

The Chess Journalist

Volume XLVIII (Issue 163)

October 2025



CHESS JOURNALISTS OF AMERICA



New York Illustrated Times, October 19, 1878.

Table of Contents:	Page
Hello From the Editor	3
In Memoriam: Daniel Narodistky (1995–2025) by Mark Capron	4
2024-25 Chess Journalists of America Award Winners and Final Report by Joshua Anderson	5
In the Limelight: JJ Lang interviewed by Mark Capron	9
<i>Resurfaced</i> : Chess Journalism in Spanish by Chris Martinez G	14
Library Focus: Lance Bark	16
The 1984 Midwest Masters Invitational – Part 1 by Robert Irons	21
From Vienna to Manila part 2 by Agermose2 (Michael Agermose Jensen)	29
<i>1500 Forced Mates & Mate Threats and Defense</i> by Jakov Geller, Reviewed by Rex Gray	35
<i>William Norwood Potter and John Wisker, Victorian Chess Masters</i> by Hans Renette and Fabrizio Zavatarelli, Reviewed by Mark Capron	36
<i>More Passing Clouds from The Pawn</i> by Dennis Wasson	39
Way Back by Dennis Wasson	40
The Snarky Dictionary of Chess by Bob Basalla	44
<i>Play the Mackenzie! A Sharp White Attack in the Ruy Lopez</i> by FM David Gertler, Reviewed by NM Randy Bauer	48
Solutions to Exercises found in <i>From Vienna with Love</i> issue #161 pages 34-39	49
<i>Masterpieces and Drama of the Soviet Championships, Volume I (1920-37)</i> by Sergey Voronkov, Reviewed by Andy Ansel	50
<i>The Pawn</i> by Paco Cerdá, Reviewed by Mark Capron	53
World #2 Hikaru Nakamura Plays in Iowa Open by Mark Capron	54
<i>The Golden Age of Chess 1851–1886, 110 Brilliant Games of the Old Chess Masters</i> by Robert Johnson, Reviewed by Mark Capron	56
Queens' Corner—Kyla Zhao, Interviewed by Samika Nettem and Joshua Anderson	58
Studies in Tour of Zebra {2,3} on Square Board by Awani Kumar	62
Oddities and Peculiarities (and Obscurities): <i>The Haunted Chessmen</i> by E.R. Punshon	68

The Chess Journalists of America:

President: Joshua M. Anderson (joshuamiltonanderson@gmail.com)

Vice-President: Jon Edwards (jedwards.chess@gmail.com)

Secretary: Rachel Schechter (rachelaschechter@gmail.com)

Treasurer: Mark Capron (mcapron243@mchsi.com)

Editor: Mark Capron (mcapron243@mchsi.com)

Assistant Editor: Rachel Schechter (rachelaschechter@gmail.com)

Proofreaders: Rex Gray, Diane Dahl, Gio Espinosa, Rachel Schechter, Joshua Anderson

Social Media & Outreach Manager: Eva Kennedy (EvangelineJJFK.OfficialOutreach@outlook.com)

Advertising policies for The Chess Journalist
(effective 10/31/06)

1. Ad rate \$150/page (fractional pages proportional).
2. All ad copy and payment must be received by the editorial deadline (4/5, 7/5, 10/5, 1/5). If copy or payment is not received by that date, the ad will not appear.
3. The editor reserves the right to reject any ad for any reason. If an ad is rejected, payment will be refunded.

Notes:

1. All copy (paper or electronic) must be camera-ready. We do not provide free design or layout services.
2. Reasons for rejecting ad copy include, but are not limited to: 1) Inappropriate content; 2) Foul language; 3) Actual or potential libel, defined as defamatory factual assertions not probably true.

Submittal deadlines 4/5, 7/5, 10/5, 1/5

Note: The Chess Journalist is published by the Chess Journalists of America. One time only publication rights have been obtained from signed contributors. All other rights are hereby assigned to the authors. Articles do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the CJA, its officers, or its members. Copyright © 2025 by the Chess Journalists of America.

Join the CJA!

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.

Join or renew by sending dues to the CJA Secretary:

Mark Capron
3123 Juniper Drive
Iowa City, IA 52245

Or join via website: www.chessjournalism.org

Membership Dues:

Regular—\$10 for 1 year

Membership Plus—\$15 includes one entry into awards (only available May 1 until the awards submission deadline, usually Mid—June)

Outside the US—\$15 for 1 year

Hello From the Editor

Congratulations to all the entrants and winners of the CJA Annual Awards. CJA President Joshua Anderson gives us the winners and the inside scoop from the 2024-2025 CJA Awards season.

I thought last issue was the largest we would ever produce. Well here comes this issue at 72 pages, even longer than last issue. Thanks to everyone for sending in material. This makes the magazine all the better.

Unfortunately we recently lost a couple more chess stars, GM Daniel Naroditsky and GM Mihai Şuba. We have a short remembrance for GM Naroditsky in this issue, but GM Şuba will have to be in the next issue, as it was announced too late for this issue.

World renowned chess book collector, Andy Ansel, sends in a review of the Elk & Ruby book *Masterpieces and Drama of the Soviet Championships, Volume I (1920-37)* by Sergey Voronkov. Our proofreader extraordinaire, Rex Gray, also reviewed two Elk & Ruby books *1500 Forced Mates* and *Mate Threats and Defense* both by Jakov Geller. Lastly, NM Randy Bauer reviewed the Elk & Ruby book *Play the Mackenzie, A Sharp White Attack in the Ruy Lopez* by FM David Gertler. Elk & Ruby are very active on the publishing front so, the list will continue to grow. Also if you haven't seen it yet, check out [Elk & Ruby's](#) newly revamped website.

The reviews continue. I reviewed three books: a famous book recently translated into English, *The Pawn* by Paco Cerdá; Robert Johnson's newest book *The Golden Age of Chess 1851-1886*; and McFarland's book *William N. Potter and John Wisker Victorian Chess Masters* by Fabrizio Zavatarelli and Hans Renette.

Our niche in the book review department is alive and well! We have a list of books to review for the next issue. I am really excited about finishing this issue so I can really get into some of these new books. They look great!

Armchair chess historian, Dennis Wasson, returns with two articles. One with interesting leads found in *The Pawn* (magazine published in the early 1900s) and a report on a historical tournament that was only self-published at the time (approximately 30 copies). It seems as if it was pretty rare. I did not find any of the games in my ChessBase databases, but Andy Ansel did have the original publication and, therefore, the games in his massive database.

Thanks to Awani Kumar who had sent in two, knight's tours for last issue, but I had to postpone one of them till this issue. We can learn about the Zebra in this installment.

We have three interviews in this issue. First we feature back to back CJA Chess Journalist of the Year JJ Lang. Next the Library Focus is back and we feature book collector/scuba diver Lance Bark. Lastly, we have a guest interviewer standing in for Rachel Schechter in the Queens' Corner. Samika Nettem interviews Kyla Zhao with a little help from her friends CJA President Joshua Anderson and Computer Wizkid Charan Perumalla.

We made a new friend, Chris Martinez G. Chris brings us the first installment of a new column, *Reflections*. I think you will really enjoy what he has to offer.



Robert Irons is back with the first of a three part series on the 1984 Midwest Masters tournament. He covers an introduction and the first two rounds of the event in this issue.

We continue with the series on the Pierce Gambit by Michael Agermose Jensen (first installment was in issue 161) with *From Vienna to Manila*. Note you can find the answers to the Exercises from Part one in this issue.

The Snarky Dictionary of Chess By Bob Basalla is a humorous piece. Made me laugh out loud a few times.

By now most of you know that super GM Hikaru Nakamura has been traveling around the US and Canada and "randomly" playing in FIDE rated tournaments. We were lucky and he came to one of our tournaments in Iowa. There is a short report with a few pictures inside.

Thanks to Rex Gray, Diane Dahl, Gio Espinosa, Joshua Anderson, Jon Edwards, and Rachel Schechter for their excellent proofreading and suggestions.

Please consider sending in an article or idea for an upcoming issue. More authors are always welcome and make the issues better!! Deadline for next issue is January 5.

Please send your comments, suggestions, or even better, send me a story or idea for the next issue:

mcapron243@mchsi.com

—Mark Capron

"Dedicated to the future, with honor to the past."
— Neil Peart

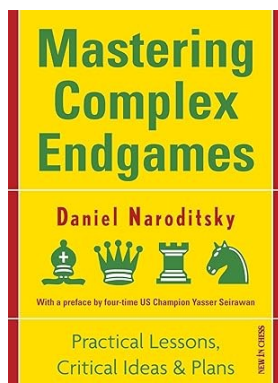
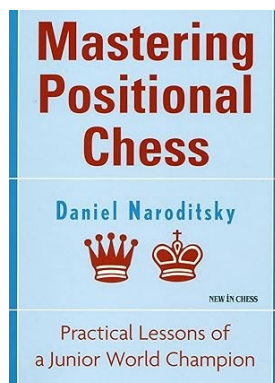
In Memoriam: Daniel Naroditsky (1995–2025)

by Mark Capron with input from Dan Lucas and Adam Porth

On October 19 the chess world lost one of its nicest and friendliest grandmasters. Daniel, or Danya as he was affectionately called, was known as a world class blitz player, author, and end-game specialist. In recent years, Daniel was a content creator, streamer, coach, and first-rate commentator.

Daniel was born in San Mateo, California. He learned the game at six years old. He won the Under-12 section of the World Youth Chess Championship in 2007. Danya won the under-20 US Junior Championship in 2013 and earned the grandmaster title at age 18. He played in five US Championships. In 2024, he tied for first in the Swiss stage of the World Blitz Chess Championship and won the US National Blitz Championship in 2025 with a perfect 14/14.

Daniel authored two books: *Mastering Positional Chess* and *Mastering Complex Endgames*. The first he wrote when he was only 14 years old! Daniel also wrote columns for *Chess Life* and *The New York Times*. He served as Grandmaster-in-Residence at the Charlotte Chess Center since 2020. Danya had many followers on YouTube and Twitch where he did content creation and streaming. Danya had almost a million followers.



From November 2021—February 2025 he worked with Chess.com. A career highlight was his commentary during the 2021 World Championship match between Magnus Carlson and Ian Nepomniachtchi.

As the outpourings of thousands have stated Danya had a gentle soul. Daniel's mother, Elena Naroditsky, described her son as "a brilliant, loving, and deeply sensitive soul" who had been tormented by accusations of cheating in online chess games.

"For Daniel, there was nothing more important than his dignity and his name as a chess player," she said. "He worked his whole life for it — and then one person kept saying he was a cheater."

There has been much written on the internet surrounding the accusations and the accuser. We will not get into this here as we would prefer to simply celebrate Danya's amazing life.

The picture below is from Dan Lucas. "Just last year when I (Dan Lucas) was visiting Boston and I randomly ran into him playing blitz at Harvard. He was his usual friendly self and happy to see me." Picture used with permission from Dan Lucas.



From Adam Porth:

GM Daniel Naroditsky played in the 4-day section at the 2025 US Open and reminded me of a player in Idaho called the "gentleman of chess." He was cordial, quiet, and respectful of chess etiquette before, during and after his games. As round one was about to begin, Daniel approached me with one of his friends and politely asked if there were pencils or pens available. "Of course," I replied. I quickly pulled out two pens and offered them up. Daniel said thank you and turned to his buddy and said, "See, it's good to be a grandmaster!" I laughed and also handed them a clock. In addition to the clock, he returned the pens after the round to my surprise.

Round 6 produced many anxious players as the starting times were wrongly reported on flyers. Despite this, most players showed up on-time. In Daniel's case, he was paired against FM Julio Morella and was one of the top boards, but Julio was missing! I explained that Julio struggled with English and might not have understood our announcements. Daniel quietly nodded as many games were underway and walked the isles introspectively for nearly an hour observing games. Julio arrived, dripping with sweat and anxiety upon seeing the round underway. Oof! I nervously introduced them and Daniel explained to me that he would split the remaining time with Julio if we were okay with this compromise. Julio (and I) enthusiastically accepted and they amenably shook hands, I set the clock, and the match began. Daniel Naroditsky embraces the spirit of fairness and respect for his opponents, not often observed at this level of play.

Just another anecdote on how Daniel was a gentle soul and very respectful to others.

Continued on page 57

2024-25 Chess Journalists of America Award Winners and Final Report

By Joshua Anderson

Eighty-four. If memory serves, and more and more it does not, that was the number of entries we had my second year. Apparently, no one saw me hanging on and they figured why bother. This year, my 13th, we had almost that many pictures. This is just one of a multitude of changes that came to the forefront this year. This report, as the final wrap up, addresses everything that was done for the awards this year.

As always, the award discussion starts with choosing the categories. I still remember talking with Al Lawrence, the very first year, and yes, I thought it was just so cool to talk to the former executive director of U.S. Chess. These days it is a lot of email and a bigger group, but the awards belong to the organization, and everyone should always feel welcome to make suggestions. Often there is not that much discussion, but this year I got rid of Best Magazine, a category I never liked, and so there was a little more commentary.

For those of you who don't know the back story, I had a damaged heart from a viral infection and so one year I did not run the event. Instead, a woman named Jennifer Vallens took over. She brought a few women judges, very talented women on the whole, and she added a couple of categories of which Best Magazine was one of them.

Quite honestly, that first year I was just happy my injection fraction was improving from 20% (60% is good). After that, I inherited the position back and I decided to let it play out for a few years. The problems that I had with it weren't changing and then things got worse when the two groups entering wanted to send hard copies, something that most of the judges do not want.

The problems with the category are substantial and varied. It isn't so much that judges are forced to compare apples with apples, but more apples with oranges. They are certainly both fruit, but hardly the same. First, *Chess Life* has to be responsive to the 100,000 members of US Chess, *American Chess Magazine* has to not lose money, or at least not lose too much money. *Chess Life* has to cover and avoid covering certain issues, *American Chess Magazine* can cover whatever it wants. Much of the target audience for *Chess Life* is not the membership of the Chess Journalists of America (CJA), not that CJA members don't understand this and we do vary our judges, but judges who are serious readers of chess magazines and know what it means to make a magazine are not the usual 1400 or so rated players which are supposed to be the *Chess Life* audience. Also, in three weeks it is difficult to find a bunch of judges who can seriously examine the two magazines. Again, not impossible, but difficult. All of this leads us to conclude that the magazine category wasn't a category that allowed a fair judging of the two publications.

It is fine to disagree with me, people do it all the time, just ask my wife. If you disagree with me so much that you would like to do this job, feel free to reach out to me.

We ended up with a couple of problems this year and I will explain them and then explain the process to fix them.

Score area

The scoring site was used for the first time last year. It was found to have a couple of significant flaws. It was very difficult to fix entries when some sort of mistake was in them, even if it was just a typo. On top of this, it was impossible to switch judges. This is a problem as

most years there is a judge or two who disappears and becomes non-responsive and there are many times where judges accept a category then realize there is a conflict of interest, or their schedule is such that they can't judge some random category.

This needed to be fixed for this year. Unfortunately, technical difficulties led to it taking quite a bit of time. It has now been fixed, and we will be doing a test run of the scoring site sometime this winter. Probably in the next issue there will be a call for anyone who wants to help with the testing.

Outreach to states

States magazines, photos, websites, etc., are an interesting lot, because sometimes they are quite good, but who and when and how they change are often quite unknown. In any given year things can change substantially. Unfortunately, with all going on, I am lousy at reaching out to each state and asking about changing leadership or changes in editing/publications. Thus, we have taken the position of Secretary and slightly tweaked it to include a state liaison component, so that the position will reach out each spring to the states to help build up state involvement in the awards.

On to the awards themselves:

Top 3

The top 3 were surprisingly light this year, with no category having more than 4 entries.

Chess Journalist of The Year



JJ Lang narrowly edged out Jon Jacobs, who earned an Honorable Mention, and did most of his publishing work on Facebook. Unfortunately, the Facebook format didn't help present Jacobs' work in the best way according to several judges. They did comment on how impressed they were with the content, but wished it would have been published in a different way. None the less, it wasn't enough to overcome the sheer volume and depth found in Lang's work.

See the interview with JJ later in the issue.

Best Story of The Year

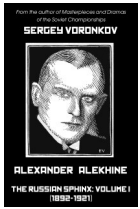
In a year with few major stories, Mark Taylor's well written piece remembering [William Alexander Scott III](#) easily won the award. It was featured in the March 2025 [Chess Life](#).

Best Column

At times there are eight or nine entries in this category. This year there were just four entries, and three of the authors were previous winners. This year, [US Chess's Andy Soltis](#) won the category, edging out [American Chess Magazine](#) (ACM)'s [Alex Fishbein](#), who won an honorable mention.

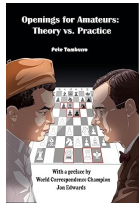
Books

Though we increasingly have problems with the mail service, we still get a good number of books. One thing we are considering is to start the books a bit earlier. More time for the judges in this category isn't the end of the world and it would give the postal service a little more time as well.



Best Book of The Year Overall

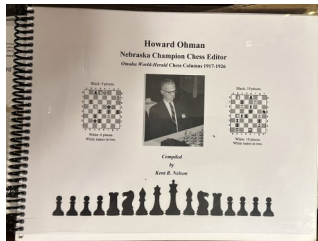
Here we had an exceptionally tight race with Sergey Voronkov's [Alexander Alekhine: The Russian Sphinx: Volume I \(1892 - 1921\)](#) just edging out [The Real Paul Morphy](#) by Charles Hertan, which won an Honorable Mention.



Best Book - Instructional

As is common, this category had just a small percentage of the overall entries. Here Pete Tamburro's [Openings for Amateurs - Theory vs Practice](#) was the clear winner.

Best Book – Self-Published



Kent Nelson takes this category with his book [Howard Ohman Nebraska Champion Chess Editor Omaha World-Herald's Chess Columns 1917-1926](#). There was a bit of controversy here in that there was an error in the copyright date for the book as it said 2022 and not 2024. After discussing with the author, it was confirmed it came out in 2024 not 2022.

Best Book - Other

Voronkov's work won again in this category, this time more easily outdistancing Hertan's work as well as Taylor Kingston's [Chess in the Third Reich](#), which both tied for second place in the category.

Visual Arts

These categories have mostly exploded in recent years - especially chess photo, art, and magazine cover.

Best Single Chess Photo

Twenty-one! That is the number of entries in this category and only one of them scored more than nine points. That was David Llada's ["Reflections"](#) from [Chess Life](#).

Best Cartoon

This is one of those categories that hasn't grown as much in the visual arts categories. This year, as with many years, there were just two. [Chess Life Kids](#) usually enters a comic strip and did so again this year. It covered the ["Chess Adventures with Gukesh Dommaraju"](#) and won the category.

Best Art

US Chess's [art for Super Nationals](#) won the award for Best Art.

Best Photojournalism Article

US Chess's ["Middle School Mayhem!"](#) won this category with a host of photos from the event.

Best Single Chess Magazine Cover

This category had a surprise winner with a [Florida Chess](#) entry for [Spring, 2024](#) (chess pieces on the beach) edging out [ACM's Issue #39](#) (Gukesh with tiger and elephant). The winning cover stated May 2024, but upon investigation it did not get sent out until June of 2024, which made it eligible.

Print Articles

Fifty years ago, everything was print. Even five or so years ago this category would have the most entries, but this year it had less than 50 entries.

Best Historical Article

It is no surprise after Mark Taylor won Best Story of the Year, that his piece on [William Alexander Scott III](#) would also win Best Historical Article.

Best Feature Article

[Prithu Gupta's piece](#) on Gukesh winning the Candidates Tournament in Toronto clearly won this category.

Best Single Article of Local Interest

Northwest Chess's article on the [Oregon Open](#), won the award over Caleb Brown's article about [Luis Salinas winning a career achievement award](#) and Lenoir City Chess receiving a [travel grant to attend Nationals](#).

Best Analysis

John Burke's analysis in the [2024 Candidates Match in Tough Fight and Missed Chances](#), won the award. Robert Shlyakhtenko, who also has done well in a few of these events, earned an Honorable Mention for his analysis work on [Studying a Tabiya](#).

Best Review

The annual [Carsten Hansen multiple review approach](#) versus [John Watson one or two book approach](#) ended with Hansen eking out a win and Watson earning an Honorable Mention.

Best Tournament Report National/Intl

Female tournaments ruled the day in this category. Zoey Tang's article on [Alice Lee winning her 2nd consecutive US Junior Girls' Championship](#) just edged out Carissa Yip's story about her [winning the U.S. Women's Championship](#), which received an Honorable Mention.

Best Personal Narrative

Grayson Rorrer's narrative about [getting a GM norm](#) won here with a perfect score.

Best Interview

This category is usually a dog fight, but was won easily by Jon Jacobs for his [interview with Bill Goichberg](#).

Best Tournament Report State/Local

Davis Zong's report on the [USATE](#), probably the largest local event in the world, easily won the day. With there being four of these USAT's, this really is a regional event, just a really big one.

Best Instructive Lesson

Two of the four articles were clearly favored with [Abrahamyan](#) receiving 21 points and winning the category. She just edged out Fishbein's article on [Four Key Positions](#) which received an honorable mention.

Online & Social Media

As has become the custom, most of our entries are from this category.

Best Humorous Contribution

[7 Humorous Predictions For Chess In 2025 - Chess.com](#) by Ray Linville won this category. The one about Magnus Carlsen's child, not correct, but not as far off as you might expect.

Best Feature Article

Davis Zong's report on the [FIDE World Corporate Chess Championships](#) won this category, beating out seven other features.

Best Interview

[World Chess Hall of Fame's Interview of Susan Polgar](#) by Yasser Seirawan won this category with four top scores from the five judges.

Best Overall Website – Small Organization (Groups of Less Than 500)

Arjun Kochar's website [www.32pieces.com](#) scored 4 out of 5 firsts.

Best Blog

Ray Linville's blog [Learning with Each Game](#) just edged out Nick Vasquez's blog [Chess in Small Doses](#), which won Honorable Mention.

Best Non-Instructive Chess Video

First Responders [CHESS Enriches Lives](#) and [Relive the Magic of SuperNationals VIII 2025](#) tied for first place in this event. Both scored 17 points.

Best Tournament Report – State/Local

[GM Brodsky Repeats as Charlotte Open Champion: Full Recap!](#) - Chess.com just edged out a Saint Louis Chess Club video - [The 2024 Saint Louis Masters: A Retrospective | #STLMasters](#)

Best Single Podcast Episode

This category often inspires a close competition and that was true again with [One Move at a Time](#) podcast hosted by Bryan Tillis interviewing Susan Polgar winning. Earning an Honorable Mention was [Beyond the Board](#) with DeV Vaughn Croxton interviewing Laurel Aronian, who often enters this event.

Best Overall Chess Website

The [St. Louis Chess Club](#) won this category besting World Chess Hall of Fame and two other entries.

Best Instruction Lesson

Dan Heisman, who has won this category numerous times over the years, does so again with the YouTube video - [3 Ply for Checks, Captures, Threats](#).

Best Documentary

[Alabama Chess Championship 2024: Stuart Rachels Returns](#) by Cynara Inman and Tyler Dickerson won for Best Documentary with many 5-point scores.

Best Tournament Report – National/International

JJ Lang's [Ju Wenjun Wins FIDE World Blitz in Tiebreakers, Carlsen and Nepo Split Title](#) edged out Max Lu's [Festivities Galore at American Continental Championship as Two Americans Qualify for 2025 World Cup!](#) which received an Honorable Mention.

Best Analysis

Alex Ostrovskiy's [Norms Earned, Rating Thresholds Reached, and Gotham Dominance Highlight July NYC Norms Invitational](#) won this category with three first place votes.

Best Personal Narrative

It is hard to imagine two more different articles tying for a category. Max Lu, who I believe is still a teenager, wrote about a singular event in [Festivities Galore at American Continental Championship as Two Americans Qualify for 2025 World Cup!](#). Eugene Salomon, who just turned 97 (and I think is more than five times(!) older than Max), wrote about [his 80 years in chess](#).

Best Educational Lesson

Dan Heisman, who has won this category before, wins again with [Recognizing Common Chess Patterns](#).

Best Tournament/Match Coverage (This May Be a Series of Videos)

By far and away our closest category. The winner was Sabrina Foisor's article [Women's World Championship: Match Point](#). The TWO Honorable Mentions were [Charlotte Chess Center Hosts US Masters: Day One Recap!](#) By David Norman for chess.com and [SuperNationals VIII](#) by Jack Aronian for US Chess. The final entry missed an Honorable Mention by a single point and was JJ Lang's [Women's World Championship: Highlights From Opening Rounds](#).

Best Online Review

I do not win many of these awards, but always feel incredibly awkward when I do. On the other hand I am always very happy when something from our magazine wins an award. Here, Mark Capron's [review of The Real Paul Morphy](#) carried the day.

Best Instagram Feed

Unlike many of our "techie" social media awards, this was an extremely close contest, with the [Saint Louis Chess Club](#) edging out the [Grand Chess Tour](#) by a single point 20 -19.

Best Weekly Video Program

[St. Louis Chess Club](#) was the only entrant and easily won the award.

Best Podcast

[One Move at a Time](#), a podcast put out by US Chess and hosted by Bryan Tillis, won an Honorable Mention.

Best Historical Article

Bruce Hedman won the award with fives and threes for his piece on William F. Drueke Chess Sets, which can be read at [William F. Drueke Chess Sets - Chess.com](#)

Best Twitter Feed

[Dan Heisman](#), a repeat winner in this field, won again this year.

Junior (Under 21)

Best Print Article By A Junior

Max Lu's recap of his final scholastic event comfortably won this popular category with his article entitled [One More Time](#).

Best Personal Narrative by a Junior

Lu's [article](#) also just edged Andy Woodward's Journey for his final GM, [Achieving the Aim](#), which won Honorable Mention.

Best Online Article by a Junior

Lu also won this category, but for the article on [Two Americans Qualifying for the 2025 World Cup!](#)

Best Photo by a Junior

Ella Guo's [photo of Magnus Carlsen](#) playing and crowd watching won this category.

Cramer

As mentioned previously, the Cramer Awards were a little light this year, with numerous categories only having one or two entries.

Best Overall State Website

This category was won by the [Texas Chess Association](#) and [Chess Maine](#) also participated.

Best State Magazine/Newsletter- Print

The two magazines that entered were [Northwest Chess](#), representing Washington, Idaho, and Oregon, and [Rank and File](#) representing Southern California. [Northwest Chess](#), which is a monthly magazine, won the category.

Best State Magazine/Newsletter- Online

Oddly, this year there were less entries for this category, whereas usually there are more. [Northwest Chess](#) was the clear winner.

Best State Championship Report

This is the category with a few entries - four. Northwest Chess entered championship reports for two different states - Washington and

Idaho. With [Washington](#) winning the award and Scott Varagona's report on the [Alabama State Championship](#) taking the honorable mention.

Best Personal Narrative

Varagona won for this category with his story of [playing IM Stuart Rachels in 2024](#). Not only does the report talk about the game, but it is thoroughly annotated as well.

Best Photograph

Entered by [Northwest Chess](#), this [photo of kids analyzing](#), easily won the award.

Best State Tournament Coverage

This category was tight and diverse. [Alabama's video](#) edged [Northwest Chess's](#) written report, with the written report winning honorable mention.

Best State Facebook Page

[Texas](#), which has quite an active Facebook page, won this category.

