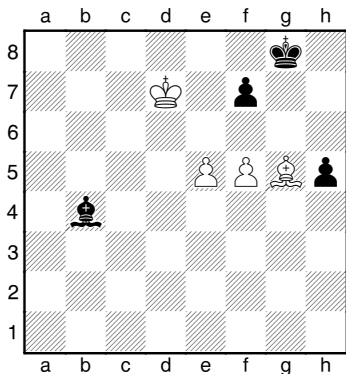
There wasn't anything else, and yet, another pair of pawns comes off... 44...exd5+ 45.♞xd5 ♞h1 46.♞d7 ♞g8 47.♞b7 ♞d1 48.♞e7 ♞e1+ 49.♞d5 ♞d1+ 50.♞c6 ♞d4 51.♞b7 ♞d3 52.♞c7 ♞h7 (The computer suggests the unnatural 52...f6!? 53.exf6 ♞f8, which no human would ever play. At least optically, White's chances have clearly improved.) 53.♞b8 ♞g8 54.♞c7 He repeated quite often in this endgame to gain time and fortify himself for further winning attempts, but I am far from certain such maneuvers are worth undergoing. Indeed, he spent a good 30-seconds or so on each occasion, double checking with his scoresheet that a third repetition would not occur. 54...♞h7 55.♞c6 ♞g8 56.♞d7



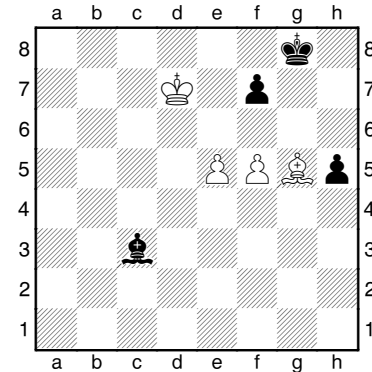
Finally making way for the king to enter on the kingside after a lengthy period of maneuvering. 56...♞c3+! The simplest. He has to give me a tempo to get my bishop out, after which the ensuing endgame should, in theory, be an easier draw. 57.♞d6 ♞f8+ 58.♞d5 ♞d3+ 59.♞c6 ♞c3+ (59...♞xd7 60.♞xd7 ♞c5 could have been played immediately. 61.h5 g×h5 62.f5 ♞h7!?, and Black is holding, as in the game.) 60.♞b7 ♞g7 61.♞c7



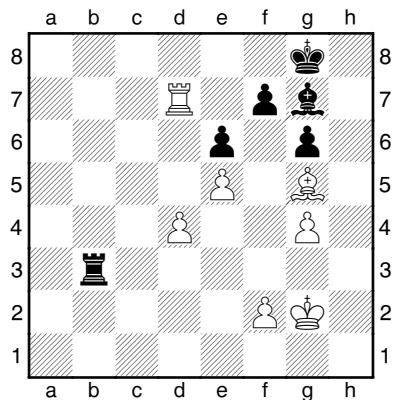
61...♞xc7+! A tough decision to make, but I came to the conclusion that the ensuing bishop endgame is drawn. 62.♞xc7 ♞f8 63.♞d7 ♞b4 64.h5 White has no way to make any use out of his extra pawn, if not for such a breakthrough. 64...g×h5 65.f5



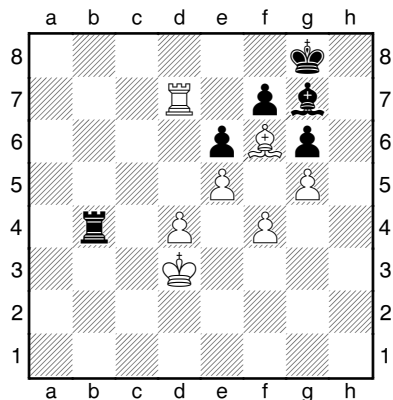
The critical moment of the game. I have defended quite well for forty moves straight, but finally lost my nerve... 65...♞c3?? Not like this...



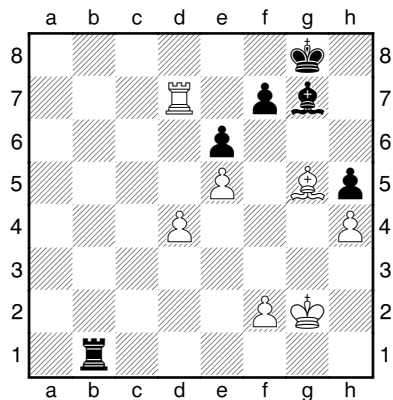
(It was imperative to remove the king from the back rank with 65...♞h7!, after which the pawn on h4 will soon be allowed to prove its worth. 66.e6 f×e6 67.f×e6 ♞g7! In a theoretical sense, the bishop endgame under examination is a win for White—without the h4 pawn, of course—unless Black's king can make it to d5. Thus, setting up shop passively would not do the trick. Here, however, Black is very lucky to still have the h-pawn, thus rendering White's only winning try harmless. 68.♞e7 ♞xe7 69.♞xe7 h4= Both sides queen in unison, and the game is drawn.) 66.♞f4?? What I was expecting, and now the position is indeed a draw. (The immediate breakthrough with 66.e6! would see White queen with check, since I made the mistake of leaving my king on the back rank. 66...f×e6 67.f×e6 ♞b4 68.♞e7! ♞c3 69.♞d6 ♞f6 70.♞c7! h4 71.♞d8+— White is just in time.) 66...h4 Finally, blessedly even, the game is a simple draw. Black's h-pawn is too far down the board for White to make any further attempts. 67.f6 (67.e6 f×e6 68.f×e6 ♞f6!)= 67...h3 68.♞e8 Threatening e5-e6, and forcing 68...♞b4!, the final only move. 69.♞g3 ♞a3 70.♞h2 ♞b4 71.♞f4 Gaining time, but eventually he had to come to terms with the fact that the position holds no further winning tries. 71...♞a3 72.♞g3 And we agreed on a draw. A close fight that I was very fortunate to hold. I needed to win both of my last two games to secure an IM Norm, which I succeeded in doing, despite overcoming some rocky moments in the process. Interestingly enough, though no IM Norms were recorded in either of the two other sections being played concurrently, my opponent in this game and Harshid Kunka also managed to reach the necessary 7/9 score in my group. Three norms scored at such an astronomically high score in one section is quite remarkable! In any event, it is time to come back to the main line and see how Liam could have brought the game to its worthy conclusion. 36...♞b3+ 37.♞g2 ♞b1! White's task is certainly made more difficult now, compared to the relatively docile capture on g4 below. After 37...h×g4?! 38.h×g4 White's plan is gradual, and very difficult to stop – f2-f3, ♞g3-f4 and, at just the right moment, ♞f6, with domination.



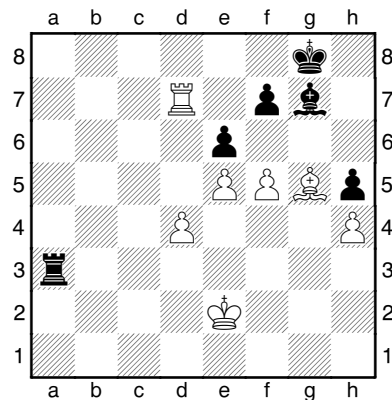
38...b4 39.f3 b3 40.g3 d3 41.f4 b3 42.f6 Black is utterly paralyzed, and the win is close at hand. 42...b2 43.g5! Not a simple change of structure to decide upon, but it's necessary. 43...b4 With an additional defender of the bishop, White was threatening d4-d5. (43...b3? 44.d5 exd5 45.d8+ h7 46.e6+— The same trick as before.) 44.e4 a4 (Allowing d5 immediately with 44...b8 was no better. 45.d5 exd5+ 46.fxd5+— White's king penetrates with decisive effect.) 45.f4 b4 46.f3+—



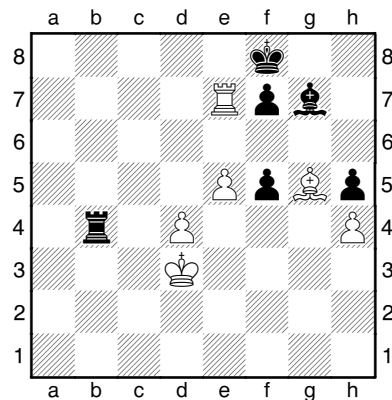
White will crash through with d5 and win shortly. While there are other options, clarifying the structure at once with **38.gxh5** seems like the simplest to me. **38...gxh5 39.h4!** An important little detail.



39.f4? would be a grave move order mistake, quite possibly depriving White of a well—deserved victory. 39...b2+ 40.g3 b3+ 41.f4 Far from a natural or comfortable move to make, but the only way to continue the game. 41...f3± White has complicated his task needlessly, and appears unable to make progress from here. 39...b3 40.f4 a3 Black has nothing better than to wait. White can now prevail through straightforward—though not necessarily simple!—means. **41.f2 b3 42.e2 a3 43.f5!**

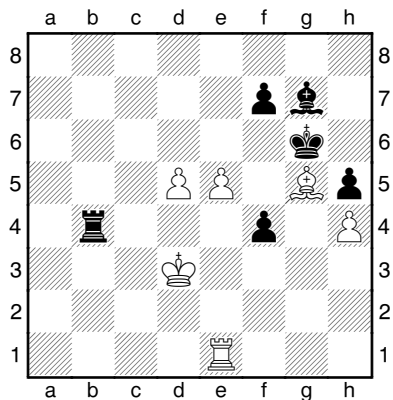


A key breakthrough, and showing one of the nice aspects of having an extra pawn—there is always the luxury to give it back when it most suits you. **43...exf5 44.fxe7!** Giving the e5—pawn a helping hand and preparing to satisfy the newly created passer's lust for expansion. **44...a4 44...b3** Continuing to wait would allow the passer on d5 to become a decisive factor. 45.d5 b5 46.d6 a5 47.d7+— **45.fxe3!** Wasting a move is the simplest path to White's goal. 45.f3 a6 The main difference between these two moves is that here 46.f8+? isn't working well anymore, though White can most likely still win by bringing his king up instead. (46.f4+— should be enough, though White's task has been complicated needlessly.) 46...h7 47.d5? f6! 48.exf6 a6 49.f6 a3+ The rook has too much distance from White's king, allowing for the liquidation into a trivially drawn endgame. 50.f4 a3 51.hxg5 f4= **45...b4** Otherwise White achieves either a well—timed d5 break or simply f4, picking off the f5 pawn. **46.f3! f8!** Otherwise White is in time to play d5.

