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Zoey Tang at the 2024 Oregon Open.

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Jim Tarjan at the 2024 Oregon Open.

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Oregon Open

Wilson Gibbins

Two hundred and sixteen (216) chess players descended on the Lloyd Center DoubleTree Hotel in Portland Oregon for the 74th Oregon Open in search of competition, camaraderie, and cash. This meant that FIDE Arbiter Norm May and tournament directors Dave Murray and Kent Bedell had a busy Labor Day weekend keeping up with all the tasks and responsibilities of large tournaments.

Zoey Tang won the top section and the \$2,221.67 prize. With all the Oregon tournaments she has won, it was a surprise that this was her first Oregon Open victory. She started with a draw with Rafael Palathingal from Washington in round one to warm up, then reeled off five straight victories to clinch clear first. Vidip Kumar Kona finished second, grabbed the \$1,791.67 second prize, and, in the process, took his rating over 2200. Congratulations to the new National Master. Nick Raptis, Austin Liu, Roger Tabet, and Ishaan Kodarapu tied for third, taking home \$573.33 each. Robert Fisette took the U2150 third-place prize with four points, as the first and second place U2150 prizes were included in the four-way tie for third.

Cody Gorman and William Nobles drew each other in round four and won their other five games to tie for first in the Under 2000 section, winning \$645 each. Emel Bayrambeyli finished third with 4.5 points to claim \$573.33. Neil Natarajan, Tunahan Efe Monkul, and Ademidun Jedidiah Adebolu shared the third place and U1850 prizes.

Laurel Scarborough, Selina Cheng, Aaron Nicoski, and Bhavik Bharath Bharath had a four-way tie for first in the U1700 section with 4.5 points each, netting them \$573.33. Abraham Tebbe and Jiro Plaunty shared the U1550 money.

In the U1400 section, Advait Krishnan won clear first and \$716.67

with 5.5 points, drawing Elijah Barish in the last round after winning his first five games. Elijah tied Kenzo Fonseca for second with five points to win \$501.66 each. Eesha Juneja, Benjamin Wooden Himmelman, Joseph Danilescu, and Steven Hearn won the U1250 prizes with four points.

The U1100 section was the largest with 63 players. Kanishk Premchander won all six games to ensure clear first in the section and \$716.67 first prize. Maximilian Francis Eline, Kaiden Chamberlain, Jayden Yu, and William Martin each scored five points to tie for second and win \$250.83. Vivaan Kalra, Daniel Dollinger, and Weg Shukla each scored four points to share the U950 prize.

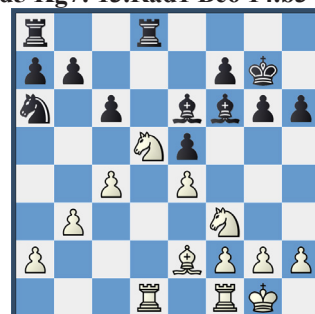
Vidip Kona won the Blitz Championship with 7.5 out of eight points, giving up only one draw to Yu-Chen Liang. Nick Raptis finished second.

Thanks to FIDE Arbiter Norm May and tournament directors Dave Murray and Kent Bedell for directing and managing the tournament. Thanks to Mike Morris for helping with the startup and shutdown of the tournament and directing the Blitz event. Thanks to Lilly Tang helping to keep things running. And thanks to Greg Markowski for managing our Oregon Chess Federation/Northwest Chess membership system to ensure that Oregon chess players had OCF memberships.

If after all that you are still hungry for chess, we encourage you to return to the Lloyd Center DoubleTree for the Oregon Class Championships on November 2-3.

**Rafael Palathingal (1947) –
Roger Tabet (2113) [E94]**
Oregon Open 2000+
Portland, OR (R3), September 1, 2024
[Roger Tabet]

1.d4 Nf6 2.Nf3 g6 3.c4 Bg7 4.Nc3 0-0 5.e4 d6 6.Be2 Na6 7.0-0 e5 8.dxe5 dxe5 9.Bg5 h6 10.Qxd8 Rxd8 11.Bxf6 Bxf6 12.Nd5 Kg7! 13.Rad1 Be6 14.b3 c6



Position after 14...c6

This was the first hard decision. The natural move ...Nc5 is good, but Black has to know how to deal with b4.

15.Nc3 g5

15...Nc5 16.b4? Nd7 17.a3 a5!; 15...Nb4! a good move too. 16.a3? Nc2 17.a4

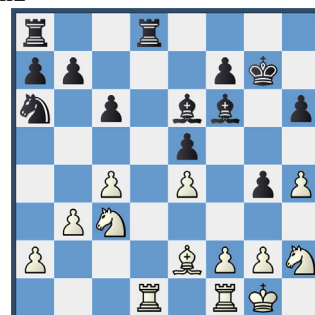
16.h4?!

16.Rxd8 Rxd8 17.Rd1 g4 18.Ne1 h5

16...g4

16...gxh4! Taking was better. 17.Na4 Bg4

17.Nh2



Position after 17.Nh2

This is the only move that does not lose a pawn. h4 is hanging but so is g4.

17...h5 18.g3

I played g4 earlier to get to this forced position where the h2 knight is temporarily in jail. But f3 is coming and I only have a few moves to ameliorate my position.

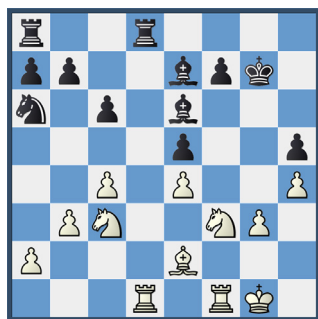
18...Be7!

18...Nb4! Also good 19.f3 gxf3 20.Bxf3 Rh8! 21.Rf2 Be7.

19.f3 gxf3

19...Bc5+! The best move. 20.Kg2 Nb4+ to get to c2 and e3 or d4.

20.Nxf3



Position after 20.Nxf3

A critical position. Maintaining the advantage here is not simple.

20...Bh3?!

20...Nb4! 21.Rxd8 Rxd8 22.Rd1 Bc5+ 23.Kg2 Rxd1 24.Bxd1 f6 25.Ne1 Bd4!+

21.Rxd8!

21.Rfe1? I thought this first 21...Bb4? 22.Rxd8 Rxd8 23.Rd1 Rf8 (23...Rxd1+? 24.Nxd1 f6=)

21...Rxd8 22.Rd1 Rxd1+ 23.Bxd1?!

23.Nxd1=

23...Nc5?!=

23...Bb4! 24.Nb1 Bc5+ 25.Kh2 Bg4 26.Kg2 f6

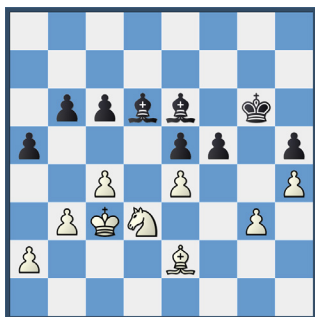
24.Ne1? Kg6

Four minutes just on this move. 24...Nxb3!? 25.axb3 Bb4 26.Bxh5 Bxc3 27.Nc2=

25.Kf2 Ne6?=-

Despite the bishop pair, this position is equal. 25...a5!

26.Nd3 f6 27.Ke3 Nd4 28.Ne2= Nxe2 29.Bxe2 b6 30.Bf3 Be6 31.Kd2 a5 32.Kc3 Bd6 33.Be2 f5



Position after 33...f5

I thought breaking with ...f5 would help activate my bishops, but this is still equal.

34.Bf3! c5

34...f4= 35.gxf4 exf4 36.e5 Bc7 37.Bxc6 Kf5=

35.Kd2 fxe4 36.Bxe4+ Kf6 37.Ke3 Bf8 38.Bf3 Bh6+ 39.Ke2 Bf7 40.Nb2

I find this idea strange but actually good. With Nf2 the control of the e4 square was clear and I had no way of progressing. 40.Nf2!=

40...Bg6!= 41.Nd1?!

A bad move. g4 was best. 41.g4! hxg4 42.Bxg4 e4 43.Na4 Ke5 44.h5 Bf7 45.Nxb6?!+ Kf4 46.Nd7 Bg7 47.Nxc5 Kxg4 48.Ke3 Kf5+ 49.Nxe4

41...e4!

Now or never. This takes space and allows the black king to enter via e5 and d4.

42.Bg2 Ke5 43.Ne3?!

43.Nc3 Bf5!+

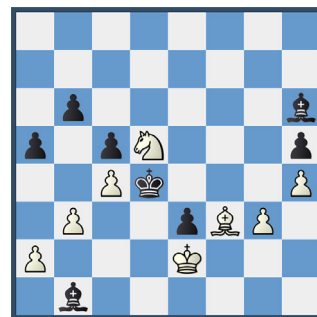
43...Kd4 44.Nd5

The endgame starts to be interesting here. I missed the best move ...Bf5.

44...e3

44...Bf5! 45.Nxb6?? Bg4+ 46.Ke1 Kd3! 47.Bf1+ Kc2 48.Be2 Bd2+ 49.Kf1 Bh3+ 50.Kf2 e3+ 51.Kf3 Bg4+

45.Bf3 Bb1!!



Position after 45...Bb1

A very good move made with a few minutes on the clock. The idea was not so much to take the white pawns, but to incite a3 then Bd3+ and b3 is weaker after Kc3 at some point.

45...Bd3+= 46.Kd1 b5 47.cxb5 Bxb5=

46.Ke1??

A bad move. a3 was more resilient. 46.a3 Bd3+! 47.Ke1 Bc2! 48.Nxb6 Bg7-+ To go to e5 then g3.

46...Bxa2

We started blitzing here.

47.Bd1 b5

47...Bf8! 48.Nxb6 Bd6 49.Nd5 Bxg3+ 50.Ke2 Bxh4-+

48.Ne7 Bf8?

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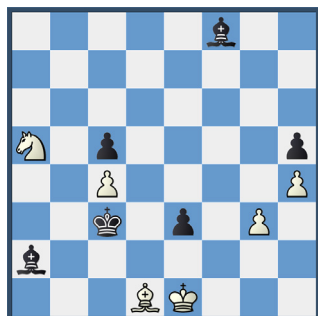
48...Bxb3!! The best move is to let the h6 bishop hang and give the other bishop as well. The main idea is to clear the path for the a-pawn. 49.Bxb3 a4!! 50.cxb5 (50. Ba2 b4 51.Nf5+ Kc3 52.Nxh6 b3 53.Bb1 a3 54.Nf5 a2) 50...axb3 51.b6 b2 52.b7 b1Q+; 48...bxc4 also wins 49.Nf5+ (49. bxc4 Kc3) 49...Kc3 50.Nxh6 cxb3+

49.Nc6+ Kc3 50.Nxa5 bxc4??

Gives away all the advantage and goes back to equality. 50...b4! 51.Ke2 Bh6 52.Ke1+

51.bxc4?

Another mistake! Taking with the knight was the only move. 51.Nxc4= Bxb3 52.Bxb3 Kxb3 53.Nxe3=



Position after 51.bxc4

51...Bd6?