Best Scholastic Coverage in a State

Florida edged out Southern California in this category, with Southern California earning an honorable mention.

Best State Magazine/Newsletter- Online

Jeffrey Roland continued on his winning ways with [Northwest Chess](#) earning the award.

We always end with a group of thank yous. The number of people involved in this project is what makes it fun, intense, exciting, tricky, difficult, and everything else. I always close with the long list of helpers, but this year I want to start with a young man who is so young he can't judge. However, he could help with other things and learned new skills for us, like Airtable and the like, and he also designed the new award certificates. He is a 1700ish, 14-year-old named Charan Perumalla and he deserves a great deal of thanks for all his help.

Now for the rest of the helpers, in no particular order; Pete Tamburro, Al Lawrence, Eric Johnson, David Sands, Andy Soltis, John Donaldson, Mark Capron, Anthony Gold, Ray Linville, Jon Edwards, Robert Irons, Jon Crumiller, Eric Vigil, Christopher Romeril, Rex Gray, Andy Ansel, Alexey Root, Patrick Tejeda, Neil Brennan, Bette Marshall, Nikki Khmel'nitsky, Christian Brickhouse, Rebecka Ratcliffe, Eva Kennedy, Diane Dahl, Vasishta Tumuluri, John Hilbert, Peter Minear, Eric Johnson, David Sands, Dov Gorman, Anand Mishra, Eric Holcomb, Ralph Dubisch, Ray Linville, Matt Traynor, Emily Allred, Rachel Schechter, Laurel Aronian, Arjun Kochar, Josh Sinanan, Louis Pratt, James Hodina, Patrico Robayo, Davis Zong, Christopher Romeril, Dirk Troltenier, Peter Dyson, Eric Vigil, Jeff Zheng, Chris Baker, Matthew Bengtson, Jack Aronian, Robert Irons, and Miguel Ararat.

And finally, as I do any year in which I am being smart, I need to thank my wife Brandy Anderson who puts up with all the long hours, all the fussing I do and is wonderful and supportive anyway.

***In the Limelight:* JJ Lang (Two time CJA Chess Journalist of the Year)**
Interview by Mark Capron

Congratulations on winning the Chess Journalist of America's *Chess Journalist of the Year* award the past two years! An amazing accomplishment, well deserved! How does this year's award compare to last year's award? And what did this award mean to you?

Thank you! At the time of last year's award, I'd say that reporting was about 80% of my day-to-day job at US Chess as the Digital Assistant. Right around the time I won last year, I was also promoted to Digital Editor as part of some departmental restructuring. I have a lot more responsibilities now, and, depending on the week, reporting on chess takes up between 20% to 50% of my time. I wish it could be more, and I struggle to cover everything I want to, let alone cover it in as much detail as I'd like. So, being able to report on as much as I did felt like quite a feat this year, and to have *CJA* say that it was up to their standards was incredibly reifying and validating.



Photo by John Hartmann

What was the one thing you were most proud of, that you feel led to the award this year?

I'm not sure how directly it led to the award, but I can't believe I've kept up the *Tactics Tuesday* and *Wednesday Workout* weekly series. That's 12 puzzles a week, all taken from recent events, almost always featuring either top American players abroad or top boards of US Chess National Events. Something that is unique about chess reporting, I think, is the ability to report by annotating. We are not simply summarizing or describing an event that happened or could have happened, but rather we are sharing it directly with the readers to see for themselves and try to solve for themselves.

I saw you studied philosophy at Stanford. What jobs have you done that are most related to the area of philosophy? Or did Chess simply take over as your occupation?

Hah! Sitting around for hours deep in thought, trying to find a way to think about a problem that other people wouldn't see, or that you yourself didn't see a moment ago. Am I describing philosophy, or chess? When I was in my doctoral program, I taught a

few classes and served as a teacher's assistant (TA) for many more undergraduate classes. I taught my own philosophy courses at City College New York (CCNY) as part of an exchange program, too. The shift from teaching philosophy to teaching chess came gradually, and for a while I was teaching private lessons full time, mostly with adults. Working with adults is neat because a lot of the pedagogical methods I learned from teaching philosophy are appropriate. In both cases, we're trying to encourage our students to better identify what they don't know or understand, as to figure out what steps to take to rectify that.

What classes in college prepared you best for your role as Digital Editor for US Chess?

I took some math classes (too hard), then in philosophy a lot of philosophical logic and philosophy of math classes (more my speed), as well as a lot of literature and gender studies courses. So, a ton of writing, but nothing on the journalism or reporting front. Which is kind of surprising, because I did my undergraduate studies at UNC-Chapel Hill, which has an excellent journalism school. But I guess you had to apply to get into the J-School, so it was its own separate beast. I was editor in chief of my high school newspaper, though, and our faculty supervisor, Jennifer Colletti, was a tremendous teacher and mentor.

Who or what have been some of your favorite subjects to write about and why?

The kids! By this point, I've been covering National Scholastic Championships for long enough to recognize almost all of the top names in each grade level. It's very fun to know what to expect, stylistically, from various players, and to write about them in a way that showcases this knowledge. An example of this was when WIM Chloe Gaw held IM Tani Adewumi to a draw (as Black!) in the third round of the K-12 Championship section at SuperNationals VIII. Despite the 240-point rating difference between them, I had seen enough of Gaw's games to know how comfortable she is in Sicilian structures. And Tani has obviously come a long way in his ability to grind out positional games, but he's still a player who thrives in chaos. As soon as Tani went for a Moscow set-up with 3. Bb5+ after 1. e4 c5 2. Nf3 d6, I remembered thinking that this would be a game to keep an eye on, as he seemed to be playing to her strengths. And then I remembered thinking, "Wow, I can't believe I know this much about these high schoolers!"

Who taught you to play?

I remember my mom teaching me how to play when I was little, maybe around five or six years old? She knew the rules, and she would tell you that that was about it, although I think she's always sold herself a little short there. I think she could tell that I was a fast learner and also more interested in cerebral hobbies than playing outside, and saw chess as a prophylactic defense against an eventual interest in video games (see? She was totally a chess strategist). Then, I remember playing a few games with my

dad, but being really upset when I lost my queen and not wanting to play anymore. And that was it for a while.

Where did your story with chess begin?

In middle school, a couple of my friends joined the chess club in sixth grade. I didn't, but I was aware that they loved it. Then, we played some games at lunch one day, and they were so much better than me that I realized for the first time that there was something they were learning, and I didn't know it. So, I wanted to be taught it. I also had a crush on the only girl in the chess club at the time, and I'm sure that didn't hurt. But she was a French Defense player, so it was never going to work out between us. But once I started going to chess club, I was hooked. We were very lucky, as the only public middle school in the district with a chess club, and that was all thanks to Martin Roper, an English teacher with a national rating that had been over 2000 in the 1990s. He was incredible. He would drive us hours to scholastic tournaments when there weren't any nearby, and he took such pride in our growth and achievements. But I think as a result of his literary background, he was a very passionate, captivating, and unique chess teacher. Every game had a story, both in terms of who the players were and what they meant for chess, or what chess meant to them, but also in terms of the moves themselves. Every game was full of intentions, desires, hopes, disappointments, you name it. He didn't just teach us how to play chess. He taught us how to feel it.

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

Yeah, I mean, Mr. Roper, basically. I didn't start playing chess until middle school, but from ages 12-18, my house was littered with *Chess Life* magazines. I would read the articles cover to cover every month. I'd spend hours trying to solve the puzzles in *Benko's Bafflers*, and I'd go through Pandolfini's *Solitaire Chess* columns over and over. I even had a stack of my favorite issues that I'd keep in my bathroom for reading. My rating went from around 400 to around 1780 in those six years. But even before joining the four-digit club, I had enough of a feel for the game from going to chess club and learning from Mr. Roper that I was able to follow the writing and I loved it. So, I know what it's like to be obsessed with chess not just as a game but as an experience brought to life by writers passionate enough to share their experiences and thoughts. I want to be a part of that legacy and to play a part in future generations getting to know that experience.

What inspires you in general?

Whoa. Curiosity, I think. I just like to experience things I haven't experienced before and share that with others. I think that helps me as a journalist because my instinct is to look for what's new, interesting, or different rather than looking for what I can fit into a familiar box.

What has been your greatest writing challenge?

Macro-level: figuring out how to cover all the games, tournaments, players, and organizers who deserve a spotlight. Micro-level: writing a sentence with two or fewer clauses.

What are some of the obstacles that come up during the writing process and how do you overcome them?

So, I've been diagnosed with ADHD, and sometimes that makes it very difficult to write for long stretches of time, or to write in a linear way. Other times, it doesn't, because ADHD is less about "attention deficit" and more about an unusual relationship to attention, more generally. The word I've heard is "hyperfocus" or "hyperfixation," meaning that sometimes it's just hard for me to *not* write! If I get invested in a game I'm annotating, what might have started as "a few quick notes on one or two key moments" could easily become the next couple of hours of my day. And what might start as "just one game from the winner" might turn into "well, they played three neat games, and one of the players who tied for second played this fascinating game, and three other people tied for second, so..." and suddenly I've spent the entire day annotating. That's not a problem in a world with limitless time.

But when I think about writing and reporting more generally, I think I get nervous or more anxious when I know I have to look up a lot of particular details to write something. If I know I have to write an article today, I'm usually eager to get started on it first thing. But if I know that, in order to write that article, I'll have to look up how many times so-and-so has been invited to this event before, and when the last time a player rated below such-and-such won this event, and any number of other details, the thought of writing that article feels more like a chore. It's not even that I mind doing this sort of research. On my own time, I'll often go down such rabbit holes. I think that's what is off-putting about it in the context of writing an article, actually: trying to just get the info I need and get on with it.

The most successful way I've been able to overcome these sort of freeze-ups is to make what I call a "fine-grained to-do list." The to-do list might start as "write the article", and if I don't experience any hang-ups, that might remain just one item on my list. But I've definitely written articles that ended up as 20 or 30 line items, such as "email the TD to ask about X" and "search for who won the event in what year" and even "turn that knotty sentence into three smaller ones." If I feel stuck, I just try to keep breaking down the task into parts that are small enough that they no longer feel scary, even if there are a lot of them.

With larger writing projects, I will often fear I'm losing the thread or the "point" the more I write, even if I had a clear thesis and outline. This was definitely a problem in my past life in academia. The trick that I learned there was the "reverse outline" where I just let myself vomit up a draft, then read through it and write a brief one-sentence summary of each paragraph. Then I look at my notes on what I actually wrote and try to make a new outline off of what I apparently wrote. That usually produces a much more coherent outline, because it's responding to what I was actually thinking as I wrote, instead of what I thought I was going to write about it before I wrote. It's also fun trying to interpret an author's writing as if that author isn't just me.

I have never heard ADHD described quite that way before. Eloquent! It really helps me understand some of the people in my life with ADHD. I shared the above passage with one of these people I am very close with, and their comment was "That's eerily close to how my life and brain operates. The fine grained to do list is something I have to do to finish

something I'm not 'focused' on. I do force myself to finish things on time but it's an internal fight. When it's something I'm enjoying it isn't at all."

I'm thrilled to hear that someone you're close with who has ADHD found that comment relatable, and that you found it insightful. For a while, I was regularly co-hosting a podcast with my close friend Julia, who has a doctorate degree in clinical psychology, about chess and psychology. We've both been too busy to keep up with it, but I'm very proud of our episode about ADHD and I was surprised by the reaction we got in terms of how many people said it helped them understand people in their lives better. I don't know how to link to a podcast episode in print, but: <https://chessfeels.transistor.fm/episodes/ep-15-the-adhd-episode-season-1-finale>

What do you feel has been your greatest success in writing? In writing in chess?

More generally: I've mentioned dread or anxiety when it comes to knowing I have to write something that feels daunting in some way, perhaps because I don't know how to start, how to organize it, or what to say about it. That feeling is a major reason I didn't finish my Ph.D. program (I'm ABD, meaning "All But Dissertated"). I don't mind not writing my dissertation, though, since life took me in different directions and I'm thrilled with them. But I can think of other cases where I felt a similar level of anxiety over the thought of writing something and still found a way to write it. Those have to be my greatest successes, since on some level I didn't think I could do it. Most recently, I had this experience with a Chessable course that my friend CM Vjekoslav Nemec talked me into co-authoring with him. Vjeko is a regular Chessable author (and the co-author of several courses by GM Jan Gustafsson that are *excellent* in my opinion), and he has been a great coach for me in the past (I've been too busy to take any lessons recently). We're doing an opening course on the Kan Sicilian. Coming up with the variations to recommend was mostly fine. Writing the explanations was also fine, as was finding and annotating model games and instructive positions. But we also wanted to include a general overview that distilled the entire course into a few key ideas or themes, or at least to come up with an overview for each chapter. The thought of turning tens of thousands of words into a few bullet points or paragraphs terrified me for the better part of a year. Being able to distill complex ideas into something succinct and organized is hard! But after going through several drafts of writing the course itself, then reading through it, I was able to just go on a walk, organize my thoughts, and start putting it together. That felt like a huge success: actually writing something that had struck fear into my heart for months. This was true for philosophy writing, too.

Specifically for chess writing, I can think of several titled players who have told me they thought I was much higher rated because of how well I write about the ins and outs of chess. That might sound like a back-handed compliment, but I take it with pride.

We have a similarity when you describe ABD as I suffered from that as well. I had an advisor that wouldn't grant your Ph.D. unless you had a positive story to tell in the dissertation. I had the knowledge, but it didn't matter. I had discovered a new chemical, but we could not solve part of its chemical structure. I had isolated only 8mg and needed more. I tried for three years to get the plant to produce the

chemical again, but it just wouldn't. I think that is why I have a dislike for biology. LOL. When my wife and I had twins, I decided to switch to an MS and spent half a semester writing that thesis, got my degree, and found a job. It worked out well for me and sounds like it is working good for you as well.

I would have a dislike for biology after that experience, too. In my mind, if you find something new, that should count. Philosophy is hard because of the level of abstraction, coming up with something novel is hard, more because of the 'something' than the 'novel.' John Hartmann (the *Chess Life* editor-in-chief) is also an ABD philosopher, and my neighbor an hour away in Omaha. I've joked that, to work in the publications department at US Chess, a background in chess is a plus, but the only requirements are residing in Nebraska and being ABD in a philosophy PhD program.

What aspect of chess draws you in most when selecting something to write about? History, openings, endings, biographies, tournaments, etc.?

So. much of my job is focused on news and reporting, so I definitely consider myself a novice when it comes to writing about history or biographies. I'd love to get more experience doing that sort of research and reporting, though, but it definitely currently feels intimidating. Openings are hit-or-miss depending on how well-versed I am in the particular opening. I'd like to see the statistical breakdown on every game I've chosen to annotate in a report, and which openings are over- or under-represented. I'm certain that Benonis are over-represented, because I'm a Benoni Boy. I know I'll often have more to say (or add to somebody else's annotations) in the Kan Sicilian these days. I wonder if there are any openings that I just am afraid to touch. Grunfeld, probably.

I am a Grunfeld player. I even played the Grunfeld against Jonathan Rowson in a simul! When I played ...d5 his comment, while laughing, was something like well you have balls! Ha Ha

That's funny.

Continuing with the original question. But, more generally, I think I'm drawn to the psychological elements of chess. Sometimes this means features or reporting about what makes people so passionate about playing/organizing, or their experiences in a game. But even if it's just writing about specific games or events, I enjoy trying to get into the heads of players and trying to make sense of what they might have been thinking. Strong players don't blunder in a vacuum, so it's doing them a disservice to simply write why their move was refuted by an engine. Instead, what sort of thing might they have been focused on instead, or why might they have dismissed a particular issue that turned out to be relevant? Few things get me as excited as clicking onto a game between two strong players and seeing a computer evaluation chart that looks like a seismograph because of all the "errors." That must have been such a tense game to play! Let's figure out exactly why it was.

Are there specific grammar or format items that you use in your writing that define your style as you see it?

I can't think of any that I'm proud of. But I definitely have some go-to phrases and phrasing that I've realized are distinctive, because sometimes when I'm working with authors who have written for me a bunch in the past, I'll start noticing those JJ-isms cropping up in their own writing when it definitely wasn't there before, and I'll think that I'm rubbing off on them. Or, at least, that they're reading my articles!

At one point not too long ago, you decided to focus on your own game, and you improved to have a rating over 2100. Any advice for others who want to improve their game?

These things take time. More time than most of us have as adults. It's unfair, but that doesn't mean it's not true. My big improvement jump from around 1800 to around 2100 was when I was living in New York and teaching there for a semester. It was a cushy temporary gig, and I had ample opportunity to play at the Marshall and, more importantly, enough time to actually put like 3-5 hours of work in for each lesson and take a couple of lessons a week on top of what I was reading and the games I was playing. Most adults don't have nearly that much time to immerse themselves in chess, which makes it very hard to improve. It's been so much harder to improve with sporadic playing and minimal time to study. So, my advice is that there's no substitute for getting OTB experience, but, also, that there's no substitute for immersion in a subject. I think that can be humbling or disappointing to hear, but I also hope it can be motivating.

Do you have a favorite opening? Ending?

I already alluded to my favorite opening. But, even earlier, when I said I'm just always curious and excited to experience new and interesting things, I wonder if anybody reading this guessed some of my opening repertoire just based on that. I think it's very Benoni-apt. For endings, just the plain old Vancura. I don't know exactly how to explain it, but it doesn't make sense to me. Like, of course I've learned it and even taught it and once even held it in a game! But unlike so many other fundamental endgames that just sort of "click," I never got that "a-ha" moment of it *making sense* in some sort of logical way. I still don't believe it. It's kind of like those Reti, king-and-pawn endgame studies where the defending king is so obviously far from the square of the enemy pawn, but still draws. Although I guess there's a sort of logic to those, eventually, that I can latch onto. But I still just look at the position and think "no way," and then I can play through each move and understand it, but then look at the position again and think, just as firmly, "no way."

My guess is you play KIA positional but yet attacking. I don't think you would play the Smith-Morra or are part of the BDG cult.

You think too highly of me. I'm going to be a Benoni player until the day I die (most likely from a Benoni-related incident).

Do you have a favorite game anyone played?

Wow. Let's say Spassky – Petrosian, Moscow (7), 1966. The one where Petrosian looks ready to enter a race against Spassky after castling opposite sides, but then pulls out some prophylactic voodoo and reduces Spassky to throwing desperados. But then the final position with all the advanced pawns, and those little Exchange sacrifice flourishes along the way. It's brutal, and I

think it's the game that helped me understand that playing positional, strategic, and even defensive chess is totally compatible with attacking chess. And, weirdly enough, it was played on my birthday (albeit 25 years before I was born).

[Event "Petrosian - Spassky World Championship Match"]

[Site "Moscow URS"]

[Date "1966.04.25"]

[EventDate "?"]

[Round "7"]

[Result "0-1"]

[White "Boris Spassky"]

[Black "Tigran Vartanovich Petrosian"]

[ECO "D03"]

[WhiteElo "?"]

[BlackElo "?"]

1. d4 ♟f6 2. ♟f3 e6 3. ♠g5 d5 4. ♟bd2 ♠e7 5. e3 ♟bd7 6. ♠d3 c5 7. c3 b6 8. O-O ♠b7 9. ♟e5 ♟xe5 10. dxe5 ♟d7 11. ♠f4 ♟c7 12. ♟f3 h6 13. ♠g3 g5 14. b4 h5 15. h4 g×h4 16. ♠f4 O-O-O 17. a4 c4 18. ♠e2 a6 19. ♟h1 ♠dg8 20. ♠g1 ♠g4 21. ♟d2 ♠hg8 22. a5 b5 23. ♠ad1 ♠f8 24. ♟h2 ♟xe5 25. ♟xg4 h×g4 26. e4 ♠d6 27. ♟e3 ♟d7 28. ♠xd6 ♟xd6 29. ♠d4 e5 30. ♠d2 f5 31. exd5 f4 32. ♟e4 ♟f6 33. ♟f5+ ♟b8 34. f3 ♠c8 35. ♟b1 g3 36. ♠e1 h3 37. ♠f1 ♠h8 38. g×h3 ♠xh3 39. ♟g1 ♠xf1 40. ♟xf1 e4 41. ♟d1 ♟g4 42. f×g4 f3 43. ♠g2 f×g2+ 0-1

Do you have a favorite game you have played?

Yes! My Benoni brilliancy! What a fun move to find over the board. Eventually, Nick just started laughing, too. He's one of the other strongest regular tournament players in Nebraska, and this was my first win against him after losing our first meeting. I think he has a plus score against me again now, though, and it is stressful playing a lot of the same people over and over again and not being able to surprise them as easily.

[Event "March UNO Open"]

[Site "Omaha, NE"]

[Date "03/19/2022"]

[Round "4"]

[White "Lacroix, Nick"]

[Black "Lang, JJ"]

[Result "0-1"]

[WhiteElo "2038"]

[BlackElo "2076"]

[TimeControl "G/45 D/5"]

[Board "1"]

[Variant "Standard"]

[ECO "A65"]

[Opening "Benoni Defense: King's Pawn Line"]

[StudyName "benoni game"]

[ChapterName "Lacroix - Lang"]

[Annotator "https://lichess.org/@/K_A_L_E"]

[ChapterURL "https://lichess.org/study/tke9O4Qa/q5m6UsMw"]

1. d4 e6 2. c4 c5 3. d5 exd5 4. cxd5 d6 5. e4 ♟f6 6. ♟c3 g6 7. ♠f4 ♠g7 8. h3 O-O 9. ♠d3 b5 10. ♟xb5 ♟xe4 11. ♠xe4 ♟a5+ 12. ♟c3 ♠e8 13. ♟e2 ♠xe4 14. O-O ♠xc3 15. bxc3 ♠a6 16. ♠e1 ♟d7 17. ♠d2 ♠ae8 18. ♟f4 ♟f6 19. c4 ♟d8 20. ♟a4 ♠xc4 21. ♠xe4 ♠xe4 22. f3 ♟e8 23. ♟c2 ♟e5 24. ♠c3 ♠d4!! 25. ♠xd4 ♟xd4+ 26. ♟h2 ♟xf4+ 27. g3 ♟e5 28. ♠d1 ♠xd5 29. ♟d2 ♠xf3 30. ♠e1 ♟e4 31. ♟f4 ♟b2+ 32. ♟g1 ♟f2# 0-1

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

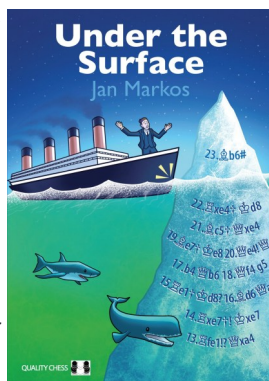
I was just talking to my therapist about how a central part of chess improvement is to be able to identify the “automatic” thought processes that aren’t always working, develop the skill of noticing that you (e.g.) went straight from looking at a position to looking for the most vicious attack, and then develop the skill of asking questions that can help determine whether this is the best or only plan in the position. This has helped me a lot outside of chess, too. I’ll often feel anxious or stressed, and then, without even recognizing what happened inside my brain or body, I’m rushing to complete some chore or task, I guess in order to reduce that stress. But when I pause and notice that something has happened, and then ask some questions to myself, I’ll often realize that I am not, in fact, in mortal danger, if I do not do the dishes or write this press release at this exact moment, and I end up enjoying my life a lot more.

Do you have a favorite chess book?

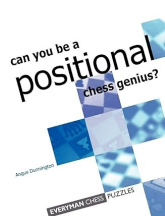
Yeah! I like to say *My System* because it never gets a neutral reaction. And I do like it, and think a lot of the criticism of the technical writing is very unfair. It’s cool to see such foundational thought articulated like that. But it’s not my favorite book. That would probably be *Under the Surface* by Jan Markos.

I’m not familiar with that book. Would you please provide a bit about *Under the Surface* and why it appeals to you so much?

Yeah. *Under the Surface* was originally published by Quality Chess in 2018. It won the ECF book of the year award that same year. Ján Markoš is a Slovak GM, and he has a background in philosophy and theology, as well. I think that background puts him in a unique position to try to get at some of the deep beauty and deeper truths of chess strategy, which is why I think of *My System* as a reference point (at least for the ‘truths’ part, maybe not the beauty). His writing is very vivid. Other authors have told us to listen to our pieces, but I’m not sure if many have explained how to do this as well as this book does.



Is there a book that you read, and your understanding of the game was greatly improved?



Yeah, keeping with what I said about that Petrovian game, Angus Dunnington’s *Can You Be A Positional Chess Genius?* from Everyman. I think that was my first exposure to a book of puzzles that were exacting when it came to calculation, but was still primarily about evaluation and strategy, rather than tactics.

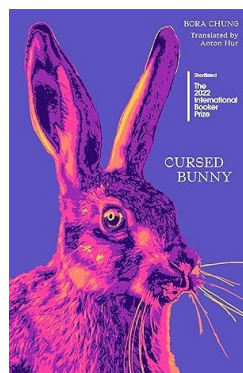
What other types of books do you read for fun?

I used to be way more into literature, and it’s a real shame how little I get to read these days. I was just reading this really morbid collection of feminist, body horror, short stories — *Cursed Bunny* — by a Korean author (with a Slavic literature background) named Bora Chung, though. I have always loved the Russians/Slavs more generally, probably because of both the surface-level

familiarity of the cultures through chess and the deeper appreciation of suffering and mundanity that chess instills in us.

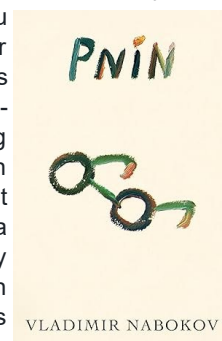
I have, however, been really into audio dramas recently. I struggle to listen to podcasts that are just conversations between people, as I find it really difficult to pay attention, if I’m not participating in the conversation myself or at least taking notes/writing down my thoughts. But, with fiction podcasts, I find it way easier to stay engaged and get sucked into stories. I’ve listened to an absurd amount, probably 100 different shows in the past year.

The most mind-blowingly, delightful one I’ve heard is called *Midnight Burger*. It’s about a time-traveling, dimension-spanning diner that shows up somewhere new every day. It’s comedic sci-fi that is really witty, creative, and finds a brilliant balance of cynical absurdity (one day, they end up on a planet where it’s always the year 2012 and Mitt Romney is running for president) and heart-warming beauty.



Who is your favorite non-chess author? Favorite book?

Probably Vladimir Nabokov. It would be cheating to say *The Luzhin Defense*, since it’s a book about chess. Although I do really like that book, mostly because, in the preface, he tells you that the main character dies a tragic death. You might think that’s a spoiler, but remember that Nabokov, while not much of a chess player, was known to compose chess problems. And don’t problems begin by telling us exactly what’s going to happen, and in exactly how many moves? So, I think of it as a novel that is embodying the spirit of a composition, and that’s so cool. But my favorite book of his is *Pnin*, even though nothing really happens, because that’s where all the insight is hidden.



Your US Chess bio says you like to cook. What is your favorite dish to cook? How about favorite dish to eat?

I do love to cook! I grew up in North Carolina, and really love barbecue, although I’ve been trying to go back towards being mostly vegetarian. So, shortly after moving to Nebraska and realizing there wasn’t any decent barbecue around here, I bought a Weber smoker and taught myself how to make Carolina-style pulled pork. I’ve also experimented with ribs and gotten pretty good with brisket, and I do love how it is an exercise in patience.