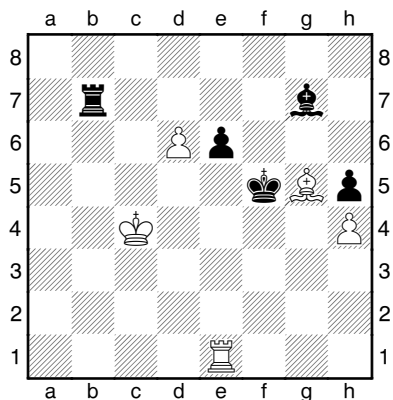


46...b6 It is especially instructive to pause and take a moment to contrast this position with the one arising after 45.f3 above. 47.f8+ h7 48.d5 f6 49.exf6 a6 50.f6 b3+ 51.f4+— Black's rook is undefended, making the win simple. **47.a7!** The beginning of an ingenious plan. 47.d5? e4!= **47...g8 48.a1!** White will stick his rook on e1 next, temporarily confining it to a purely defensive role, but soon thereafter finally achieving the d5 break, with decisive effect. **48...h7 48...b6 49.f1!** Showing the other idea of White's operation, and why the text was necessary. 49...f6 50.exf6 a6 51.f5+— **49.e1 g6 50.d5 f4!?**





Introducing the possibility of activating his king is the only way for Black to keep slim chances of salvation alive. **51.d6 Bb5 52.Qxf4!** Certainly a committal move that should only be played if White has calculated the ensuing complications very precisely—but if he has, it leads to a clear win. **52...Qf5 53.Qc4 Bb7 53...Bb8** the only alternative, as something has to be done about the quick moving passer. **54.Qd5!!** Never underestimate the power of pawns! Giving a piece to ensure they remain safe is the easiest way to ensure eventual victory. **54...Qxf4 55.Bf1+ Qg4**, otherwise the capture on f7 is decisive. **56.Bg1+-; 53...Bb8 54.Qd5** It is worth noting that Black loses after **54...Bb5+** in similar fashion to the main line. **55.Qc6 Bb3 56.e6! fxe6 57.Qg5+-** The pawn can't be stopped. **54.e6! fxe6 55.Qg5**

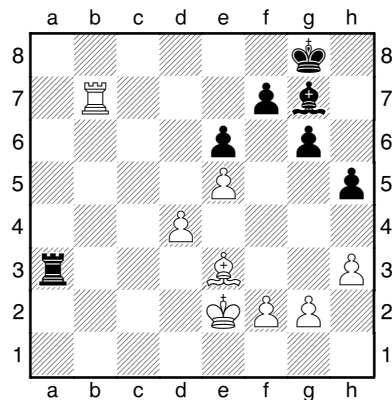


Black has to give up his bishop to halt the inexorable advance of the d6 pawn, thus deciding the game in White's favor. **55...Bd7 56.Qc5 Qe5 57.Bd1+-** White's rook pawn is, quite importantly, the right color for the remaining bishop, deciding the game in the first player's favor.

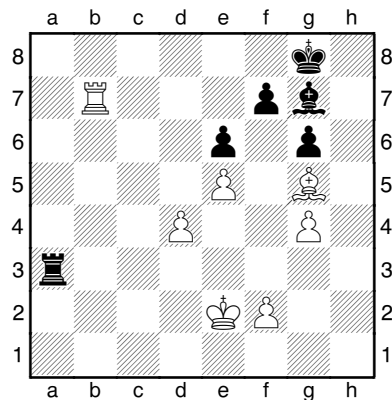
1/2-1/2

For historical significance, I am obliged to include the only other encounter I have managed to find that reached the exact same endgame—interestingly, another Grunfeld. On this occasion, the player with the White pieces managed to follow the correct path for some time, before eventually faltering and conceding a draw. There can be little to no doubt that the position is a hard one to handle correctly in practice.

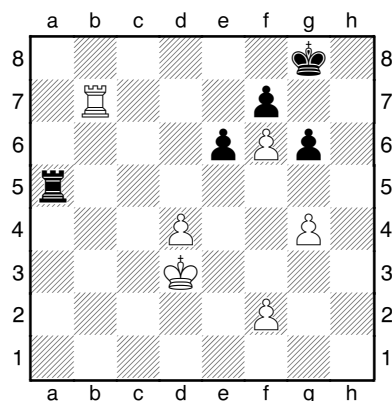
**Plischki, Sebastian (2418) — Petrova, Kristyna (2172)**  
**[D85]** Marianske Lazne IM—B, Marianske Lazne (1),  
 17.01.2009  
**[GR]**



**35.g4** Plischki, an experienced German IM, has properly determined the right plan, though his king is a bit misplaced, giving Black increased drawing chances. **35...h×g4 36.h×g4 Bc3!?** Practically, I feel it must be correct to stay on the third rank, not allowing the White king to make its way to the kingside so easily. **36...Ba2+?! 37.Qf3 Ba3 38.Bb8+ Qh7 39.Qe4+-** is a good example of what I mean – White's king is playing a major role in the game, leading to a fairly simple victory for the first player. **37.Qg5** A good start. **37.Qf3?? Qh6±** is most probably a drawn rook ending. **37...Ba3**



The first critical moment of the game. **38.Qf6!-** I have to condemn the transition to a rook ending regardless of whether or not it truly puts eventual victory in danger. There is no reason to take bishops off the board unless the moment is exactly right, since Black is entirely unable to generate any form of counter play with his minor piece. **38.f3 Ba5 39.Qf2+-** will soon return to the plan seen in my game. **38...Qxf6 39.exf6 Ba5 40.Qd3!** Absolutely necessary to keep the win in hand.



Continued on page 33

## Albert W. Fox, A Chess Life On and Off the Board

By John S. Hilbert

Reviewed by Joshua Anderson



ALBERT W. FOX  
A Chess Life On and Off the Board

by John S. Hilbert

John Hilbert's most recent biographical addition is that of Albert W. Fox. Fox was primarily a lawyer, also a journalist and never a professional chess player. Hilbert's work, as he usually does, highlights a lesser known historical figure. As many historians tend to focus on national players of the 19th century and early 20th century, such as Frank Marshall and Jackson Showalter, Hilbert is able to tell the tale of these slightly weaker players weaving in their experiences in regional chess as well as their experiences with more

prominent players (see Hilbert's [Walter Penn Shipley – McFarland \(mcfarlandbooks.com\)](#) for a previous example).

While focusing on Fox, Hilbert highlights the Mid-Atlantic region, specifically the Washington D.C. area chess scene. While Hilbert pays little attention to Fox's few early games played in Europe while Fox was getting an education, he spends over 70 pages detailing the chess scene in D. C. It is not until Fox gets to New York in September, 1902, that Hilbert is able to cover his play in much depth.

The five years from 1902 – 1907, make up the heart of the book and the Fox's most active chess years. His arrival in New York was quickly noted by the famed journalist Hermann Helms. While Washington has a much more significant chess scene than often realized, New York's chess scene had been thriving since before the days of Paul Morphy. Fox began to take part in it shortly after arriving, mostly at the Brooklyn Chess Club. He won the club's championship in 1904 and went on to play the Cambridge Springs tournament. This tournament was the most significant United States chess event between the Sixth American Chess Congress (1889) and the 1924 New York international Tournament.

At Cambridge Springs, Fox started well against a field that included World Champion Emanuel Lasker, but he could not keep up his pace. He had some great games, all of which are covered by Hilbert. Fox beat David Janowski who came in second, but was the only player to lose to the bottom two players in the field – Albert Hodges and Eugene Delmar. The coverage of this event is extensive, perhaps even a touch too extensive as this one event covers about 10 percent of the book. Though his 10th–11th place was certainly disappointing, he rebounded by winning the 1906 Manhattan Chess Club championship and finishing second in the 1905 and 1906 Brooklyn Chess Club championships.

Fox's work as a lawyer in Washington, DC (he moved back in 1907), makes up less than half of his book, though two-thirds of

his life. This is perhaps not surprising, as his career and eventually a family took up more and more of his time away from chess. Because it is only a few hours south of New York City, Fox could occasionally go back and play in various New York events, such as the 1916 Rice Memorial Tournament, but the majority of the last two hundred and fifty pages focus on his time and play in DC. For Fox, a noted player in the region, but not one of the top players in the country, he straddles an interesting level of player. At one point, he participates in simulms against Jose Capablanca, drawing, and Boris Kostic, losing, while soon after gives a simul with Fox's result being compared favorably with that of Capablanca's. He also routinely represents the club in various matches and meets strong regional players, such as Baltimorian, Isodor Turover (who would be a chess philanthropist well into the 1960s, usually through brilliancy prizes, but also supported Fischer's 1962 Stockholm trip.)