Another mistake! ...Bb1 was winning again. The game will be even from now on. 51...Bb1 52.Bxb5 Bd3 53.Be2 Be4 54.Bd1 Kb4 55.Nb3 Kxc4+

52.Ke2 Bc7 53.Nb7 Kd4 54.Nxc5!!

A brilliant move and the only idea that saves the game. Well found from my opponent. 54.Kf3!= The only other good move, and for the same reason. 54...Bxc4 55.Nxc5!

54...Bxc4+ 55.Kf3 Bd5+ 56.Ke2 Bxg3

56...Kxc5 57.Kxe3 Bf7 58.g4=

57.Nb3+ Ke4 58.Nc5+ Kd4 59.Nb3+ Ke4 60.Nc5+ Kf4 61.Nd3+ Kg4 62.Kxe3+ Kxh4 63.Bxh5 Kxh5 64.Nf4+ Bxf4+ 65.Kxf4

½-½

Ishaan Kodarapu (2091) –

Jim Tarjan (2362) [A26]

Oregon Open 2000+

Portland, OR (R4), September 1, 2024

[Ishaan Kodarapu]

1.c4 Nf6 2.Nc3 d6 3.e4 e5!?

Quite an interesting opening; the move order is very weird.

4.h3?!

I'm not sure what I was thinking when I played h3. This move is not useful. Better is 4.g3 Nc6 5.Bg2 and aiming for a English Botvinnik setup.

4...g6 5.d3 Bg7 6.g3



Position after 6.g3

Now we can see h3 was a wasted move but does allow my bishop to go to e3 without being bothered with Ng4.

6...0-0 7.Bg2 Nc6

7...c6!? is another interesting way to play this position. The end goal is to push ...d5, which he can prepare with Be6 and Nbd7-b6.

8.Nge2 Nd4 9.Nxd4 exd4 10.Ne2 Nd7 11.0-0

11.b4!? Maybe playing this before Black played ...c5 was a try. 11...c5 12.0-0! cxb4 13.Bb2 Qb6 14.a3. Despite being down a pawn, White is preferable.

11...a5

Stopping White's b4.

12.b3

With the idea of Bb2 and forcing ...c5.

12...Re8 13.Bb2 c5 14.a3?



Position after 14.a3

This move is utterly pointless. I had thought in the game I would try to play b4 but that doesn't even do much.

14...Rb8

Preparing ...b5. I am forced to go a4. 14...h6 (Useless move) 15.b4 b4 only weakens my position; Black has the nice 15...b5! ending with a complex position where Black should come out on top.

15.a4

Basically, a3 was a wasted move.

15...Ne5

I had seen this knight maneuver in advance. He obviously wants to go Nc6-b4.

16.Nf4



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Now I maneuver my knight to d5.

16...Nc6 17.Nd5 Be6

He wants to capture on d5 and play ...Nb4. This isn't really stoppable.

18.Bc1?!

18.Ba3 Bxd5 19.cxd5 Nb4 20.Bxb4 axb4 without a wasted Bc1.

18...Bxd5 19.cxd5!?

I had decided to capture this way to keep my chances alive. If the pawn structure was purely symmetrical, Black should never lose. I decided to take this risk, opening up the ...b5 push for Black.

19...Nb4 20.Ba3

Now we can see 18.Bc1 was wasted!

20...b5!



Position after 20...b5

Black finally lashes out on the queenside.

21.axb5 Rxb5 22.Kh2?

Not a necessary move. After checking with the engine, I saw that 22.h4! immediately is fine. I had played this a move later, but Kh2 had pretty much been wasted. The whole idea behind this is to try and soften up Black's kingside. The next moves for White will be h5 and f4-f5, while Black naturally gravitates towards the queenside in hopes of picking up the isolated b3-pawn.

22...Na6 23.h4

I start the kingside "attack" if you can call it that. Only way Black can play for an advantage here is...

23...Nb8?

...Nb8 is totally unnecessary. 23...Qb6! and I had 24.Bc1! Rxb3 25.Rxa5! calculated. 25...Rb8 However, Black is still better here because of the d3-pawn and his activity.

24.f4?

In my mind, I had still considered that Black would go for the b3-pawn with ...Qb6. I thought I was going to simply march my pawns and get significant counterplay. However 24.Bc1! Is a much better move. The idea is simple: defend the a3-pawn. 24...Qb6 25.Ra3 Nd7 Only way Black is winning b3 is by moving his knight out of the way. 26.Bh3 Nf6 27.h5! Rb8 28.h6 Bf8 29.Bd2 White is completely fine here.

24...Nd7 25.Bh3 h5 26.Bc1

I realized that I actually have time to transfer my f1-rook to the defense of the b3-pawn, because Black has his knight to worry about.

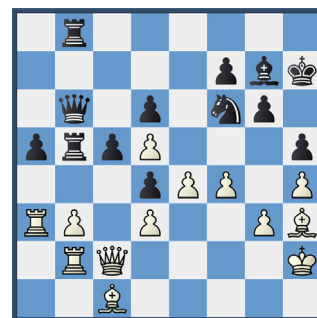
26...Nf6 27.Rf2?

27.f5! Qb6 28.Bg5 Black is given no time to mess around on the queenside. Actually, he's starting to have serious problems on the kingside.

27...Qb6 28.Ra3 Rb8 29.Rb2 Kh7 30.Qc2?

[Diagram top of next column]

Black is simply better now. He has pretty much stopped all traces of counterplay ever happening on the kingside. He can easily continue to slowly squeeze his advantage. 30.f5! attacking as soon as possible, while keeping the White queen



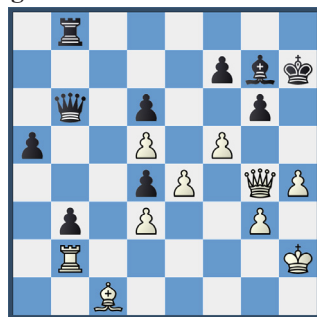
Position after 30.Qc2

flexible! Qc2 was very committal, but by keeping the queen on d1, I give myself more chances to transfer it over to the kingside if necessary. It is not clear how Black will continue.

30...Ng4+ 31.Bxg4 hxg4 32.Qe2 c4?

This is not a terrible move; however, he gives me a lot of chances to make something happen on the kingside, because all of his pieces are on the queenside. 32...f5! Very simple move! 33.exf5 gxf5 34.Qe6 Rf8 and White has nothing here.

33.Qxg4 Rxb3 34.Raxb3 cxb3 35.f5



Position after 35.f5

Finally, we see this pawn break. It is Black who has to play precisely in order to keep his advantage. Otherwise, he could allow a perpetual, or even could get into some

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trouble *hint hint*.

35...Qc5?

He goes on the offensive, but this is not the best move. 35...Qc7! The idea is that Black leaves the infiltration of Qc3 on the table, as well as bringing his queen to the kingside if necessary.

36.Bf4

Now according to the engines, the position is equal. However, it is very tricky to play for Black. In the game, I was pretty much going for a draw, but maybe Black could mess up somewhere and give White a win.

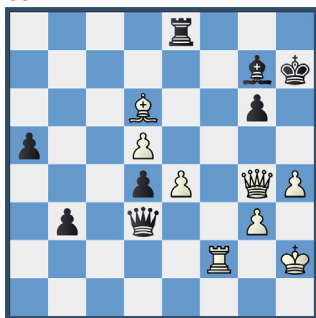
36...Qc3 37.Rf2 Qxd3 38.fgx6+

38.Bxd6 first is also fine.

38...fxg6 39.Bxd6

Defending e4.

39...Re8



Position after 39...Re8

40.e5!!

With less than two minutes on the clock, it's not easy to find this move, but it was kind of a gut feeling to play it. I thought that if Black took it, he would lose, but the real idea is just to defend the pawn, as Black was simply threatening ...Qxe4.

40...Rxe5??

Suddenly, White is completely winning!!

40...Qe3! 41.Rf7 b2 42.Rxg7+ Kxg7 43.Qd7+ Kh6 44.Qxe8 Black cannot even promote a queen here, as Qh8 is threatened. Black is actually the one forced to make a perpetual with 44...Qf2+ 45.Kh3 Qf5+ (45...Qf1+ 46.Kh2 Qe2+ 47.Kh3) 46.g4! Not (46.Kh2?? Kh5! And there is no perpetual for White.) 46...Qf3+ 47.Kh2=.

41.Bxe5 Bxe5 42.h5?!

Simpler was the immediate 42.d6 Black cannot take the pawn, but can't really let the pawn run either 42...Bxd6 (42...Qe3 43.Rf7+ Bg7 44.d7+-) 43.Qd7+

42...a4 43.d6 a3 44.d7 Bc7 45.d8Q Bxd8 46.Qd7+ Kh6 47.Qxd8 Qe3 48.Qh8+ Kg5 49.Qf6+

Overall a crazy game, which for the most part was unclear. However, by creating annoying chances on the kingside, I was able to win this game!

1-0

**Nick Raptis (2348) –
Zoey Tang (2343) [D13]**

Oregon Open 2000+

Portland, OR (R5), September 2, 2024

[Zoey Tang]

Going into the penultimate round, Nick was the only player on 4.0/4, while I was one of two players with 3.5/4. Standings-wise, I had to win if I wanted a realistic chance of finishing first.

1.d4 Nf6 2.g3

And there goes all my preparation from the previous night!

2...d5 3.Bg2 Bf5

Because White's setup has been rather slow to control the center, I'm able to develop my pieces to the most natural squares. Qb3, the typical refutation to an early Bf5, isn't even legal here!

4.c4 c6

The opening has now transposed into a reversed London, where "Black" has chosen to fianchetto the kingside bishop.

5.cxd5

I was surprised by this move during the game. Normally, keeping the tension (so as to not allow Black's knight to get to c6 easily) is preferable. 5.Nc3 e6 6.Nf3 Be7 7.Nh4=

5...cxd5 6.Nf3 Nc6 7.Nc3 e6



Position after 7...e6

8.Qb3?!

The queen is misplaced here, as it is always in danger of becoming trapped.

8...a6

A typical way to defend the b7-pawn; however, there are better options here. 8...Nb4! The easiest way to seize the advantage. Already, Black is threatening to win on the spot with ...Bc2. 9.Qa4+ Nd7 10.0-0?? Bc2 11.b3 a6!-+ Quiet moves are always the hardest to see! Now ...b5 is unstoppable.

9.0-0

9.Qxb7?? Na5-+

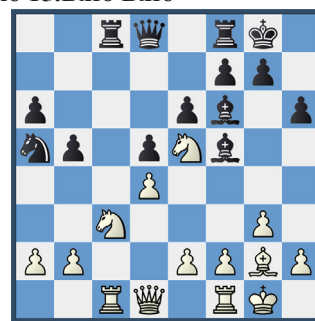
9...Be7 10.Bf4

Now White is threatening Qxb7, since the queen can escape to c7 later.