Continued on page 43

Resurfaced: Chess Journalism in Spanish

By Chris Martinez G

I Didn't Expect to Buy a Chess Magazine Older Than My Dad...

I didn't expect to buy a chess magazine older than my dad, but here I am. The year on the cover says 1953. The place? Buenos Aires, Argentina. The pages are fragile, yellowed at the edges, and smell like history. But what's inside isn't just moves and games — it's a voice. Loud, proud, and unlike anything you'd expect to find in the usual chess press.

That's why I'm starting this column, *Resurfaced*. Each time we meet here, I'll pull one story out of the stack — from old Spanish-language magazines, books, and other treasures I've been collecting — and bring it back to life. Think of it like finding a hidden aisle in the chess store, full of things you never knew were there.

Najdorf, Bolbochán, and Argentina's National Duty

Open the August 1953 issue, and you'll find an article titled "*Al margen del Torneo de la Candidatura*" ("On the Margin of the Candidates Tournament"). At first glance, it's about Miguel Najdorf heading to Switzerland to compete in the Candidates — the tournament that would decide who faced Botvinnik for the world title.



But the more you read, the more you realize this isn't just about chess.

The article paints Najdorf not as an individual contender, but as the representative of an entire nation. He wasn't traveling alone either — Argentina also sent master Julio Bolbochán as his collaborator. And the writer is quick to remind readers: this wasn't charity, this was policy.

The government of Juan Perón, deep in its Second Five-Year Plan (*Segundo Plan Quinquenal*), had paid their way. And it wasn't just about money. The article argued that every taxpayer had played a part. Taxes, it said, were a patriotic contribution — and part of that contribution was sending Najdorf and Bolbochán to Europe to fight for Argentina's honor.

In the magazine's own words, this was a "*deber moral, patriótico y de solidaridad nacional*" — a moral, patriotic, and national duty.

Chess as Politics, Chess as Identity

Now, pause for a second. Can you imagine the IRS telling Americans: "Pay your taxes — it helps Fischer beat the Soviets"? It sounds wild. But in 1950s Argentina, that was exactly the narrative.

This wasn't unusual either. Perón's Argentina invested heavily in sports, culture, and symbolic achievements. Chess wasn't just a game; it was cultural diplomacy, national pride, and a way to say: *We belong on the world stage*.

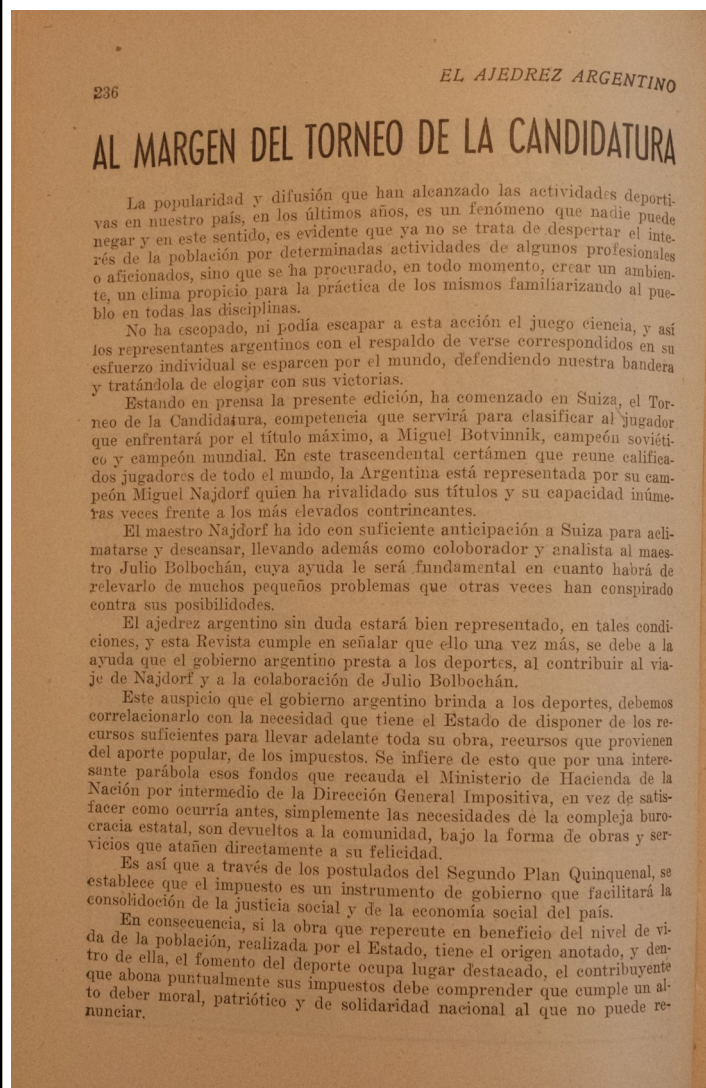
And it wasn't just Argentina flexing its muscles. Remember, this was the Cold War. The Candidates Tournament itself was charged with meaning: Soviet players versus the rest of the world. To send Najdorf was to take a stand. To support him financially was to declare: *Argentina has a place in this fight*.

The Magazine's Tone

The writing itself is striking. The tone is formal but passionate, almost propagandistic. Where most chess coverage in the 1950s might stick to games and results, this Argentine magazine wrapped chess in the language of patriotism, duty, and solidarity.

It's a reminder that chess journalism is always more than games. It's culture talking to itself. And in this case, Argentina's chess press reflected a nation that saw itself as a

rising power, proud and unafraid to declare chess part of its social contract.



Why It Matters Today

So why dig up this old magazine and tell you about it here? Because it shows us two things that still matter.

First, chess reflects society. In 1953 Argentina, chess was a vehicle for national identity and social justice rhetoric. Today, in different ways, it still carries meaning — whether through scholastic programs, online streaming culture, or international Olympiads.

Second, voices matter. English-language chess journalism has long dominated the record, and if you were an American club player in 1953, you probably wouldn't have cared much about what was happening in South America — or anywhere else in Latin America, for that matter. Honestly, I know I wouldn't. I'd have been too wrapped up in my local club games and the thrilling idea that one day an American kid — maybe Fischer, still just a boy then — could rise to challenge the Soviets.

But here's the thing: when you stop and listen to these Spanish voices, it feels like walking out of a store with a bag full of clothes you didn't know you needed, but now can't imagine going without. They give you a different perspective — fresh, colorful. They remind us that chess in the Americas was bigger than one country, and that players and fans in Latin America saw the game through pride, politics, and passion. Without those perspectives, our picture of chess history is incomplete — and rediscovering them feels like a bonus you didn't even know was waiting.

And here's the part I love: thanks to *The Chess Journalist*, those voices get to be heard again in the U.S. Seventy years later, we're still listening.

My Reflection

I'll admit, reading these pages hit me in a personal way. In my earliest years in Mexico DF — now known as CDMX — I remember wandering with my uncle through bookstalls and magazine stands. He picked up novels and cowboy tales, while I reached for comics in Spanish. Holding this 1953 issue brought back that feeling: fragile pages in my hands, voices waiting to be discovered, and a connection to something bigger than myself.

It's a reminder that history is never just "out there." Sometimes it's sitting on a shelf, waiting to be found again. And when you find it, it's not just about the past — it's about identity, about belonging, about reconnecting.

More Pages to Come

So that's our first resurfaced story. In 1953, Argentina declared chess a national duty. Najdorf and Bolbochán weren't just playing games; they were carrying the weight of taxes, politics, and solidarity onto the board.

But this is only the beginning. These magazines — and other Spanish-language works — are full of surprises: quirky club stories, colorful editorials, forgotten masters, even odd puzzles tucked into the margins. And I'll keep bringing them to you, one at a time.

Because the best part of rediscovering forgotten voices? Sharing them. And thanks to this journal, we have the perfect place to do it.

So, take this one home, enjoy it — and when the next issue rolls around, come back. There'll be more waiting for you.



Library Focus: Lance Bark

Interviewed by Mark Capron

Long Room at Trinity College in Dublin, Ireland, photo by Mark Capron.



Hi Lance, please tell us a little bit about yourself and what you do for a living?

I'm from the south shore of Long Island, a town called Massapequa. Nice little town to grow up in. I spent my youth in and around the waters of the Great South Bay. My dad did some clamming and crabbing on the weekends from our little 16' clam boat. My love for the water and the ocean started there. At 15, I got my scuba certification to

explore the underwater realm of Florida's reef systems. Then on to a 2-year degree in Underwater Technology for commercial diving. Many years of great traveling and experiences in salvage diving. After that, I was a scuba instructor for 12 years, teaching everything from basic open water level to advanced deep technical, decompression diving and cave diving. My fiancé and I actively dive about once or twice a month now. For the last 11 years, I have been the property manager for a commercial complex of offices and warehouses in Sunrise, Florida. There are about 90 or so tenants and no shortage of problems to solve, so it keeps me busy.

You do a lot of diving in the ocean. I'm guessing you never uncovered a chess book in the depths, but what have you found that is interesting?

I got scuba certified in 1975. I just celebrated my 50th year of diving by diving in Key Largo with my fiancé and some dear friends. I also went to commercial diving school for two years to receive a degree in Underwater Technology learning all about diving physics, underwater welding and burning, and salvage operations. Then I spent several years as a salvage diver traveling all throughout the Caribbean raising sunken ships and boats, doing underwater repairs, and emergency response for ocean vessels in distress. I do have some nice artifacts at home such as port holes, anchors, and ships wheels. I was also a scuba instructor for about 12 years teaching everything from basic open water to deep technical, mixed gas and decompression diving. I also go cave diving about every 2-3 years in northern Florida.

Have you seen the TV show *Gold Rush: White Water*? If so, what do you think about those divers in that cold water and staying under for 6-8 hours at a time dredging for gold?

I have seen the TV show *Gold Rush*, the key to keeping warm in cold water has two answers:

- 1) A dry suit. This is a neoprene wetsuit about 1/4" thick. There is a neck seal and wrists seals, with attached boots. You enter the suit via a zipper which runs across the shoulders. Totally waterproof. You wear thermal under garments to keep you warm, and battery powered heat pads may also be used. Plus, you wear a thick rubber hood to keep your head warm, and thick gloves. I used this type of suit when I was a commercial diver and had diving jobs in New York and New Jersey during the winter months.
- 2) Hot water suit. This type of suit has plastic or rubber tubes lining the arms, chest, and legs of the suit. The tubes have hot/warm water running through them. The water is heated on the deck of the support vessel by way of a water circulating pump, water is heated via electric coils and pumped down to the diver via hose married to the diver's umbilical. There is a thermostat on deck to regulate the temperature, so the diver does not overheat or get burned. The water is constantly flushed throughout the dive.

We went on a trip to Key West once and went out fishing. It was a lot of fun. Do you fish much or just scuba dive?

No fishing, I used to spearfish and get lobsters for my parents when they were alive, but not anymore. Now I just shoot Lionfish, an invasive species in Florida.

When did you begin playing chess?

I first started playing chess around age 10. I learned from my dad, who was helpful, but I was beating him very soon. Then, in 1972, the Fischer craze was everywhere, and I was playing with friends. I was on the chess team in high school, but it was very apparent to me that I was not going to be a threat to the world of chess kings...lol, but I was hooked.

When did you begin collecting Chess books?

I got into collecting chess books much later in life when I had some extra money to spend.

Do you recall what the first book you ever had was?

My first chess book was *Bobby Fischer Teaches Chess*. Then *Logical Chess Move by Move*...then the disease kicked in...

What are some of your favorite books you have collected?

My favorite books tend to be biographical books, learning about

the lives of all the great men and women of chess.

What draws you to a book? Cover? Title? Subject? Something else?

The thing that draws me to a book is the subject, and the era in which it is about. I gravitate to those players before the advent of computer assisted programming.

Tell us a story or two about how you got some of these books.

I have been collecting books from a very young age. My father was in the Merchant Marine during WWII, and I inherited his love of the ocean and all things nautical. We both love maritime history, and I inherited his nautical collection when he passed. Since my passion is diving, my dive book collection is in the hundreds. When my fiancé and I travel, we always seek out used bookstores to find any treasure that may be waiting for us on the shelves.

Do you have lots of your books autographed?

I'm not big on the autograph part of collecting, I do have one chess book autographed by William Lombardy, and I met Maurice Ashley at a book signing here in Fort Lauderdale. He signed his new book, *Move By Move*. I also brought my May 1999 issue of *Chess Life* where he was on the cover, and he signed that as well.

What strategies have you used to obtain books?

Before the internet, I went to every used bookstore on any of my travels.

What is your favorite bookstore to purchase from? Are there good used bookstores in your area?

I have a great bookstore nearby in Boca Raton called BookWise.

Do you have a favorite publisher?

The old-time publishers like Fireside and Dover have put out some great books. Now we have New In Chess, Gambit, and many others to choose from.

Have you written any books yourself?

I have not written any books, but I worked for a local Florida outdoor magazine for several years, and I was responsible for the scuba section of that magazine. I wrote and took pictures for the monthly story about all the wrecks and reefs along the Florida coast.

Do you read everything you have collected?

I would need at least 10 to 20 more lifetimes to read all my books. But I have read portions and played some games in almost all of them.

Why did you decide to collect Chess books?

Collecting books is partly some compulsion thing I have, maybe a

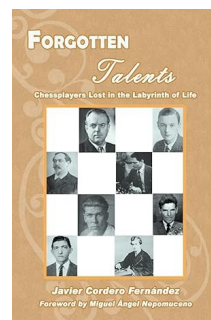
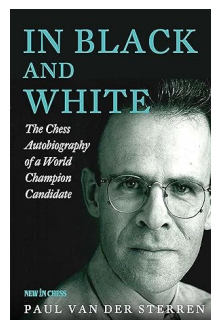
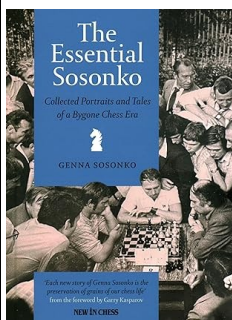
disease...lol. I'm just happy my compulsion is not drinking, drugs, or gambling.

Who is your favorite player?

My favorite player is a very tough question. Paul Morphy stands out, not only for his chess ability, but for his manners and pure etiquette at the chess board and in social circles. Then there is Fischer, great player, but insane; Frank Marshall, José Capablanca, Vasily Smyslov, Mikhail Tal and all the rest of that era.

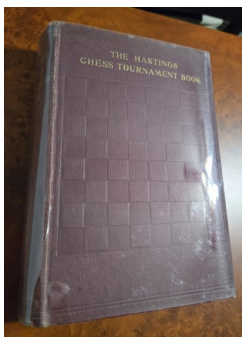
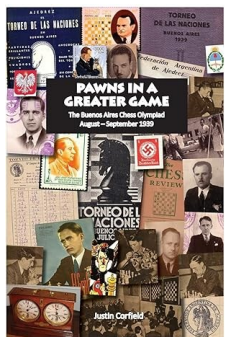
What is your favorite biography book?

Biographical books are really my favorite. It is so interesting to read about how all the greats got started in chess and the long hard road to constantly improving. Genna Sosonko has many great books including *The Essential Sosonko*, and I enjoyed *In Black and White* by Paul van der Sterren. One other somewhat obscure book is *Forgotten Talents: Chessplayers Lost in the Labyrinth of Life* by Javier Cordero Fernández. A wealth of great biographies.



What is your favorite tournament book?

I do like tournament books. Some of my favorites would be my two editions of the Lone Pine tournaments, *Pawns in a Greater Game*, *San Sebastian 1911*, *1st and 2nd Piatigorsky Cup*, *Cambridge Springs 1904*, *Kings, Queens, and Rookies*, *The Chess Battles of Hastings*. (I do have a nice 1896 edition of *The Hastings 1895 Tournament*)



Who is your favorite author in chess books?

As far as authors go, I have many that I like. Bruce Pandolfini, Jeremy Silman, Yasser Seirawan, Reuben Fine, and many more.

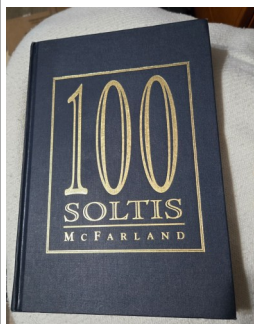
How about other books, what genre do you read the most and is there a particular author or two you would like to call out?

My other book passion is wreck diving history, including WWII wrecks. I have dove wrecks sunk by U-boats off the Florida coast and I have dove the WWII wrecks off of North Carolina including the U-352. I have too many to list, but there are a ton of great maritime authors.

What's your favorite opening book?

Don't really get into opening books, my memory is shot...lol. I do have some basic books on openings by the old-time authors.

Do you have a favorite book overall?



Today it is probably *100 Best Chess Games of the 20th Century* by Andrew Soltis, but who knows by tomorrow. It changes regularly.

Do you have a favorite book series?

Yasser Seirawan has a great series of books that I like. Also, *My Great Predecessors* by Kasparov.

Do you have all your books catalogued?

I need to organize my books better; I just moved them all into another room and things are a mess at the moment.

Do you know about how many books you own?

500 or so chess books.

Have you started to buy any books on Kindle, Forward chess, etc.?

I absolutely refuse to use any book on Kindle. This is sacrilege!!! The nice thing about my book collection is that I can pick a book and travel back in time to any era I like and play a game. I don't need any battery-operated or electronic device. My fiancé allows me to have a portion of the dining room table for a full-time set-up of the board and pieces. However, I joined Chess.com years ago and I do enjoy playing online now and then. I also like playing the bots and coaches, and the game review feature. It's nice to learn from my mistakes as well as having a game rated much higher than my usual 1200 range. Whenever someone asks me if I am any good at chess, my standard reply is...." I have risen to the heights of mediocrity!"



Do you collect books from any other language besides English?

I have one book not in English, *Bobby Fischer's 60 Memorable Games* in Dutch. I got it because I thought it was unique. It isn't a book, but I made friends with someone from Ukraine. We met on Facebook in a chess group. After Putin invaded, he needed help. I sent some

money, and he sent me his chess pin collection. He is still alive as of last month.

Do you have a favorite game?

My favorite game would be the game I played against GM Michael Rohde, July 21, 1989, in a simul. I was in the Grumman Chess Club, (I worked at Grumman Aerospace in Bethpage, Long Island for many years.) there were about 30 of us playing in the simul. I lost in 28 moves but had a great time. Here is the autographed score sheet.



Also I wanted to mention my good friend and chess mentor Roy Fressdorf. Roy and I would play during the long winter season on Long Island, and we both went to the simul featuring Micheal Rode. We both lost, but had a great time. Roy is a very good chess player and spent many gloomy winter Saturdays with me over the board and teaching me more advanced chess strategies. If I got two wins out of ten from him, I was happy.

I hear you have a nice collection of chess sets as well. Would you tell us about a few of them?

Chess sets. Growing up, I had a cheap lightweight set. I didn't know any better. In the early 1990's, I went to the town of Huntington on the north shore of Long Island to visit a store called YOUR MOVE. I was stunned at the size of the store that was devoted to chess and other board games. This store is now located in my hometown of Massapequa under the new name Your Move Chess & Games or on the internet as CHESS USA. I got a nice boxwood Reykjavik set with a 3.75" king, along with a Drueke board #63, which came in a nice red cloth, board carrier with the name DRUEKE embroidered in yellow. I haven't seen one since. I still have this today. I also have a prototype set in ebony with a 4" king which was the forerunner of Frank Camaratta's House of Staunton Collectors series. I emailed Frank some pictures and he has confirmed this. I also reached out to two manufacturers in India who have also confirmed the set. The internet is a dangerous place for chess collectors...lol, but I have

found some unbelievable deals. I do have three House of Staunton sets with the nice, fitted briefcase, 4",4.4" both in ebony, and one set 3.75" in Indian Rosewood. I also have all three sets of



the WE Ultimate versions of 1, 2 and 3. Great plastic sets. I don't own any what you would call "valuable" like a Jaques level set. If I hit the lotto, maybe an 1860's era set would be nice! I have a nice Drueke board #64 I found on Facebook for a steal. That was a very fortunate find. So, the internet kind of fuels the thrill of the hunt. An interesting side note about chess set collecting: in the early 90's I had the good fortune to meet Floyd Sarisohn, of Commack, Long Island. Floyd was one of the most well-known collectors of chess sets in the nation and lived 30 minutes from me. I got myself invited to his home somehow and was introduced to the world of chess set collecting. I really had no idea what was in store for me that day. His lovely wife served us milk and Pepperidge Farm chess cookies, and I got a tour of their home with about a thousand chess sets which were displayed on shelving on every wall and in every room in the house. Amazing to say the least. Floyd passed in 2024 at the age of 95.

What's your most prized possession?

Prized set: I have a very nice Drueke #4466 set I bought from Chuck Grau from Facebook. Social media is a great place to make friends with like interests. That's how you and I met.



Any close encounters with sharks? Or just book sharks?

I have been on many shark dives. Every year in the Jupiter area of Florida, the lemon sharks migrate. There are hundreds milling about. Also, the wrecks off of North Carolina are where hundreds of sand tiger sharks congregate for giving birth. Big pregnant sand tigers are about 12-14' long. It is quite the sight to see! I also have a large fossil shark tooth collection from diving the West coast of Florida.

From our phone conversation you mentioned you had some megalodon teeth that you found. How big are the teeth and how big would that estimate the megalodon to be?

I have been diving for shark teeth for over 20 years or so on the west coast of Florida. I have some really nice megs, tiger, sand tiger, mako and a host of others. I have a 5" megalodon tooth, which would make it about a 50' shark!



Do you have a favorite quote or two?

Favorite quote: someone once said that chess could never be a hobby. Well, chess is certainly a hobby for me, one of my greatest pastime pleasures.

Hikaru Nakamura has been one of my favorite players of recent times. What was it like meeting him and his stepfather Sunil Weeramantry?

Meeting Hikaru and his dad was great. I did get his dad to sign his book and Hikaru signed my chess board! Here in Broward County Florida, there is a chess program called Mayors' Chess Challenge. Once a month, chess players and the mayor of each local town gather at the local hall for a day of chess. I have played some of the mayors and locals for a great sharing of chess. Hikaru and his dad showed up for the Mayors' Challenge here in Sunrise, Florida, a couple of years ago.



Lance with signed copy by the authors Sunil Weeramantry and Robert McLellan and Hikaru Nakamura who signed my chess board.



Lance playing the mayor of Fort Lauderdale Dean Trantalis at the annual Mayors Chess Challenge.



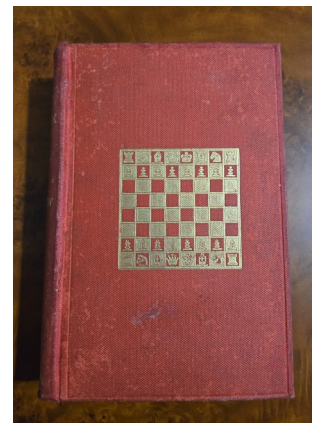
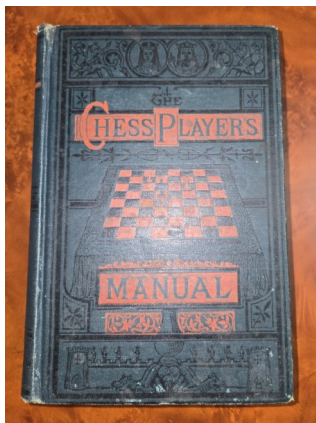
As we spoke on the phone, we not only have similar tastes in chess books, but also music. Who are some of your favorite musicians/groups? Any good music stories?

My musical taste is quite eclectic. Having two older brothers growing up got me into the best of the 60s and 70s classic rock. I feel lucky to have grown up during this time, and I was able to see fantastic shows at many famous venues such as Madison Square Garden, Nassau coliseum, the Hollywood Sportatorium,

Miami Marine Stadium, Radio City Music Hall and such. My favorites include, but not limited to: Dylan, the Dead, Led Zeppelin, Lynyrd Skynyrd, Marshall Tucker, the Allmans, Pink Floyd, Yes, the Doors, Frank Zappa, the Who, the Kinks, the Beatles, Rolling Stones, Jimmy Buffet, Bob Marley, Tom Petty, and ELO. Also, all the country artists that would be considered classic, Waylon, Willie, Vern Gosdn, Don Williams, Hank Williams, JR and SR., Charlie Daniels, and the whole bunch in that era. Pop groups like the Monkees and rock like Steppenwolf and Blue Oyster Cult, the list goes on and on.

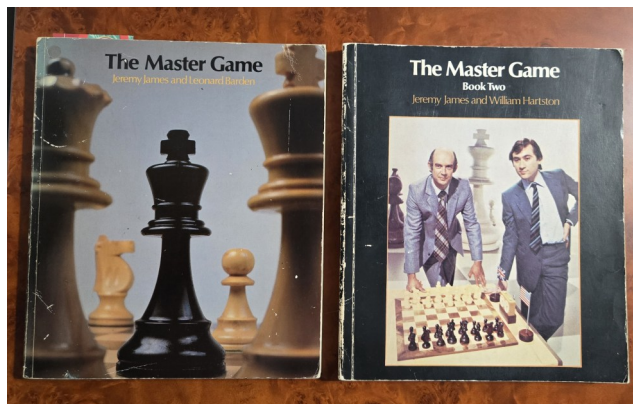
Thank you for the interview it was great to hear your stories.

You're welcome. Here are a few more pictures from my library.



(L) *Chess Players Manual* CHD Gossip 1886 edition

(R) *Chess Players Handbook* by Howard Staunton 1888 edition



2 volume set Hosted on British TV



This is NEMO... My nemesis..... Beats me...even with Black....

The 1984 Midwest Masters Invitational – Part 1

By Robert Irons

The second Midwest Masters Invitational Chess tournament took place in the International House on the campus of the University of Chicago over the second weekend in March 1984. The International House has a most charming history; it was founded by Harry Edmonds, who, as a young man working for the YMCA in 1909, was on the campus of Columbia University when he happened to pass by a young Chinese student outside the library. Harry shared a casual "Good morning" with the student, who in turn replied, "I've been in New York three weeks, and you are the first person who has spoken to me." Struck by the student's feelings of loneliness and isolation, he and his wife Florence started having afternoon teas and Sunday suppers for international students living in New York City. In 1911, Edmonds opened the Cosmopolitan College Club, offering excursions, social events, and housing assistance to international students.