As the 20th century progressed, Fox generally played less and less chess and the years flew by quickly, both in Fox's life and in Hilbert's biography. Some unique events, being a very young Samuel Reshevsky's chauffeur and referee, are covered, as are his friendship with other strong local players like Norman Whitaker (whom Hilbert already covered in his 2000 book [Shady Side: The Life and Crimes of Norman Tweed Whitaker, Chess Master](#)) and Isador Turover. Reuben Fine's arrival to Washington D.C. in the early 1940s reinvigorated both Fox and the area chess scene with the National Press Club and Washington Chess Divan both holding more events. Post World War II Fox played rarely, mostly in what seemed to be club matches or similar, though in 1958, he played one last match against Valentin Ivanov for the National Press Club championship, which Fox won.

Hilbert's research is quite thorough. He had reached out to Fox's daughter who generously provided access to what she had left from her father as well as sharing remembrances in interviews. However, she passed away long before the book was completed, for it took Hilbert over 20 years to finish this volume. As someone who has been working on a book for the last decade, I can understand such timelines are often necessary. This is usually due to outside factors and a desire to provide a complete picture of the subject.\

Hilbert relies on analysis of the time. Most of this analysis is not covered by copyright law since it happened well over a century ago. This freedom is at times overused by historians who can freely use mammoth block quotes (to be fair some readers like block quotes, for example, Dr. Saidy is known for being fond of them, feeling they provide a real sense of the time) without fear of legal issues. Hilbert does a good job of giving some useful notes and explanations without providing too many lines, usually text to help us understand the position rather than variations and sub-variations.

With regard to pictures, there are quite a few, though the quality of the images is adequate and somewhat varied. They range from black and white to sepia (essentially brown and white) posed photographs. While I will be the last to object to a picture of Theodore Roosevelt (my name on chess.com is TRoose-

velt1858), photographs of him and several other Presidents, are perhaps a bit superfluous. (My work with the Byrnes may skew my perspective, as I had over 2000 photographs to limit to about 30.) Roosevelt's inclusion is because he and Fox wore the same style glasses.

Hilbert has a tendency to "play" in his footnotes, rather than taking the view that footnotes should not contain material that should not be in the text. He is no different in this work as in his McFarland books. The footnotes are usually quite interesting and sometimes quite long, most of a page or spanning onto 2 pages. While I found the book even more enjoyable with the addition of footnotes, one could skip them and still have a firm grasp of the subject, though perhaps less of an understanding of Fox's chess associates.

My problems with the book are, literally, with the book. It is fair to say I am a bit rough around the edges and, perhaps, not as gentle as I should be on things. That said, I find that books from Moravian Chess to be weak especially in the binding and this one is no different. I have read through the book just once and gone back through a few places for this review and already have numerous cracks in the binding and though the pages have not yet come out, they could with the slightest provocation.

As is usual with one of Hilbert's books, this one can be wholeheartedly recommended as he is able to not only give the reader an understanding of Fox and his interactions with the chess greats, Lasker, Marshall, etc. and lesser known but important players such as Helms and Turover. In the end, the book is not just about Fox, but the players he knew and the world in which he lived.

QR code to Albert W. Fox, Moravian Chess Publishing

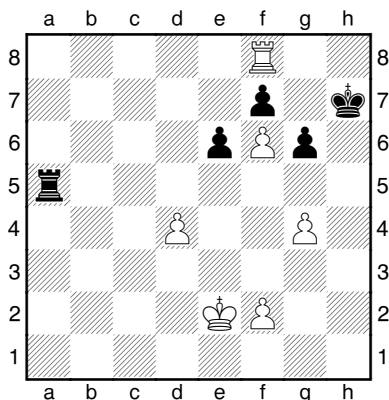


If you are weak in the endgame, you must spend more time analyzing studies; in your training games you must aim at transposing to endgames, which will help you to acquire the requisite experience. ~ **Mikhail Botvinnik**

In a rook and pawn ending, the rook must be used aggressively. It must either attack enemy pawns, or give active support to the advance of one of its own pawns to the queening square. ~ **Siegbert Tarrasch**

### Continued from page 31

40.♖b8+?? was played in the game, missing a devilish trick by Black that should hold the draw without further discussion. 40...♙h7 41.♖f8



41...g5! 42.♖xf7+ ♔g6 43.♖f8 White evidently thought that he was keeping an extra pawn. Petrova went a bit wrong and soon thereafter made a losing blunder, but could have cut the game short at this moment with 43...e5! 44.♔e3!? exd4+ 45.♔xd4 ♖a4+ 46.♔e5

♖a5+=. The king is unable to escape the checks without allowing Black to pick up the f—pawn. And now, back to the natural move made in the main line that proves to be the only way to keep the game going. 40...♖d5 Black can only wait and hope that White is unable to break through. 40...e5? looks promising at first, but fails tactically. 41.♖b8+ ♔h7 42.♖f8 g5 43.dxe5 ♖xe5 44.♖xf7+ ♔g6 45.♖e7 ♖d5+!? (45...♖a5 46.f7+[] ) 46.♔e4! ♖d6 47.f7 ♖f6 48.♔e3+-. 41.♔e4 ♖a5 42.f4 ♖d5 43.♖b8+ ♔h7 44.♖f8 ♖d7 45.♔d3+- It won't be long until Black is forced into a fatal zugzwang. ½-½

I gained a great deal of satisfaction and clarity from delving a bit more deeply into the nearly uncharted territory my opponent and I had navigated. There are indeed some questions that remain unanswered, and I look forward to hearing from the reader—thoughts, comments, suggestions, corrections, etc. are much appreciated. Absolute truth is an endless search, especially considering that the chess engine—despite being a great helper that allowed me to dig into this endgame at a depth that could have taken years unaided—can occasionally have a hard time evaluating properly the type of position under consideration. Nevertheless, I hope this examination has proved instructive, and helped the reader better appreciate an outwardly unassuming endgame that hides great beauty under the surface.

## King Chess

Documentary Film by Dylan Quercia and Gloria Iseli  
Reviewed by Mark Capron

The setting is the Kühlhaus in Berlin, Germany, March 2018. The players vying for the chance to face World Champion GM Magnus Carlson, "The King of Chess", are GM Fabiano Caruana, and GM Wesley So from the USA; GM Vladimir Kramnik, GM Sergey Karjakin, and GM Alexander Grischuk from Russia; GM Ding Liren from China; GM Levon Aronian from Armenia; and GM Shakhriyar Mamedyarov from Azerbaijan.

Dylan Quercia (Coach Q, an expert from USA) was covering the tournament for *US Chess Online* and decided to make a documentary. Dylan and Gloria Iseli put the film together. It runs for just over one hour and thirty three minutes.

The camera work was very clear and captured the emotion of the players and fans as the tournament proceeded. The sound quality was excellent with only a couple of exceptions. On some of the after game interviews it was hard to hear what the player said due to background noise swamping it out.

WGM Anastasiya Karlovich did the press conferences in Berlin and was quite funny at times with questions to the players.



GM Danny King did the press conferences in the London section..

The film progressed through the Candidates tournament and followed the winner to the World Championship in London. Even though it is a bit cliché, I enjoyed the concept of the opening as the first few rounds, the middle game as the next rounds and, no, you didn't guess it, the ending was not the last few rounds. The ending was the London Carlson–Caruana WCC Match. The film described each of these phases with a cool-looking graphic silver and gold chess board by showing examples of openings, middlegames and endings.

Throughout each round of the tournament the scores of the players were shown in rank order using easy to understand graphics.

Interestingly, there was a short section on having three Russian and two USA players in the event. The concern was about match fixing, and so they made a point to pair each countryman against each other (USA vs USA; Russia vs Russia) in the first rounds. Interviews with the players didn't reveal to any of them thinking twice about match fixing. They all just wanted to play brilliant chess.

The film had several mini-interviews with various chess personalities from around the globe. The GM Yasser Seirawan interview at the end was exceptional. The players themselves had short bios woven into the story and included a bit about how they each

qualified for the event. There were several asides in the film showing various scenes from the area and a small section on Chess Boxing.

The film recently won the *Audience Award for Best Documentary* at the Golden State Film Festival!



Director, Gloria Iseli, accepting the Award



I enjoyed the film quite a bit. Siskel and Ebert I am not, but I would give this film 4.5 stars out of 5 stars. ★★★★★

Executive Producers: Gloria Iseli and Dylan Quercia

Director: Gloria Iseli

Written by: Gloria Iseli and Dylan Quercia

Time: 1:33

[kingchessfilm.com](http://kingchessfilm.com)



# HOW TO BECOME WORLD CHESS CHAMPION

By Bob Basalla

At some point in our lives, most of us have stared at that distant, gleaming Everest peak and thought, "Why couldn't I reach that summit someday?" Of course, if we are not delusional, we know that it will never happen. The title of World Chess Champion resides beyond our grasp, forever fantasy. After all, most of us stink at this game we love, relative to the playing elite.

But circumstances need not always be this way. Dr. Bob's *Comprehensive Guide to Gaining the World Chess Title* (Patzner Press, 2023) surprisingly reveals many pathways to achieve your fervently desired goal. Sherlock Holmes purportedly published a monograph detailing 114 distinct varieties of cigar ash. So why couldn't there be 114 or more ways to cop the Caissic crown? Having thoroughly thought through the permutations, but space being limited, I have distilled the best bets into the following truncated list. Choose one and head for glory!

\*\*

## BY THE TRADITIONAL METHOD

First, we have to acknowledge the process successfully employed by all the World Champions up to this day. It combines the following attributes, in varying degrees: innate talent (think Capablanca, and also Morphy, had there been a title to attain in his day), drive/desire/devotion (Alekhine), will to win (Fischer), concentration (Smyslov), deep study (Botvinnik), preparation (Kasparov), imagination (Tal), iconoclasm (Steinitz), prudence (Karpov), objectivity (Anand), tenacity (Petrosian), cunning (Lasker), accuracy (Kramnik), universality (Spassky), confidence (all), an aura of destiny (Carlsen) and perhaps a bit of luck (Euwe, who won over Alekhine because of the latter's drinking and lack of preparation during their first match). While the Traditional Method is available to all in principle, since so few of us can hope to reach, let alone sustain, such excellence, there has to be an easier way. Well, read on...