10...Na5 11.Qd1 0-0 12.Ne5 Rc8 13.Rc1 b5 14.Bg5?!

Trading off the bishop for Black's knight isn't the most palatable idea, but it's hard to come up with reasonable moves for White. Humanly speaking, playing 14.e3 and waiting around isn't the most natural idea. 14...Nc4 15.Qe2 h6 16.h4 Bb4. White isn't losing, but this is not the type of position you'd like to play.; 14.e4! When down space, blow everything up! 14...dxe4 15.g4 Bg6 16.Nxg6 hxg6 17.Nxe4

14...h6 15.Bxf6 Bxf6



Position after 15...Bxf6

Even though my advantage is by no means decisive, at this point I was feeling pretty good about my chances. Nick was spending lots of time, which (given that it's not a particularly tactical position) meant that he didn't like his position much.

16.Nf3?

Not really improving. 16.b3 looks weakening, but at least it stops Nc4. 16...Be7 17.Nb1 Qd6+

16...Qb6?!

16...Nc4 17.b3 Na3!-+ Crushing. Black is potentially threatening ...Bc2, and White still has zero reasonable moves.



Getting ready to start round five. Nick Raptis (L) plays Zoey Tang.
Photo credit: Meiling Cheng.

17.e3 Rc7 18.Qe2 Rfc8 19.Nd2 Qb8

Threatening b4 to crash through on the only open file. 19...b4?! 20.Na4 I didn't want to allow the excessive trades, though after 20...Qb5 21.Qxb5 axb5 22.Nc5 Be7 Black is still clearly better.

20.Ra1?!



Position after 20.Ra1

20...Nc4?

Making equal trades when you're the one

putting pressure on is usually not a great idea. 20...b4 21.Na4 Qb5 22.Qxb5 axb5 23.Nc5 Nc4!-+ White has an impossible choice: take on c4 and straighten out Black's structure, or lose the b2-pawn and give up the c4-outpost.

21.Nxc4 Rxc4 22.a3 a5 23.Rfd1 b4 24.axb4 axb4 25.Na4



Position after 25.Na4

25...Be7??

Too complacent. There's no need to stop

Nc5, and the dark-squared bishop had an important duty. 25...b3 26.Nc5 White doesn't even have this option because of 26...Bc2 27.Rdc1 R8xc5 28.dxc5 Bxb2-+ 26.e4!

Boom! Suddenly White has broken through the binds in the position.

26...Rc2 27.Qe3 dxe4 28.Bxe4 Bxe4 29.Qxe4 b3 30.Qe3??

The problem with coming back from a losing position is that sometimes, your mentality doesn't adjust quickly enough. White had already managed to fight back to an equal-ish position! 30.Qf3 maintaining defense of the a8-h1 diagonal is critical, since without the fianchettoed light-squared bishop, the king can get airy. Black has no real targets here.

30...Qb7

I'm now threatening ...Ra8 or even ...h5-h4. There's no way to challenge the diagonal.

31.Nc5 R8xc5!

I didn't see the exchange sacrifice at first. However, I wasn't completely satisfied with 31...Bxc5 32.dxc5 R8xc5 33.Rd8+ Kh7 34.Rad1, where even though Black has a clear advantage, I'll have to be careful with my king safety. It is a major piece endgame, after all.

32.dxc5 Bxc5 33.Rd8+ Kh7 34.Qd3+

Even though White has this check, there's still no way to guard the f2-pawn. White's kingside falls apart.

34...f5 35.Rf1 Qb6 36.Kg2 Bxf2 37.Kh3 Bg1

Black still has to exercise a bit of caution. A trap I almost fell into: 37...Be3?!, threatening ...Qb7 and ...Qb4, looks very nice, but White has 38.Rxf5! exf5 39.Qxf5+ Qg6 40.Rh8+!= This would



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have been very depressing.

38.g4 Qc7 39.Rd6 Rxh2+ 40.Kg3 Qe7 41.Rxg1 Qh4+ 42.Kf4 Qf2+ 43.Ke5 Qxg1 44.Kxe6 Qxg4 45.Qxb3 Re2+ 46.Kd7 Qe4 47.Kc7 Qc2+

Even though I was playing with Black, I managed to get an advantage straight from the opening. Barring some exceptional players, defense is nobody's forte, but Nick managed to fight all the way back to equal. Besides that small blip, though, we can pretend it was a smooth victory! I'd like to draw your attention to what happened after move 30 :)

0-1

**Ted Wang (2195) –
Ishaan Kodarapu (2091) [A04]**

Oregon Open 2000+

Portland, OR (R6), September 2, 2024

[Ishaan Kodarapu]

1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 e6 3.d3

Sideline of the French Sicilian, presumably trying to avoid the main lines.

3...Nc6

However, it's very easy for Black to play.

4.g3 g6 5.Bg2 Bg7 6.0-0 Nge7 7.Nbd2 0-0 8.c3 e5

Stopping d4 for the foreseeable future. Black now has a reverse Botvinnik setup.

9.a4 d6 10.Nc4 h6

Preparing ...Be6. I looked at these sorts of lines before the game, and White's idea is to push b4, playing on the queenside. Black shouldn't be too afraid and should push on the kingside.

11.Bd2 Be6 12.b4 f5

White doesn't have anything concrete on the queenside. He can push b5, but he would probably just lose all his attack.

13.exf5

Correct, otherwise I would easily go f4 and the attack would play itself.

13...Bxf5 14.b5?

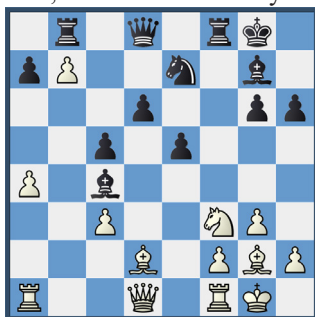
The one and only mistake. 14.bxc5 was correct, where after I would play 14...d5! 15.Nd6 Bxd3

14...Bxd3!

14...Na5? 15.Nxa5 Qxa5 16.Nh4! Either I give up the bishop pair or lose a pawn. 16...Bc8 17.Be4 It seems OK for Black here, but White is completely better.

15.bxc6 Bxc4 16.cxb7 Rb8

Perhaps he thought the pawn would be strong on b7, but it's actually just dead. From here, conversion was easy.



Position after 16...Rb8

17.Re1 Bd5 18.h4 Qd7 19.c4 Bxb7 20.Nh2 Bxg2 21.Kxg2 Nf5 22.Qg4 Qf7 23.Rf1 h5 24.Qe2 Nd4 25.Qe4 Qb7 26.Qxb7 Rxb7 27.Bg5 Bf6 28.Be3 Rb4 29.Rac1 Rc8 30.Nf3 Nxf3 31.Kxf3 Kf7 32.Ke2 Ke6 33.Rc2 Rxa4 34.Rb1 Rc6 35.Rb8 Rb6 36.Re8+ Kf7 37.Rc8 e4 38.Rc7+ Ke6 39.f3 exf3+ 40.Kxf3 Rb3 41.Ke2 Rb2 42.Rxb2 Bxb2 43.Kd3 Be5 44.Bf4 Bxf4 45.gxf4 Ra1 46.Rg7 Kf6 47.Rd7 Rd1+ 48.Ke3 a5 49.Ra7 Rd4 50.Ra6 Kf5 51.Rxa5 Rxc4 52.Ra6 Re4+

0-1

Emel Bayrambeyli (1644) –

Randall Smolensky (1800) [C57]

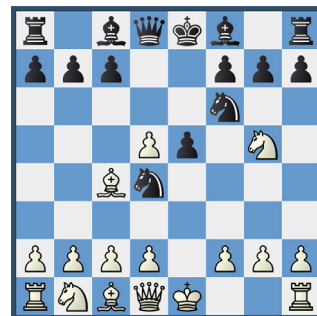
Oregon Open U2000

Portland, OR (R2), August 31, 2024

[Emel Bayrambeyli]

First of all, I would like to thank the tournament organizers, arbiters, and everyone who contributed to this amazing event. And of course, my heartfelt gratitude to my wonderful chess trainer Stanislav Ilin and my family, who support me in every way. Lastly, a big thank you to Green Chess Team for their support!

1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Be4 Nf6 4.Ng5 d5 5.exd5 Nd4?!



Position after 5...Nd4

An unexpected move from my opponent, playing unusually. This move surprised me, and I had to spend time analyzing it.

6.c3

I realized the knight on d4 was strong, so I decided to chase it away.

6...b5

My opponent knows the theory very well and continues with an aggressive move.

7.cxd4 bxc4 8.0-0 Qxd5 9.Re1

The open e-file creates a pin that's uncomfortable for Black. The black king is vulnerable and feels pressured.

9...e4 10.Nxe4

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It's the right moment to exploit the pin on the e-file. Black's king is left exposed.

10...Nxe4

10...Be7 11.Nxf6+ gxf6 White would still have a better position because of Black's bad pawn structure.

11.Nc3 Qd7 12.Rxe4+ Be7 13.Qe2

I'm putting pressure on the bishop on e7, preventing Black from castling. I'm focusing on the weakness of the e7-bishop.

13...Bb7 14.Re3

14.d5 is a move that I also considered.

14...Kf8 15.b3



Position after 15.b3

15...cxb3?

Black should have continued development with ...Re8. ...cxb3 ruins Black's defense. They don't have time to finish their development.

16.axb3 a6 17.Rxe7

A critical rook sacrifice, taking advantage of Black's undeveloped position.

17...Qxe7 18.Ba3

1-0

**Jaden Marx (1821) –
Cody Gorman (1875) [E05]**
Oregon Open U2000
Portland, OR (R3), September 1, 2024
[Cody Gorman]

**1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e6 3.g3 d5 4.Nf3 Be7
5.Bg2 0-0 6.0-0 dxc4 7.Qa4**

As someone who plays the Catalan, the move I would play is Ne5 whereas this allows Black to equalize nicely.

7...a6 8.Qxc4 b5 9.Qc2 Bb7 10.Nbd2 Nc6?!

[Diagram top of next column]

Although I had this nice idea that the knight would simply move and attack the



Position after 10...Nc6

queen which would free up the c-pawn, there's no need for this maneuver when simply ...Nbd7 and ...Rc8 puts pressure on the queen. There's no need to chase the queen with ...Nc6 to b4 when White will have to move the queen off the c-file regardless.

11.e3

11.Ne4

11...Nb4 12.Qb1 c5 13.a3 Nbd5 14.dxc5 Bxc5 15.b4?

15.e4

15...Ba7

I saw 15...Bxe3! during the game, but it didn't feel as decisive. If White accepts the sac with 16.fxe3 Nxe3 we end up in a neat position where White's development and piece placement hurt. For instance 17.Re1 Nxe2 18.Kxg2 Rc8 and White's in a tough position. White's bishop is tied to defend the d2-knight and Black has full control of the c- and d-files.

16.Bb2 Nxe3 17.Bxf6?