Edmonds used his relationship with John D. Rockefeller Jr. to convince him to open what became the first International House in New York City. At a cost of \$3 million to build, it opened in 1924, serving about 500 students, with Edmonds as its first director. It was such a success that Edmonds and Rockefeller extended the idea, building International Houses on the campuses at Berkeley in 1930, at Chicago in 1932, and at Paris in 1936. As of

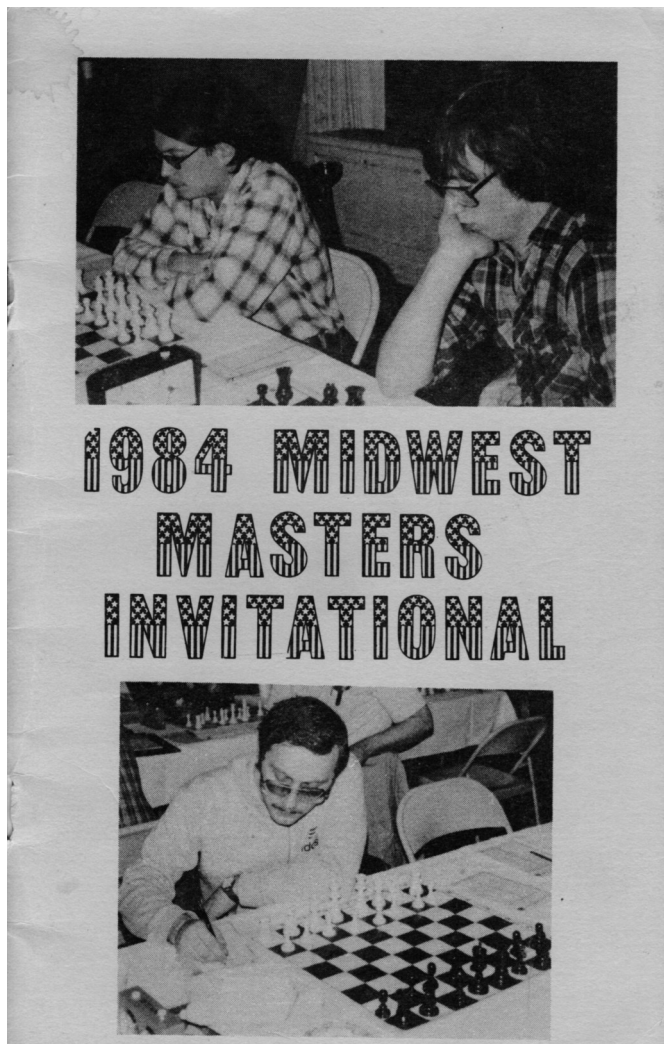
today, International Houses Worldwide is a partnership of 15 International Houses, serving over 9,000 students from over 125 countries. While they are financially and organizationally independent, they all share the International House pledge:

As light begets light, so love, friendship and goodwill are passed from one to another. We who have come from many nations to live in one fellowship at International House promise one another to pass the light wherever we go.

The tournament, as for the first MMI, was organized once again by Helen Warren and directed by Walter Brown. It is a testament to these two principals that a full 20 players from the prior tournament entered this second one. There were, however, some significant changes this time around.

The field rose in size from 36 to 43 players, the number of masters increased from 23 to 34, and the average pre-tournament rating of the players climbed by 30 points! Ten states were represented by the players, listed here in descending order by their pre-tournament rating.

Player	Pre-Tournament Elo
Brooks, Michael	2490
Odendahl, Steven	2437
Sprenkle, David	2429
Kuroda, Paul	2413
Zelkind, Eduard	2410
Kaushansky, Leonid	2388
Martinovsky, Gene	2379
Rose, John	2354
Chow, Albert	2348
Moore, Thomas	2345
Unger, Tom	2331
Giles, Morris	2327
Berchenko, Sergey	2316
Lindsay, Fred	2310
Savage, Allen	2309
Finegold, Ben	2307
Dandridge, Marvin	2306
Weiss, Mitchell	2305
Miller, Todd	2291
Eckert, Doug	2290
Pelts, Peter	2280
VanMeter, Lester	2270
Chachere, Lawrence	2268
Tomas, John	2267
Colias, Billy	2257
Dubin, Aaron	2244
Mohr, Ken	2239
Stevanovic, Miomir	2233
Ellis, James	2226
Hudson, Steven	2224
Myers, Hugh	2212
Wallach, Ken	2210
Karklins, Erik	2209
Schiller, Eric	2207
Sandrin, Angelo	2199
Sage, Timothy	2199
Mills, James	2172
Lief, Adam	2163
Frumkin, Edward	2161
Bereolos, Peter	2149
Szpisjak, Steven	2138
Redman, Timothy	2092
Zelkind, Mike	1848



Top: Paul Kuroda, Michael Brooks. Bottom: Leonid Kaushansky.

As with the first MMI held in 1982, the action took place over five rounds, with the first round being held on Friday March 9th, rounds two and three on Saturday the 10th, and the final two rounds on Sunday the 11th.

Round 1

The tournament began with fireworks; of the 21 games recorded, 19 ended decisively. The Best Game prize was won by the first-round game Moore – Mills, which was worthy of being included in Informant 37. Eckert and Odendahl played a solid game until the 30th move, when they traded mistakes. Eckert insisted on making the last one on move 31, whereupon Odendahl showed him that his back rank was weak. Szpisjak had a decent advantage against Pelts until he grabbed a poisoned pawn. It only took three moves for Pelts to make his point (pun intended). Myers chose an odd flank opening against Giles, who took over the center with pawns supported by his minor pieces. On his 19th move Myers misplaced his queen, and Giles took over the initiative. Nine moves later he skewered a rook, and Myers waved the white flag. Ben Finegold showed Eric Schiller that it only takes one bad move to spoil the efforts of 40 good moves. Finegold won a Q+P ending 22 moves later. Van Meter was taught the same lesson by Kuroda, who only required 15 moves to win the R+B+P ending. Lief made one bad pawn move under pressure, and his game quickly collapsed. Savage – Sage is a drunken slugfest, with both players teetering for eight full moves before Sage makes the final mistake.



Foreground: Eugene Martinovsky, James Ellis. Rear: Michael Brooks, John Tomas, Ken Mohr.

Ellis, James S - Martinovsky, Eugene Simeon (2230) [B17]

Midwest Masters-B Chicago (1), 1984

[Irons,Robert]

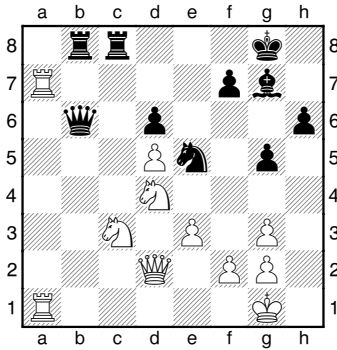
1.e4 c6 2.d4 d5 3.♖c3 dxe4 4.♜xe4 ♞d7 5.♙c4 ♜g6 6.♜g5 e6 7.♞e2 ♚b6 8.♙d3 c5 9.dxc5 ♙xc5 10.♜f3 h6 11.♜e4 ♚bd7 12.♙f4 0-0 13.0-0-0 ♞b6 14.♜xc5 ♜xc5 15.♙d6 ♞e8 16.♜e5 ♜xd3+ 17.♞xd3 ♙d7 18.♜xd7 ♜xd7 19.♙f4 ♞a6 20.♞h5? ♚ [20.♞b1] 20...♜f6 21.♞h4? -+ [21.♞e5 ♞xa2 22.♞a3 ♞d5 23.♞g3 ♚] 21...♞xa2 22.♙xh6 ♞a1+ 23.♞d2 ♞a5+ 24.♞c1 ♞a1+ 25.♞d2 ♞a5+ 26.♞c1 ♞h5 27.♞xh5 ♜xh5 28.♙g5 f6 29.♙e3 f5 30.♙g5 b5 31.g4 fxg4 32.♞g1 g3 33.hxg3 a5 34.♞d7 a4? ± [34...♞f8=] 35.♞h1 ♜f6 36.♙xf6 gxf6 37.♞hh7?! = [37.♞h6±] 37...b4 38.♞hg7+ ♞h8 39.♞b1 ♞e8 40.♞h7+ ♞g8 41.♙dg7+ ♞f8 42.♞b7 ♞g8 1/2-1/2

Eckert, Doug D - Odendahl, Steven M (2380) [A61]

Midwest Masters-B Chicago (1), 1984

[Irons,Robert]

1.d4 ♜f6 2.♜f3 e6 3.c4 c5 4.d5 exd5 5.cxd5 d6 6.♜c3 g6 7.♙g5 ♙g7 8.e3 h6 9.♙h4 g5 10.♙g3 ♜h5 11.♙d3 ♞e7 12.♞a4+ ♜d7 13.♜d2 ♜xg3 14.hxg3 a6 15.♞c2 b5 16.a4 c4 17.♙e2 ♞b8 18.axb5 axb5 19.♞a5 b4 20.♜b5 c3 21.bxc3 bxc3 22.♜e4 0-0 23.♜exc3 ♜c5 24.0-0 ♙d7 25.♞a7 ♞fc8 26.♙g4 ♞d8 27.♙xd7 ♜xd7 28.♞d2 ♜e5 29.♜d4 ♞b6 30.♞fa1? -+



[Either 30.♞aa1 or 30.♞a2 are better than the text. Odendahl misses his first opportunity, but makes the most of the second. 30...♞b4? Black wins with 30...♞xc3! 31.♞xc3 ♞xa7 32.♞xa7 ♞b1+ 33.♞h2 ♜g4+ 34.♞h3 ♜xf2+ 35.♞h2 ♞h1#] 31.♜e4? [31.♜de2=] 31...♞b1+! [The back rank weakness does Eckert in.] 0-1

Redman, Timothy P - Chachere, Lawrence [B96]

Midwest Masters-B Chicago (1), 1984

[Irons,Robert]

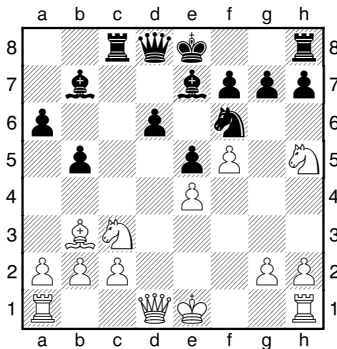
1.e4 c5 2.♜f3 d6 3.d4 cxd4 4.♜xd4 ♜f6 5.♜c3 a6 6.♙g5 e6 7.f4 ♞c7 8.♞f3 b5 9.♙d3 ♜bd7 10.♞h3 ♙b7 11.a3 0-0-0 12.♙h4 ♜c5 13.0-0-0 ♙e7 14.♞he1 ♞b8 15.♞e3 ♞c8 16.♙g3 ♞a8 17.h3 ♞hd8 18.♙f2 ♞b8 19.g4 d5? ± [19...♜fd7±] 20.e5 ♜fe4 21.♙xe4 dxe4 22.♞b1 ♙a8 23.♜de2 ♙d5 24.♞d2 ♞b7 25.♞ed1 a5 26.♜xd5 exd5 27.♜c3 b4? -+ [27...♜d3! 28.cxd3 d4 29.♞xe4 dxc3 30.♞xb7+ ♞xb7 31.♞c2 cxb2 32.♞xc8 ♞xc8 33.♞xb2 ♞d8±] 28.axb4? = [28.♜xd5+-] 28...axb4 29.♜xd5 ♙f8? -+ 29...b3= 30.b3 ♜d7 31.♜b6 ♙c5 32.♜xd7+ ♞xd7 33.♞xd7 ♞a6 34.♙g3 ♞c6 35.♙xc5 ♞xc5 36.♙g2 ♞c6 37.♞d2 e3 38.♞d6+ [38.♞xb4+ ♞a8 39.♞a3+ ♞b8 40.♞a7#] 38...♞xd6 39.exd6 e2 40.♞e1 1-0

Pelts, Peter - Szpisjak, Steven [B87]

Midwest Masters-B Chicago (1), 1984

[Irons,Robert]

1.e4 c5 2.♜f3 d6 3.d4 cxd4 4.♜xd4 ♜f6 5.♜c3 a6 6.♙c4 e6 7.♙b3 b5 8.f4 ♙e7 9.f5 e5 10.♜de2 ♙b7 11.♜g3 ♜bd7 12.♙g5 ♞c8 13.♙xf6 ♜xf6 14.♜h5



14...♜xh5? = [14...♞xc3! 15.♜xf6+ ♙xf6 16.bxc3 ♙xe4±] 15.♞xh5 0-0 16.0-0-0? ♚ [16.♞e2 ♞xc3 17.bxc3 ♞a8 18.a4 ♙xe4 19.axb5 ♙xg2 20.♞g1 ♙h4+ 21.♞d2 ♙g5+ 22.♞e1=] 16...♞xc3 17.bxc3 ♙xe4 18.♞he1 ♙xg2?? [18...♞a8±] 19.♞g1 ♙b7 20.♞h6 ♙f6 21.♞xg7+ [21.♞xg7+ ♙xg7 (21...♞h8 22.♞xh7#) 22.♞g1 with mate to follow.] 1-0

Myers, Hugh Edward - Giles, Morris [A00]

Midwest Masters-B Chicago (1), 1984

[Irons,Robert]

1.♜c3 c5 2.g4! ♚ [Given Giles' reputation as a tactician, this is a bit of poking the bear.] 2...d5 3.♙g2 d4 4.♜e4 e5 5.g5 h6 6.h4 ♜c6

7.d3 ♖e6 8.c4 ♗d7 9.♟f3 ♜5 10.gxf6 gxf6 11.h5 ♜5 12.♟g3 ♟f6 13.♟h4 ♖d6 14.♖d2!+- [14.♟g6 0-0-0+] 14...♟g8 15.♗b3 e4 16.dxe4 ♖xg3 17.fxg3 ♟xe4! 17...fxe4 18.0-0-0 0-0-0+ 18.♖f4 ♟a5 19.♗c2+- [19.♗d3 ♖xc4 20.♗a3 ♟c6 21.♖xe4 fxe4 22.♗xc5=] 19...♟xg3 20.b3 ♟xh1 21.♟g6 ♗d8 22.♖d2 ♟g3 23.♗d3 ♟xh5 24.♖f3 ♟xg6 25.♖xh5 ♗h4+ 26.♗d1 ♗xh5 27.♖xa5 ♟g1+ 0-1

Finegold,Benjamin - Schiller,Eric Andrew (2220) [D52]
Midwest Masters-B Chicago (1), 1984
[Irons,Robert]

1.d4 d5 2.c4 e6 3.♟c3 ♟f6 4.♖g5 ♟bd7 5.e3 c6 6.♟f3 ♗a5 7.♗c2 ♟e4 8.♖h4 ♖b4 9.♟c1 ♟b6 10.cxd5 exd5 11.♖d3 ♖f5 12.0-0 ♖xc3 13.bxc3 ♗a4 14.♗e2 ♗a3 15.♟g5 h6 16.♟xe4 dxe4 17.♖b1 0-0 18.♗h5 ♖g6 19.♗g4 ♟fe8 20.c4 ♟e6 21.♟fd1 ♗a5 22.♗e2 ♖h5 23.f3 ♟ae8 24.♟e1 ♗a3 25.♗c2 ♜5 26.f4 ♖f7 27.♗b3 ♗a6 28.a3 ♟g6 29.♖a2 ♟a4 30.♗c2 ♟b6 31.♗c3 ♟a4 32.♗b4 b6 33.♗d2 ♟c8 34.♖b3 b5 35.♗b4 ♟g4 36.cxb5 cxb5 37.♖xf7+ ♟xf7 38.♗b3+ ♟c4 39.♖g3 h5 40.♟e2 ♟g6 41.♟ec2 ♟xc2+- [In an even position, this mistake is enough to lose the game. 41...♟b6= holds the position.] 42.♟xc2 b4 43.axb4 ♟h7 44.♟a2 h4 45.♟xa4 ♗g6 46.♟xa7 hxc3 47.h3 ♗c6 48.♟a1 ♟g6 49.b5 ♗c7 50.♗b2 ♟b6 51.♗e2 g6 52.♗b2 ♗d7 53.♟a5 ♗c7 54.♗a3 ♟b7 55.♗a1 ♗c2 56.♗e1 ♗d3 57.♗xg3 ♟g7 58.♟a6 ♗d1+ 59.♟h2 ♗h5 60.b6 ♗e2 61.♟a7 ♟xa7 62.bxa7 ♗a6 63.h4 ♗xa7 64.h5 1-0



Lester Van Meter

Kuroda,Paul - Van Meter,Lester [D14]
Midwest Masters-B Chicago (1), 1984
[Irons,Robert]

1.♟f3 d5 2.c4 c6 3.cxd5 cxd5 4.d4 ♟f6 5.♟c3 ♟c6 6.♖f4 ♖f5 7.e3 e6 8.♟e5 ♟d7 9.♟xc6 bxc6 10.♖a6 ♗b6 11.♗e2 ♖b4 12.0-0 ♖xc3 13.bxc3 0-0 14.a4 e5 15.a5 ♗c7 16.♖g3 ♟f6 17.c4 ♟b8 18.cxd5 ♟xa6 19.♗xa6 cxd5 20.♟fc1 ♗e7 21.♟c5 ♟ac8 22.♟ac1 ♟xc5 23.dxc5 ♟c8 24.♗b5 ♖d7 25.♗b4 ♖c6 26.h3 ♗c7 27.f4 ♟b8 28.♗d2 ♟e8 29.fxe5 fxe5 30.♗c3 d4 31.exd4 ♗b7+- [Again, it only takes one bad move to ruin 30 good ones. 31...exd4= keeps things level.] 32.♖xe5 ♟f8 [32...♖xg2? 33.c6!] 33.♗g3 ♟f7 34.♟h2 g6 35.♟c2 ♖e4 36.♟f2 ♖d5 37.♖f6 ♗c7 38.♗xc7 ♟xc7 39.♟e2 ♟f7 40.♖g5 ♟d7 41.♟g3 ♖c6 42.♟f2+ ♟e6 43.♟f6+ ♟d5 44.♟f2 a6 45.♖f4 ♖b5 46.♖e5 ♟d8 47.♟e3 1-0

Hudson,S. - Rose,John [B42]
Midwest Masters-B Chicago (1), 1984
[Irons,Robert]

1.e4 c5 2.♟f3 e6 3.d4 cxd4 4.♟xd4 a6 5.♖d3 ♟f6 6.0-0 d6 7.c4 ♖e7 8.♟c3 ♟bd7 9.♖e3 ♗c7± [9...0-0± is better here.] 10.♟c1 0-0 11.f4 b6!+- [Not the best post for the bishop. Better is 11...♟c5 followed by e6-e5, ♖d7 and eventually b7-b5.] 12.♟f3!- [12.g4+-] 12...♟c5 13.e5 dxe5 14.fxe5 ♗xe5 15.♟c6 ♗d6 16.♟xe7+ ♗xe7 17.♖g5 ♟xd3 18.♗xd3 ♗c5+ 19.♖e3 ♗c6 20.♟xf6 gxf6 21.♖h6 ♗c5+ 22.♟h1 ♗h5!± [22...♟f5=] 23.♖xf8 ♗g5+- [23...♟xf8]

24.♟g1 ♟xf8 25.♗d6+?= [25.♟e4+-] 25...♟g7 26.♗c6+- [26.♟a4=] 26...♟b8 27.♟e4 ♗e5 28.♟d6 ♗c5 29.♟e8+ ♟f8 30.♗xc5+ bxc5 31.♟xf6 ♟xb2 32.♟xh7+ ♟g7 33.♟g5 ♟xa2 34.♟e4 ♟c2 35.h4?! ♟xc4 36.♟e1 ♖b7 0-1

Kaushansky,Leonid (2355) - Stevanovic,Milidar [B09]
Midwest Masters-B Chicago (1), 1984
[Irons,Robert]

1.e4 d6 2.d4 ♟f6 3.♟c3 g6 4.f4 ♖g7 5.♟f3 0-0 6.♖d3 ♟a6 7.♖e3 c5 8.h3 ♟h5 9.0-0 cxd4 10.♟xd4 e5± 11.fxe5 dxe5 12.♟f5 gxf5 13.♗xh5 f4 14.♖f2 ♟c7 15.♟ad1 ♗e8!+- [15...♗d6±] 16.♖c5 ♗c6 17.♖xf8 ♟xf8 18.♟h2 ♖e6 19.♟d2 ♗b6 20.♟fd1 ♟e8 21.♟d5 ♖xd5 22.exd5 ♟f6 23.♟f5 ♗e3 24.♟e2 ♗g3+ 25.♟h1 ♟d8 26.♖c4 e4 27.♟xe4?=[27.d6+-] 27...♟xe4 28.♗xe4 ♟e8 29.♗f3 ♟e1+ 30.♟xe1 ♗xe1+ 31.♗f1 ♗xf1+ 32.♖xf1 ♖xb2 33.♖d3 h6 34.♟g1 ♟e7 35.♟f2 ♖e5 36.♟f3 ♟d6 37.♟e4 f6 38.♟f5 ♟xd5 39.♟g6 ♟d4 40.♟xh6 ♟e3!± [40...f3 41.gxf3 ♖g3=] 41.♟g6 ♟f2 42.♖e4 ♟g3 43.♖xb7 ♖c3 44.♟f5 a5 45.♟e4 f3 46.gxf3 ♟xh3 47.♟d3 ♖e5 48.c4 ♟g3 49.♟e4 ♟f2 50.c5 ♟e2 51.c6 ♖c7 52.♟f5 ♟xf3 53.♟xf6 ♟e3 54.♟e6 ♟d4 55.♟d7 ♖g3 56.c7 ♖xc7 57.♟xc7 1-0



Eduard Zelkind

Mohr,Ken - Zelkind,Eduard [E74]
Midwest Masters-B Chicago (1), 1984
[Irons,Robert]

1.d4 ♟f6 2.c4 g6 3.♟c3 ♖g7 4.e4 d6 5.♖e2 0-0 6.♖g5 c5 7.d5 h6 8.♖e3 a6 9.a4 e6 10.♗d2 exd5 11.exd5 ♟h7 12.h3 ♟e8 13.♖d3 ♟h5 14.♟ge2 ♟d7 15.b3! 15.0-0= 15...♟e5 16.♖c2 ♗e7 17.♟f1 ♖d7 18.♟e1 ♜5 19.♟g3?+- [19.a5+] 19...♟xg3+ 20.fxc3 ♗f6 21.♟e2 b5 22.axb5 axb5 23.cxb5 ♖xb5 24.♟g1 ♟a2 25.♟c1 ♟b2 26.♟h2?! [26.♗d1] 26...c4?! [26...♟f3+ 27.gxf3 ♗c3 wins] 27.♖d4? [27.♗d1] 27...♟f3+ 28.gxf3 ♗xd4 29.♗xd4 ♖xd4 30.♟xe8 ♖xe8 0-1

Frumkin,Edward A (2215) - Weiss,Mitchel J [A27]
Midwest Masters-B Chicago (1), 1984
[Irons,Robert]

1.c4 e5 2.♟c3 ♟c6 3.♟f3 ♜5 4.d4 e4 5.♟g1 g6!± [5...♖b4=] 6.♖f4 ♖g7 7.e3 d6 8.c5 a6 9.cxd6 cxd6 10.a3?!- [10.h4±] 10...b5 11.b4 ♟f6 12.♟c1 ♟e7 13.♖xb5+?+- [13.♗b3=] 13...axb5 14.♟xb5 0-0 15.♖xd6 ♖d7 16.♗b3+ ♟h8 17.♖c7 ♗c8 18.♟d6 ♗a6 19.♟f7+ ♟xf7 20.♗xf7 ♗xa3 21.♟c4 ♟fd5 22.♟e2 ♟c8 23.0-0 ♟xc7 24.♗xc7 ♟xc7 25.♟xc7 ♖b5 26.♟xe7 ♖f6 27.♟f7 ♖xe2 28.♟xf6 ♖xf1 29.♟xf1 ♗xb4 30.g4 fxc4 31.♟g2 ♗c4 32.♟g3 ♟g7 33.♟f4 ♗e2 34.♟g2 h5 35.♟g3 ♗f1 0-1

Miller,Todd Q (2260) - Lief,Adam [A38]
Midwest Masters-B Chicago (1), 1984
[Irons,Robert]

1.c4 ♟f6 2.g3 g6 3.♖g2 ♖g7 4.♟f3 0-0 5.0-0 c5 6.d4 cxd4 7.♟xd4 ♟c6 8.♟c2 d6 9.♟c3 ♖d7 10.e4 a6 11.♗e2 ♟b8 12.♟d1 ♟e8 13.c5 ♗c7 14.♖f4 e5+- [14...♟e5±] 15.cxd6 ♗b6 16.♖e3 ♗xb2 17.♗d3 ♟d4 18.♟xd4 exd4 19.♖xd4 ♟g4 20.♟ab1 ♗a3 21.♖xg7 ♟xg7 22.♗d4+ f6 23.♖h3 ♟e5 24.♟g2 ♖xh3+ 25.♟xh3 ♗a5 26.♖b3 ♗d8 27.♟g2 h5 28.♟a4 ♟d7 29.♟c5 ♟xc5 30.♗xc5 ♟xe4 31.♗d5 ♟e8

32.♖c3 ♖h6 33.♖c7 b5 34.♗f7 ♖f8 35.♗g7+ ♖g5 36.♖d5+ f5 37.f4+ 1-0

Tomas,John - Brooks,Michael A (2330) [E94]
Midwest Masters-B Chicago (1), 1984
[Irons,Robert]

1.c4 ♖f6 2.♖f3 g6 3.♖c3 ♖g7 4.d4 d6 5.e4 0-0 6.♖e2 ♖bd7 7.0-0 e5 8.d5 ♖c5 9.♗c2 a5 10.♖g5 h6 11.♖e3 ♖f7 12.♖d2 f5 13.exf5 gxf5 14.f4 exf4 15.♖xf4 ♖e5 16.♖f3 ♖g6 17.♖e3 ♖d7 18.♖ae1 ♗f6 19.♖d4 ♗f7 20.♗d2 ♖ae8 21.♖d1 ♖xd4+ 22.♖xd4 ♖xe1 23.♖xe1 ♗g7 24.♖f3 ♖e8 25.♖xe8+ ♖xe8 26.♖c2 ♖d7 27.♗f2 ♖e5 28.♖xe5 ♗xe5 29.♗d2 ♖g7 30.g3 c6 31.♗f2 cxd5 32.♗xd5 ♖f6 33.♗d2 ♖g6 34.♗f4 ♖e6 35.♗xe5 dxe5 36.g4 ♖g5 37.gxf5 ♖xc4 38.♖e3 ♖g8 39.♖e4+ ♖xe4 40.♖xe4 b6 41.a3 ♖h7 42.f6 ♖g8 43.♖c6 ♖xf6 44.♖f3 ♖b3 45.♖b7 ♖e6 46.♖e4 ♖d6 47.♖d3 ♖d5 48.♖c8 ♖e7 49.♖e3 ♖f6 50.h4 ♖e6 51.♖b7 ♖f5 52.♖f3 ♖b3 53.♖e2 ♖e6 54.♖f3 ♖d6 55.♖d3 ♖d5 56.♖h5 ♖c5 57.♖c3 ♖c6 58.♖e2+- [58.♖f7=] 58...e4 59.♖c4 a4 0-1

Chow,Albert (2305) - Dubin,Aaron [D17]
Midwest Masters-B Chicago (1), 1984
[Irons,Robert]