\*\*

## BY ASSERTION

In this method one achieves top chess honors by simply *declaring* that one is World Champion! Don't snicker, it worked once. After Wilhelm Steinitz defeated Adolf Anderssen in 1866 he immediately began touting himself as the World Champion. The thinking was this: Morphy crushed Anderssen 7–2 in 1858, becoming the consensus best player on the planet, especially since Howard Staunton, the other main claimant, declined to play the Louisianan. Then, when soon afterward Morphy left public chess forever, the mantle of "best player" kind of devolved back to Anderssen, Steinitz rationalized. Therefore, after beating the German schoolteacher 8–6, Steinitz deemed himself #1. Since most of us schlubs would not prevail against an Anderssen-quality master "mano a mano," the best approach would be to challenge the current champion to a no stakes match, and when he (Magnus Carlsen as of this writing) does not respond, forfeit him! To cement your claim more firmly, also send challenge letters or

emails to all the main title contenders. Their non-response will bolster your bold contention. By this method I am already World Champion of checkers, Parcheesi, badminton, tennis, ping pong, bowling, golf, poker, boxing and mixed martial arts (all weight classes), archery, Foosball, competitive eating and many other games and sports too numerous to mention. But I have magnanimously left chess to you...

\*\*

## BY CHEATING

Though distasteful to many, criminality can prove quite effective. Of course, one would have to be more subtle about it than the butt-stupid schemes recently alleged. However, as magicians will readily admit, if they are honest, there are numerous ways to perform almost any trick, so clandestine computer assistance should not be impossible as you rise up the rating ranks. Admittedly, such sustained chicanery might eventually become suspicious, though. Likewise, the Lucretia Borgia concept (poisoned pawns perhaps?) is probably too risky and impractical (someone might notice opponents or rivals continually keeling over). Blackmail could work if you could find "dirt" on each player you encounter up the competition ladder, but even if you somehow could, the research cost would be prohibitively expensive to all but billionaires. The same applies to bribery. Bribery might once have been viable, since in the past professional players ("chess bums") were financially bereft. Not as much anymore. And the reverse blackmail of continued "hush money" would bankrupt all but the top 0.0001%. Intimidating your opponents with veiled death threats is a gamble, as you are likely to find one crazed "title or bust" fellow fanatic who would accept your gambit by calling your bluff. (The severed head of a chess knight in their bed is hardly intimidating enough. I know.) Impersonating the World Champion after plastic surgery, kidnapping, and identity theft might allow you to feel like the Champ for a few days or weeks but such a superficial reign would be fleeting at best. Who could act nerdy or strangely or egotistical enough (depending on the champ at the time) not to be found out?

\*\*

## BY ACCLAMATION

Convince the chess bureaucrats to unanimously select you as the next World Champion, with a term beginning immediately and lasting as long as you do. Of course, to do so and make it stick and be recognized everywhere one would first have to become global dictator (arguably an easier task in our time than consistent super-GM play). I alluded to the consequences of this approach in my piece "Chess in 2042" in *The Chess Journalist* (2022).

\*\*

## BY INHERITANCE

If a close friend or relative held the title you could perhaps invei-

gle them into bequeathing you the Championship in their will (natural causes, naturally; I am not suggesting you prematurely off them). The Federation and others might object, but you would have a legal document to support your claim. The chief sticking point here is that very few of us know or are related to the current Champion. I wrote of a player, Sam Lopez, who inherited his master rating in my account of Tasmania 1909: International Chess and Tiddlywinks Congress (1979/1986/2021).

\*\*

#### **BY BEATING A WEAKER CHAMPION**

Somehow finagle an opponent you are sure to defeat onto the chess throne and then snatch the crown with ease! The only difficulty comes in achieving the title for your patsy, which involves the same problems you were working to get around in the first place. Infinite regress looms. An item in my *Whole Board Catalog of Chess Books and Equipment* (My Sister by Aron Nimrodovich) suggests a possible solution to this conundrum.

\*\*

#### **BY CUSTOMIZATION**

At any one time there is more than one World Chess Champion. There is one overall champ, to be sure. But there is also a Women's World Chess Champion, a World Junior Chess Champion, a World Blind Chess Champion and so on. Why not one more? Customize a World Championship tournament with as many specifications as you need to emerge the victor. And if no one else but you qualifies to participate, oh well. For example, as winner of the "World Retired Dentist Living in Berea, Ohio, named Bob Chess Championship," I could shorten that mouthful of a title, to technically, but truthfully, say that I was a World Chess Champion!

\*\*

#### **BY SCHISM**

Create your own splinter chess federation and have yourself elected as its first official Chess Champion, or to be more legit, win a quad among the board members. Not that long ago there was an era of alternative federations and concomitant championships, so you have precedent in your favor.

\*\*

#### **BY CREATING YOUR OWN "CHESS"**

Unlike Monopoly or Scrabble, the name of chess is not proprietary. Anyone can call anything "chess" without legal retribution. A slight change in rules, or even a wholly different game can be labelled "Chess," and as the top practitioner of this newly dubbed variant you are naturally the World "Chess" Champion. Furthermore, following in the tradition of Lewis Carroll, words can mean what you want them to mean when you say them. That means "Champion" may also be redefined to apply only to you, thereby making you a readymade titleholder! Legally changing one's name to "World Chess Champion" would do the trick as well.

\*\*

#### **BY DIVERSITY HIRE**

With the exception of Anand, all previous World Chess Champions have been white; and without exception all have been male. Should in the future certain elements succeed in constructing a one world, woke-minded government, those of minority, oppressed, or preferred status may try to wind their way up the stifling bureaucracy to place themselves in position to be chosen as a diversity hire for World Champion within the subsumed Ministry of Chess Affairs. Don't worry if you are a patzer or do not even know the moves. Merit will no longer be an issue as only redressing the previous inequitable unbalance in appearance will count. Despite my impeccable patzer credentials, that leaves me out, but then I am not privileged to be eligible for such reparations, am I?

\*\*

#### **BY YOUR BETTERS DISAPPEARING**

This might sound macabre to some, but think of it. If all the chess players more skilled than you suddenly ceased to exist you would by default be the World's best player! Instead of fruitlessly attempting to scale the chess ability mountain one might level the mountain so as to stand astride a more manageable molehill. Unfortunately, for most of us far down the pecking order, this would require a body count that would make even the most prolific serial killer wince. And remember, just to be sure, one would have to take down quite a few others on our populous planet to have any chance that your Championship claim was and remained true. Not to mention the difficulties in removing only certain folks and not a lot of others innocent of being better than you. I touched on this grisly scenario in a (so far unpublished) short story.

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#### **BY CHANGING THE CHAMPIONSHIP CYCLE**

One might have to invest a few decades to reach the decision-making tiers of the chess federation but, once getting there, you could enact a change in the championship cycle, morphing (or Morphing?) it into a lucrative TV reality show for weekly knock out games culminating in a ratings week Championship Match. But slyly having oneself made the show's producer and editor, one could steer the final game into a winner-take all contest between the survivor and—you, where you hold all the cards (an Immunity King, for instance). Voila! You win the title in front of millions of witnesses! I fleshed out this schema in my short story "*Chess Comes Down to Reality*" (2004).

\*\*

#### **ON OTHER WORLDS/MANY WORLDS**

Who said the "World" in World Chess Champion had to be Earth? Become an astronaut, go to the Moon or Mars and pull out a magnetic set. Just be sure, not as drastically as murder, mind you, that none of your co-explorers are particularly Royal Game adept. In the far future there may be many "World" Chess Champions. And if you subscribe to the Many Worlds Hypothesis in fundamental physics you don't even have to do anything to be top dog. Most Many Worlds interpretations decree every physically allowable event has to exist, if not here, then in another universal realm. That means that since it isn't forbidden by the

laws of physics, somewhere/somewhen or whatever, you *already* are/have been/going to be the World Chess Champion! An infinite number of you in fact. Of course, there still remains the philosophical question of whether all those “yous” are really “you.” I personally vote no, but you may have another opinion.

\*\*

#### BY CYBER–MELDING

Perhaps in the future humans could be “enhanced” by integration with a computer entity. There is talk of this futuristic possibility even now. If it occurs in your lifetime, and you have a choice, remember to merge with a device with awesome chess–playing potential. Then find a way to discourage others (hopefully not involving sabotage, but hey, whatever it takes...) from following in your brain–steps. Co–Champion with “Bob,” or however you choose to refer to your cyber symbiont, wouldn’t be all bad.

\*\*

#### BY TIME TRAVEL

Should such a sci–fi device ever become workable one could go back in time with a concealed top of the line chess computer (see Cheating above...) and handily defeat the befuddled top players of any selected previous era. But take note, your victory may not be long–lived as time travelers from *your* future armed with even more powerful chess engines could swoop in to change history any number of additional times. I examined some of the permutations in my short story “*The Young Turk Confounds*.”

\*\*

#### BY SUPERNATURAL MEANS

Voodoo or other forms of sorcery (of dodgy reality at best) might be a way to ascend to the heights of chess against the resistance of others, but again as with poisoning, probably not without notice. Ditto for receiving wishes from a genie or other equivalent entity, or selling your soul to Satan for chess hegemony. Though perhaps more real than the above, the same basically applies to hypnosis or other forms of mind control causing players to continually fall for your traps. The latter was explored in my short story “*Caissa’s Chosen*.” It didn’t end well. Korchnoi allegedly played against the ghost of Maroczy, a process, which if true, would open the door to consultation assistance from the beyond. Don’t hold your breath. Besides, séances at the board might be a wee bit conspicuous to some.