17.Ng5! keeps White in the game and just creates chaos with multiple hanging pieces. The computer suggests White comes out a little better after 17...Qxd2 18.Bxf6 Nf5 19.Bxb7 Rab8

17...gxf6 18.fxe3 Bxe3+ 19.Kh1 Bxd2 20.Rd1 Bxf3 21.Bxf3 Ra7 22.Ra2 Rd7 23.Qb2 Bg5 24.Rxd7 Qxd7 25.h4 Qd3 26.Kg2 Be3 27.Qxf6 Rc8

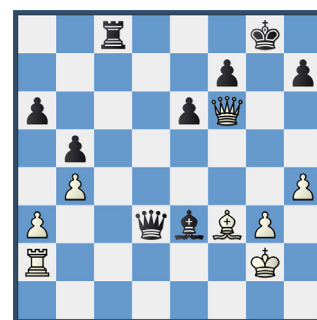
[Diagram top of next column]

28.Ra1?

This loses the game by giving Black's rook entrance to the second rank.

28...Rc2+ 29.Kh3 Rf2 30.h5 h6 31.a4 Bg5 32.Rd1 Qxd1 33.Qxg5+ hxg5 34.Bxd1 Rd2 35.Bb3 Rb2 36.Bd1 Rxb4 37.axb5 axb5 38.Bc2 f5

0-1



Position after 27...Rc8

**Neil Natarajan (1739) –
Cody Gorman (1875) [B03]**
Oregon Open U2000
Portland, OR (R5), September 2, 2024
[Cody Gorman]

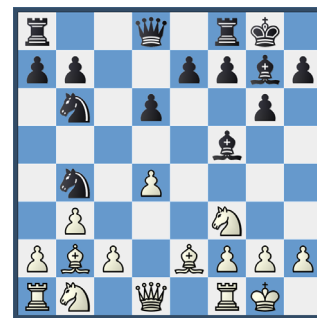
**1.e4 Nf6 2.e5 Nd5 3.d4 d6 4.exd6 cxd6
5.Nf3 g6 6.Be4 Nb6 7.Bd3?!**

This equalizes the position and puts the bishop on an ineffective square. Either Bb3 or Be2 is better.

7...Bg7 8.b3 0-0 9.0-0 Nc6 10.Bb2 Nb4?

I thought going for the bishop pair was fine, but there's no need to attack the bishop and force it to retreat. ...Bg4 followed by ...e5 gives Black the edge in the opening.

11.Be2 Bf5



Position after 11...Bf5

12.Na3

White could also just play c3 since if ...Nc2 is played, 13.g4 hurts.

12...Rc8 13.c3 N4d5 14.Qd2 e5 15.c4 Nf4 16.d5?

This relieves any pressure in the center and gives Black a very comfortable position.

16...Nd7 17.g3 Nxe2+ 18.Qxe2 Nc5 19.Qd2 Bd3

I should have just done ...Bh3 and then ...f5. White kingside is under stress.

20.Rfd1 Qd7 21.Ne1

21.b4 Be4 22.Ng5 f6 23.Nxe4 Nxe4

21...Bf5 22.Nac2 h5 23.Ne3 Bh6 24.Qe2 Bh3 25.N3g2 f5 26.f3 Rce8 27.Nd3 Nxd3 28.Qxd3 Qd8 29.Qc3 Qb6+ 30.Kh1?

30.c5 is the only way to keep the position from getting worse, by forcing a trade of queens and playing with a pawn down.

30...Qf2 31.Rg1 Kh7 32.Nh4 Be3 33.Rad1 g5 34.Ng2 Bd4 35.Qc1 Bxb2 36.Qxg5 Qxf3 37.Rd2 Bd4 38.Rgd1 Bxg2+ 39.Rxg2 Qxd1+ 40.Rg1 Qxg1#

0-1

**Selina Cheng (1644) –
Ekam Sardar (1292) [C65]**

Oregon Open U1700

Portland, OR (R2), September 1, 2024

[Selina Cheng]

1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bb5

The Ruy Lopez, or the Spanish

3...Nf6 4.0-0 Be5

I thought he'd go for main line 4.Nxe4, but apparently not!

5.Nxe5

The idea of 5.d4 after 4... Nxe5

5...Nxe5 6.d4 Bxd4

Black gets the pawn back.

7.Qxd4 Nc6 8.Bxc6 dxc6 9.Qxd8+ Kxd8

10.Nc3 Be6 11.Bg5

With the idea of e5.



Position after 11.Bg5

11...h6 12.Bxf6+ gxf6

Doubling his pawns.

13.f4

I want to go f5, and reduce the squares for his bishop.

13...Ke7 14.f5 Be4 15.Rfe1 Rad8 16.Rad1 b5?

16...Rd6 17.b3 Ba6 18.Kf2 Rhd8 19.Kf3 b6 20.a4 Bb7 21.a5 c5 22.Rxd6

17.b3 b4 18.Na4 Bb5 19.Nc5 Rxd1?!

19...Rd6

20.Rxd1 Rd8 21.Rxd8

I trade off all the rooks

21...Kxd8 22.Kf2 Ke7 23.g4?!

23.g3 Kd6 24.Nb7+ Ke7 25.h4 Ba6

26.Nc5 Bb5 27.Ke3 Bf1 28.Kd4 Be2

23...Kd6 24.Nd3?

24.Nb7+ Kd7

24...c5 25.Ne1 Ke5 26.Ke3 a5 27.h4 c4

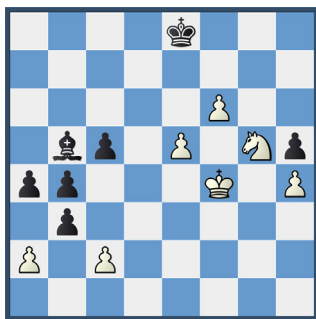
28.Nf3+ Kd6 29.g5 h5??

This gives up a pawn. 29...fxg5 30.hxg5 hxg5 31.Nxg5 f6 32.Nf7+ Ke7 33.Nh6 c5 34.Ng8+ Kf7 35.Nh6+

30.gxf6 a4 31.Ng5 Ke5 32.Nxf7+ Kxf6 33.Ng5 c5?!

33...Ke5 34.Nf3+

34.Kf4 cxb3 35.e5+ Ke7 36.f6+ Ke8

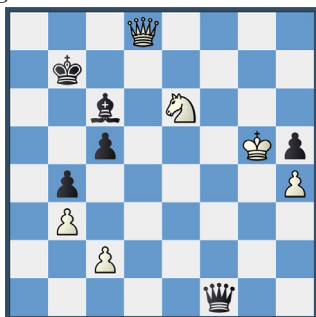


Position after 36...Ke8

37.axb3??

I took with wrong one, cxb3 is better. 37.cxb3 Bd7 38.e6 Bxe6 39.Nxe6 An example of what might happen after 37.cxb3

37...a3 38.e6 a2 39.f7+ Ke7 40.Nh7 a1Q 41.f8Q+ Kxe6 42.Ng5+ Kd5 43.Qf5+ Kc6 44.Qe6+ Kb7 45.Qe7+ Kb6 46.Qd6+ Bc6 47.Qd8+ Kb7 48.Ne6 Qf1+ 49.Kg5



Position after 49.Kg5

49...Qg2+??

This is a huge blunder, as it allows my king to hide on h6. He should've played ...Qg1+, and there would lots of checks.

49...Qg1+

50.Kh6

My king escapes to spot where there are no more checks.

50...Qd5??

50...Qf3 51.Nxc5+ Ka7 52.Qd4 Ka8 53.Ne6 Bb7 54.Qd8+ Ka7 55.Qa5+ Kb8 56.Qe5+

51.Qxd5 Bxd5 52.Nxc5+

I take the pawn with check, and I have ideas of attacking the b4 pawn.

52...Kc6?!

52...Kb6 53.Nd3 Bf3 54.Nxb4 Kb5 55.Nd3 Be2 56.Kg5 Bd1 57.c4+ Kc6 58.b4

53.Nd3 Kb5 54.Kxh5 Be4 55.Kg5 Bh7

He can't take the knight, because I will queen first, as shown below. 55...Bxd3 56.cxd3 Kc5 57.h5 Kd4 58.h6 Kc3 59.h7 Kxb3 60.h8Q

56.h5 Be4 57.h6 Bh7 58.Kf6 Be4 59.Kg7 Bf5?!

59...Kc6 60.Nxb4+ Kd6 61.h7 Ke5 62.h8Q Kf4 63.Qh4+ Kf3 64.Qh5+ Kf2 65.Nd3+

60.h7 Bxh7 61.Kxh7 Ka5 62.Kg6 Kb5 63.Kf5 Ka5 64.Ke5?!

64.Ke6 Ka6 65.Kd6 Kb5 66.Kc7 Ka6 67.Nxb4+ Kb5 68.Nd3 Ka6 69.c4 Ka7

64...Kb5?!

64...Ka6

65.Kd5 Ka5 66.Kc5 Ka6 67.Kxb4 Kb6??

67...Ka7 68.Kb5 Kb7 69.c4 Kc7 70.c5 Kb7 71.c6+ Kc7 72.Kc5 Kb8 73.Kb6

68.c4 Kc6 69.c5

I simply push my pawns.

69...Kb7 70.Kb5 Kc7 71.c6 Kb8 72.Kb6 Kc8 73.c7 Kd7 74.Kb7 Kd6 75.c8Q Kd5 76.Kb6 Kd4 77.Qc4+ Ke3 78.Ne5 Kf2 79.Qd3 Kg2 80.Qf3+ Kg1 81.Qe2 Kh1 82.Ng4

82.b4 Another line leading to mate 82...Kg1 83.Nf3+ Kh1 84.Qh2#

82...Kg1 83.b4 Kh1 84.Qf1#

I got off lucky he didn't play 49...Qg1+, and he instead played Qg2+, and I won.

1-0

**Laurel Scarborough (1265) –
Aaron Nicoski (1608) [B12]**

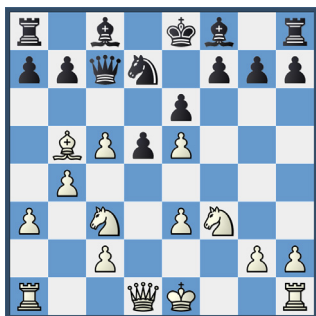
Oregon Open U1700
Portland, OR (R3), September 1, 2024
[Aaron Nicoski]

My opponent played very well this game and found the one and only move to seal the victory on move 12. The game was basically over from there.

1.e4 c6 2.d4 d5 3.e5 c5 4.dxc5 e6 5.Be3 Nd7 6.Bb5 Qa5+

6...Ne7 is what I should have played 7.Nf3 Nf5 8.Bd4 Qa5+ 9.Nc3 a6 10.Bxd7+ Bxd7

7.Nc3 Ne7 8.a3 Nf5 9.b4 Nxe3 10.fxe3 Qc7 11.Nf3



Position after 11.Nf3

11...b6??