1.d4 d5 2.c4 c6 3.♖f3 ♖f6 4.♖c3 dxc4 5.a4 ♖f5 6.♖e5 ♖bd7 7.♖xc4 ♗c7 8.g3 e5 9.dxe5 ♖xe5 10.♖f4 ♖d8 11.♖xe5? ♖f7 [11.♗c1±] 11...♖xd1+ 12.♖xd1 ♗c8 13.♖g2 ♖e6 14.♖d6+ ♖xd6 15.♖xd6 h5?!= [15...♖d5?] 16.0-0 h4 17.♖d3 hxc3 18.♖xc3 ♗d8 19.♖d1 ♗a5 20.b4 ♗f5 21.b5 ♖d7 22.a5 cxb5 23.♖xb7 ♖h3 24.♖dd3 ♖xc3+ 25.hxc3 ♗h5 26.♖e3+ ♖d8 27.♖e5 ♗h7 28.♖e7+ ♖c7 29.♖f3 ♖e8?+- [29...♖e6=] 30.♖c5+ ♖b8 31.♖g5 a6 32.♖f4+ ♖a7 33.♖e3 ♖b8 34.♖d5? [34.♖f4+ ♖a7 35.♖d5] 34...♖c8 35.♖e4?! [35.♖b6] 35...♗g6 36.♖c5+ ♖b8? [36...♖d8] 37.♖f4+ ♖a7 38.♗d2?± [38.♖e3] 38...♖c6 39.♖e5 ♖a8 40.♖e7 ♖f6 41.♖c5 ♖xf3+ 42.exf3 b4 43.♖a4 ♖d5 44.♖b6+ ♖xb6 45.axb6 ♗xb6 46.♖e8+ ♖b7 47.♖b8+ ♖c6 48.♖xb6+ ♖xb6 49.♗f1 ♖b5 50.♖e2 a5 51.♖d3 a4 52.♖c1 a3 53.f4 g6 54.f3 ♖c5 55.♖e3+ ♖b5 56.♖c1 ♖c5 57.♖e3+ ♖b5 58.♖d4 ♖a5 59.♖c4 ♖a4 60.♖f6 b3 61.♖c3 a2 62.♖d2 ♖a3 63.♖c1 ♖b4 64.♖b2 ♖b5 65.♖d2 ♖c4 66.♖a1 1-0

Unger,Thomas - Karklins,Erik [D13]
Midwest Masters-B Chicago (1), 1984
[Irons,Robert]

1.c4 c6 2.d4 d5 3.cxd5 cxd5 4.♖c3 ♖f6 5.♖f3 ♖c6 6.♖f4 e6 7.e3 ♖e7 8.♖d3 0-0 9.0-0 ♖h5 10.♖g3 ♖xc3 11.hxc3 ♖d7 12.♖c1 ♖c8 13.g4 ♖a5 14.g3 g6 15.♖g2 ♖c4 16.♖e2 ♖a5 17.b3 ♖xe3?+- [17...♖b6=] 18.♗xe3 ♖xc3 19.♖xc3 ♗xc3 20.♖c1 ♖a5 21.♗h6 ♖f6 22.♖h1 ♖d8 23.♗h7+ ♖f8 24.♖xc6 ♖e8 25.♖b1 ♗c3 26.♗h6+ ♖g7 27.♗f4 ♖c8? [27...♖d7] 28.♗d6+ ♖g8 29.♖h7+ ♖h8 30.♗f4 ♗c7 31.♖e5 ♗e7 32.g5 ♖d8 33.♖g4 e5 34.dxe5 ♖c6 35.♖f6 1-0

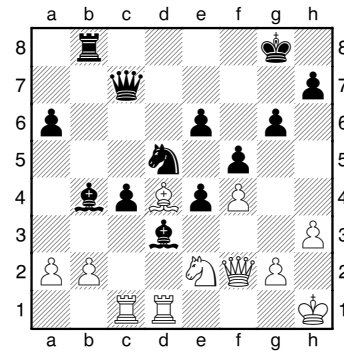
Wallach,Kenneth - Berchenko,Sergey [D06]
Midwest Masters-B Chicago (1), 1984
[Irons,Robert]

1.d4 d5 2.c4 ♖f5 3.♖c3 e6 4.cxd5 exd5 5.♗b3 ♖c6 6.♖g5 ♖xd4 7.♗a4+ ♖d7 8.♗xd4 ♗xg5 9.♖f3 ♗f6 10.♗xd5 0-0-0 11.♗a5 ♗b6 12.♗xb6 axb6 13.e4 ♖b4 14.♖c1 ♖f6 15.♖g5 ♖he8 16.f3 ♖e7 17.♖c4 ♖e8 18.a3 ♖c5 19.♖e2 ♖d4 20.♖c2 h6 21.♖h3 ♖c6 22.♖cc1?+- [22.♖d1=] 22...♖ed7?=[22...♖xe4 23.♖xe4 f5 24.♖h2 b5 25.♖d3 ♖xf2 26.♖xf2 ♖xd3+-] 23.♖cd1 ♖xc3 24.bxc3 ♖f8 25.♖e3 ♖e7 26.♖b3 ♖d7 27.♖f4 ♖c5 28.♖c2 ♖fe8 29.♖d5 ♖xd5 30.♖xd5 c6 31.♖h5 ♖c7 32.a4 ♖a8 33.♖a1 ♖a5 34.f4?+- [34.g4=] 34...♖b3 35.♖xb3 ♖xh5 36.h3 ♖c5 37.♖c1 g5 38.g3 f6 39.h4 gxf4 40.gxf4 ♖g7 41.♖f3 ♖d6 42.♖a2 b5 43.axb5 ♖xb5 44.♖d1+ ♖e7 45.♖d2 ♖c5 46.♖c2 h5 47.c4 ♖g4 48.♖h2 0-1

Bereolos,Peter - Dandridge,Marvin [B36]
Midwest Masters-B Chicago (1), 1984
[Irons,Robert]

1.♖f3 ♖f6 2.c4 c5 3.♖c3 ♖c6 4.d4 cxd4 5.♖xd4 g6 6.e4 ♖xd4 7.♗xd4 d6 8.♖e2 ♖g7 9.♖e3 0-0 10.♗d2 ♖d7 11.f4 a6 12.♖c1 b5 13.♖f3 bxc4 14.e5 dxe5 15.♖xa8 ♗xa8 16.0-0 ♖f5 17.h3 ♖d3 18.♖fe1 e4 19.♖d4 ♖d8 20.♖e5 ♖h6 21.♗f2 ♖d7 22.♗h4 ♖f8 23.♖d4 ♗b7

24.♗f2 e6 25.♗h1 ♖b8 26.♖ed1 ♖d6 27.♖d2 ♗c7 28.♖e3 f5 29.♖e2 ♖b4 30.♖dd1 ♖f6 31.♖d4 ♖d5



[White is under some serious pressure here.] 32.b3 ♖a3 33.♖e5 ♗b6 34.♗e1 ♖xc1 35.♖xb8+- [And here he finally cracks. Better is 35.♖xc1 ♖c8 36.bxc4 ♖xc4 37.♖xc4 ♖xc4?] 35...♖b2 36.♖e5 ♖xe5 37.fxe5 ♖xe2 38.♗xe2 ♖c3 39.♖d6 ♖xe2 40.♖xb6 c3 41.♖c6 f4 42.b4 e3 43.a4 ♖c1 44.♖xc3?=[44.♗g1+-] 44...♖a2?+- [44...♖d3! 45.♖xd3? e2+-] 45.♖c8+ ♖g7 46.♖g1 ♖xb4 47.♗f1 g5 48.♖c4 a5 49.♖c5 h5 50.♖xa5 g4 51.hxc4 hxc4 52.♖e2 ♖c6 53.♖c5 ♖d4+ 54.♖d3 e2 55.♖c1 ♖b3 56.♖c7+ ♖g6 57.♖xe2 ♖f5 58.♖c4 ♖a5 59.♖b4 ♖c6 60.♖b6 ♖a5 61.♖d3 g3 62.♖b5 f3 63.gxf3 g2 64.♖b1 ♖f4 65.♖e2 ♖g3 66.f4 ♖c6 67.♖e3 ♖a5 68.♖e4 ♖c4 69.♖g1 ♖f2 70.♖xg2+ ♖xg2 71.f5 exf5+ 72.♖xf5 ♖f2 73.♖e4 ♖e2 74.e6 ♖d2 75.♖d4 ♖d6 76.a5 ♖c2 77.a6 ♖b3 78.a7 ♖b5+ 79.♖c5 ♖xa7 80.e7 1-0

Sprengle,David (2325) - Colias,Billy [A28]
Midwest Masters-B Chicago (1), 1984
[Irons,Robert]

1.c4 ♖f6 2.♖c3 e5 3.♖f3 ♖c6 4.d3 ♖b4 5.♖d2 0-0 6.e3 ♖e8 7.♖e2 ♖xc3 8.♖xc3 d5 9.cxd5 ♗xd5 10.0-0 ♖g4 11.♗c2 ♖ad8 12.♖fd1 ♖h5 13.b4 e4?± [13...a6±] 14.dxe4 ♗xe4 15.♗b2 ♖d5 16.b5 ♖ce7?+- [16...♖xc3 17.♗xc3 ♖xd1+ 18.♖xd1 ♖e5 is somewhat better, but life is difficult for Black at the moment.] 17.♖xg7 ♗g6 18.♖e5 ♖f5 19.♖g3 ♗b6 20.♖h4 ♖xg3 21.hxc3 ♖xe3? [21...♗f6 22.♗xf6 ♖xf6 holds on longer than the text.] 22.♖xd8 ♖xd8 23.♖xh5 ♖c4 24.♗b3 ♗f6 25.♖d1 1-0

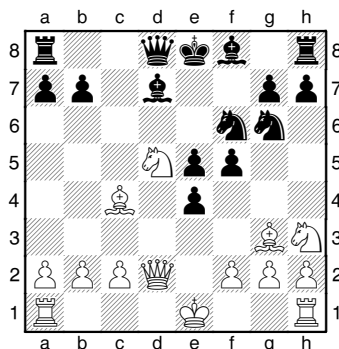


Allan Savage

Savage,Allan George - Sage,T. [B00]
Midwest Masters-B Chicago (1), 1984
[Irons,Robert]

1.e4 ♖c6 2.d4 d5 3.♖c3 dxe4 4.d5 ♖e5 5.♖f4 ♖g6 6.♖g3 f5 7.♖b5+

d7 8. h3 c6 9. d4 f6 10. d2 cxd5 11. dxd5 e5



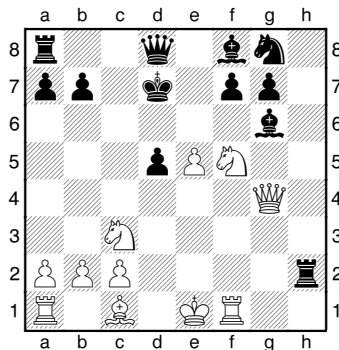
[Stockfish rates this as dead even (0.0), but there are land mines all over this position. White has given up a pawn in return for faster (but not necessarily better!) development. I refer to the White light-squared bishop on g3, which only has access to the squares h4, f4 and e5, all of which are controlled by Black. Opening a line with f3 or f4 leaves White with two isolated kingside pawns against four connected Black pawns. White needs to make us of his lead in development and take advantage of the Black king's position. Instead, what follows is a series of missed opportunities for both players.] 12.0-0-0?! [12. d5=] 12... d6?+ [12... c6?] 13. f4?! [13. b5+] 13... exf3?+ [13... d5 14. d5 dxd5 15. dxd5 dxd5 16. dxd5 d8+] 14. h1?! [14. b5+] 14... dxd5?+ [14... d5 15. dxd5 dxd5 16. dxd5 dxd5 17. dxd5 d8+] 15. dxe5 dge7?! [15... d7+] 16. d4?+ [16. d5+] 16... f2?+ [16... dxf4 17. dxf4 d8 18. dxe6 dxe6 19. dxf3 dxa2 20. dxb7 d1+ 21. d2 d8+ 22. d2 d4 23. dxd8+ dxd8 24. dxb8+ d7 25. d1=] 17. dxf2 d6 18. dxd5?! [18. dxb6 dxb6 19. dxe6] 18... dxd5?! [18... dxf2 19. dxc7+ d7 20. dxe6+ d6 21. dxa8 h5 22. dxc7] 19. dxb6 axb6 20. dxd5 h5 21. d4 g6 22. a3 d6 23. dxe6 dxe6 24. dxb7 d7 25. d5 g5 26. d6 d6 27. dde1 dxe6 28. dxe6 d7 29. d2 d7 30. d6 h4 31. d5 g4 32. dxe4 d6 33. d7 d8 34. d6+ d7 35. d2 d8 36. d6 d6 37. c3 d8 38. d5 d7 1-0

Moore, Tucker - Mills, James A (2215) [B12]

Midwest Masters-B Chicago (1), 1984

[Irons, Robert]

1. e4 c6 2. d4 d5 3. e5 d5 4. d3 e6 5. g4 d6 6. dge2 c5 7. h4 cxd4?! [In the tournament book, Thomas Moore cites Nunn - Seirawan, Lugano 1983: 7... h6 8. d3 d6 (0-1 in 39 moves).; Stockfish prefers 7... h5=] 8. dxd4 h5 9. f4 hxd4 10. d5+ d7 11. f5 dxe4 12. d1! [An alternative from recent play was 12. d1 g1 d5 13. fxe6 fxe6 14. dxe6 d6 15. dxd7+ dxd7 16. dxd5+ van der Weil - Speelman, Wijk ann Zee, 1983, drawn in 25 moves)] 12... h2 13. dxd7+! dxd7 [But not 13... dxd7 14. d4] 14. Qxg4 [14. d3 d4+ 15. d1 g3 16. fxd6 a6 17. dce2 g2 18. dxf7+ leaves White better off than the text.] 14... exf5 15. dxf5



15... dxf5?+ [I prefer 15... d8 16. e6 dxf5 17. exf7+ dxf7 18. dxf5+ d6+ and Black is still very much in the fight.] 16. dxf5+ d6 17. d5 d7 18. dxe7 dxe7 19. d4 d8 20. d4+ d7 21.0-0-0 d6+ 22. d1 d6 23. d4 d8 24. e6+ d6 25. exf7 d6 26. d4+

d6 27. d3+ d6 28. dxd5+ d5 29. d3+ [One move faster is 29. d7+ d6 (29... dxc7 30. d5+ d6 31. d3+ d6 32. d5#) 30. dxa8+ d5 31. d5+ with mate in 3 moves.] 29... d5 30. d4+ d5 31. d3 [31. a4+ is faster: 31... d6 (31... d5 32. d4+ d6 33. d7+ dxc7 34. d5#) 32. d4+ settles the issue.] 31... h4 32. d3+ d5 33. d2+ d4 34. d3+ d5 35. d5+ [It is mate next move. According to Thomas Moore, Jim Mills' comment after the game was "I should not have to play GM Nunn in round 1."] **1-0**

Sandrin, Angelo - Lindsay, Fred P (2225) [A57]

Midwest Masters-B Chicago (1), 1984

[Irons, Robert]

1. d4 d6 2. c4 c5 3. d5 b5 4. cxb5 a6 5. e3 g6 6. d3 d7 7. d3 0-0 8. a4 e6 9. dxe6 fxe6 10. d6 d6 axb5 11. dxb5 d6 12.0-0 d7 13. d1 dxd6 14. dxd6 d7 15. d2 d6 16. dxd5 dxd5?! [16... exd5+] 17. d4 dxe7?! [17... d6+] 18. e4 d6 19. dxe6+ dxe6 20. dxc6 d7 21. dxc5 dxa4 22. e2! [22. h4] 22... d3 23. dxa8 dxa8 24. d4 d5 25. f4 d8 26. d7 c7 27. d3 d1+ 28. d1 d2 29. d2 d5 30. d2?! [30. d2+] 30... d6 31. d3 d1+ 32. d2 d1 33. d3 d1 34. g3 d3 35. d2 d4 36. d3= h5 37. d3 d1+ 38. d2 d1 39. d3 d1+ 40. d2 1/2-1/2

Scores at the end of round 1:

- 1.0: Berchenko, Bereolos, Brooks, Chow, Finegold, Giles, Kaushansky, Kuroda, Miller, Moore, Odendahl, Pelts, Redman, Rose, Savage, Sprenkle, Unger, Weiss, Zelkind
- 0.5: Ellis, Lindsay, Martinovsky, Sandrin
- 0.0: Chachere, Colias, Dandridge, Dubin, Eckert, Frumkin, Hudson, Karklins, Lief, Mills, Mohr, Myers, Sage, Schiller, Stevanovic, Szpisjak, Tomas, Van Meter, Wallach

Round 2

This round began with less aggression than the first round, with only 13 decisive games. Dr. Martinovsky caught Redman on an off day, with his 25th move falling into a back-rank mate. Kaushansky played his favorite Sveshnikov Variation in the Sicilian against Weiss, and kept him under pressure, resulting in several mistakes that brought the game to an abrupt end. Rose committed two small positional mistakes against Pelts, after which Pelts returned the favor. His last mistake allowed Rose to force through a passed pawn. The score for the game Mills - Tomas has what I believe to be a typo which puts Mills' queen *en prise*. The resulting draw only makes sense under those circumstances. Ken Mohr tried sort of a delayed-Benko Gambit against Schiller's Four Pawns Variation against the King's Indian. Both players have the nerve, but in the end, only Schiller had the chops, winning the K+R+P ending in 39 moves. Eckert bounced back from his first-round loss to beat Karklins with the Scheveningen Sicilian, picking off a rook on move 30. In a dead-even position, Lief offered Dubin mate in three moves. Fortunately for Lief he overlooked it, and the game ended in a draw. Sage resigned to Colias in what appears to me to be a winning position. In a fairly standard Accelerated Dragon position, Giles introduces a bit of chaos, but it turns out that Kuroda is up to the challenge.

Martinovsky, Eugene Simeon (2230) - Redman, Timothy P

[D42] Midwest Masters-B Chicago (2), 1984

[Irons, Robert]

1. e4 c6 2. d4 d5 3. exd5 cxd5 4. c4 e6 5. d3 d6 6. d3 d7 7. cxd5 dxd5 8. d3 d6 9.0-0 d6 10. d4 d4 11. dxd4 dxd4 12. d4+ d6 13. d5 0-0 14. dxc6 bxc6 15. dxc6 d8 16. b3 d7 17. d5 d6 18. d2 d8 19. d4 d4 20. dxd4 d4 21. d1 d2 22. a3 dxb3?+ [22... d7=] 23. d5 dxc5 24. dxc5 d4?! [24... a5] 25. d4 d3?! [White has checkmate in two moves.] **1-0**

Van Meter, Lester - Wallach, Kenneth [E61]

Midwest Masters-B Chicago (2), 1984

[Irons, Robert]

1. d4 d6 2. c4 g6 3. d3 d7 4. d3 0-0 5. d5 h6 6. d4 d6 7. e3

4.bd7 8. a2 e5 9.0-0 10. e8 10. c6 11. f1d1 12. e1a1 a5 13. h3
 14. f8? 13... exd4 14. exd4 15. f8? 14. g3 b6 15. c5 bxc5 16. dxe5 dxe5
 17. a4 18. f5 19. d3 20. d3 21. d3 22. d3 23. d3 24. d3 25. d3 26. d3 27. d3 28. d3 29. d3 30. d3 31. d3 32. d3 33. d3 34. d3 35. d3 36. d3 37. d3 38. d3 39. d3 40. d3 41. d3 42. d3 43. d3 44. d3 45. d3 46. d3 47. d3 48. d3 49. d3 50. d3 51. d3 52. d3 53. d3 54. d3 55. d3 56. d3 57. d3 58. d3 59. d3 60. d3 61. d3 62. d3 63. d3 64. d3 65. d3 66. d3 67. d3 68. d3 69. d3 70. d3 71. d3 72. d3 73. d3 74. d3 75. d3 76. d3 77. d3 78. d3 79. d3 80. d3 81. d3 82. d3 83. d3 84. d3 85. d3 86. d3 87. d3 88. d3 89. d3 90. d3 91. d3 92. d3 93. d3 94. d3 95. d3 96. d3 97. d3 98. d3 99. d3 100. d3



Ben Finegold, Angelo Sandrin, Eric Schiller

Lindsay, Fred P (2225) - Ellis, James S [A30]
 Midwest Masters-B Chicago (2), 1984
[Irons, Robert]

1. f3 c5 2. c4 f6 3. c3 e6 4. g3 b6 5. d2 a7 6.0-0 7. b3 a6
 8. b2 d6 9. d4 cxd4 10. dxc4 11. f1d1 12. e1 b8 13. e4
 14. b1 15. f6+ 16. f6 17. b2 b5 18. b2d2
 19. d4 20. g2 21. e4 22. d5? 23. d3 a5? 24. d3 a5?
 25. d3 a5? 26. d3 a5? 27. d3 a5? 28. d3 a5? 29. d3 a5? 30. d3 a5? 31. d3 a5? 32. d3 a5? 33. d3 a5? 34. d3 a5? 35. d3 a5? 36. d3 a5? 37. d3 a5? 38. d3 a5? 39. d3 a5? 40. d3 a5? 41. d3 a5? 42. d3 a5? 43. d3 a5? 44. d3 a5? 45. d3 a5? 46. d3 a5? 47. d3 a5? 48. d3 a5? 49. d3 a5? 50. d3 a5? 51. d3 a5? 52. d3 a5? 53. d3 a5? 54. d3 a5? 55. d3 a5? 56. d3 a5? 57. d3 a5? 58. d3 a5? 59. d3 a5? 60. d3 a5? 61. d3 a5? 62. d3 a5? 63. d3 a5? 64. d3 a5? 65. d3 a5? 66. d3 a5? 67. d3 a5? 68. d3 a5? 69. d3 a5? 70. d3 a5? 71. d3 a5? 72. d3 a5? 73. d3 a5? 74. d3 a5? 75. d3 a5? 76. d3 a5? 77. d3 a5? 78. d3 a5? 79. d3 a5? 80. d3 a5? 81. d3 a5? 82. d3 a5? 83. d3 a5? 84. d3 a5? 85. d3 a5? 86. d3 a5? 87. d3 a5? 88. d3 a5? 89. d3 a5? 90. d3 a5? 91. d3 a5? 92. d3 a5? 93. d3 a5? 94. d3 a5? 95. d3 a5? 96. d3 a5? 97. d3 a5? 98. d3 a5? 99. d3 a5? 100. d3 a5?

Zelkind, Eduard - Finegold, Benjamin [A14]
 Midwest Masters-B Chicago (2), 1984
[Irons, Robert]

1. c4 e6 2. f3 f6 3. g3 d5 4. d2 e7 5.0-0 6. b3 a5 7. b2 a4
 8. bxa4 9. b3 10. c3 11. c2 12. d3 13. e4 14. e4 15. e4 16. e4 17. e4 18. e4 19. e4 20. e4 21. e4 22. e4 23. e4 24. e4 25. e4 26. e4 27. e4 28. e4 29. e4 30. e4 31. e4 32. e4 33. e4 34. e4 35. e4 36. e4 37. e4 38. e4 39. e4 40. e4 41. e4 42. e4 43. e4 44. e4 45. e4 46. e4 47. e4 48. e4 49. e4 50. e4 51. e4 52. e4 53. e4 54. e4 55. e4 56. e4 57. e4 58. e4 59. e4 60. e4 61. e4 62. e4 63. e4 64. e4 65. e4 66. e4 67. e4 68. e4 69. e4 70. e4 71. e4 72. e4 73. e4 74. e4 75. e4 76. e4 77. e4 78. e4 79. e4 80. e4 81. e4 82. e4 83. e4 84. e4 85. e4 86. e4 87. e4 88. e4 89. e4 90. e4 91. e4 92. e4 93. e4 94. e4 95. e4 96. e4 97. e4 98. e4 99. e4 100. e4

Weiss, Mitchel J - Kaushansky, Leonid (2355) [B33]
 Midwest Masters-B Chicago (2), 1984
[Irons, Robert]

1. e4 c5 2. f3 d6 3. d4 cxd4 4. dxc4 5. e3 6. d5 d6 7. d5
 8. exd5 9. c4 a6 10. c3 g6 11. a2 g7 12.0-0 13. h1
 14. f4 15. c2 16. c7 17. a4 exf4 18. a4 e5 19. a4 d7

19. d2 f8 20. b3 f8 21. f1f7 22. c5 23. b6 24. d1?+
 25. c2 26. d3 27. e3 28. e3 29. c1 30. e7 31. b3
 32. b2 33. e8 34. xg7+ 35. xg7 36. e2+ 37. g8 38. b3? 39. h3 40. f2
 0-1

Rose, John - Pelts, Peter [A40]
 Midwest Masters-B Chicago (2), 1984
[Irons, Robert]

1. c4 g6 2. d4 g7 3. e4 c5 4. f3 c6 5. dxc5 6. a5+ 7. d2 8. c5 9. e2 10. bxc3 11. b3 12. h3 13. e5 14. f4 15. e3 16. a5 17. a5 18. f4 19. c6 20. b3 21. a4 22. e2 23. e6 24. 0-0 25. f1 26. f1 27. f1 28. f1 29. f1 30. f1 31. f1 32. f1 33. f1 34. f1 35. f1 36. f1 37. f1 38. f1 39. f1 40. f1 41. f1 42. f1 43. f1 44. f1 45. f1 46. f1 47. f1 48. f1 49. f1 50. f1 51. f1 52. f1 53. f1 54. f1 55. f1 56. f1 57. f1 58. f1 59. f1 60. f1 61. f1 62. f1 63. f1 64. f1 65. f1 66. f1 67. f1 68. f1 69. f1 70. f1 71. f1 72. f1 73. f1 74. f1 75. f1 76. f1 77. f1 78. f1 79. f1 80. f1 81. f1 82. f1 83. f1 84. f1 85. f1 86. f1 87. f1 88. f1 89. f1 90. f1 91. f1 92. f1 93. f1 94. f1 95. f1 96. f1 97. f1 98. f1 99. f1 100. f1

Odendahl, Steven M (2380) - Savage, Allan George [A88]
 Midwest Masters-B Chicago (2), 1984
[Irons, Robert]

1. d4 f5 2. g3 f6 3. d2 d6 4. f3 c6 5. c4 6. d5 7. b3 8. g7 9. b2 10.0-0 11. e5 12. dxe6 13. e6 14. c3 15. a6 16. d2 17. e2 18. d1 19. c5 20. f8 21. d4 22. e3 23. f8 24. e5 25. f4 26. e4 27. d4 28. c4 29. d4 30. c4 31. d4 32. c4 33. d4 34. c4 35. d4 36. c4 37. d4 38. c4 39. d4 40. c4 41. d4 42. c4 43. d4 44. c4 45. d4 46. c4 47. d4 48. c4 49. d4 50. c4 51. d4 52. c4 53. d4 54. c4 55. d4 56. c4 57. d4 58. c4 59. d4 60. c4 61. d4 62. c4 63. d4 64. c4 65. d4 66. c4 67. d4 68. c4 69. d4 70. c4 71. d4 72. c4 73. d4 74. c4 75. d4 76. c4 77. d4 78. c4 79. d4 80. c4 81. d4 82. c4 83. d4 84. c4 85. d4 86. c4 87. d4 88. c4 89. d4 90. c4 91. d4 92. c4 93. d4 94. c4 95. d4 96. c4 97. d4 98. c4 99. d4 100. c4



Edward Frumkin

Stevanovic, Milidar - Frumkin, Edward A (2215) [A00]
 Midwest Masters-B Chicago (2), 1984
[Irons, Robert]