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#### BY ABANDONMENT

For this scheme, first become the world’s leading psychiatrist or religious leader or some other extremely persuasive personage. Step two: badmouth chess, or more particularly the World Chess Championship, as corrosive to societal norms. Devalue it with your every utterance until the public uproar is so great that the governing federation would have to drop it just to survive. Step three: just calmly walk over and pick up this “useless artifact of a late and unlamented era” and safeguard the people by placing it permanently in your safe keeping, for the greater good don’t you know...

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#### BY VONNEGUT’S DICTUM

In his novel, “*Mother Night*”, Kurt Vonnegut, Jr. promoted the concept “You are what you pretend to be.” That is, if you live a certain way for long enough, even if it is merely a façade, it might as well be said that that is what you are. Given enough time, what you “really are” melds into the reality you are faking. So consistently act like the World Chess Champion and with each passing year you asymptotically approach the reality you desire. Or maybe I’ve misread old Kurt...

\*\*

#### BY OBIT

If all else fails you still have this last gambit. I know of someone whose obituary claims that he was “many times Ohio champion” when he actually never in his life played in even *one* of the championship tournaments! The people who posted his obit, not being chess folk, of course just entered it as fact. And practically all who habitually or for research purposes scour the notices from then on won’t likely notice either. Thus, in a certain (very limited) way you can rest for all eternity in the knowledge that at least some among we–the–living consider you (the schemer) to have been the World Chess Champion!

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Obviously, I’m concluding long before Holmes’ 114 cigar ash types, but you get the idea. The schemes only get wilder from here. And I’m sure there are many more ways out there which I did not come up with—yet. But this compendium ought to warn you off underestimating me.

#### THE END



**Bob Basalla is a retired dentist who lives in Ohio. Photo by Stacia Pugh, Director of Marketing & Promotion *Progress With Chess*.**

We invite the CJA readers to suggest additional ideas and send them in for the following issue.



## The Queens' Corner

By Rachel Schechter



*The Queen glides into a1 then steps off the board.*

*"And that's mate," she says, sipping mint honeyed tea. Her attendants surround. She looks about her chambers. "There's much to be done. Spare no effort." Her attendants into action spring.*

*"Why such preparations?"*

*"Who's coming to visit?"*

*"A very special personage," says the Queen, smiling mysteriously.*

*"Irina Krush?"*

*"Carissa Yip?"*

*"I know! Susan Polgar? I mean, Judit."*

*The Queen shakes her head, sheds her gown, considers her gloves:*

*"All iconic women intrinsic to the royal game, but no, not today."*

*"What's her color?"*

*The Queen removes her sapphire necklace, opts for a simple yet lustrous strand of pearls, and takes a deep breath:*

*"Magenta," she says.*

*Her attendants cup their hands to their mouths, stare silently, then:*

*"A Red Queen?"*

*"From Alice in Wonderland?"*

*"Are you saying, 'she's mad'?"*

*The Queen kicks off her shoes, recalling US Chess' The Madwoman's Book Club.*

*"Nature of the game," she laughs lightly, "We're all a bit mad, aren't we?"*

*Her attendants wring their hands.*

*"Oh dear, down the rabbit hole..."*

*"So, she's crazy?"*

*The Queen dons a riding habit, slips into sable boots:*

*"Like a fox," she says, adjusting her black brim, "She's one of the most influential women in US Chess. Modest, soft-spoken, personable, formidable—an off-the-board power queen of great prowess. She has more people dancing her attendance than you can count, me included. The only crazy thing about her is her insistence that she doesn't play chess."*

*They all laugh.*

*"So why are you wearing a riding habit?"*

*The Queen flicks her riding crop.*

*"I'm off to meet her with my knights..."*

*Her lady-in-waiting mops her forehead:*

*"Wait! Her tea? What's her favorite tea?"*

*The Queen selects her gloves:*

*"Jasmine, black."*

That said, we welcome **Carol Meyer**, US Chess Executive Director, since 2017, to *The Queens' Corner*. A career non-profit professional, Carol beat out 100+ applicants for the job and oversees one of the most intellectual arenas on the planet. Here's what we learned:

### Based on your experience, what are the top challenges/issues female chess players are facing today?

Though I do not have personal experience as a female tournament chess player, I have observed and reviewed data US Chess collected from such players. Female players continue to be a small minority—just 14% of US Chess membership. This disparity of representation begins early—the male to female player ratio is most balanced at the age of five. Aspects of chess culture need to change, and we have been working on this for some time now. There are still places in the chess world where women are made to feel unwelcome. Recent board and sanctioning committee actions point toward improving the environment for female chess players. Tournament, casual, all.



Are you the first US Chess female Executive Director? Briefly, how would you define your role?

Jean Hoffman, my immediate predecessor, was the first. I am the second. My role includes overseeing all US Chess Operations and working with the Executive Board on organizational strategies. I am fortunate—on both counts—to work alongside committed

and talented people, male and female.



**Since coming on board as Executive Director in 2017, what are the toughest personal challenges you've faced and surmounted?**

As an outsider to the chess world, there was some skepticism about my ability to lead a national chess federation. Looking back over the past five years and all that has been accomplished, I'm confident many of those skeptics now *support* the direction we're taking.

**You've broken through one of the toughest glass ceilings in the world. Any advice for other female executives trying to break through theirs? (Including chess)**

I am fortunate to have benefitted from women who blazed leadership trails before me. So, I can say with some surety—be confident in your knowledge, stand your ground, and surround yourself with people who can help lead you forward. And remember to listen. I accept that I don't have all the answers, and I welcome input from my colleagues on staff, the Executive Board, and our members who share different perspectives than mine. There is a richness born from diverse views.



scaling the heights...

**Please tell us of 3 future projects you have in the works.**

Grow the US Chess program supporting Youth chess initiatives in underserved communities. Grow the opportunities for Seniors to play chess (rated or otherwise) via working through community centers, residential communities, and/or other meeting places.

Grow the network of schools providing Chess in Education.

**Recently, US Chess reached the 100K Members mark. Did you play a role in that?**

As has been well-documented, during the Covid pandemic US Chess experienced a significant membership decline. Our recovery began in May 2021, we returned to our pre-Covid numbers in early 2023, and we were thrilled to reach the 100K membership mark in February 2023. We were on that cusp in 2020 before Covid struck. The programs US Chess offers to broaden its user base have played an important role in achieving this milestone, and I am confident we will continue to grow—excited for the milestones to come.

**You're also engaged elsewhere in the chess world. Please elaborate.**

I am serving my second term on the FIDE Commission for Women's Chess. I was greatly involved in identifying 2022 as the 'Year of Women in Chess' and continue to work with my international colleagues on improving the environment for women in

chess. Additionally, I'm significantly vested in several US Chess Committees, including our At-Risk Youth program.

**We know from your bio you're a career non-profit professional. How did you land the top job at US Chess back in 2017?**

As I understand it, the US Chess Executive Board was looking for a leader from *outside* the chess community with expertise in non-profit management and governance. I was selected from a pool of 100+ applicants for the job. Guess I fit the bill?

**We also know you're modest and soft-spoken—though like President Teddy Roosevelt you carry a 'big stick'. What's your single most important achievement as US Chess Executive Director to date?**

In its entirety, my tenure at US Chess has been rewarding. Increasing our level of professionalism, expanding programming, fundraising successfully, and assembling a great team are what I'm most proud of. If I carry a 'big stick', it is simply leading by example.

**Which over-the-board chess queens do you most admire? Past, present, and/or future.**

I was very fortunate to meet the first woman awarded the GM title—Nona Gaprindashvili—at the Batumi Olympiad in 2018. At the time, I was with former US Chess President Ruth Haring, who was positively giddy to meet one of her chess heroines. There are so many US chess women who have profoundly impacted the game. I think of Irina Krush, who has won eight US Women's Championship titles, a feat matched only by US Chess Champions Samuel Reshevsky and Bobby Fischer. Future? Today's young female talents are extremely well-rounded as people. I admire Jennifer Yu and Carissa Yip for their incredible play at the board, and for their dedication to their studies *outside* the chess world. These and other like-minded women will succeed whatever they endeavor.

**Aesthetically, artistically, your chess fave(s)?**

Now that US Chess is headquartered in St. Louis, I enjoy the rotating exhibits at the World Chess Hall of Fame. One needn't be a chess player to appreciate how the royal game intersects with art, culture, and history.

**Please share a bit about your girlhood and current family life.**

People tell me I was born to be a leader. And though I grew up in a traditional environment—from a very young age, I questioned the female norms assigned to me. Yes, I gave my mom more than a few gray hairs. But over time, with changing social norms, I grew confident that I did indeed have a place at the table. Today, I have two adult daughters and two adult stepsons; I live in Raleigh, North Carolina with Chris (my spouse) and our four-legged family. Outside of work, I enjoy kayaking, hiking, cycling, politics, and current affairs.

*The Queen reenters her chambers. Her attendants cluster:*

*"How did the interview go?"*

*"What did she say?"*

*"Just read the article," says the Queen, kicking off her boots, relaxing between rounds.*

*"We did. But you—what can you tell us?"*

*The Queen sips tea, Jasmine, black.*

*"Tell you? That like countless others, I'm a better chess player for having met Carol Meyer."*

## Oddities and Peculiarities

By Mark Capron

There is a new World Chess Champion and his name is **Ding Liren** from China. Wait a minute! Wasn't Magnus Carlsen the WCC? Yes, but he didn't defend his title. Why would anyone not defend their title? Has this ever happened before? Then everyone remembers Bobby Fischer did the same thing, although somewhat different circumstances.

Looking back through history one can find that this has happened a few times. Even the great Garry Kasparov did it when he and challenger Nigel Short broke off from FIDE and we ended up with two WCC. The new FIDE WCC, and Garry Kasparov representing the Grandmasters Association.