I unknowingly opened the a8–h1 diagonal which led to this defeat. Almost any other move would have kept me in the game. 11...Be7 12.e4 dxe4 13.Nxe4 0-0 14.Qd4 Rd8 15.0-0-0 b6 16.c6 Nb8 17.Nd6

12.Nxd5!! exd5 13.Qxd5 Bb7??!

13...Be7 14.Qxa8 bxc5 15.Rd1 0-0 16.Qc6 Qxc6 17.Bxc6

14.c6 Bxc6 15.Bxc6 0-0-0 16.Rd1



Position after 16.Rd1

16...Be7??

16...Bxb4+! 17.axb4 Nb8 18.Bb7+ Qxb7 19.Qc4+ Qc6 20.Qg4+ Qe6 21.Rxd8+ Rxd8 22.Qxg7

17.Bxd7+

Game Over 1–0 Any way I capture the bishop ends in my demise.

17...Rxd7

17...Qxd7 18.Qa8+ Kc7 19.Qxa7+-

18.Qa8+ Qb8 19.Qxb8+ Kxb8 20.Rxd7+-

1–0

**Cedric Davies (1577) –
Laurel Scarborough (1265) [B13]**

Oregon Open U1700
Portland, OR (R5), September 2, 2024
[Davies, Cedric]

Going into the fifth round, my opponent and I were tied for clear first with a score of 3.5 each. Although he had a low rating, I saw that he had beaten a 1600 and a 1500, so he was not to be underestimated. I was in charge most of the game, but Laurel was tenacious in his fighting spirit to generate counterplay, not afraid to make sacrifices. His resourcefulness at the end of the game to generate counterplay against my king while keeping an eye on my passed pawn was well done. I aided in his quest with a terrible 41. Rh3?? blunder that sealed my fate. If I had won this game, I would have won the tournament. An unfortunate error, but that is life, and it is for interesting chess games that we play.



Wilson Gibbins. Photo credit: Meiling Cheng.

1.e4 c6 2.d4 d5 3.exd5 cxd5 4.Bd3 Nf6 5.c3 Nc6 6.Bf4 Qa5?!

Unusual — not sure this does anything, other than a one move threat on d4. Black ends up wasting a move.

7.Nf3 Bg4 8.Nbd2 e6 9.Qb3 Qb6

The prior ...Qa5 move makes this the only sensible way to guard the b-pawn, but the resulting pawn structure is terrible for Black.

10.Qxb6 axb6± 11.Ne5 Nh5 12.Be3 Nf6

He smartly brings his knight back. 12...Nxe5? 13.dxe5 Bc5 I had this exact position in my third-round game, though messed it up by not playing the best line. 14.Bxc5 bxc5 15.h3 Bf5 16.Bb5+ Ke7

17.g4+-

13.h3 Bh5 14.g4 Bg6 15.Nxg6

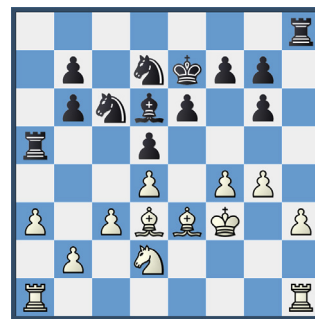
Idea here is to trade off the bishop for a knight, making my d3-bishop the boss of the light squares. It also gives me the potential for a passed pawn on the h-file. This is a sound judgement. But better was to avoid the trade with Bb5, play h4, forcing h6 in reply, and only then make the trade, leaving Black with a really bad pawn structure. 15.Bb5 Rc8 16.h4 h6 17.Nxg6 fxg6± And Black's pawn structure is terrible.

15...hxg6± 16.Ke2

I wanted to bring my king to g2 by playing Kf1 first but realize that fails to Nxg4. So,

I move the king up, uniting the rooks.

16...Bd6 17.f4 Ke7 18.Kf3 Ra5 19.a3 Nd7



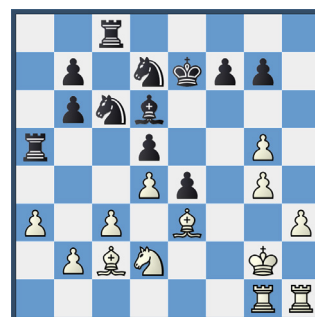
Position after 19...Nd7

Here I thought that Black was planning to play ...f5, so I play the rook to the g-file to prevent it.

20.Rag1 g5!?

A dubious, though daring sacrifice to at least get some freedom for Black's pieces. At first, I thought it was quite good, for if I take later on e5, his pieces come alive. Then I realized I don't need to take on e5, and can just calmly step away from the fork on e4.

21.fxg5 e5 22.Kg2 e4 23.Bc2 Rc8



Position after 23...Rc8

A confusing move at first. I then realized that Black was likely planning a sacrifice on the a3-pawn, but it didn't look sound, so I didn't work to prevent it.

24.Bb3

Putting pressure on d5 and preventing b5. Although I wasn't planning it, c4 is also a strong threat.

24...Nd8 25.Rf1

In retrospect, I don't like this move. I think it would have been better to prepare for Black's sac by shoring up the e3-bishop with Re1. But h5 starting on my outside passed pawn may be better, or even c4. The idea here was to threaten



Steven Breckenridge. Photo credit: Meiling Cheng.

Rf5, picking up the d5-pawn, but it's maybe a little slow.

25...Bxa3!?

Another daring sacrifice! Black isn't sitting back to let me control the flow of the game. He ends up picking up three pawns, with counterplay. Before the sac, I thought it was unsound because I would win the d5-pawn, not realizing the threats to my e3-bishop.

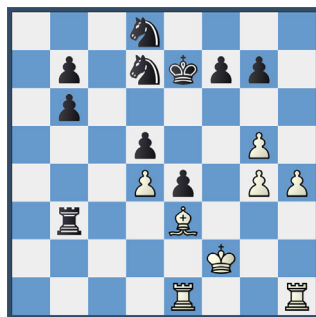
26.bxa3

Computer recommends to not accept the sacrifice 26.Rb1 Ne6 27.h4+-

26...Rxc3 27.Kf2 Rxa3 28.Re1!?

I choose to allow Black to exchange his rook for two pieces. I figure I don't need to waste time protecting the bishop and then will be free to push my passed h-pawn. Computer seems to agree.

28...Raxb3 29.Nxb3 Rxb3 30.h4



Position after 30.h4

The h-pawn should be the deciding factor in the game... if I had played it right.

30...Ne6 31.Re2?

I'm wasting too much time playing prophylactic moves here. I need to get on with it by pushing h5!

31...Nf4 32.Rd2?

I saw that if I captured the knight, he had a rook check on f3 that looked a little dangerous. I stopped my calculation here, not a good choice. If I had looked deeper, I would have seen that the rook check amounted to nothing. 32.Bxf4 Rf3+ 33.Kg2 Rxf4 34.Rf2! and the black rook is forced to trade itself, making it an easily winnable game for White 34...Rxf2+ (34...Rxc4?? 35.Kh3 the rook is trapped) 35.Kxf2+-

32...Nf8?

32...f6!= 33.gxf6+ (33.Bxf4 Rf3+ 34.Kg2 Rxf4=) 33...Nxf6 34.Bxf4 Rf3+ 35.Kc1 Rxf4 36.Rg2 Rxc4 37.Rxc4 Nxc4=

33.h5

A good move, but I still had the chance here to take the f4-knight and trade the rook, which was better.

33...N8e6 34.h6 Ng6 35.Ra2?

Getting greedy! Much better to push h7 right away and either force the knight to the corner or pick it up on the next move. I was too ambitious, thinking I could get my other rook around quickly to prevent the knight from stopping the pawn. By sending this rook to the back rank, I end up leaving my king vulnerable. 35.h7 Nh8 36.Rc2 Kd7 37.Ra1 b5 38.Ra8 Nd8 39.Rcc8+-

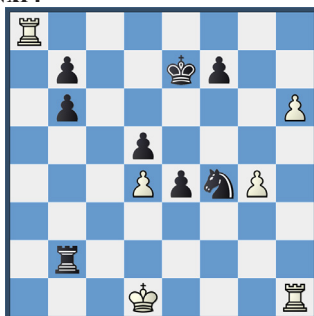
35...Rc3 36.Ra8 Rc2+ 37.Ke1 gxf6 38.gxf6 Nef4 39.Kd1 Rb2

My original plan here was to continue with Kc1 until I realized Nd3+ protects the rook. I, therefore, switched plans because I thought I could use Bxf4 to draw the knight away from stopping the h-pawn.

40.Bxf4

But much better is 40.Bc1 unfortunately it never crossed my mind during the game 40...Rb1 41.Kc2 Cleanly shuts down the active rook 41...Rxc1+ 42.Kxc1 Nf8 43.Kd2 N4e6 44.h7 (44.Ke3 Ng5) 44...Nxb7 45.Rxb7 Nxd4+-

40...Nxf4



Position after 40...Nxf4

41.Rh3??

And here I made the losing move. A complete blunder and it looks silly, but I actually thought it was brilliant at the time. For one, it defends along the third rank, so if the knight goes to d3, I will snap it off. And I thought Black couldn't take the rook, because it would take the knight away from stopping the passed pawn, along with clogging up the h-file. But I did not think through the possible checks and weakness of my own king as we shall see. I had maybe about eight

minutes on my clock at this time, so I should have calculated this out better. 41.Rh5! also sacrifices the rook, but on a much better square, where I can take back with the g-pawn and really clog up the h-file 41...Nd3 (41...e3 42.Re5+ Kd6 43.Rxe3 Rh2 44.Rd8+ Kc6 (44...Kc7 45.Rf8+-) 45.Rf3 Ng6 46.g5+- White's king is safe, his passed pawn is dangerous and his active rooks easily win the day) 42.h7 e3. This comes with a mate threat, but we can stop it 43.Re8+!? Cute, although Re5+ also works and is simpler (43.Re5+ Nxe5 44.dxe5 Rb1+ 45.Ke2 Rh1 46.h8Q Rxh8 47.Rxh8+-) 43...Kxe8 44.h8Q+ Kd7 45.Rh2+- Nf2+ 46.Ke1 Nd3+ 47.Kf1 e2+ 48.Rxe2 Rb1+ 49.Kg2 Nf4+ 50.Kf3 Nxe2 51.Kxe2+-

41...Nxb3 42.h7?

42.Kc1 Rh2 43.h7 Nf2 44.h8Q Rxh8 45.Rxh8 Nxb3+-

42...Nf2+

Worse is 42...Rh2 43.h8Q Nf2+ 44.Ke2 Rxh8 45.Rxh8 Nxb3 46.Rb8

43.Ke1 Nd3+ 44.Kf1

44.Kd1?? e3 and White can't prevent mate 45.Re8+ Kxe8 46.h8Q+ Kd7 any White move, then Rd2#

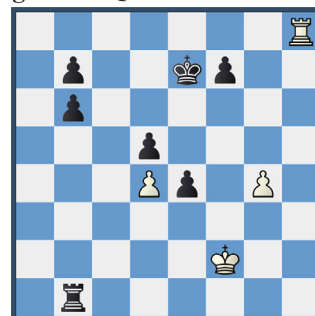
44...Rb1+

44...e3! 45.h8Q e2+ 46.Kg2 e1Q+ 47.Kh3 (47.Kf3 Qf2#) 47...Nf4#

45.Kg2 Nf4+ 46.Kf2?