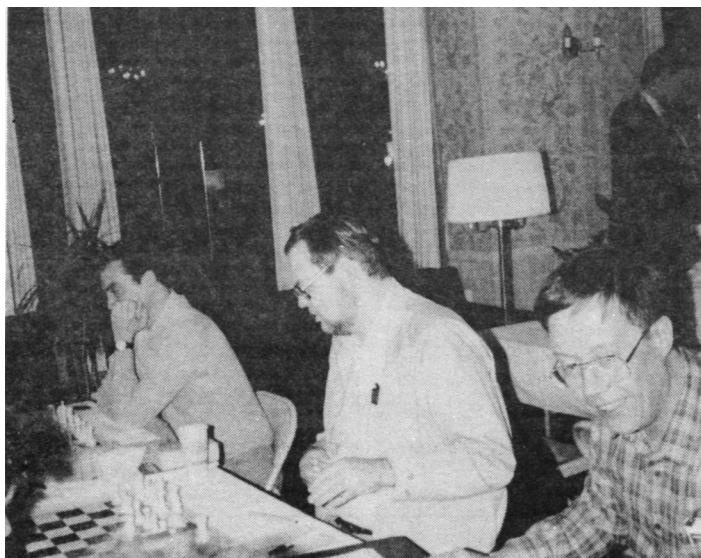
1. g3 f5 2. d2 f6 3. f4 g6 4. b3 5. g7 6. b2 d6 7. f3 e5 8. fxe5 9. g4 10. a3 11. c6 12. d4 13. e4 14. exf5 15. e2 16. f6 17. f7 18. d7 19. f8 20. a1 21. f8 22. a1 23. f8 24. a1 25. f8 26. a1 27. f8 28. a1 29. f8 30. a1 31. f8 32. a1 33. f8 34. a1 35. f8 36. a1 37. f8 38. a1 39. f8 40. a1 41. f8 42. a1 43. f8 44. a1 45. f8 46. a1 47. f8 48. a1 49. f8 50. a1 51. f8 52. a1 53. f8 54. a1 55. f8 56. a1 57. f8 58. a1 59. f8 60. a1 61. f8 62. a1 63. f8 64. a1 65. f8 66. a1 67. f8 68. a1 69. f8 70. a1 71. f8 72. a1 73. f8 74. a1 75. f8 76. a1 77. f8 78. a1 79. f8 80. a1 81. f8 82. a1 83. f8 84. a1 85. f8 86. a1 87. f8 88. a1 89. f8 90. a1 91. f8 92. a1 93. f8 94. a1 95. f8 96. a1 97. f8 98. a1 99. f8 100. a1

17. ... f8 18. d3 19. g6 20. c4 21. c3 22. d2 23. b4 24. bxc5 25. d5+ 26. h8 27. b1 28. e6 29. d5 30. d5 31. e8 32. d3 33. d5 34. d6 35. d5 36. d5 37. d5 38. d5 39. d5 40. d5 41. d5 42. d5 43. d5 44. d5 45. d5 46. d5 47. d5 48. d5 49. d5 50. d5 51. d5 52. d5 53. d5 54. d5 55. d5 56. d5 57. d5 58. d5 59. d5 60. d5 61. d5 62. d5 63. d5 64. d5 65. d5 66. d5 67. d5 68. d5 69. d5 70. d5 71. d5 72. d5 73. d5 74. d5 75. d5 76. d5 77. d5 78. d5 79. d5 80. d5 81. d5 82. d5 83. d5 84. d5 85. d5 86. d5 87. d5 88. d5 89. d5 90. d5 91. d5 92. d5 93. d5 94. d5 95. d5 96. d5 97. d5 98. d5 99. d5 100. d5

Szpisjak, Steven - Hudson, S.. [A17]
 Midwest Masters-B Chicago (2), 1984
[Irons, Robert]

1. c4 f6 2. c3 e6 3. g3 d5 4. d2 e7 5. d3 6.0-0 7. b3 8. f3 9. b2 10.0-0 11. e4 12. d4 13. e4 14. e4 15. e4 16. e4 17. e4 18. e4 19. e4 20. e4 21. e4 22. e4 23. e4 24. e4 25. e4 26. e4 27. e4 28. e4 29. e4 30. e4 31. e4 32. e4 33. e4 34. e4 35. e4 36. e4 37. e4 38. e4 39. e4 40. e4 41. e4 42. e4 43. e4 44. e4 45. e4 46. e4 47. e4 48. e4 49. e4 50. e4 51. e4 52. e4 53. e4 54. e4 55. e4 56. e4 57. e4 58. e4 59. e4 60. e4 61. e4 62. e4 63. e4 64. e4 65. e4 66. e4 67. e4 68. e4 69. e4 70. e4 71. e4 72. e4 73. e4 74. e4 75. e4 76. e4 77. e4 78. e4 79. e4 80. e4 81. e4 82. e4 83. e4 84. e4 85. e4 86. e4 87. e4 88. e4 89. e4 90. e4 91. e4 92. e4 93. e4 94. e4 95. e4 96. e4 97. e4 98. e4 99. e4 100. e4

21.f4 ♖g6 22.♙e1?± [22.♙d1+/-] 22...♙c8 23.♙b5 ♙xe6 24.♙xe6+ ♖h8 25.♙f7= [25.♙g3 ♙xg5 26.♙f7 ♖f8 27.♙xg6 ♖xg6 28.♖g2 ♙h6+/-] 25...♖f8 26.♙xg6 ♖xf4 27.♙f5 ♖xf1+ 28.♖xf1 ♙f4+ 29.♖g1?+ [29.♙f2=] 29...♙xg5+ 30.♖h1 ♙h5+ 31.♖g2 g6?± [31...♙d6+/-] 32.♙h3 ♙e2+ 33.♙f2??+ [33.♖g1= keeps things level. The text move is the turning point in the game, although some spotty play makes it take longer than necessary for the win.] 33...♖f8 34.♖f1 ♙h4 35.♙d7?! [35.♖h1] 35...♙f3+ [35...♖x2+ 36.♖xf2 ♙xf2+ 37.♖h1 ♙g3 leads to mate in at most nine more moves.] 36.♖h2 ♙xf2 37.♙g4 ♙xg4 38.♙xg4 ♖g7?! [38...♙g3+ 39.♖g2 ♖xf1 40.♖xf1 ♙e5] 39.♖g2 ♙e3?!± [39...♖f4+/-] 40.♖xf8 ♖xf8 41.♙e6?+ [41.♖f3=] 41...♖e7 42.♙g8 h5 43.♖g3 ♖f6 44.♙d5 ♖g5?!± [44...g5] 45.♙e6?+ [45.e5?] 45...♙f4+ 46.♖h3 ♙e5 47.♖g2 ♖f4 48.♖f2 g5 49.♙h3 g4 50.♙g2 h4 51.♙f1 h3 52.♖e2 ♖g3 0-1



Tom Unger, Hugh Myers, Tom Moore, Standing is Organizer Tom McCormack.

Miller, Todd Q (2260) - Chow, Albert (2305) [D41]
Midwest Masters-B Chicago (2), 1984
[Irons, Robert]

1.c4 c5 2.g3 ♖f6 3.♙g2 d5 4.♖f3 ♖c6 5.cxd5 ♖xd5 6.d4 e6 7.0-0 ♙e7 8.♖c3 0-0 9.e4 ♖xc3 10.bxc3 cxd4 11.cxd4 b6 12.♖e1 ♙a6 13.♙b2 ♖c8 14.♙f1 ♙xf1 15.♖xf1 ♙f6 16.♖b1 ♙a5 17.♙d3 ♙d7 18.♖fd1 ♖fd8 19.d5 ♙xb2 20.♖xb2 exd5 21.exd5 ♖c5?± [21...h6=] 22.♖e2?± [22.♙g5 f5 23.♖c2±] 22...g6 23.d6 ♖c4 24.♖e7 ♙xd6 25.♙xd6 ♖xd6 26.♖xd6 ♖xd6 27.♖xa7 ♖e4 28.♖a4 ♖c3 29.♖b4 b5 30.♖d4 ♖f8 31.♖f1 ♖e7 32.♖e1 ♖d6 33.♖b2?+ [33.♖d2=] 33...♖e5?± [33...♖d5+/-] 34.♖e2 ♖d5 35.♖d2 ♖e4 36.♖b3 b4 37.f3+ ♖e5 38.a3 bxa3 39.♖xa3 ♖b5 40.♖a2 h5 41.♖c3 ½-½

Mills, James A (2215) - Tomas, John [E91]
Midwest Masters-B Chicago (2), 1984
[Irons, Robert]

1.♖f3 ♖f6 2.c4 g6 3.♖c3 ♙g7 4.e4 d6 5.d4 0-0 6.♙e2 ♙g4 7.0-0 ♖c6 8.d5 ♙xf3 9.gxf3 ♖b8 10.♙e3 c6 11.♙d2 ♙d7 12.♖fd1 ♙h3 13.b4?± [13.♖h1±] 13...♖bd7 14.♙f1 ♙xf3 15.♙g2?!+ [15.dxc6 bxc6 16.♖ac1±] 15...♖e5 16.♙d4 ♙h5 17.♙xe5 dxe5?!± [17...♙xe5+/-] 18.dxc6 bxc6 19.b5?!+ [19.a4±] 19...cxb5 20.cxb5 ♙h6 21.♙d3 e6 22.♖ab1 ♖fc8 23.♖a4 ♙h4 24.♙e2 ♖ab8 25.b6 axb6 26.♖xb6 ♖c7 27.a4 ♙f8 28.♖d5 ♖xb1 29.♖xf6+ ♙xf6 30.♖xb1 ♙c5 31.a5 ♙d4 32.a6 ♖g7 33.♙b2?? [I am convinced that this move is a typo. A more likely continuation is 33.♙d2 ♙e7 34.♖c1 ♖xc1+ 35.♙xc1 ♙a7] 33...♙e7? 34.♖c1? ♖xc1+?!± 35.♙xc1 ♙a7?!± ½-½

Schiller, Eric Andrew (2220) - Mohr, Ken [E76]
Midwest Masters-B Chicago (2), 1984
[Irons, Robert]

1.d4 ♖f6 2.c4 c5 3.d5 g6 4.♖c3 ♙g7 5.e4 d6 6.f4 0-0 7.♖f3 b5?! [This was a relatively untested opening variation at the time; my database has only 23 games in the line prior to this date. Props to both Schiller and Mohr for wading into murky waters.] 8.e5 [And of those 23 games, only 5 use this line (8.cxb5 is used in the other 18). But while White did well with cxb5 (63.9%), the results with e5 were impressive (80%).] 8...dxe5 9.fxe5 ♖g4 10.♙f4?!± [10.♖xb5 ♖xe5 11.♙e2 a6 12.♖c3 ♖bd7= Kavalek - Vukic, Biel 1977 (1/ 2-1/2 in 14 moves).] 10...♖d7 11.cxb5 ♖dxe5?!± [11...♖xe5 12.♖xe5 ♖xe5 13.♙e2±] 12.h3 ♖xf3+ 13.♙xf3 ♖f6 14.♙c4 ♙b7 15.0-0 ♖d7 16.♖ae1 ♖b6 17.♙d3 ♙d4+?!± [17...e6! 18.d6 (18.dxe6? ♙d4+ 19.♙e3 (19.♙xd4 ♙xd4+ 20.♖h1 ♖xc4+/-) 19...♙xc4 20.♙xc4 ♖xc4+/-) 18...♖xc4 (18...♙d4+ 19.♖h2 ♖xc4 20.♙xc4 a6 21.a4 ♙b6=) 19.♙xc4 ♙d4+/-] 18.♙e3 ♖xd5 19.♙xd4 cxd4 20.♙xd4 ♖xc3 21.bxc3?!± [21.♙xd8 ♖axd8 22.bxc3 e6 23.♖d1±] 21...♙xd4+ 22.cxd4 e6 23.♖e5 ♖fd8 24.♖f4 ♖ac8 25.♖c5 ♖g7 26.♙e2 ♙d5 27.a4 ♙b7?!± [27...f5=] 28.♖f2?!± [28.♖f1±] 28...♙xd4?+/- [After this it's all downhill. Black can fight on with 28...f5=] 29.♙xd4 ♖xc5 30.♖d7 ♙d5 31.♙f3 ♙xf3 32.gxf3 a6 33.b6 a5 34.♖c7 ♖d5 35.♖e3 ♖d1 36.♖c5 ♖d8 37.♖xa5 ♖b8 38.♖b5 ♖f6 39.a5 1-0

Karklins, Erik - Eckert, Doug D [B81]
Midwest Masters-B Chicago (2), 1984
[Irons, Robert]

1.e4 c5 2.♖f3 e6 3.d4 cxd4 4.♖xd4 ♖f6 5.♖c3 d6 6.g4 ♖c6 7.g5 ♖d7 8.♖db5 ♖b6 9.a4± [One recent predecessor is 9.♙f4 ♖e5 10.♙h5 ♖g6 11.♙e3 a6 12.♖d4 ♙d7 13.f4 e5 14.fxe5 ♖xe5 15.♙h3 ♖c8 16.0-0 g6 17.♙h4 ♙g7 18.♙xd7+ ♖exd7 Gufeld - Timoschenko, Krasnovarsk 1980 (1-0 in 62).] 9...a6 10.♖d4 ♙e7 11.♖g1 0-0 12.♙e3 ♙c7 13.a5 ♖d7 14.♙h5 g6 15.♙h6 ♖e8 16.♖g3 ♙f8 17.♙h4 ♙g7 18.♖xc6 ♙xc6 19.♖a3 d5 20.♙g2 ♖f8?± [20...b5= keeps things level. Fortunately for Eckert, his is the next-to-last mistake!] 21.exd5?± [And he didn't have long to wait! 21.Kd1± keeps things going. After this Karklins loses quickly.] 21...exd5 22.♖f1 ♙e6 23.♙b4 ♖ac8 24.♖g1 ♙e5 25.♙f4 ♙g7 26.♖a4 ♙d7 27.♖d3 ♙f5 28.♖e3 ♖xe3 29.fxe3 ♙xc3 30.bxc3 ♖c4 0-1

Dubin, Aaron - Lief, Adam [E19]
Midwest Masters-B Chicago (2), 1984
[Irons, Robert]

1.d4 ♖f6 2.c4 e6 3.♖f3 b6 4.g3 ♙b7 5.♙g2 ♙e7 6.0-0 0-0 7.♖c3 ♖e4 8.♙c2 ♖xc3 9.♙xc3 ♙e4 10.♖e1 ♙xg2 11.♖xg2 d6 12.♖d1 ♖d7 13.e4 ♖c8 14.♙e3 c5 15.♖ac1 ♖d8 16.♙c2 ♙b7 17.d5 e5 18.♖d3 ♙f6 19.♙d2 g6 20.♖e3 ♙g7 21.♖e1 ♖f8 22.♖b3 ♙c7 23.a4 ♙h6 24.♖g2 ♙xd2 25.♙xd2 f6 26.♖h4 ♙f7 27.f4 exf4 28.gxf4 ♖e8 29.♖be3 ♖fe7 30.♙g2 ♖g7 31.♙f1 a6 32.♖f3 g5 33.fxg5 ♖e5 34.♖h4 fxg5 35.♖f5 ♖f8?± [This type of move used to be referred to as a help-mate.] 36.♖g3?± [36.♖h6+ ♖h8 37.♙xf8+ ♖g8 38.♙xg8#] 36...♙g6 37.♙g2 h6 38.♖f1 ♖h7 39.b3 ♖ff6 40.h3 ♙d7 41.♙e2 ♙e8 42.♖a1 ♖f7 43.♖e3 ♙e5 44.♖a2 a5 45.♙f3 ♖g8 46.♖g2 ♖e8 47.♖ee2 ♖a1+ 48.♖h2 ♖g8 49.♙h5 ♖e5 50.♖g1 ♙c3 51.♖g3 ♙c1 52.♖eg2 ♙f4 53.♙e2 ½-½

Bereolos, Peter - Moore, Tucker [D32]
Midwest Masters-B Chicago (2), 1984
[Irons, Robert]

1.♖f3 ♖f6 2.c4 c5 3.♖c3 e6 4.d4 d5 5.cxd5 exd5 6.♙g5 ♙e7 7.dxc5 ♙e6 8.♙a4+ ♖c6 9.♖d1 0-0 10.e4 ♙e8 11.♙e2 ♖xe4 12.♖xe4 dxe4 13.♙xe4 ♙xc5 14.b3 ♖b4 15.♖d2 f5 16.♙e5 b6?± [16...♙b6±] 17.0-0 h6 18.♙b5?!± [18.♖e1±] 18...♙g6?± [18...♙xb5 19.♙xe6+ ♖h7 20.♖d7 ♖c6 21.♙xc6 ♖xc6=] 19.♖h4 ♙xg5 20.♙xe6+ ♖h7 21.♖f3 ♙e7?+ [21...♙f6 22.♙xf6 ♖xf6 23.a3 ♖c6 24.b4 ♙f8 25.♖c1±] 22.♙xe7 ♙xe7 23.a3 a6 24.♙d7 [The only way to save the knight is to give up the exchange.] 1-0

Colias, Billy - Sage, T. [C66]
Midwest Masters-B Chicago (2), 1984
[Irons, Robert]

1.e4 ♖c6 2.♖f3 e5 3.♙b5 ♖f6 4.0-0 d6 5.d4 ♙d7 6.♖c3 ♙e7 7.♖e1

exd4 8.ϕxd4 0-0 9.♙xc6 bxc6 10.b3 d5 11.e5 ♘b4 12.♙d2 ϕg4 13.g3 ϕh6 14.ϕa4 ♙xd2 15.ϖxd2 ϕf5 16.ϕc5 ϕxd4 17.ϖxd4 ♙f5 18.c3 ϖg5 19.♙e3 ♙fe8 20.ϖg2 ϖh5 21.h4 ϖg6 22.♙d1 ♙e6 23.f3 h5 24.ϖd3 ♙f5 25.ϖe2 ♙e6 26.♙d4 ♙e7 27.ϖh2 ♙ae8 28.♙a4 ♙c8 29.♙xa7 ϖf5 30.f4 f6 31.ϕd3 c5 32.♙a8?+ [32.ϕxc5=] 32...d4 33.cxd4 cxd4 34.♙f3 ϖh3+ 35.ϖg1 ♙b7 36.♙xe8+ ♙xe8 37.ϖf1 ϖf5 38.♙f2 ♙a6 39.♙d2 fxe5 40.fxe5 1-0



Paul Kuroda and Michael Brooks

Brooks, Michael A (2330) - Unger, Thomas [B16]
Midwest Masters-B Chicago (2), 1984
[Irons, Robert]

1.e4 c6 2.d4 d5 3.ϕd2 dxe4 4.ϕxe4 ϕf6 5.ϕxf6+ gxf6 6.c3 ♙f5 7.ϕe2 ϕd7 8.ϕg3 ♙g6 9.h4 h5 10.♙e2 ♖a5 11.a4 0-0-0 12.b4 ϖc7 13.♙h5 e5 14.♙g4 ϖb8 15.h5 ♙h7 16.♙h4 exd4 17.♙xd7 ♙d6 18.♙xd4 ♙xd7 19.♙e3 ♙hd8 20.ϖg4 ♙g8 21.ϖf3 ♙e7 22.ϖf1 ♙e5 23.♙ad1 a5 24.ϕf5 ♙xf5 25.ϖxf5 ♙xd4 26.♙xd4 ♙xe3 27.fxe3 axb4 28.cxb4 ♙g5 29.ϖxf6 ♙xh5 30.ϖd8+ ϖxd8 31.♙xd8+ ϖc7 32.♙d4 ♙h1+ 33.ϖf2 ♙a1 34.a5 b5 35.axb6+ ϖxb6 36.♙d7 ϖb5 37.♙b7+ ϖc4 38.g4 f6 39.♙f7 ϖxb4 40.♙xf6 c5 41.♙b6+ ϖc3?+ [41...ϖc4=] 42.g5 c4 43.g6 ♙a5 44.ϖf3 ♙g5 45.e4 ϕd4 46.♙d6+ ϖc3 47.ϖf4 ♙g2 48.ϖf5 ϖb2 49.♙b6+ ϖa3 50.♙c6 ϖb3 51.ϖf6! [51.e5!] 51...c3 52.g7 c2 53.e5 ♙f2+ 54.ϖe7 ♙g2 55.ϖf8 ♙f2+ 56.ϖg8 ♙e2 57.e6 ♙xe6 58.♙xc2 1-0

Dandridge, Marvin - Sandrin, Angelo [E00]
Midwest Masters-B Chicago (2), 1984
[Irons, Robert]

1.d4 ϕf6 2.c4 e6 3.g3 c5 4.dxc5 ♙xc5 5.ϕf3 ϖb6 6.e3 ϕc6 7.♙g2 0-0 8.0-0 ♖a6 9.b3 d5 10.cxd5 ϕxd5 11.♙b2 ♙d8 12.ϕg5 ϕf6 13.ϖc2 ♙e7 14.♙d1 ♙xd1+ 15.ϖxd1 h6 16.ϕf3 ♙d7 17.ϕbd2 ϕb4 18.ϕc4 ♙c6 19.♙f1 ♙d5 20.a3 ϕc6 21.ϕfd2 ♙d8 22.ϖc2 b5 23.ϕe5 ϕxe5 24.♙xe5 ϖc6 25.ϖb2 ♙c8 26.♙d3 ϕh1 27.e4?+ [27.♙f1?] 27...ϕxe4 28.♙xe4 ♙xe4 29.ϕxe4 ϖxe4 30.♙xg7 ♙c2 31.ϖd4 ϖf3 32.♙e5 ♙c5?+ [32...f6+] 33.ϖd8+ ϖh7 34.ϖh8+ ϖg6 35.ϖg7+ ϖh5 36.♙d4 ♙xd4 37.ϖxd4 ϖc3 38.ϖd1+ ϖg5 39.h4+ ϖf6 40.♙b1 1/2-1/2

Chachere, Lawrence - Myers, Hugh Edward [A56]
Midwest Masters-B Chicago (2), 1984
[Irons, Robert]

1.d4 ϕf6 2.c4 c5 3.d5 ϕe4!± [My database contains 10 games with this continuation prior to this one, with an even record (4 wins each for White & Black and 2 draws). In 5 of those games the Black pieces were played by Stefan Buecker of Germany, who scored 3 wins, 1 loss and 1 draw. To date (August 2025) my database contains 899 games with this position. The players follow what is now considered the main line.] 4.ϖc2 ♖a5+ 5.ϕc3 ϕxc3 6.♙d2 e5 7.♙xc3 ϖc7 8.e3 d6 9.f4 f5!+ [9...g6] 10.fxe5 dxe5 11.ϕf3! [11.g4] 11...♙d6! [11...e4±] 12.♙e2 0-0 13.ϕh4!± [13.e4±] 13...ϖe7 14.g3 g5 15.ϕf3 ϕa6!± [15...e4=] 16.a3 ♙d7 17.0-0-0 ♙ab8 18.e4 ϕc7 19.exf5 ♙xf5!+ [19...♙xf5±] 20.h4 g4 21.ϕg5 ♙ff8 22.♙d3 h6 23.ϕe4 b5 24.♙de1 b4 25.♙d2 bxa3 26.bxa3 ϕxd5 27.ϕxd6 ϖxd6 28.cxd5 c4 29.♙h7+ ϖh8 30.♙b4 ♙xb4 31.axb4 ϖxb4

32.♙g6 ♙f3 33.ϖb2 ♙b3 34.ϖxe5+ ϖg8 35.♙e2 ♖a3+ 36.ϕd1 c3 37.ϖe7= [37.ϖe1+] 37...ϖa1+ 38.ϖc2 ϖb2+ 39.ϕd1 ♖a1+ 40.ϖc2 ♖a2+?+ [40...ϖb2+ 41.ϕd1 ♖a1+ 42.ϖc2 ϖb2+ 43.ϕd1 ♖a1+ 44.ϖc2 ϖb2+] 41.ϕd3 ♖a6+ 42.ϕd4 ϖb6+ 43.ϖe5 ϖb8+? 44.ϖf6 ♙b6+ 45.♙e6 [White has mate in no more than 5 moves.] 1-0

Berchenko, Sergey - Sprenkle, David (2325) [B89]
Midwest Masters-B Chicago (2), 1984
[Irons, Robert]

1.e4 c5 2.ϕf3 ϕc6 3.d4 cxd4 4.ϕxd4 ϕf6 5.ϕc3 d6 6.♙c4 e6 7.♙e3 ♙e7 8.ϖe2 a6 9.♙b3 ϖc7 10.0-0-0 0-0 11.g4 ϕxd4 12.♙xd4 b5 13.g5 ϕd7 14.ϖh5 ♙d8 15.ϕd5?+ [15.f4±] 15...exd5 16.♙xd5 ϕe5 17.♙xa8! [17.f4] 17...♙g4 18.ϖh4 ♙f3 19.♙d5 ♙xh1 20.f4 ϕc4!± [20...ϕc6+] 21.♙d3 ϕxe3 22.♙xe3 ϖc5!± [22...♙c8?] 23.ϖe1 b4!± [23...♙xe4 24.♙xe4 (24.♙xe4 g6=) 24...ϖxd5 25.♙e7 g6=] 24.♙g3 ♙c8 25.♙b3!± [25.c4!+] 25...d5 26.ϖxh1 ϖd4 27.♙xd5 ϖf2 28.ϖd1 ϖxf4+ 29.ϖb1 ♙xg5 30.♙f3 ϖxh2 31.♙xf7+ ϖh8 32.♙e6 ♙b8 33.♙h3 ϖf4 34.♙f5 h6 35.♙d3 a5 36.c4!± [36.c3=] 36...a4 37.c5 a3 38.c6 axb2!± [38...♙a8+] 39.ϖxb2?+ [39.ϖd2?] 39...ϖe5+ 40.ϖb1 ♙f6 41.ϖb3 ♙a8 42.ϖc2 ♙a3 43.ϖd5 b3+ 44.ϕd1 ♖a1+ 45.ϖe2 ♙xa2+ 46.♙d2 ♙xd2+!± [46...ϖh1+] 47.ϖxd2 ♖a6+ 48.ϖd3 ϖb6 49.ϖd7 ϖb5+ 50.ϖf2 ϖc5+?+ [50...♙h4+] 51.ϖf3 ϖc3+ 52.ϖg4 h5+ 53.ϖxh5 ϖf3+ 54.ϖg6 ϖg2+ 55.ϖf7 g6 56.♙xg6 1-0

Giles, Morris - Kuroda, Paul [B34]
Midwest Masters-B Chicago (2), 1984
[Irons, Robert]

1.e4 c5 2.ϕf3 ϕc6 3.d4 cxd4 4.ϕxd4 g6 5.ϕc3 ♙g7 6.♙e3 ϕf6 7.ϕxc6 bxc6 8.e5 ϕd8 9.♙d4 ♖a5 10.e6! [This doesn't work out the way Giles intended. Better is 10.f4=] 10...ϕf6 11.exf7+ ϖxf7 12.♙c4+ d5 13.♙b3 ♙e8 14.f4?+ [This weakens e3 & e4, and thus helps Black more than White. 14.♙e5= maintains equality.] 14...♙a6?+ [14...c5 15.♙e5 ♙d8 16.a3 c4 17.♙a2 ϕe4 18.♙xg7 ϖxg7 19.ϖd4+ ϖf7+ keeps the advantage. Fortunately for Kuroda this is the next-to-last mistake!] 15.ϖf2? [White can strengthen his attacking position and bring his king to safety with 15.ϖf3 c5 16.♙e5 c4 17.♙a4 ♙ed8 18.0-0-0= The text is the beginning of a suicide march for the White king.] 15...ϕg4+ 16.ϖf3! [16.ϖg3 holds on just a bit longer, but things are already difficult for Giles.] 16...e5! 17.ϕxd5 [If instead 17.fxe5 ϕxe5+ 18.♙xe5 ♙xe5 19.g3 ♙ae8 looks ominous, while; 17.ϖxg4 exd4 18.ϕxd5 ♙e2+ draws the curtain.] 17...exd4 18.ϕe3+ ϖf8 19.ϕxg4 ♙e2+ 20.ϖxe2 ♙xe2 21.ϖxe2 ♙e8+ 22.ϖf1 ϖd2 23.ϕf2 ϖe2+ 0-1

Scores at the end of round 2:

- 2.0: Berchenko, Bereolos, Brooks, Chow, Kaushansky, Kuroda, Rose,
- 1.5: Finegold, Lindsay, Martinovsky, Miller, Odendahl, Savage, Zelkind
- 1.0: Chachere, Colias, Eckert, Giles, Hudson, Moore, Pelts, Redman, Sandrin, Schiller, Sprenkle, Unger, Weiss
- 0.5: Dandridge, Dubin, Ellis, Frumkin, Lief, Mills, Stevanovic, Tomas, Van Meter, Wallach
- 0.0: Karklins, Mohr, Myers, Sage, Szpisjak

Note: Photos courtesy of Helen Warren.