Anatoly Karpov got mixed up in some of the FIDE experimentations after Garry Kasparov moved to the GMA. FIDE started to have different approaches to the WCC and Karpov decided that it wasn't fair or advantageous for him to defend his title so he gave it up in 1999 by not competing in the Super Tournament.

Note that from 1993—1999 Karpov was FIDE Champion and Kasparov was the GMA Champion. History shows that most everyone considered Kasparov the real WCC during 1985—2000.

Mikhail Botvinnik ceded his title in protest when FIDE decided to remove the "return match" clause. Botvinnik used this clause to regain the championship after losing it ... twice in 1957 and 1960. In 1958 and 1961 he regained the title in rematches. At this point in time FIDE disallowed the "return match" and Botvinnik stopped playing in protest.

Alexander Alekhine held the title from 1927—1935 and from 1937—1946, but passed away while holding the title. No WCC match could be played with Alekhine so two new players had to compete.

Bobby Fischer's protest to not play the match due to the conditions seems similar to Magnus Carlsen. Both wanted changes to the rules of the championship match and neither got what they were looking for and so did not play. In Carlsen's case it looks like he will continue to play in tournaments and be an active player. As we all know Fischer did not.

As time goes by it will be interesting to see what happens. Will there be a unification match with the FIDE WCC and Magnus Carlsen? In any case, lets celebrate Ding Liren's championship by looking at a couple of the games that made him King.

Ding Liren and Ian Nepomniachtchi met April 7—May 1 to decide who would become the next FIDE WCC. They played 14 closely contested games and the score ended 7—7, each with 3 wins and the rest drawn. The tiebreaker was a set of four games at a much faster time control where Ding won the last game to become WCC.

My favorite game from the match was in round 10. Both had opportunities in the game but it ended in a draw. Several people have annotated this game including WGM Katerina Nemcova who I thought did a fabulous job. You can find her analysis on the [US Chess website](#). Here is the game:

### Ding,Liren (2829) - Nepomniachtchi,Ian (2761) [A28]

FIDE World Championship 2023 (10), 23.04.2023

1.c4 ♟f6 2.♟c3 e5 3.♟f3 ♟c6 4.e4 ♟c5 5.♟xe5 ♟xe5 6.d4 ♟b4 7.dxe5 ♟xe4 8.♟f3 ♟xc3 9.bxc3 ♟c5 10.♟g3 ♟f8 11.♟e2 d6 12.♟f4 ♟e7 13.♟d1 h5 14.0-0 h4 15.♟d3 g5 16.exd6 cxd6 17.♟xd6 ♟xd6 18.♟xd6+ ♟xd6 19.♟xd6 ♟e6 20.f4 ♟e7 21.♟d4 gxf4 22.♟fxf4 h3 23.g4 ♟ac8 24.♟f2 ♟c5 25.a4 ♟a5 26.♟d1 b6 27.♟g3 ♟h6 28.♟fe4 ♟f8 29.♟d8+ ♟g7 30.♟a8 ♟c5 31.♟xa7 ♟xc4 32.♟ae7 ♟hc6 33.♟7e5 ♟xe5 34.♟xe5 ♟b3 35.♟xb3 ♟xc3+ 36.♟h4 ♟xb3 37.♟b5 ♟a3 38.♟xb6 ♟xa4 39.♟xh3 f5 40.gxf5 ♟f4 41.♟b5 ♟f6 42.♟g3 ♟xf5 43.♟xf5+ ♟xf5 44.h4 ♟g6 45.h5+ ♟xh5 ½-½

Here is the game that tied the classical match at 6—6:

### Ding,Liren (2829) - Nepomniachtchi,Ian (2761) [D04]

FIDE World Championship 2023 (12), 26.04.2023

1.d4 ♟f6 2.♟f3 d5 3.e3 c5 4.♟bd2 cxd4 5.exd4 ♟c7 6.c3 ♟d7 7.♟d3 ♟c6 8.0-0 ♟g4 9.♟e1 e6 10.♟f1 ♟d6 11.♟g5 0-0 12.♟xf6 gxf6 13.♟g3 f5 14.h3 ♟xf3 15.♟xf3 ♟e7 16.♟h5 ♟h8 17.g4 ♟g8 18.♟h1 ♟g6 19.♟c2 ♟h4 20.♟e3 ♟g6 21.♟g1 f4 22.♟d3 ♟e7 23.♟ae1 ♟g5 24.c4 dxc4 25.♟c3 b5 26.a4 b4 27.♟xc4 ♟ag8 28.♟c6 ♟b8 29.♟b7 ♟h6 30.♟e4 ♟f8 31.♟xb4 ♟d8 32.♟c3 ♟g6 33.♟g2 ♟h4 34.♟e2 f5 35.♟xe6 ♟xh5 36.gxh5 ♟xh5 37.d5+ ♟g8 38.d6 1-0

Here is the last game of the classical portion for the 7 –7 tie:

### Ding,Liren (2829) - Nepomniachtchi,Ian (2761) [E46]

FIDE World Championship 2023 (14), 29.04.2023

1.d4 ♟f6 2.c4 e6 3.♟c3 ♟b4 4.e3 0-0 5.♟d2 d5 6.a3 ♟e7 7.♟f3 c5 8.dxc5 ♟xc5 9.♟c2 dxc4 10.♟xc4 ♟bd7 11.♟d1 ♟e7 12.♟g5 h6 13.h4 ♟c7 14.♟e2 ♟d8 15.♟c1 ♟f8 16.♟ge4 ♟xe4 17.♟xe4 ♟xc2 18.♟xc2 ♟d7 19.♟b4 ♟xb4+ 20.axb4 ♟c6 21.♟c5 ♟xg2 22.♟g1 ♟d5 23.e4 ♟c6 24.b5 ♟e8 25.♟xb7 ♟d4 26.♟c4 ♟d7 27.♟c5 ♟c7 28.♟c3 ♟ac8 29.b4 ♟d7 30.♟cg3 ♟xc5 31.bxc5 ♟xc5 32.♟xg7+ ♟f8 33.♟d3 ♟d8 34.♟e2 ♟c3 35.♟g8+ ♟e7 36.♟1g3 e5 37.♟h8 ♟d6 38.b6 ♟xb6 39.♟xe8+ ♟xe8 40.♟b5+ ♟xb5 41.♟xc3 ♟d7 42.♟f3 ♟e7 43.♟c3 a5 44.♟c7+ ♟f6 45.♟c6+ ♟g7 46.♟a6 ♟b2+ 47.♟f3 ♟a2 48.♟g3 h5 49.♟a8 ♟a1 50.♟g2 a4 51.♟a5 f6 52.♟f3 a3 53.♟a6 ♟f7 54.♟e3 ♟e8 55.♟e2 ♟e7 56.♟f3 ♟a2 57.♟e3 ♟a1 58.♟e2 ♟f7 59.♟f3 ♟a2 60.♟e3 ♟e7 61.♟f3 ♟d7 62.♟xf6 ♟b2 63.♟a6 ♟b3+ 64.♟g2 ♟c7 65.f4 exf4 66.e5 ♟b7 67.♟a4 ♟c6 68.♟a6+ ♟b5 69.♟a7 ♟b6 70.♟a8 ♟c5 71.♟a6 ♟b5 72.♟a7 ♟b6 73.♟a8 ♟c6 74.♟a6+ ♟d7 75.♟f2 ♟e7 76.♟g2 ♟e3 77.♟f2 ♟g3 78.♟f1 ♟c3 79.♟f2 ♟e3 80.♟g2 ♟d7 81.♟f2 ♟c7 82.e6 ♟d8 83.♟a7 ♟e8 84.♟g2 ♟xe6 85.♟xa3 ♟g6+ 86.♟f2 ♟g4 87.♟a5 ♟xh4 88.♟f3 ♟e7 89.♟f5 ♟e6 90.♟xf4 ♟xf4+ ½-½

Here is the game that won it for Ding in tiebreaks:

### Nepomniachtchi,Ian (2795) - Ding,Liren (2788) [C84]

FIDE World Championship 2023 (18), 30.04.2023

1.e4 e5 2.♟f3 ♟c6 3.♟b5 a6 4.♟a4 ♟f6 5.0-0 ♟e7 6.d3 b5 7.♟b3 d6 8.a4 ♟d7 9.h3 0-0 10.♟e3 ♟a5 11.♟a2 bxa4 12.♟c3 ♟b8 13.♟b1 ♟e8 14.b3 c5 15.♟xa4 ♟c6 16.♟c3 a5 17.♟d2 ♟e6 18.♟c4 d5 19.exd5 ♟xd5 20.♟d2 ♟xc3 21.♟xc3 ♟xc4 22.bxc4 ♟d8 23.♟d2 ♟c7 24.c3 f5 25.♟e1 ♟d8 26.♟a2 ♟g6 27.♟e2 ♟d6 28.g3 ♟de8 29.♟f3 e4 30.dxe4 ♟e5 31.♟g2 ♟d3 32.♟xd3 ♟xd3 33.exf5 ♟xe1+ 34.♟xe1 ♟xc4 35.♟a1 ♟xf5 36.♟d2 h6 37.♟c6 ♟f7 38.♟e1 ♟h7 39.♟e3 ♟e5 40.♟e8 ♟xc3 41.♟c1 ♟f6 42.♟d7 ♟e2 43.♟d5 ♟b4 44.♟e4+ ♟g8 45.♟d5+ ♟h7 46.♟e4+ ♟g6 47.♟f5 c4 48.h4 ♟d3 49.♟f3 ♟f6 50.♟g4 c3 51.♟d1 ♟g6 52.♟c8 ♟c6 53.♟a8 ♟d6 54.♟xd6 ♟xd6 55.♟e4+ ♟g6 56.♟c4 ♟b1+ 57.♟h2 a4 58.♟d4 a3 59.♟c7 ♟g6 60.♟c4 c2 61.♟e3 ♟d6 62.♟g2 h5 63.♟f1 ♟e5 64.g4 hxg4 65.h5 ♟f5 66.♟d5 g3 67.f4 a2 68.♟xa2 ♟xf4 0-1

"Self-pinning for immortality. Congrats Ding!!"  
Tweeted Magnus Carlsen.