Although still losing, this is a much better attempt. At the time I had about one minute left on my clock, and I felt intuitively that I needed to stay close to Black's passed e-pawn 46.Kh2 Ng6 47.Rg8 e3 48.Rxc6 e2 49.h8Q Rh1+! 50.Kxh1 e1Q+ 51.Kg2 Qe4+ 52.Kg3 Qxc6+-

46...Ng6 47.h8Q Nxb3 48.Rxb8



Position after 48.Rxb8

The battle of the h-pawn has finally settled, but in Black's flavor. We reach a rook ending with Black up three pawns,

way too much for me to handle. Even with the low time, the rest of the game was easy for Black to win.

48...Rd1 49.Rb8 Rd2+ 50.Kc3 Rd3+ 51.Ke2 Rxd4 52.Rxb7+ Kf6 53.Rxb6+ Kg5 54.Rd6 Kxg4 55.Rf6 Ra4 56.Rxf7 d4 57.Rd7 Ra2+ 58.Ke1 d3 59.Rf7 e3 60.Rg7+ Kf5 61.Rd7 Ra1#

Disappointing, in that I had a winning edge for a large part of the game and then ruined it with one bad move. But Black played well to generate counterplay. I definitely realize now with post-game analysis, that I had a lot of better options for stopping Black's counterplay. For example, the line when he first plays Nf4, to take the knight with my bishop and force a rook trade. Live and learn, this is why we play chess, to have hard fought, interesting games.

0-1

**Caleb Kesey (1547) –
Aaron Nicoski (1608) [D48]**

Oregon Open U1700
Portland, OR (R6), September 2, 2024
[Aaron Nicoski]

Final round of the tournament! My opponent played the opening well but unfortunately spent way too much of his time in doing so. By move 15 or so, he already had less than ten minutes on his clock.

1.d4 d5 2.c4 c6 3.Nc3 Nf6 4.Nf3 e6 5.e3 Nbd7 6.Bd3 dxc4 7.Bxc4 b5 8.Bd3 a6 9.e4 c5



Position after 9...c5

10.0-0

10.e5 cxd4 11.Nxb5! axb5 12.exf6 gxf6 is the main line; 10.dxc5? Nxc5; 10.d5?! exd5 11.exd5 Bd6.

[10.d5?! exd5 11.exd5 Bd6 does indeed favor Black. The problem is 10.d5 is one of the two main lines, with Black usually continuing 10...c4, when White

can choose between 11.dxe6 and 11.Bc2. Black's 10...exd5 in Aaron's annotation is likely a mistake, met by 11.e5! Ng4 12.Bg5, advantage to White.—Games Editor.]

10...cxd4 11.Nxd4 Bb7 12.Re1 Bc5

12...Bd6! would have been a better spot for my bishop controlling the e5-square.

13.Nb3 Bb6 14.Be3 0-0 15.e5 Nd5

15...Nxe5?? 16.Bxb6+-

16.Bxb6 N7xb6 17.Ne4 Nf4!? 18.Nbc5 Bd5 19.Re3 Nc4 20.Rg3??

20.Bxc4! must be played so as to not lose the *critical* e5-pawn 20...Bxc4 21.Qg4 Ng6 22.Rd1=

20...Nxe5? 21.Rg5 f5 22.g3 Nh3+ 23.Kf1 Nxe5 24.Nxe5 Qxe5 25.f4 Qg4 26.fxe5 Qh3+ 27.Ke1 Qxh2 28.Rc1 Qxg3+ 29.Kd2 Qf2+ 30.Be2 Qd4+ 31.Nd3 Rac8 32.Rxc8 Rxc8 33.Ke1 Qg1+ 34.Bf1 Bg2 35.Qe2 Qxf1+ 36.Qxf1 Bxf1 37.Kxf1 Rc2 38.a3 g5 39.Ke1 h5 40.Kd1 Rg2 41.Nc5 Rxb2 42.Nxe6 g4 43.Nf4 h4 44.e6 Kf8 45.Ng6+ Ke8 46.Nxh4 g3 47.Kc1 Rh2

0-1

**Kenzo Fonseca (1314) –
Chen Yuon (1226) [C54]**

Oregon Open U1400
Portland, OR (R2), August 31, 2024
[Kenzo Fonseca]

1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bc4 Bc5 4.c3 Nf6 5.d4

A basic opening line that allows for aggressive play or a simple draw when needed.

5...exd4 6.e5 d5

This is the only good move for Black and is a very thematic move when playing into e4 openings.

7.Bb5

Redirecting the bishop to pin the knight; while I could trade the minor pieces, the position isn't the most comfortable.

7...Ne4 8.cxd4 Bb4+ 9.Bd2

Most people play Nbd2, which while is good, isn't the best. This allows me to force Black to respond and allows me to develop easily.

9...Nxd2 10.Nbx2 Bg4

Chen plays a line which allows him to simplify the position to make drawing

easier.

11.0-0

I unpin the knight, hoping Chen doesn't take my d2-knight, to keep the game complicated.

11...Bxd2

To my dismay Chen is playing for a draw and decides to simplify the position.

12.Qxd2 Bxf3 13.gxf3 Qd7

Chen unpins his knight. Here I think about moving the king out of the open file, but instead decide to attack his pawn to force him to make decisions. When you are the stronger player you should make your opponent have to consider more options.

14.Qg5 0-0 15.Kh1

Now I move the king away from the open file to remove any chances of Black taking the queens off the board.

15...h6?!

15...f6 16.Bxc6

16.Qg3 a6 17.Rg1

An intermezzo threatening mate as well as creating a battery I can possibly use later on.

17...g6 18.Bxc6 bxc6 19.Rae1 Qe6 20.f4

Here I opened up the row for my queen to allow me to easily defend my queenside pawns.

20...Rae8?!

20...c5 21.dxc5 Kh7 22.a3 Rab8 23.b4 a5 24.Rb1 axb4 25.axb4 Rb5 26.Qd3

21.Qf3?!

I am sliding my queen to the side to create a battery which I am hoping to use later on to break through Black's pawn structure. 21.Rc1 Kh7

21...Qf5 22.Rg3 Kh7

Chen sees my ideas and brings his king up to defend the g6-pawn as well as remove his king from the semi-open file.

23.Rc1 Re6 24.Qa3?!

24.b3 f6

24...Ra8?!

24...Rb8 25.Rf3

25.Qe3 Rf8 26.f3?!

Preventing possible queen trades. In hindsight, it's not the best since I cut off defense for the f4-pawn. 26.Kg2 f6

26...Rb8 27.b3 Rf8 28.Rcg1?!

28.h4

28...Rb8 29.Rg4 Rf8?!

29...Rb5 30.Rc1 c5 31.Rxc5 Rxc5
32.dxc5 a5 33.Rg1 c6 34.Re1 g5 35.fxg5

30.Qe2?!

Here I am preparing to add the queen to my battery. 30.Rc1

30...Ra8 31.Rh4

I threaten Rg5 tactics as well as a possible sac on h6.

31...Kg7 32.Qg2 Rf8?!

32...c5 33.dxc5 Rb8 34.Qg4 Qxg4
35.Rhxg4 Rb5 36.c6 Kf8 37.Rc1 Rb4
38.Rc5

33.Rg4?!

33.Qh3 Qxh3

33...Rg8 34.Qh3

This allows for potential tactics like Rxg6 as well as adding pressure to the h6-pawn.

34...Qd3?!

34...Kh7 35.Rc1

35.R4g3?!

My idea is to take advantage of the diagonal that can be used to infiltrate Black's side of the board as well as tactics that include Qxe6. I also am threatening f5. 35.Qf1 Qxf1 36.Rxf1 f5 37.Rg2 Rb8 38.Rd2 a5 39.Kg2 Rb4 40.h4 a4

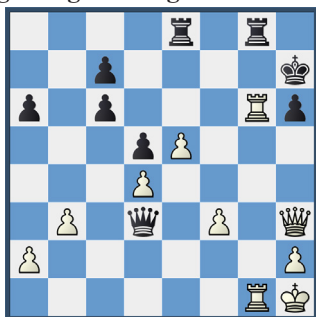
35...Kh7??

Chen is scared by the battery and my f5 ideas, however this just allows f5 to work. 35...Qxd4

36.f5 Ree8

Chen adds a defender to his rook, but it's too late now.

37.fxg6+ fxg6 38.Rxg6!!



Position after 38.Rxg6

This threatens mate as well as winning material. Black's only choice is to take with the queen, or I end up winning both

rooks with tempo.

38...Qxg6 39.Rxg6 Kxg6 40.f4?!

This was unnecessary since g5 is already stopped with Qg5, my plan was to trap the king on their side of the board, however it already is trapped. 40.Qg4+ Kf7 41.Qh5+ Ke7 42.f4 Ref8 43.f5 Kd8 44.f6 Rg5 45.Qf3 Rg6

40...Rgf8??

40...Ref8

41.Qd7

Now invade the queenside and gobble up the pawns.

41...Rg8?!

41...c5 42.dxc5 a5 43.Kg2 Rb8 44.Qe6+ Kh7 45.Kf3 a4 46.f5 Rg8 47.Qxd5

42.Qxc6+??

I thought about f5, but I didn't play it since I was scared there might be draw/



Jack Buchanan. Photo credit: Meiling Cheng.

checkmate ideas, a sad miss. 42.f5+ Kg5 43.f6 Ra8 44.f7 Rgb8 45.Qe7+ Kg4 46.Qe6+ Kf3 47.Qf6+ Ke2

42...Kf5 43.Qxd5 Re6??

43...Kxf4 44.e6

44.Qf3??

I missed Qd7, which pins the e6-rook and allows me to win the rook or rooks. Instead, I defend a pawn that cannot be saved. 44.Qd7 Kxf4 45.Qxe6 Rg5 46.Qf7+ Rf5 47.Qc4 Kg5 48.Qe2 c6 49.h3 Kh4

44...Reg6

A crucial moment where I am considering h3 or Qf7.

45.Qf2

I choose Qf7, which is best since the mate threat is defended and I don't allow Rg3.

45...Rg4 46.h3 Rxf4 47.Qc2+

I force Black to pin his own rook, which allows me to safely push the pawns.

47...Re4 48.e6 Re8?

48...Rg7 49.b4

49.d5 c6?

A final attempt by Chen, which hopes to unpin the rook or win the pawn. Unfortunately for him, the pin stops the plan of ...R4xe6. 49...Rg8 50.e7

50.dxc6 R8xe6 51.c7 Re8 52.c8Q+ Rxc8 53.Qxc8+ Kf4 54.Qxa6 Re1+ 55.Kg2 Rd1?!