The round-by-round results will continue with the next issue.

Victory without struggle has no story!

From Vienna to Manila part 2
by Agermose2 (Michael Agermose Jensen)

Originally published on March 5, 2025 at Chess.com, reproduced here with the author's permission.
For part 1 see issue #161



Romanian stamp commemorating the Olympics in Manila 1992

Pierce Gambit Part 2

Manilla is best known in the sporting world as the venue of the "Thrilla in Manila", which became the name for the third World Championship heavyweight boxing match between Muhammad Ali and Joe Frazier in the Philippines 1975.

17 years later in June 1992, the city would host the 30th chess Olympiad. It was notable for it being the first Olympiad after the split of the Soviet Union, and a young Vladimir Kramnik made his debut as a title-less 2590-rated, scoring an absurd 8.5/9.

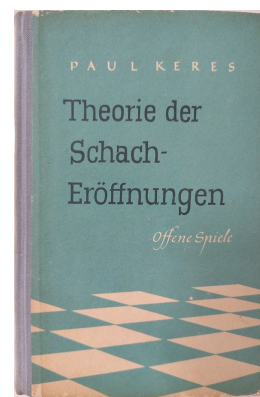
My first recollection of the tournament was the vivacious article in the Danish magazine Skakbladet. Written by Lars Schandorff, who would later become author of fine opening books, this hugely entertaining piece left a lasting impression on a few of my chess friends as well.

Many years later I, by accident, discovered that our Pierce gambit also did quite well at the Olympics.

In [Part 1](#) we examined the origins of the Pierce Gambit with emphasis on the games of Louis Paulsen. In this second installment, we move closer to present day and try to offer a little more theoretical depth in the annotations.

Before we get to the games one must remember that 1992 was before engines, before databases, before the World Wide Web, and players had to rely on books and analysis.

Beyond the Pierce book from 1885, the main source was Paul Keres' books on the Open Games, which first edition appeared in 1949.

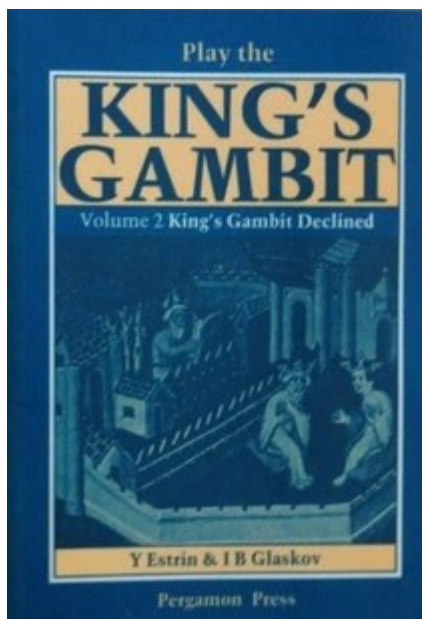


The German 1953 edition of Keres' book on the open games

Then in 1980 Yakov Estrin (an International master and correspondence grandmaster as well as World Correspondence

Chess Champion, 1972-1976) and Russian candidate master Igor Glazkov wrote a series of articles on the King's Gambit in the magazine, *Schachmaty Riga*, issue 7-11, 1980. Later they analyzed the Pierce Gambit in another Soviet magazine *Shakhmatny Byulletin* no. 1, 1982.

These articles were later enlarged into a two-volume work in English, *Play the King's Gambit* (1982), and this was the main reference for players of the white pieces in 1992. The defenders probably relied on the Yugoslav Encyclopedia, which was by then in its second edition (1981).



Volume 2 of Estrin & Glazkov's *Play the King's Gambit* (1982)

In addition to the aforementioned Schandorff, another author whose books I have enjoyed, is Scottish Grandmaster Paul Motwani, who in the 1980s and early 90s played the Pierce gambit regularly. Motwani was the World Cadet (Under-17) champion in 1978 and has written several chess books.

Motwani was awarded the GM title during the Manila Olympiad and here he defeats a fellow GM with the Pierce Gambit:

Motwani,Paul (2455) - Antunes,Antonio (2465) [C25]
Manila, 1992 [agerm]

1.e4 e5 2.♖c3 ♘c6 [2...♘f6 3.f4 is the regular Vienna Gambit.] 3.f4 [This is the other Vienna gambit, which is arguably more risky than the regular Vienna gambit.] 3...exf4 4.♖f3 g5 5.d4 g4 6.♙c4 gxf3 7.0-0 ♖g5 [We already saw the defects of this move in Pierce-Nash (Part 1), which did not prevent Motwani from facing it twice.] 8.♙xf3 ♘xd4 9.♙xf7+! [The prettiest and also best move. 9.♖xd4?? ♙c5 is obviously not on.] 9...♖xf7? [A year earlier Motwani had faced the better 9...♖d8 but won another miniature. 10.♙f2 (10.♙xf4! ♙c5 11.♖h1 would have been even more convincing, as was given by Keres in 1953 (!).) 10...♖g7 11.♙xf4! ♘e7? 12.♖h5 d6 13.♙g5 ♘xc2 14.♙af1 ♖e5 Every White piece is in the attack. So it comes as no surprise that there is a winning blow. 15.♙g8! ♖c5 16.♖h1 ♖d7 17.♙x8 ♘g6 18.♙d8+ ♖c6 19.♙d5+ 1-0 Motwani,P (2440)-Kula,R (2300) Berlin 1991.] 10.♙xf4+ [10.♖xd4?? I will leave the reader to refute.] 10...♘f6 11.♘d5 ♘e6 [As we saw in part one, the first game in this line was played in 1885, where Black continued 11...♖e5] 12.♙xf6+ ♖xf6 13.♘xf6

♙c5+ 14.♖h1 ♖xf6 [Black has plenty of wood for the queen, but the weak king decides.] 15.♖h5 h6 [Motwani gave the alternatives: 15...d6 16.♙g5+! ♘xg5 17.♙f1+ ♖e6 18.♖g4+ ♖e7 19.♖xg5+ ♖e8 20.♖f6+; 15...♖e7 16.♙g5+ ♖d6 17.♙f6+ with idea of mate on d5.] 16.b4! ♙d4 17.c3 ♙xc3 [Loses the bishop, but other moves no not save Black either. 17...♙e5 18.♖f5+; 17...♙b6 18.♙xh6] 18.♖f3+ ♖g6 19.♖xc3 [Now material is equal, and the win consists of mopping up the pieces of Black's position.] 19...♙f8 20.♖g1 d6 21.♖g3+ ♖h7 22.♖h4 ♙f7 23.♖xh6+ ♖g8 24.♙b2 ♘g7 25.♙f1 [Black must lose material. We feel a little sorry for the black rook and bishop who never got to enter the game.] 1-0

A very nice game, but the real treat is the next one. Icelandic GM Jon Arnason was the Cadet World Champion the year before Motwani in 1977 (ahead of Garry Kasparov!), and here he takes down world class GM Michael Adams.

Arnason,Jon Loftur (2515) - Adams,Michael (2620) [C25]
Olympiad-30 Manila (9.3), 17.06.1992 [agerm]

1.e4 e5 2.♖c3 ♘c6 3.f4 exf4 4.♖f3 g5 5.d4 d6 6.d5 ♘e5 7.♙b5+ ♙d7 8.♙xd7+ ♘xd7 9.♖d4 [9.h4! was featured in Part 1 in Paulsen-Harmonist, 1888. Arnason in Informator gave 9.♘d4 as the only alternative and 9.♖d4 as a novelty, when it had already been played in 1984.] 9...f6? [9...♖f6! is better. Then the exchange of blows with 10.♖xf6 ♘gxf6 11.♘xg5 ♙g8 12.♙xf4 h6 13.♖f3 ♙xg2 14.0-0-0 yielded little in Pliester,L (2360)-Grinberg,N (2420) NED Open-ch15 Dieren 1984 (6), and drawn in 41.] 10.h4! [Arnason rejected 10.♘xg5? fxg5 11.♖xh8 ♘df6 which traps the queen. If you solved the exercises at the end of part 1, you will know this already.] 10...g4 11.♘g5 [But now things are different as the white pawn is already on h4.] 11...♘c5 12.♘e6 ♘xe6 13.♙xe6 c6 14.♙xf4 [Material is equal, but all Black's pieces are still sitting on their starting squares. Adams tried to win some time for castling with] 14...♖b6 [14...♖e7 is examined in Motwani-Gretarsson below.] 15.♖d3 [15.♖c4 ♖a6 is also winning, but Arnason wants to keep the queens.] 15...0-0-0 16.0-0-0 h5 17.♖g3 ♖c7 18.♙d3 ♖e7 19.♙hd1 ♖xe6 20.♙xd6 ♙xd6 21.♙xd6 ♙xd6 22.♙xd6 ♖e7 23.♖f4 [Black survived the onslaught and eliminated the pawn on e6. But the kingside is still not out of the starting boxes and White won a long technical endgame.] 23...♙h7 24.♘e2 ♙f7 25.♖f5+ ♖c7 26.♙e6 ♖d7 27.♖f4+ ♖c8 28.♙d6 ♖e7 29.♘g3 ♖e5 [Forced, but it brings little relief.] 30.♖xe5 fxe5 31.♙e6 [31.♘xh5 could be safely taken, but Arnason plays it safe. 31...♙f1+ 32.♖d2 ♙f2+ 33.♖e3 ♙xg2 34.♙g6 winning.] 31...♖d7 32.♙xe5 ♙f2 33.♘xh5 ♙xg2 34.♙g5 ♘h6 35.♙g7+ ♖e8 36.♙g6 ♘f7 37.♙xg4! [wins a second pawn and the game. Adams fights but it is futile.] 37...♙h2 [37...♙xg4 38.♘f6+] 38.♘g7+ ♖e7 39.♘f5+ ♖f6 40.b3 a5 41.♙g8 ♖e5 42.♙f8 ♘d6 43.♘xd6 [Not all rook endgames are drawn.] 43...♖xd6 44.♙f4 b5 45.a3 ♖e6 46.♙g4 ♖e5 47.♙g6 ♙xh4 48.♙xc6 ♖d4 [48...♖xe4 49.♙c5] 49.a4 bxa4 50.♙c4+ ♖e3 51.♙xa4 ♙h5 52.♖b2 ♙g5 53.♙c4 ♙h5 54.♖a3 ♙e5 55.♖a4 ♖d2 56.♙c8 ♖c1 57.c4 ♖b2 58.♙b8 ♖c3 [58...♙xe4 59.♖xa5] 59.♙b5 [with two connected pawns, the win is trivial.] 1-0

The next game has Motwani, earlier in the year, winning another Pierce gambit. This time vs a young Helgi Gretarsson, who two years later would become World Under-20 Champion, an achievement that confers the title of Grandmaster.

**Motwani,Paul (2455) - Gretarsson,Helgi Ass (2350) [C25]
Hafnarfirdi (4), 03.1992 [agerm]**

1.e4 e5 2.♖c3 [For comparison, the Quaade Gambit line goes: 2.f4 exf4 3.♗f3 g5 4.♖c3 d6 5.d4 ♗g7 6.g3 ♖c6! 7.d5 ♖e5] 2...♖c6 3.f4 exf4 4.♗f3 d6 [In the Icelandic newspaper "Dagblaðið Vísir", Jon Arnason (who was also participating in the tournament) gave this a '?'. While, 4...g5 is better, this is only because Black can then play 5...g4 and force White to a piece sacrifice (5.g3 was not known back then). Some sources erroneously give the move-order as 4...g5 5.d4 d6] 5.d4 g5 6.d5 ♖e5 [Compared with the Quaade gambit, White has not yet played g3, while Black is missing ♗g7. This works out to White's advantage as Black wants ♗g7, but who would play g3 here?] 7.♗b5+ ♗d7 8.♗xd7+ ♖xd7 [8...♗xd7 9.h4! g4? 10.♖xe5+ dxe5 11.♗xg4+ was winning in Gallagher,J (2500)-Ledger,D (2265) Hastings Challengers 1993/94. See also Exercise 2.] 9.♗d4 [We saw Paulsen play 9.h4! in part 1. Because of Black's option at the next move, Paulsen's move is preferable.] 9...f6? [As mentioned already, 9...♗f6! appears to equalize: 10.♗xf6 ♖xg6 11.♖xg5 the Pierce book ended here. 11...♗g8 12.♖xf4 h6 13.♗f3 ♗xg2 14.0-0 0-0 15.♗hg1 (15.♖d4 was given as slightly better for White in *New In Chess Yearbook* 29. This is certainly debatable.) 15...♗g6 16.♗g3 ♗e8 1/2-1/2 Tseitlin,M (2440)-Kosashvili,Y (2460) Tel Aviv-B 1992. White has fewer pawn islands, but the weakness of the e5 square and the e4-pawn compensates Black's weak pawns.; 9...♖g6 is interesting and very unclear. 10.♖xg5 ♗g8 (10...♗g7 11.♗f2 Pierce and 11.♖xf4 is also fine.) 11.♖f3 (11.♖h3!? ♗xg2 12.♖xf4) 11...♗xg2 12.♖xf4 ♖h5 (12...♗g7 G.Lane (2000) is also met by 13.♗d2) 13.♗d2 ♗g7 (13...♖e5!∞ was the correct move-order.) 14.♗e3! ♖e5 15.0-0-0± 1-0 Shabalov,A (2590)-Kreiman,B (2425) New York op 1994 (4)] 10.h4! [Arnason in his comments gives 10.♖xg5? fxg5 11.♗xh8 ♖df6 and as we saw, he in June (this game was played in March) avoided precisely this trap. The lesson here is that analyzing games is useful.] 10...g4? 11.♖g5! ♖c5 [Black had relied on this defence of the e6 square, but White puts the knight there anyway.] 12.♖e6 ♖xe6 13.dxe6 c6 14.♖xf4 [Black's position is already miserable. The pawn on e6 is a nuisance.] 14...♗e7 [Gretarsson wants the pawn. A few months later Arnason reached this position himself as we saw in the previous game from Manila, where Adams chose 14...♗b6] 15.♗c4 [You can't have it.] 15...♖h6 16.♗g3! ♗c7 17.0-0 ♖e3+ 18.♗h2 [White is perfectly safe here, while Black's king must run to the queenside. Meanwhile, Black's bishop is out on a limb.] 18...0-0-0 19.♗ad1 a6 20.♗d3 ♖a7 [20...♖c5 21.♖a4 does not save the d6 pawn.] 21.♖xd6 ♗g7 22.e5!+- [Black's defences are at a breaking point and the e-pawn is immune to capture.] 22...♗h6 23.♗g3 f5 24.e7 ♗e8 25.♗xf5 ♖xe7 26.♗f7 ♗e6 27.♗f6 ♗c4 28.b3 ♗g8 29.e6 ♖g6 30.♖a4 h5 [Now Motwani finishes with a very nice move.] 31.♖b8! [Black resigned as ♖xb8 is met by ♖b6 mate.] 1-0

So 9.♗d4 won twice, but the games in the notes with 9...♗f6 gave White nothing. Still, not to worry, as Paulsen's 9.h4! is strong.

Beside Motwani and Arnason, there were in 1992 surprisingly many grandmasters willing to play an opening, where White is obliged to sacrifice a piece, and the decision lies with Black whether to force the sacrifice.

Swedish maverick Jonny Hector may not be known to everyone, but in Scandinavia he is famous for his creative openings and gambit play. He started out with the Latvian gambit before mov-

ing on to the Evans and King's Gambits. We will have to break the chronology, as the next game is a bit before 1992. My excuse is that it will only be for 15 moves.

**Hector,Jonny - Garcia Vicente,Nieves [C25]
Zamora Spanish tt 88-89 Zamora, 1988 [agerm]**

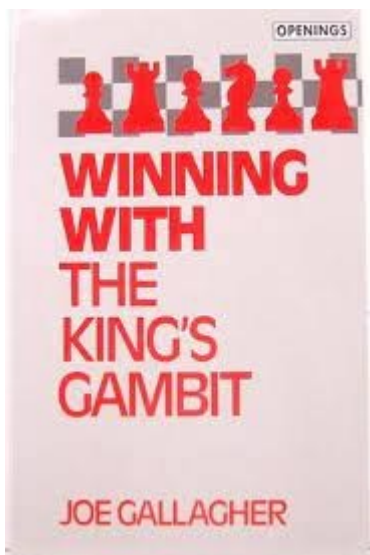
1.e4 e5 2.♖c3 ♖c6 3.f4 exf4 4.♗f3 g5 5.d4 g4 6.♖c4 gxf3 7.0-0 d5 [In his autobiography, Hector gives this move a '?'. It is certainly better than 7...♗g5 from Motwani-Antunes, but the popularity of the move stems from Lepeshkin's analysis, which strangely is not included in the 1985 Batsford book on the Vienna game (a translation of Lepeshkin and Konstantinopolsky's 1982 work).] 8.exd5 ♗g4 9.♗d2! [A difficult choice, but this is probably better than ♗e1+ or ♗e1+ (the moves given in the Pierce book). Later someone came up with the queen sacrifice 9.dxc6 but, as shown by Keres, it does not work. The text move was found by Igor Glazkov in 1965, while the 1968 edition of Keres's book on the Open games, credits a chap named Gahlnbeck with the invention. Unfortunately, I have no information of any players with that name, and Keres does not state the source.] 9...♖ce7 [9...♗g7 10.♗xf4 ♖xd4+ 11.♗h1 ♗h4 (unclear according to Gahlnbeck) and now we can improve on Estrin & Glazkov's analysis from their article in *Schachmaty Bulletin* no. 1, 1982 with (11...fxg2+ 12.♗xg2 ♗h4 13.♗xf7+ ♖d8 and here Gahlnbeck went astray with ♗f8+ when White has a win with 14.dxc6) 12.♗xf3! with a winning attack. (12.dxc6 fxg2+ 13.♗xg2 0-0-0 14.♖d5 Estrin & Glazkov 14...♗xd5 15.♖xd5 ♖f6 Eger-Weinitschke, corr DDR 1983 16.♗g3!∞)] 10.♗xf4 ♖h6? [A suggestion of Paul Keres (in his 1968 book). In the first edition of the Yugoslav Encyclopedia (1974) Larsen selected a verdict of Black advantage. Perhaps they did not consider White's next move, which threatens mate in one. If you switch on the engine it will spit out 10...h5! with a complicated position. In fact my old Fritz engine of 15 years ago found this move.; The alternative is 10...♗d7 11.d6! 0-0-0 was given as better for Black by Lepeshkin. But Gallagher found 12.dxc7! ♗e8 13.♖xf7 with advantage.] 11.♖e4! [Glazkov's move. Estrin & Glazkov conclude that Black is in difficulties.] 11...♗g7 [This was given an '?' by Bent Kølvig in *Skakbladet* 1/2008 and also by Gallagher (1992), but Black hardly has better. Now we come to an interesting junction. White has two very enticing moves. ♖f6+ or ♗xh6.] 12.♖f6+! [Gallagher gave the spectacular 12.♗xh6 in his 1992 book. In that case Black can continue with ♖f5 (or ♖xd4+ and then ♖f5), while Hector's move is just game over for Black. 12...♖f5 13.♗f4 ♖xd4+ B.Kølvig] 12...♖f8 [12...♖xf6 13.♗xf6 was the lesser evil, but White is still winning comfortably.] 13.♖xg4 ♖g6? [13...♖h5 14.♗xf3 Bangiev/Hergert (1993)] 14.♗xf3 ♖h4 15.♗a3+ [Time to resign as White wins a piece.] 1-0



Jonny Hector playing Black against the Vienna (wikipedia)

King's Gambit legend Joe Gallagher did not play the Vienna, but if Black declines with 1.e4 e5 2.f4 ♖c6 it is natural to reply 3.♗c3 and transpose.

In 1992 Gallagher published his entertaining and inspiring book *Winning with the King's Gambit*. This was always my favourite opening book, and it included the following game where Black accepts the gambit but then plays the rare 3...♗c6.



Winning With the King's Gambit (1992)

**Gallagher, Joseph G - Kamber, Bruno [C25]
Olten Swiss tt, 1992 [agerm]**

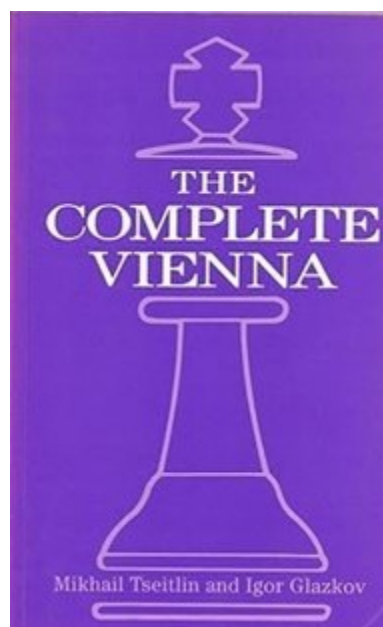
1.e4 e5 2.f4 exf4 3.♗f3 ♗c6 [In my database, there is a game from 1989 where Gallagher's opponent plays the Vienna gambit with White and one where he wins with Black, so no easy opponent. In this line of the King's Gambit accepted White can play the standard 4.d4 or transpose to our Vienna Gambit, which Gallagher does.] 4.♗c3 g5 5.d4 g4 6.♗c4 gxf3 7.0-0 d5 8.exd5 ♗g4 9.♗d2 ♗a5 [9...♗ce7 was seen in Hector-Garcia Vicente.] 10.♗b5+ c6 11.♗xf4! [White leaves the piece *en prise*, and continues so for the next five moves until Black finally takes it.] 11...♗f6 [11...cxb5 12.♗xg4 with a strong attack - Gallagher, but already given in the book on the Vienna game by Konikowski & Przewosnik (1990). Then Black must find 12...♗d7 13.♗xf3 0-0-0∞ to survive.] 12.♗e1+ [12.♗e4 ♗g7 was given by Lepeshkin. White may then try Bangiev's 13.♗d2!?] 12...♗d7 13.♗e4 f2+ [This was Lepeshkin's recommendation.] 14.♗xf2! ♗xe4 [Bangiev prefers 14...♗xd5 but then 15.♗g5 ♗e7 can be met by 16.♗xe7 ♗xe7 (16...♗xe7?? 17.♗c5+; 16...♗xe7 17.c4 cxb5 18.cxd5) 17.♗d3 ♗e6 18.b4 ♗c4 19.♗c5+ in all cases with a winning attack.] 15.♗xe4 f5 16.♗e6 cxb5 17.h3! [What a great move. Two pieces down and White finds this little pawn move. Black has defended extremely well and found the only move for several moves, but now he errs. The engine has been giving White a slight plus for some moves, but soon it switches to equal. If the bishop moves to h5 or d1 then ♗xf5 decides, but the bishop can move to a third square.] 17...♗c8? [17...♗h3! was the only survivable move. Gallagher analyses 18.gxh3 but then overlooks 18...♗c4! Gallagher analyzed 17...♗c4 but missed this. The idea is to defend the d6 square. Now there is a long forced line, which does not bring home the bacon: 19.♗xf5 ♗c7 20.♗f7+ ♗d7 21.♗f4+ ♗d6 22.♗xd6 ♗xd6 23.♗xd6+ ♗c8! (23...♗xd6? 24.♗f4+- and here there is a nice mate after 24...♗e7 25.♗g5+ ♗d6 26.♗e5#) 24.♗e7 (24.♗f6 ♗g8+

25.♗h2 ♗g6 also draws.) 24...♗c7 White can also play on in various ways, which the engine evaluates at 0.00 or take an immediate draw by repetition here.] 18.hxg4 b6 [Bangiev suggested 18...♗g7 19.♗xf5 ♗d7 but 20.♗e4 wins easily.] 19.♗xf5 ♗b7 20.♗g5 ♗c7 21.d6 ♗xd6 22.♗d5+ ♗c6 23.♗xd6 ♗xd5 24.♗xd5 [Black is two pawns down with the worse position, and decided to call it a day.] 1-0

There are not many chess players that are both grandmasters over the board and in correspondence. Even though Estrin is often reported to have been conferred the FIDE title in 1984, including reputable sources as Jeremy Gaige's *Chess Personalalia* and *The Oxford Companion to Chess* by Hooper & Whyld, it does appear he was not. In the 2nd, 1988, Russian edition of his book with Glazkov, published after Estrin's death in 1987, it is stated that he was an IM (1975).

With modern computers and engines, many correspondence grandmasters have given up the game, but in 1992 engines were still weak enough to be of little use in postal play and you could play the same openings.

Ulf Andersson and Curt Hansen are two well-known double grandmasters, as is Jonny Hector (awarded 1991 and 1999). Perhaps you have never heard of Mikhail Zeitlein, possibly because his name used to be spelled Tseitlin. I do not know when they (FIDE, ChessBase etc.) changed spelling, but we are going to go with Zeitlein, even though his books and some game databases have the spelling Tseitlin.



The Complete Vienna (1995), which Tseitlin co-authored with Igor Glazkov

The Belorussian now lives in Germany and became a FIDE grandmaster in 1987 and ICCF grandmaster in 1990. Zeitlein authored three books, two of them with King's Gambit specialist Igor Glazkov, who may be even less known to the general audience. More of him later, here we examine two of Zeitlein's games. The first was played just before our featured year 1992, at the New Year's tournament in Hastings.