Here are the rest of the games:

**Nepomniachtchi,lan (2793) - Ding,Liren (2811) [C85]**

FIDE World Championship 2023 (1), 09.04.2023

1.e4 e5 2.♘f3 ♘c6 3.♙b5 a6 4.♙a4 ♘f6 5.0-0 ♙e7 6.♙xc6 dxc6 7.♙e1 ♘d7 8.d4 exd4 9.♙xd4 0-0 10.♙f4 ♘c5 11.♙e3 ♙g4 12.♘d4 ♙d7 13.♘c3 ♙ad8 14.♘f5 ♘e6 15.♙xe7+ ♙xe7 16.♙g3 ♙h5 17.f3 f6 18.h3 h6 19.♙h2 ♙f7 20.♙ad1 b6 21.a3 a5 22.♘e2 ♙xd1 23.♙xd1 ♙d8 24.♙d3 c5 25.♙d2 c6 26.♙xd8+ ♘xd8 27.♙f4 b5 28.♙b8 ♙h7 29.♙d6 ♙d7 30.♘g3 ♘e6 31.f4 h5 32.c3 c4 33.h4 ♙d8 34.♙b7 ♙e8 35.♘f5 ♙d7 36.♙b8 ♙d8 37.♙xd8 ♘xd8 38.♘d4 ♘b7 39.e5 ♙g8 40.♙g3 ♙d7 41.♙c7 ♘c5 42.♙xa5 ♙f7 43.♙b4 ♘d3 44.e6+ ♙xe6 45.♙xc6 ♙d7 46.♘d4 ♘xb2 47.♙f3 ♘d3 48.g3 ♘c1 49.♙e3 ½-½

**Ding,Liren (2829) - Nepomniachtchi,lan (2761) [D30]**

FIDE World Championship 2023 (2), 10.04.2023

1.d4 ♘f6 2.c4 e6 3.♘f3 d5 4.h3 dxc4 5.e3 c5 6.♙xc4 a6 7.0-0 ♘c6 8.♘c3 b5 9.♙d3 ♙b7 10.a4 b4 11.♘e4 ♘a5 12.♙xf6+ gxf6 13.e4 c4 14.♙c2 ♙c7 15.♙d2 ♙g8 16.♙c1 0-0 17.♙d3 ♙b8 18.♙e1 f5 19.♙c2 ♘c6 20.♙g5 ♙xg5 21.♙xg5 ♘xd4 22.♙h5 f6 23.♘f3 ♘xc2 24.♙xc2 ♙xc4 25.♙d2 ♙d6 26.♙h1 c3 27.bxc3 bxc3 28.♙d4 c2 29.♙h6 e5 0-1

**Nepomniachtchi,lan (2761) - Ding,Liren (2829) [D36]**

FIDE World Championship 2023 (3), 12.04.2023

1.d4 ♘f6 2.c4 e6 3.♘c3 d5 4.cxd5 exd5 5.♙g5 c6 6.e3 h6 7.♙h4 ♙e7 8.♙d3 0-0 9.♙c2 ♙e8 10.♘ge2 ♘bd7 11.0-0 a5 12.a3 ♘h5 13.♙xe7 ♙xe7 14.♙ae1 ♘f8 15.♘c1 ♘f6 16.f3 ♘e6 17.♘1e2 c5 18.♙b5 ♙d8 19.dxc5 ♙xc5 20.♙d2 ♙d7 21.♙xd7 ♘xd7 22.♘d4 ♘b6 23.♙d1 ♘c4 24.♙f2 ♙ac8 25.♘a4 ♙e7 26.♙fe1 ♙f6 27.♘b5 ♘c7 28.♘d4 ♘e6 29.♘b5 ♘c7 30.♘d4 ♘e6 ½-½

**Ding,Liren (2829) - Nepomniachtchi,lan (2761) [A28]**

FIDE World Championship 2023 (4), 13.04.2023

1.c4 ♘f6 2.♘c3 e5 3.♘f3 ♘c6 4.e3 ♙b4 5.♙c2 ♙xc3 6.bxc3 d6 7.e4 0-0 8.♙e2 ♘h5 9.d4 ♘f4 10.♙xf4 exf4 11.0-0 ♙f6 12.♙fe1 ♙e8 13.♙d3 ♙g4 14.♘d2 ♘a5 15.c5 dxc5 16.e5 ♙h6 17.d5 ♙ad8 18.c4 b6 19.h3 ♙h5 20.♙e4 ♙e7 21.♙c3 ♙de8 22.♙f3 ♘b7 23.♙e2 f6 24.e6 ♘d6 25.♙ae1 ♘f5 26.♙xh5 ♙xh5 27.♙e4 ♙h6 28.♙f3 ♘d4 29.♙xd4 cxd4 30.♘d3 g5 31.♙xd4 ♙g6 32.g4 fxg3 33.fxg3 h5 34.♘f5 ♙h7 35.♙e4 ♙h8 36.e7 ♙f7 37.d6 cxd6 38.♙xd6 ♙g8 39.♙xc8 ♙xe8 40.♙e6 ♙g7 41.♙f1 ♙h6 42.♙d1 f5 43.♙e5+ ♙f7 44.♙xf5+ ♙f6 45.♙h7+ ♙e6 46.♙g7 ♙g6 47.♙f8 1-0

**Nepomniachtchi,lan (2761) - Ding,Liren (2829) [C84]**

FIDE World Championship 2023 (5), 15.04.2023

1.e4 e5 2.♘f3 ♘c6 3.♙b5 a6 4.♙a4 ♘f6 5.0-0 ♙e7 6.d3 b5 7.♙b3 d6 8.c3 0-0 9.h3 ♙b7 10.a4 ♘a5 11.♙a2 c5 12.♙g5 h6 13.♙xf6 ♙xf6 14.axb5 axb5 15.♘bd2 ♘c6 16.♙d5 ♙xa1 17.♙xa1 ♙d7 18.♙e1 ♙a8 19.♙d1 ♘d8 20.♘f1 ♙d7 21.♙xb7 ♙xb7 22.♘e3 ♙b6 23.h4 ♙c6 24.h5 c4 25.d4 exd4 26.♙xd4 ♙c5 27.♙g4 ♙e5 28.♘f3 ♙e6 29.♘f5 ♘xf5 30.exf5 ♙f6 31.♙e4 ♙b8 32.♙e2 ♙c5 33.g4 ♙d8 34.♙d5 ♙f8 35.♙f1 ♙c8 36.♙e4 ♙b8 37.g5 hxg5 38.♙g4 ♙a8 39.♙xg5 ♙a1+ 40.♙e2 ♙e7+ 41.♘e4 ♙e8 42.♙f3 ♙a8 43.♙xa8+ ♙xa8 44.f6 g6 45.hxg6 fxg6 46.♙xg6 ♙a2 47.♙g4 ♙xb2 48.♙h6 1-0

**Ding,Liren (2829) - Nepomniachtchi,lan (2761) [D02]**

FIDE World Championship 2023 (6), 16.04.2023

1.d4 ♘f6 2.♘f3 d5 3.♙f4 c5 4.e3 ♘c6 5.♘bd2 cxd4 6.exd4 ♙f5 7.c3 e6 8.♙b5 ♙d6 9.♙xd6 ♙xd6 10.0-0 0-0 11.♙e1 h6 12.♘e5 ♘e7 13.a4 a6 14.♙f1 ♘d7 15.♙xd7 ♙xd7 16.a5 ♙c7 17.♙f3 ♙fc8 18.♙a3 ♙g6 19.♘b3 ♘c6 20.♙g3 ♙e7 21.h4 ♙e8 22.♘c5 e5 23.♙b3 ♘xa5 24.♙xe5 ♙f6 25.♙a3 ♘c4 26.♙xc4 dxc4 27.h5 ♙c2 28.♙xb7 ♙b6 29.♘d6 ♙xe5 30.♙xe5 ♙xb2 31.♙a5 ♙h7 32.♙c5 ♙c1+ 33.♙h2 f6 34.♙g3 a5 35.♙xc4 a4 36.♘e3 ♙b1 37.♙c7 ♙g8 38.♘d5 ♙h8 39.♙a7 a3 40.♘e7 ♙f8 41.d5 a2 42.♙c7 ♙h7 43.♘g6 ♙g8 44.♙f7 1-0

**Nepomniachtchi,lan (2761) - Ding,Liren (2829) [C07]**

FIDE World Championship 2023 (7), 18.04.2023

1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5 3.♘d2 c5 4.♘gf3 cxd4 5.♙xd4 ♘f6 6.exd5 ♙xd5 7.♘f2f3 ♙e7 8.♙c4 ♘c6 9.♙xc6 bxc6 10.0-0 0-0 11.♙e2 ♙b7 12.♙d3 ♙c7 13.♙e4 ♘f6 14.♙h4 c5 15.♙f4 ♙b6 16.♘e5 ♙ad8 17.♙ae1 g6 18.♙g5 ♙d4 19.♙h3 ♙c7 20.b3 ♘h5 21.f4 ♙d6 22.c3 ♘xf4 23.♙xf4 ♙xf4 24.♙xf4 ♙xe5 25.♙h4 ♙d8 26.♙e4 ♙xc4 27.♙hxe4 ♙d5 28.♙h4 ♙d6 29.♙e3 h5 30.g3 ♙f6 31.♙c4 h4 32.gxh4 ♙d2 33.♙e2 ♙d3 34.♙xc5 ♙d1+ 35.♙g2 ♙d3 36.♙f2 ♙g7 37.♙cf4