55...Re5 56.Qc4+ Kf5 57.h4 Kg6 58.a4 Re7 59.a5 Kg7 60.a6 Kh7 61.Kf3

56.Qf6+ Ke3 57.Qf3+ Kd2 58.Qxd1

Getting rid of Black's last piece that is capable of causing a threat.

58...Kxd1 59.a4 Kc2 60.a5 Kxb3 61.a6 h5?!

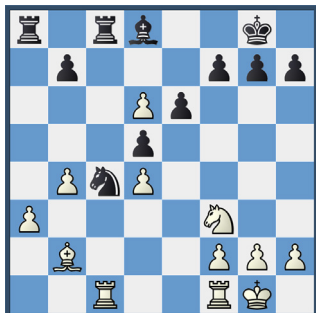
61...Kc4 62.Kf3 Kd4 63.a7 Ke5 64.Kg4 Kf6 65.Kh5 Ke5 66.Kxh6 Kd5 67.Kg6

62.a7 h4 63.a8Q Kc4 64.Qe4+ Kc5 65.Qd3 Kc6 66.Qd4 Kc7 67.Qd5 Kb6 68.Qc4 Kb7 69.Qc5 Kb8 70.Qe7 Ka8 71.Kf3 Kb8 72.Ke4 Ka8 73.Kd5 Kb8 74.Kc6 Ka8 75.Qb7#

1-0

**William Ho (1200) –
Advait Krishnan (1377) [C02]**
Oregon Open U1400
Portland, OR (R4), September 1, 2024

1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5 3.e5 c5 4.c3 Qb6 5.Nf3 Bd7 6.a3 cxd4 7.cxd4 Ne7 8.b4 Bb5 9.Bd3 Qa6 10.Bxb5+ Qxb5 11.Nc3 Qd7 12.Bb2 Nbc6 13.Rc1 Ne8 14.Na4 Nb6 15.Nxb6 axb6 16.0-0 Be7 17.Qd3 0-0 18.Qb5 Rfc8 19.Qxb6 Bd8 20.Qc5 Na5 21.Qd6 Qxd6 22.exd6 Ne4



Position after 22...Ne4

23.d7 Rc7 24.Ne5 b5 25.Nxc4 dxc4 26.Rfe1 Rxd7 27.Re5 Rd5 28.Rce1 Bf6 29.Rxd5 exd5 30.f3 Re8 31.Bc3 Kf8 32.Kf2 Ra8 33.Ra1 Ke7 34.Ke3 Kd6 35.Kf4 h6 36.Bb2 Re8 37.Rb1 Re2 38.g4 Rxh2 39.Ba1 Rg2 40.Ke3 Bg5+ 41.f4 Rg3+ 42.Kf2 Bxf4 43.a4 bxa4 44.b5 Rb3 45.Rd1 Rxb5 46.g5 Bxg5 47.Bc3 Rb3 48.Ba5 c3 49.Bxc3 Rxc3 50.Ra1 Rc4 51.Kf3 Rxd4 52.Rb1 Kc6 53.Rb8 a3 54.Rc8+ Kb7 55.Rc2 Rd2 56.Kg4 Rxc2 57.Kf5 a2 58.Ke5 a1Q+ 59.Kd6 Qa6+ 60.Ke5 Qe6+

0-1

**Elijah Barish (1311) –
William Ho (1200) [C59]**
Oregon Open U1400
Portland, OR (R5), September 2, 2024
[Elijah Barish]

1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bc4 Nf6 4.Ng5 d5 5.exd5 Na5 6.Bb5+ c6 7.dxc6 bxc6 8.Be2 h6 9.Nf3 e4 10.Ne5 Qd4 11.Ng4 Bxg4 12.Bxg4 e3 13.Bf3 exf2+ 14.Kf1 Rc8 15.Qe2+ Be7 16.Qxf2

16.Qa6 0-0 17.Qxa5 Bb4 (17...Rfe8) 18.Qa4 (18.c3 Qd3+ 19.Be2) 18...Rce8

16...Qxf2+ 17.Kxf2 0-0 18.Re1 Bc5+ 19.Kf1 Rfe8 20.Nc3 Rxe1+ 21.Kxe1 Re8+ 22.Kf1 g5 23.d3 Re7 24.Ne4 Nxe4 25.Bxe4 Re6 26.Bd2 Nb7 27.Re1 Rf6+ 28.Kc2 Bd6 29.g3 Nd8 30.Bc3 Re6 31.Kd1 Be7 32.Bf5 Rxe1+ 33.Kxe1 h5 34.Be5 Ne6 35.Be4 c5 36.Kf2 Kf8 37.Ke3 g4 38.Kf2 f6 39.Bb8 Kg7 40.Bxa7 Nd4 41.c3 Nb5 42.Bb8 Nd6 43.a4 Nxe4+

43...Kf8 44.a5 Ke8 45.a6 Kd8 46.a7 Kc8

47.a8Q

44.dxe4 Bd8 45.b4 cxb4 46.cxb4 Bb6+ 47.Kg2

47.Ke2 Bg1

47...Kf7 48.a5 Bd4 49.a6 Ke8 50.a7 Bxa7 51.Bxa7 Kd7 52.Be5 Kc6 53.Kf2 h4 54.gxh4 Kb5 55.h5 Kc4 56.h6 Kd3 57.h7 Kxe4 58.h8Q g3+ 59.hxg3 Kf5 60.Qh5+ Ke6 61.b5 f5 62.b6 Ke5 63.b7 Ke6 64.b8Q f4 65.Qbe5+ Kd7 66.Qh6 fxg3+ 67.Kf3 g2 68.Qeg7+

1-0

**Kenzo Fonseca (1314) –
Benjamin Himmelman [C54]**
Oregon Open U1400
Portland, OR (R6), September 2, 2024
[Kenzo Fonseca]

1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bc4 Bc5 4.c3 Nf6 5.d4 exd4 6.e5 Ne4??

Black falls for a common trap which allows me to get a superior position to Black or win material. 6...d5 7.Be2 Ne4 8.cxd4 Bb6 9.Nc3 0-0 10.Be3 Be6 11.0-0

7.Bd5!

A hard to see move that threatens to win the knight.

7...f5

Blacks best defense, however this allows me to prevent Black from castling.

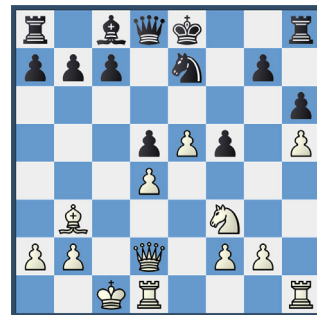
8.cxd4 Bb4+ 9.Bd2 Bxd2+ 10.Nbxd2 Nxd2 11.Qxd2 h6 12.h4?!

Inaccuracy. O-O was best. My idea is to play h5 and then Nh4 followed by Ng6. 12.0-0 Ne7 13.Bb3 a5 14.a4 c6 15.Qd3 b6 16.Rfe1 Ba6 17.Qd1 b5

12...d6

Black attacks my center.

13.0-0-0 Ne7 14.Bb3 d5 15.h5



Position after 15.h5

Allowing the idea of playing Nh4 but my main idea here is to prevent Black from

moving the knight to g6.

15...Be6 16.Qf4?!

My idea is to attack the kingside more in case Black tries to castle, doesn't make sense in hindsight since Black has no plans of castling kingside and can't really do anything there anyway. 16.Ne1 Qd7 17.Nd3 b6 18.Nf4 0-0 19.Kb1 a5 20.a3 Rab8 21.Rh3 Rfc8

16...Qd7 17.Rd3

Bringing my rook up to defend my king as well as start eyeing the c-pawn.

17...0-0-0 18.Rc3 Kb8 19.Ne1!

I saw that c5 would be a very strong outpost for my knight and find the fastest way to reroute the knight.

19...Nc6??

Black stops defending a4 with this move which will be a crucial mistake I take advantage of later. 19...g5 20.hxg6 Nxg6 21.Qd2 f4 22.Nd3 Qg7 23.Kb1 h5 24.a4 f3 25.g3

20.Nd3?!

Proceeding with my plans of playing Nc5. 20.Ba4 Ka8 21.Nd3 Qe8 22.Bxc6 bxc6 23.Nc5 Rb8 24.b3 Qe7 25.Kb2 Rb6

20...Qf7?

Black doesn't like the idea of losing his light-squared-bishop and in turn moves his queen away.

21.Nc5?

I proceed with my plans, I could've sac'd however I thought that Qd2 was too slow. 21.Rxc6 bxc6 22.Qd2 Kc8 23.Nc5 Rde8 24.Qa5 Kd8 25.Ba4 Bc8 26.Bxc6 a6

21...Bc8?!

21...Ne7 22.Ba4 c6 23.b4 Rc8 24.Bd1 g5 25.hxg6 Nxg6 26.Qd2 f4 27.Bh5

22.Ba4

Now I threaten to ruin Blacks pawn shield.

22...g5?!

Black threatens my queen. 22...Na5 23.e6 Qe7 24.Nd7+ Ka8 25.Qxc7 Bxd7 26.Bxd7 Nc4 27.Kb1 Qb4 28.Rxc4

23.hxg6

After debating for a while, I found that if I take the pawn then play Rg3 and then Rh3, I could win a clean pawn and have a easily won endgame due to Blacks bishop being entirely useless.

23...Qxg6 24.Rg3 Qh7?!

24...Qg5 25.Rxg5 hxg5 26.Qxg5 Rxh1+ 27.Kd2 Rhh8 28.Bxc6 bxc6 29.Qf6 Rdg8 30.Kc3

25.Bxc6

I take the knight first to destroy the pawn shield and cement my knight in its outpost making Black's bishop useless.

25...bxc6?!

25...b6 26.e6 Rd6 27.Nd7+ Bxd7 28.Bxd7 Rd8 29.Re3 a6 30.e7 R6xd7 31.exd8R+

26.Rgh3 h5 27.Qg5?!

Qd2 again is best, but I'm too focused on my plan that I miss it once again. 27.Qd2 Qh6 28.Rb3+ Ka8 29.f4 Qf8 30.Qa5 Qxc5+ 31.Qxc5 Bb7 32.Ra3 a6

27...Rdg8 28.Rxh5?!

Now I trade off everything and push my pawn. 28.Qd2 Qh6 29.Rb3+ Ka8 30.f4 Be6 31.Ra3 Rxd2 32.Qxd2 Rb8 33.Qd2 Rb5

28...Rxd2 29.Rxh7 Rxh7 30.Rxh7 Rxd2 31.e6?!

31.Rh8 Rxf2 32.e6 Re2 33.Kd1 Re3 34.Kd2 f4 35.Rf8 a6 36.a3 Ka7

31...Rg8

Black sees that ...Rxf2 is dead lost so they bring the rook back to defend.

32.Rf7 Re8 33.Nd7+?!

I block Black's bishop from being able to take my e6-pawn, any move that Black does loses a pawn and then is forced to lose an endgame. 33.e7 f4 34.a4 a5 35.Kd2 Ka7 36.Rf8 Rxe7

37.Rxc8 Rh7 38.Nd3 Kb7

33...Bxd7 34.exd7 Rd8 35.Re7?!