♙xc3 1-0

**Ding,Liren (2829) - Nepomniachtchi,lan (2761) [E28]**

FIDE World Championship 2023 (8), 20.04.2023

1.d4 ♘f6 2.c4 e6 3.♘c3 ♙b4 4.e3 0-0 5.a3 ♙xc3+ 6.bxc3 d6 7.♘e2 c5 8.♘g3 ♘c6 9.♙a2 b6 10.e4 ♙a6 11.♙g5 h6 12.h4 hxg5 13.hxg5 g6 14.gxf6 ♙xf6 15.e5 dxe5 16.d5 ♘e7 17.d6 ♘f5 18.♘e4 ♙d8 19.♙d3 ♙g7 20.g4 ♙b7 21.♙h3 ♘h4 22.g5 ♙xe4 23.♙xe4 ♘f5 24.♙d2 ♙h8 25.♙h8 ♙xh8 26.d7 ♙d8 27.♙xe5+ ♙h7 28.♙h2+ ♙g7 29.♙e5+ ♙h7 30.♙h2+ ♙g7 31.♙c7 ♙h4 32.♙d1 ♙xg5 33.♙c2 ♙e7 34.♙g2 e5 35.♙e4 ♘h6 36.♙xa7 ♘g4 37.♙f3 ♘xf2 38.♙xf2 e4 39.♙e2 f5 40.♙xb6 ♙xd7 41.♙b8 ♙d6 42.♙xd6 ♙xd6 43.♙xe4 fxex4 44.♙xe4 ♙f6 45.♙e8 ½-½

**Nepomniachtchi,lan (2761) - Ding,Liren (2829) [C65]**

FIDE World Championship 2023 <https://www.chess.com> (9), 21.04.2023

1.e4 e5 2.♘f3 ♘c6 3.♙b5 ♘f6 4.d3 ♙c5 5.c3 0-0 6.0-0 d5 7.♘bd2 dxe4 8.dxe4 a5 9.a4 ♙e7 10.♙c2 ♘b8 11.♙e1 ♙d8 12.h3 h6 13.♘f1 c6 14.♙c4 ♘a6 15.♙g3 ♙c7 16.♙a2 b5 17.♙e2 ♙b8 18.♘h4 ♙f8 19.♙f3 bxa4 20.♙xh6 ♘c5 21.♘g6 ♙xb2 22.♙xf8 ♙xf8 23.♙g5 ♘h7 24.♙c1 ♙b5 25.♙a3 ♙e8 26.♙c4 ♙e6 27.♙xe6 ♘xe6 28.♘f5 c5 29.♙e2 ♙b3 30.♙c4 ♙c6 31.♙c1 ♘f6 32.♙xa4 ♙xa4 33.♙xa4 ♙xc3 34.♙b2 ♙b3 35.♙xe5 ♙b4 36.♙xa5 ♙xe4 37.♙xe4 ♘xe4 38.♙a4 ♘d4 39.♙xd4 cxd4 40.♙xd4 g6 41.♘e3 ♙g7 42.♙b4 ♘g3 43.♙b7 ♘f5 44.♘g4 ♙e7 45.♙b5 ♙e1+ 46.♙h2 ♙e2 47.♙b7 ♘d6 48.♙a7 ♙f8 49.♙g3 f5 50.♙f3 ♙e7 51.♙a8+ ♙e8 52.♙xe8+ ♙xe8 53.♘e5 g5 54.h4 gxh4 55.♙f4 h3 56.gxh3 ♙f7 57.♘c6+ ♙f6 58.♘d4 ♘e4 59.f3 ♘f2 60.h4 ♘d3+ 61.♙g3 ♙g6 62.♘e6 ♙f6 63.♘f4 ♘b4 64.♙f2 ♙e5 65.♙e3 ♘c2+ 66.♙d2 ♘d4 67.♘d3+ ♙f6 68.♙e3 ♘c2+ 69.♙f4 ♘d4 70.♙g3 ♘e2+ 71.♙f2 ♘d4 72.♘f4 ♙e5 73.♘e2 ♘e6 74.♙g3 ♙f6 75.♙g2 ♙g7 76.♙f2 f4 77.♙g1 ♙g6 78.♙g2 ♙h6 79.♘c1 ♙h5 80.♙h3 ♘d4 81.♘d3 ♘xf3 82.♘xf4+ ½-½

**(3555) Nepomniachtchi,lan (2761) - Ding,Liren (2829) [C84]**

FIDE World Championship 2023 <https://www.chess.com> (11), 24.04.2023

1.e4 e5 2.♘f3 ♘c6 3.♙b5 a6 4.♙a4 ♘f6 5.0-0 ♙e7 6.d3 b5 7.♙b3 d6 8.a3 ♘a5 9.♙a2 c5 10.♘c3 ♙e6 11.♙g5 0-0 12.♙xf6 ♙xf6 13.♘d5 g6 14.♙d2 ♙g7 15.♙g5 c4 16.♙xe6 fxe6 17.♘e3 ♙h6 18.♙ad1 ♙b8 19.dxc4 ♘xc4 20.♙xc4 bxc4 21.♙xd6 ♙xd6 22.♙xd6 ♙xe3 23.fxe3 ♙xf1+ 24.♙xf1 ♙xb2 25.♙xe6 ♙xc2 26.♙xa6 ♙a2 27.♙c6 ♙xa3 28.♙xc4 ♙xe3 29.♙f2 ♙a3 30.♙c5 ♙a2+ 31.♙f3 ♙a3+ 32.♙g4 ♙a2 33.♙h3 ♙e2 34.♙xe5 ♙f7 35.♙g3 ♙f6 36.♙e8 ♙f7 37.♙e5 ♙f6 38.♙e8 ♙f7 39.♙e5 ½-½

**Nepomniachtchi,lan (2761) - Ding,Liren (2829) [C84]**

FIDE World Championship 2023 (13), 27.04.2023

1.e4 e5 2.♘f3 ♘c6 3.♙b5 a6 4.♙a4 ♘f6 5.0-0 ♙e7 6.d3 b5 7.♙b3 d6 8.c3 0-0 9.h3 ♙b7 10.♙e3 ♘a5 11.♙c2 c5 12.♘bd2 ♙e8 13.a4 h6 14.d4 exd4 15.cxd4 cxd4 16.♙xd4 ♘c4 17.♙xc4 bxc4 18.f3 ♙f8 19.♙f2 d5 20.exd5 ♘xd5 21.♙e4 ♙e5 22.♙c1 ♙c8 23.♘e2 ♙e7 24.♙d4 f5 25.♙g3 ♙xe4 26.fxe4 ♙xe4 27.♙xe4 fxe4 28.♙fd1 ♘b4 29.♙d7 ♙c5+ 30.♙h2 ♙c6 31.♙c7 ♙xc7 32.♙xc7 ♙d5 33.♘c3 ♘d3 34.♙c2 ♙c6 35.a5 ♙f7 36.♙e2 ♘c1 37.♙e1 ♘d3 38.♙e2 ♘c1 39.♙e1 ♘d3 40.♙e2 ½-½

**Ding,Liren (2829) - Nepomniachtchi,lan (2761) [D02]**

FIDE World Championship 2023 (15), 30.04.2023

1.d4 ♘f6 2.♘f3 d5 3.c3 c5 4.dxc5 e6 5.♙e7 6.g3 ♘c6 7.♙g2 0-0 8.b4 ♘g4 9.♙d4 ♙c7 10.0-0 e5 11.h3 exd4 12.hxg4 dxc3 13.♙xc3 ♘xb4 14.a3 ♙f6 15.♙c1 ♙xc3 16.♙xc3 ♘c6 17.♙xd5 ♙xg4 18.♘g5 h6 19.♘e4 ♙ae8 20.e3 ♙e5 21.♙d2 ♙d8 22.♘d6 ♙h5 23.♙b1 ♘e5 24.e4 b6 25.cxb6 axb6 26.♙b5 ♙xd2 27.♙xc7 ♙h3 28.♙xh3 ♙xh3 29.♙g2 ♙h5 30.♙b5 ♙d1 31.♘d5 ♙dh1 32.♘e7+ ♙h7 33.♙xe5 ♙1h2+ 34.♙g1 ♙h1+ 35.♙g2 ½-½

**Nepomniachtchi,lan (2761) - Ding,Liren (2829) [C84]**

FIDE World Championship 2023 (16), 30.04.2023

1.e4 e5 2.♘f3 ♘c6 3.♙b5 a6 4.♙a4 ♘f6 5.0-0 ♙e7 6.d3 b5 7.♙b3 d6 8.a4 ♙d7 9.h3 0-0 10.♙e3 ♘a5 11.♙a2 bxa4 12.♙d2 ♘c6 13.♘c3 ♙b8 14.♙xa4 ♘d4 15.♙c4 c6 16.♙xd4 exd4 17.♙f4 ♙e6 18.♙e1 a5 19.♙f3 ♙b7 20.e5 ♘d5 21.exd6 ♙xd6 22.♙xd6 ♙xd6 23.♙e4 ♘f4 24.♙e5 ♙xe5 25.♙xe5 ♙xc4 26.dxc4 ♙b4 27.♙c5 d3 28.cxd3 ♘d3 29.♙xc6 ♘e5 30.♙c7 ♘xc4 31.♘c5 ♘xb2 32.♘d7 ♙e8 33.♙xa5 ♘d3 34.♙g5 ♙f4 35.f3 h6 36.♙d5 ♘b4 37.♙d6 ♙f5 38.♙b7 ♙d5 39.♙db6 ♙d8 40.♘f6+ gxf6 41.♙xb4 ♙d4 42.♙xd4 ♙xd4 43.♙h2 ♙g7 44.♙b2 ♙d5 45.♙a2 ♙d4 46.♙b2 ♙d5 47.♙a2 ♙d4 ½-½