35.b4 c5 36.bxc5 c6 37.Kd2 Kc7 38.Ke3 Rh8 39.d8R+ Kxd8 40.Kf4 a5

35...Kb7 36.Kd2 c5?!

36...a5 37.a3

37.dxc5 Kc6??

37...c6

38.b4

I leave the d7-pawn en prize with the idea that if he takes I can play b5+ and win the rook.

38...Rxd7?!

38...d4 39.Kd3 Kd5 40.a4 f4 41.Re4 a5 42.Rxd4+ Kc6 43.bxa5 Kxc5 44.Ke4

39.b5+

1-0

**Abigail Hall (1058) –
Damien Davies (475) [B22]**

Oregon Open U1100

Portland, OR (R3), September 1, 2024
[Cedric Davies]

Damien, my son, is a boy of 11 years of age, playing in his first adult tournament. We had a lot of fun checking in on each other's games. In this game, Damien goes down by two exchanges, but shows how powerful a pair of bishops can be.

1.e4 c5 2.c3

The Alapin variation. Damien is unfamiliar with this variation and allows White to get a strong center. I keep telling him he needs to study his openings more :)

2...g6

I prefer ...d5 here or on the next move.

3.d4 cxd4 4.cxd4 Bg7±

White has a strong center.

5.Nc3 Nc6 6.Nf3 d6 7.h3 Nf6 8.Bf4 0-0 9.Bc4 Re8?±

With the bishop on c4, plus the possibility of the knight going to g5, moving the rook away from the defense of f7 doesn't seem right. Also there was a much better move in ...Nxe4 Stronger is 9...Nxe4! 10.Nxe4 d5 11.Bd3 dxe4 12.Bxe4 Nxd4±

10.0-0 b6 11.Ng5 e6 12.Nb5

Looks scary, but Black is actually fine here.

- * After-School Chess Clubs
- * Break Camps
- * Summer STEAM Camps
- * Friday Night Games and Pizza
- * Parents Night Out
- * MTG Clubs & More!



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<https://OrangutanAcademy.com>



12...d5!



Position after 12...d5

12...h6?! 13.Nxf7 Kxf7 14.Nxd6+ Kg8±

13.Nc7?+-

13.exd5 exd5 14.Bb3 Ba6! 15.Ba4=

13...dxc4 14.Nxa8 Bb7?±

14...Qxd4 15.Qa4 (15.Nc7 Rf8 16.Qxd4 Nxd4 17.Be5 Nc6 18.Bc3!) 15...Bd7 16.Nc7 Rc8=; Best is 14...Nh5 White has overextended her position. With this simple knight move, Black could have taken control and been better with two pieces for the rook 15.Be3 (15.Bh2 Qxg5 16.Nc7 Rd8-+) 15...Bb7 16.d5 exd5 17.Qxd5 Qe7 18.Nc7 Qxc7 19.Qxc4+ Black is much better.

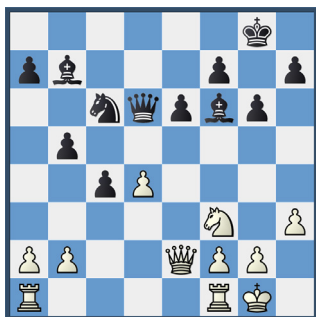
15.Nc7 Re7 16.e5?

Blocks the bishop's protection of the c7-knight. 16.d5 exd5 17.exd5±

16...Rxc7?

16...Nh5-+ Black will now recover a piece with a large advantage.

17.exf6 Bxf6 18.Bxc7 Qxc7 19.Nf3 Qd6 20.Qe2 b5



Position after 20...b5

Protecting c4, though ...Qd5 was better.

21.Rad1 Nxd4 22.Nxd4 Bxd4

The dust has somewhat settled. Although down two exchanges, Black has two pawns for it, giving him solid control over the center, and a very strong and unchallenged bishop pair. Although

White is objectively a little bit better here, Black has solid compensation.

23.Qd2?

A natural move, but does nothing to stop the upcoming threat to g2. 23.Qg4 e5 24.a3=

23...e5

23...Qg3!! A stunning move taking advantage of the f2 pin! Black wins as mate is unstoppable.

24.Rfe1 f6

Takes away the defensive square g5 from the white queen.

25.a3?

Allows Black to start his mating attack. 25.Kh2 was necessary so as to be able to protect g2.

25...Qd5



Position after 25...Qd5

The simple threat against g2 is unstoppable.

26.Kf1 Qxg2+ 27.Ke2 Bf3#

0-1

Isaiah Fattal (1088) –
Kanishk Premchander (1181) [C58]
Oregon Open U1100
Portland, OR (R6), September 2, 2024
[Wilson Gibbins]

A crucial last round game. Kanishk has five points, Isaiah has 4.5, so if Isaiah wins he will have at least a share of first place. A draw is good enough for Kanishk to finish at least tied for first, but a win gives him first alone. You might expect both players to play it safe in such a high-stakes situation. Instead, a back-and-forth tactical brawl breaks out.

1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bc4 Nf6 4.Ng5 d5 5.exd5 Na5

5...Nxd5?! 6.Nxf7 Kxf7 7.Qf3+ Ke6 8.Nc3 Today, Stockfish tells us that White

is better.

6.Bb5+ c6 7.dxc6 bxc6 8.Qf3

Kanishk — I had studied this line with the continuations 8.Be2 and 8.Bd3, but I completely glossed over 8.Qf3 and didn't know what to do at that moment. I spent around 15 minutes in this position figuring out how to get out of this seemingly gnarly situation.

8...Bd7

It is natural to defend the pawn, but in this sharp opening Black can consider sacrificing more material. 8...Rb8 and White should retreat the bishop is most popular 9.Bd3 with rough equality (9.Bxc6+ Nxc6 10.Qxc6+ Nd7!. and in this open position Black's development is more important than White's material advantage.

It is strange that Black should retreat the knight instead of gain time on the queen with (10...Bd7 but the crude mate threat 11.Qc4 leads to White's advantage.); 8...cxb5!? It normally scores well, but it didn't work out for Fabiano Caruana in a Titled Tuesday game a few years ago 9.Qxa8 Qc7 10.Qf3 Nc6 11.c3 Bg4 12.Qg3 Nd4 13.Na3 Bxa3? (13...Ne2! is unclear but close to equality.) 14.cxd4 Bd6 15.Ne4 1-0 Erigaisi,A (2718)-Caruana,F (2766) chess.com SpeedChess 2022 chess.com INT blitz (1.12)

9.Ba4±

White's extra pawn gives him an edge, but Black's lead in development means that there is a lot of fight left in the game. This wide-open position will reward players for tactical accuracy and a willingness to look beyond the stereotyped moves in the position.

9...Be7 10.c3

Not best. White is behind in development and should work on catching up. 10.0-0±; 10.d3±

10...Qc7 11.b4 Nb7 12.Bb3 0-0

And just like that, Black is a little better.

13.0-0 c5 14.a3 a5

Kanishk — I considered c4 here, but I decided to get at the queenside structure instead since my own pawns were already isolated and easy targets.

15.bxa5 Nxa5

Allows White a tactical trick that gets him close to equality. 15...c4 prevents White's next move Kanishk — I was looking at

14...c4, but I guess I got a bit greedy and went for the pawns on the queenside since the c-pawn is isolated anyway.

16.Bxf7+! Kh8!7

16...Rxf7? 17.Qxa8+ Rf8 and now Stockfish says White's should keep his queen on the edge of the board with 18.Qa6 (18.Qf3 unfortunately leaves White's queen in the lines of fire of Black's pieces)

17.Ne6 Bxe6 18.Bxe6 e4 19.Qg3 Bd6 20.Qh3 c4

Kanishk — Idea behind 20...c4 was obviously to lock down the c3-pawn and prevent White's dark-squared bishop from ever seeing the long diagonal.

21.a4 Qb6

21...Nb3! 22.Ra2 Ra5! is an effective rook lift, getting ready to bring the rook from a8 into a kingside attacking position on h5. Kanishk — I was thinking of 21...Nb3 but for whatever reason I didn't see the Ra5 follow up so I went for f2 for the rest of the game instead.

22.Na3!

And now White stands a little better, with two extra pawns and ambitions to take a third on c4. But White's bishop on c1 and rook on a1 are not contributing to offense or defense, so he will need to be very careful.

22...Bc5 23.Bf5 h6 24.Rb1

A good move, developing a piece, approved by Stockfish. 24.d4 cxd3 25.Bxh6! gxh6 26.Qxh6+ No checkmate yet, but Black's king is undefended and White can take a draw by perpetual if he wants. That said, a draw gives Black at least a tie for first place.

24...Qc6 25.Nc2

25.Rb5! gets one of White's two sleeping pieces into the game.

25...Nb3

Kanishk — Missed 25.Rb5, but thankfully he missed it so I shut that down with 25...Nb3 immediately.

26.Nb4 Bxb4 27.cxb4 Nxc1

Kanishk — This move allows me to be 100% sure I would never have to deal

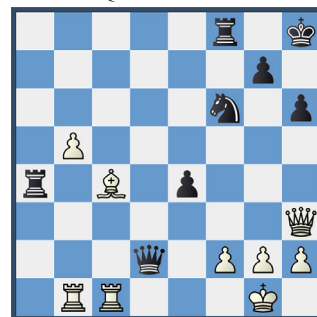
with any threats on g7. 27...Qxa4±

28.Rfxcl

White is better. All his pieces are finally in the game.

28...Rxa4 29.Be6 Qd6 30.Bxc4 Qxd2 31.b5

Normally passed pawns should be pushed, but White needs to take care of the attack on f2 first. 31.Qe3±



Position after 31.b5

31...Ng4

Kanishk — I spent a good 20 minutes on this move, calculating not only 32.Qxg4, but also 32.Qg3, defending f2. In any case, even if the position was equal, I felt that if anyone had winning chances, it would be me.

32.Bf7

Tricky, but Kanishk sees through it. 32.Qxg4 Qxf2+ 33.Kh1 Rxc4!= 34.Rxc4?? Qf1+!; 32.Qg3 Nxf2=

32...Qxf2+

Black is winning — the e-pawn combined with back rank mates is too much for White to handle. 32...Rxf7 33.Qxg4 Qxf2+ 34.Kh1 is about equal.

33.Kh1 e3

Kanishk — No need to take on f7, the more important thing was to defend the g4 knight and prepare a promotion/mating idea on f1.

34.Be6 e2 35.g3 Ne3

Kanishk — I didn't see any way to push the pawn forward or checkmate on f1, so I played 35...Ne3 to threaten Qg2# and force the white queen to stay passive, but also to add further defense to f1 in case there was a moment to break through.

36.Bc4 Rxc4 37.Re1 Qf3+ 38.Kg1 Rh4!

If 39.Qxh4 Qg2 mate.

0-1



James Nelson. Photo credit: Meiling Cheng.