**Zeitlein, Michael (2480) - Volzhin, Alexander (2335) [C25]
Hastings Challengers 9192 Hastings, 1991 [agerm]**

1.e4 e5 2.♖c3 ♘c6 3.f4 exf4 4.♗f3 g5 5.d4 ♗g7 6.d5 ♗e5 7.d6 ♗xf3+ [an older game of Zeitlein's must be mentioned because of an interesting possibility: 7...g4 8.♗xe5 good, but only second-best: (White could interpolate. 8.dxc7! ♗xf3+ and now 9.♗xc7! ♗xc7 10.♗d3 (Even here White could keep up the *zwischenzug* game: 10.♗xf4! gxf3 11.♗xc7 fxc2 12.♗xg2 and Black must lose material to complete development.) 10...♗xc3+ 11.bxc3 ♗e7 12.♗e2 0-0 13.♗a3 d5 14.exd5 ♗d8 15.d6 Such an advanced d-pawn is almost always worth material. 15...♗c6 16.c4 ♗f5 17.0-0-0 ♗e3 18.♗c3! ♗xd1 19.♗xd1 f5 20.♗b2 ♗d7 21.c5 ♗e8 22.♗h8+ ♗f7 23.♗g7+ 1-0 Pinkas, K (2390)-Felcir, J Trnava op 1990 (3)] 8...♗xe5 (8...♗h4+ 9.g3 fxc3 10.♗xg4! is a trap known from the Quaaed and Rosentreter Gambits. 10...g2+ 11.♗xh4+- Tseitlin, Mi) 9.♗xg4 ♗h6? (It was essential to play 9...h5!) 10.♗h5 ♗f6 11.♗d5 ♗xd6 Zeitlein, M (2490)-Provotorov, A RSFSR-ch sf1~5 URS 1984. Here you must find a good move. See Exercise 3.] 8.♗xf3 cxd6 9.h4 h6 10.♗c4 [At this point Englisch played 10...d5, which is the best move.] 10...♗f6? [Another 1992 game went: 10...♗e7 which, as it turns out, is a better place for the knight. White should reply. 11.♗d2!± (11.g3 was Arnason, J (2515)-Ivanov, A (2555) St Martin 1992. Find the best reply for Black. See Exercise 7.)] 11.g3 [echoes of the Paulsen game, but there was a better move.] 11...d5! [Once again Black is up to the task and plays the liberating pawn-break.] 12.♗xd5 d6 13.hxg5 hxg5 14.♗xh8+ ♗xh8 15.gxf4 g4? 16.♗h1! [It pays to know the classics, and Zeitlein copies Paulsen's winning queen maneuver.] 16...♗g7 17.f5 ♗b6 18.♗b3 ♗d7 19.♗f4 ♗c6 20.0-0-0 0-0-0 21.♗g2 d5? 22.♗xd5 ♗xd5 23.exd5 ♗xd5 24.♗xg4 [The prospect of perpetual check prevented Paulsen from 21.♗h5 vs Englisch, and here too, the spectre of it looms. White could win easily after 24.♗xd5 ♗xd5 25.♗xd5! ♗xb2+ (25...♗xb2+ 26.♗d1 ♗b1+ 27.♗c1 and there are no more checks.) 26.♗d1 ♗d4+ 27.♗d2! and again, Black has run out of checks. (27.♗d2 ♗g1+ 28.♗e2 is more complicated.)] 24...♗f6 25.♗b1 ♗xb3 26.axb3 ♗b4?? [26...♗xd1+ 27.♗xd1 ♗b4 with excellent drawing chances was probably what Black intended. And haven't we all experienced this: Working out the correct variation of a rook exchange followed by ♗b4, to suddenly realize you are holding the queen in your hand, and the rooks still on the board.] 27.♗xd8+ [Black loses king or queen.] 1-0

For Motwani it was 7...♗g5 that was the money cow. For Zeitlein, the 5...♗g7 line kept on giving.

**Zeitlein, Michael (2480) - Petran, Pal (2470) [C25]
Elekes Memorial Budapest (8), 1992 [agerm]**

1.e4 e5 2.♖c3 ♘c6 3.f4 exf4 4.♗f3 g5 5.d4 ♗g7 6.d5 ♗e5 7.d6! ♗xf3+ [7...c6 see Paulsen-Minckwitz in Part 1.; 7...g4 see notes to Zeitlein-Volzhin] 8.♗xf3 cxd6 [8...♗e5 Arnason, J (2525)-Agdestein, S (2620) Ostersonund zt 1992. See Exercise 1.] 9.h4 [Following Paulsen-Englich from Part 1. But there is a better move. 9.♗d2! ♗e7 (9...♗e5 10.0-0-0 ♗f6 11.g3!) 10.h4! gxf4 (10...h6 11.♗b5) 11.♗xf4 ♗g6 12.♗xd6 ♗f6 13.♗xf6 ♗xf6 14.♗d5 ♗d8 15.♗c4± White had a dominating position and won in 25 moves in MacKenzie, G-Golmayo Zupide, C Havana 1889.] 9...♗e5 10.g3 g4 [10...fxg3? 11.♗xg5 Tseitlin, Mi] 11.♗xg4 ♗f6 12.♗f3 fxc3 13.♗g5 [Given the possibility of ♗b6, White should simply play the direct 13.♗f4 with similar play as in the game.] 13...h6 [13...♗b6!? playing for counterplay, apparently gives up a piece, but there is a trick. 14.♗xf6 (14.0-0-0!±) 14...♗f2+! 15.♗xf2 gxf2+ 16.♗e2 (16.♗xf2 ♗xf6 chan-

ces are about even.) 16...♗xf6 17.♗d5 Tseitlin gave this as clearly better for White. The engine prefers 17.♗b5! and gives Black the advantage after 17...♗xb2 18.♗b1 ♗d4 19.♗c7+ ♗d8 20.♗xa8 ♗e8 with ...b6 next, Black picks up the knight in the corner and has many pawns for the exchange.] 14.♗f4 ♗b6 15.♗xg3! ♗xg3+ [15...♗xb2 16.♗xe5! ♗xa1+ (Black should prefer 16...dxe5! 17.♗d2! and now avoid taking on a1. 17...♗b6!±) 17.♗d2 dxe5 18.♗xf6 wins. Tseitlin, Mi] 16.♗xg3 ♗xb2 17.♗d1 [The cold logic of the engine finds 17.♗f3! ♗xa1+ 18.♗d2 ♗e7 19.♗e2 ♗b2 20.♗f1 winning.] 17...♗g8? [Practically inviting the variation from above, only this time there is no rook sacrifice. 17...♗d8 was necessary to vacate the e8 square.] 18.♗f3 ♗g4 19.♗g1 ♗b4 20.♗d2! ♗g6 21.♗xg4! ♗xg4 [and here White uncorked] 22.♗f6! [The threat is ♗d5 followed by mate on e7 or ♗h8 and ♗d5+ winning the queen. The unfortunate king on e8 renders the white pawn on e4 untouchable. Black decides to remove the king from the line of fire, but walks straight into the next crosshairs.] 22...♗f8 23.♗f2 ♗xe4+ 24.♗e2 ♗e8 25.♗f1 ♗e5 26.♗xf7+ ♗d8 27.♗f6+ ♗c7 28.♗xe5! [White had foreseen this liquidation into a won endgame as all other moves lose for White.] 28...dxe5 29.♗d5+ ♗d6 30.♗xb4 a5 31.♗f6+ [Next the knight retreats and Black will be a piece down. 31.♗f6+ ♗e7 does not work: 32.♗d5+ ♗d8 33.♗f8#] 1-0

Thus, we end our second part on a high note with all white wins.

Conclusion Part 2

1.e4 e5 2.♖c3 ♘c6 3.f4 exf4 4.♗f3 g5 5.d4 ♗g7 and 5...g4 6.♗c4 gxf3 7.0-0 ♗g5 were already refuted by Paulsen. 7...d5 is a better defence, and if Black find a series of difficult moves, he will earn a draw.

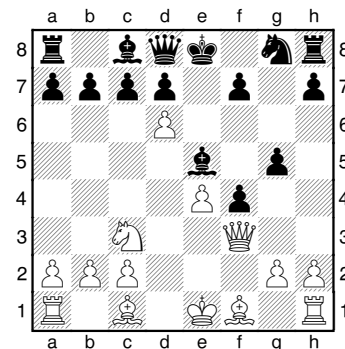
After 5...d6 White plays 6.d5 ♗e5 7.♗b5+ ♗d7 8.♗xd7+ ♗xd7 (9...♗xd7 8.h4!) and now 9.♗d4 ♗f6! is only equal, but again Paulsen saw further and found advantage with 9.h4!

1992 really was the golden age of the Pierce Gambit, but hidden behind the wins was a loss that would prove catastrophic for the Pierce gambit.

Next time we shall see how the glory days came to a sudden and unexpected end.

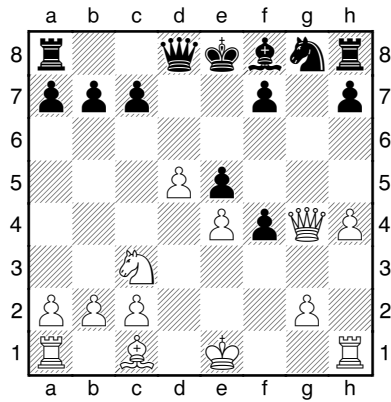
Exercises:

Exercise 1: White to move.

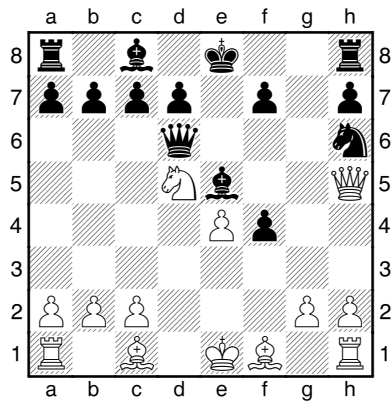


Exercise 2:

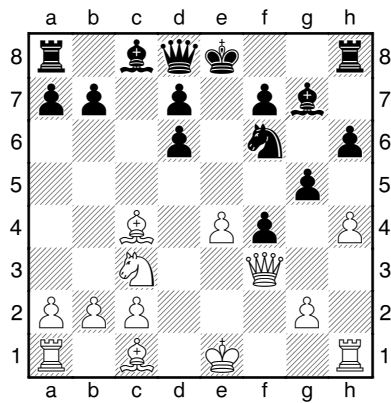
White to move:

**Exercise 3**

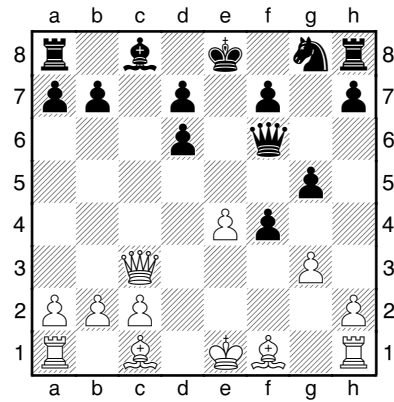
Here you must find a good move for White:

**Exercise 4**

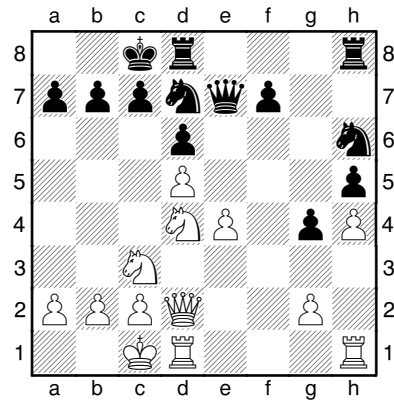
This one is difficult (Zeitlein-Volzjin, Hastings 1991/92):

**Exercise 5**

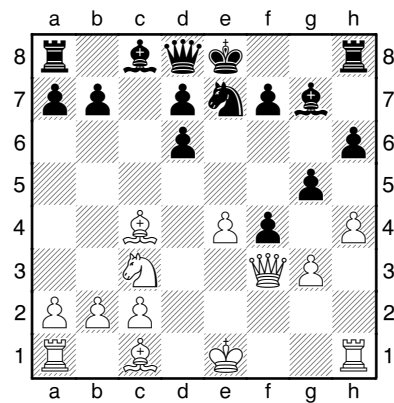
White to move:

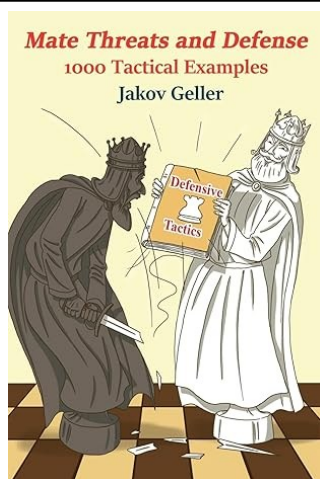
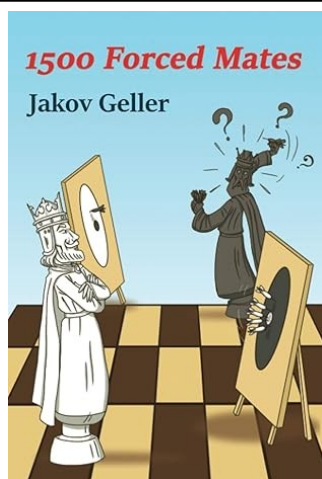
**Exercise 6**

This looks innocent enough, but is there something good. White to move:

**Exercise 7**

Black to move:





The author's paradigm for chess instruction is "Chess players should have good knowledge of all tactical blows and standard combinations as well as a good sense of timing for such tactical blows."

Both books follow this model by a linear progression: basic concepts, specific tactics, combinations of tactics, self-testing. The author classifies tactics with familiar names such as 'elimination' and 'deflection' but also describes concepts such as 'counter strike' and 'unstoppable mate'. This vocabulary helps a player to learn more easily when following the sequence of study. *1500 Forced Mates* emphasizes tactics for offense and *Mate Threats and Defense* shows the same tactics used in defense.

For each book, every chapter clearly defines the author's terms and is normally no more than two or three pages long. The remainder of each chapter is chess puzzles which illustrate the topic and reinforce learning. The tactics, combinations and puzzles become more difficult in each new chapter. The student will start with one-move solutions and progress to multiple-move solutions. There are 6 to 12-move puzzles in the final chapters that a student or advanced player should be capable of solving. Computer analysis was used to make three guarantees about the puzzles: lack of mistakes, no unsolvable puzzles and unlikely to have alternative solutions.

The puzzle diagrams are nicely placed at six per page. All puzzle solutions are at the very end of these paperbacks, so it seems possible that they could degrade quickly from bending back and forth while studying. I would write down my solutions on paper first and only consult the solutions after finishing a chapter.

One of the author's goals was "to create a 'perfect' tactical handbook for solving puzzles on a given theme." I think he has easily accomplished this goal with *1500 Forced Mates*. Although not a specifically stated goal, I think the author's emphasis in *Mate Threats and Defense* on examining all possible refutations of a threat (you must find the best possible move) is very valuable for a young or improving player. As an improving player myself, it is harder to do this on defense than on offense, so knowing that the puzzles enforce best solutions in defense is great.

I have only one quibble and that is the author's explanation of tactical vision which answers for "good sense of timing" in his paradigm. When to look for a forced mate or a threat comes down to heuristics such as 'a number of your pieces are in immediate proximity to the opposing king' or 'most of the opposing pieces are positioned far away from their king.' These hints assume a level of confidence to begin looking for tactics that I don't possess, but perhaps after finishing these books I'll get there.

Jakov Geller achieved his grandmaster title in 2011, and he has been considered a top chess coach since 2007, now holding the title of FIDE Senior Trainer. These two books are most suitable for beginning and improving players, but the author states in both books that the final chapters provide challenging material for advanced players and can serve to uncover tactical strengths and weaknesses.

The books are available in paperback and electronically through Forward Chess and Kindle. Both books can be purchased direct from the publisher's web site (<https://www.elkandrubby.com>) or on Amazon.

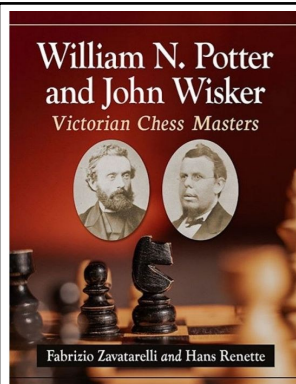
Tsundoku is the phenomenon of acquiring reading materials but letting them pile up in a home without reading them. The term is also used to refer to unread books on a bookshelf meant for reading later. The term originated in the Meiji era (1868-1912) as Japanese slang.

William Norwood Potter and John Wisker, Victorian Chess Masters

By Hans Renette and Fabrizio Zavatarelli

McFarland, 2025

Reviewed by Mark Capron



I have been a fan of Hans Renette's writing for some time now. One of his latest works, in conjunction with author Fabrizio Zavatarelli, is a tome entitled *William Norwood Potter and John Wisker, Victorian Chess Masters*, published by McFarland earlier this year. The authors dedicate 223 pages to Potter and 230 pages to Wisker. There is a five-page introduction in the book, multiple appendices, and multiple indexes for a whopping total of 476 pages!

Through deep research the authors attempt to paint a picture of who William Potter and John Wisker were by displaying historical items of interest and their games. 433 games to be exact. Some nice caricatures and photos are found throughout. The book is mostly broken down into chapters consisting of 2-year intervals. Wisker and Potter belonged to the First Class, a group of the strongest chess players, including Joseph Blackburne, Wilhelm Steinitz, Johannes Zukertort, Henry Bird, Cecil De Vere, Johann Löwenthal, and George MacDonnell, to name a few. Both players were born and grew up in England.

An explanation into the handicap player ranking process: the opponent received odds depending upon the class of player. First class vs first class usually no odds, but sometimes there was the move (i.e. given white); second class received pawn and move; third class, pawn and two moves; fourth class, knight; fifth class, rook; sixth class, two pieces; etc.

Potter is described as follows:

"Here is an athlete whose talent, energy and other qualities are hidden under an appearance of weakness, almost of sickness. A shock, so to speak, would suffice to shake him; a puff of wind would blow him away, but like the reeds in the fable, he gives way, he bends, but does not break.

Potter is not a big man; one might in fact say entirely innocent of reference to pecuniary matters, that he is rather short.

This athlete is Mr. Potter whom I do not hesitate to place in the first rank of British celebrities. A clear, ingenious and original mind, extremely enthusiastic for the science, he endeavors religiously by continuous labor to keep the holy fire burning and he tries to add some firebrand to the flame. His soft and affectionate character, always ready for benevolence and conciliation in all controversies and examinations, is, however, extremely firm in the midst of struggles...

His game, slow, modest, at first sight, multiplies dangers and snares against an antagonist who would trust too much to this kind of timidity,

A clever and witty writer, he controls in the celebrated weekly

newspaper the *Land and Water* the column reserved for Chess. The justice of his analysis, and of his observations, the correctness of his appreciations give a great interest and value to his remarks. Benevolent and serviceable, he has a right to the sympathy of all, and he receives from them daily proof of it."

Potter was born on August 29, 1840, in Middlesex, now the western part of London. Potter's father was not a nice man and ended up leaving the family when Potter was just eight years old. Potter had four siblings. Luckily the relatives and even in-laws helped keep the family afloat. The household was strict and did not allow any disobedience, disrespect or untruthfulness. Not much else is known about Potter's upbringing and education. It is guessed that he learned chess in the 1850s.

His first reported real chess activity came in 1867 when he received knight odds in games against Steinitz and Blackburne.

Potter improved and found his way to first class. His first important match was against Zukertort in 1875. Potter lost 4-2 with 8 draws, showing he belonged in the First Class.

Potter was quite sociable and attended many of the chess parties that Henry Gastineau threw at his home. Many times, a group picture was taken. The authors did some good detective work to determine the date of one of these famous photos (photo shown on page 55, author's deductive reasoning of probable date on page 57).

In 1874, Potter retired from the Post to become chief editor of *The City of London Chess Magazine*, then left it at end of 1875. The reason was probably financial. Then on November 10, 1877, Potter replaced Duffy as editor of *Land and Water*. He ran it until 1885! Potter is remembered for many of his writings. Appendix B is an anthology of Potter's writings.

In 1877, Potter and Steinitz's friendship became very strained. Steinitz had printed an article called *A Literary Outrage* that inferred a link between money and Potter. Potter fired back at Steinitz by referring to him as a foreign player. This feud lasted the rest of their lives. Based on Potter's upbringing, it is hard to imagine that Steinitz claims held much water.

At one point Steinitz was asked about Potter. Steinitz thought it was an offhand conversation and was surprised to find it in print shortly thereafter:

"Some time back a gentleman asked me what I thought of Potter's analysis. Potterio is not a personage whom I greatly admire. In London chess politics he tried the experiment of bowing all around in the midst of a fighting crowd, and he looked quite astonished when he found himself alternately kicked in the rear by different parties. However, I knew that Potter was otherwise the most conscientious and painstaking chess writer in the British Metropolis, though this would not say much in itself considering into what hands the chess press in London has fallen. But he is also a very fine player of the modern school, as well as unques-

tionably the ablest analyst in England next to Zukertort, and thinking only in general of his column in *Land and Water*, I answered my interrogator that Potter's analysis was generally reliable and correct, or words to that effect."

Despite the differences between Potter and Steinitz, when Steinitz left for America, Potter proclaimed, "Mr. Steinitz has his faults, but for our part we say let the memory of them be sunk in the Atlantic, and we send him our hearty good wishes that he may have success and prosperity."

More player quibbles involving Potter:

Just at the beginning of the (*Löwenthal-ed*) tournament, an episode involving Potter caused his withdrawal: "London, Tuesday. The single game match at the City of London Club is likely to end in a comedy. Potter exceeded his time in his game with Mason, of which Mason had the best. Mason allowed him to go on, and ultimately got the worst of the game. Blackburne objected to the violation of the rules, whereupon Potter resigned, not the game, but the match, and Blackburne resigned in consequence of Potter's resignation. There the matter stands at present." Blackburne afterwards went on to play in the tournament, while Potter stuck to his decision.

Right after this, in July 1879, it was announced that Potter was stopping public play and several of the magazines wrote "obituaries" of Potter's chess career. He was supposed to play a match with James Mason after the Löwenthal tournament. The reasons for his retirement were speculation. Was it because of the tantrum in the Löwenthal? Was it because he was getting married in May 1880? Was it that he would take over the new in-law's business as an oilman and colourman?

Whatever the reason, he still ended up playing Mason. They played 21 games over 11 weeks and ended up tied at 10.5, five wins each.

Potter was also a supporter of women's chess.

"We quite approve of the gentler sex being provided with the means of practising chess, if they happen to contract a liking for that recreation; and should witness with no displeasure the invasion of our small borough by a detachment of feminine check-maters. No doubt the male element preponderates in chessdom much more than the diversity of tastes of the two sexes can at all explain."

"Those peculiarly-constituted individuals who object to the daughters of Eve recreating themselves in any other way than by dancing and flirting will no doubt learn with displeasure that a young lady named Miss Rymer, was the winner of the late tournament of the chess class at the Birkbeck Literary Institution. As for ourselves, we feel nothing but the utmost pleasure in being the means of making public such a very interesting event, it being our opinion that chess is a pastime for which women are not naturally unfitted; while we also consider that, when practised in common by the male and female members of a household, it is eminently calculated to bring about a much-to-be-desired companionship and unity of feeling between them. As we do not happen to belong to that strange sect who look upon chess as the *ultima basia* of creation, and it's experts as the salt of the Earth--our experience in respect of the latter dogma being indeed altogether the other way--it will not be denied that in expressing ourselves as above, we speak with some pretense to impartiality."

Potter's wife died in August of 1893 and a year later in 1894 he really did give up chess. On March 13, 1895, Potter died of pneumonia.

John Wisker was born May 30, 1846, in Hull. He was very intelligent. Spoke fluently in English, French, German and Italian. Where he got his education is unknown as he did not receive a formal elementary education and his father was a labourer, so they were not rich.

Wisker's first tournament occurred in 1866 in Redcar. He achieved 2nd place behind Cecil Valentine De Vere and ahead of Reverend John Owen, Edmund Thorold, and Reverend William Wayte. Reverend Arthur Skipworth also played, but only two games before quitting due to his obligations in running the tournament.

Approximately 1868, Wisker moved to London to work for the Central Press. Wisker also wrote chess articles for all the leading magazines and was highly regarded in this.

Wisker and Potter ran in the same circles, both attending Mr. Gastineau's parties and playing in many of the same tournaments.

Potter's first impression of Wisker was "a strong, healthy young man, full of brain power, and blessed with good sense above his years." Others said he was a very lively and witty companion.

Wisker's first major tournament was the Challenge Cup of 1868-9. He achieved only mediocre results, but held the tournament winner, De Vere, to a draw.

Wisker became co-editor of *Chess Player's Chronicle* in 1872.

Both players could be cantankerous at times. After an adjournment and during the hours of 10pm and midnight, the following was witnessed:

"The last game to remain undecided was that between Wisker and Smith. Wisker was as drunk as a boiled owl, and sat mooning at his board with glazed eyes and open mouth. During the day he had a won game. Then he could've drawn easily. Finally he lost it; and not withstanding his barefaced attempts in the Australasian to explain away the matter, those who can read between the lines know what paralyzed his brain."

The heavy drinking was something that Wisker was known to indulge in frequently, possibly adding to his chronic health problems.

In 1872, Wisker won the Challenge Cup a second time in succession, which provided him with quite a bit of notoriety.

Many of the tournaments were set up to play three games a week, usually Monday, Thursday, and Saturday. Draws usually didn't count. The winner of each mini-match had to win one or two games pending the specific rules for that tournament. It amazes me that the London Chess Club had regular meetings three days a week: Monday, Wednesday, and Friday. One would think a weekend day might have been more appropriate.

Back at the time there were quite the discussions on who owned the chess games that were played (i.e. copyright). At the time the players could and did sell their games to make extra money.

In 1875 Wisker had more serious health issues and money issues which prevented him from playing much. He decided to move to Australia. On October 21, 1876, together with his wife and daughter they departed for the three-month long journey. Part of his reasoning for the move lay in his tuberculosis and Australia being a drier climate. The other part was the money problems. Luckily, Mr. Joseph Clarke footed the bill for their long trip.

In Australia he mostly did simul and blindfold simul (6 players). In 1879, a new tournament was announced and Wisker played in his one and only Australian tournament. Wisker was leading but had to abandon the tournament when he abruptly moved to Ipswich for a new job opportunity.

Wisker moved to Melbourne in 1880 when his job at Ipswich didn't pan out well.

In January 1884, Wisker became very sick. Bronchitis set in and he passed away on January 18, 1884.

The book contains 433 games ranging from miniatures to long, complex endgames. The games are shown with contemporary analysis augmented by current day analysis. Game 37, the London game, a correspondence game between London and Vienna, was analyzed very nicely, taking up almost four pages for the 49 moves.

There were twelve games presented that involved both Wisker and Potter. Head-to-head, Potter got the best with a score of 4-2 and two draws. In consultation games when they were pitted against each other, two draws and finally, they played two consultation games on the same side, unfortunately losing both.

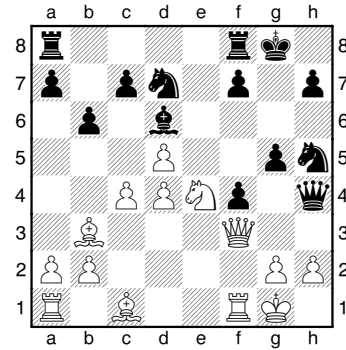
Here is one of those head-to-head games:

Potter, William Norwood - Wisker, John [C36]

London, 1868

Notes in {} are from game 188 other notes from game 1.

CHESSE IN LONDON. An instructive game between Messrs. WISKER and POTTER--ILN. 1.e4 e5 2.f4 In a few years, Potter would completely change his opening choices. 2...exf4 3.♖c4 d5 4.exd5 ♗d6 5.♗f3 ♖f6 6.0-0 7.d4 ♗g4 8.♗d3 ♖bd7 9.♗b3 ♖h5 10.c4 ♗xf3? There is no need to give up the bishop pair. The best line seems the tricky 10...c5! 11.dxc6 e.p. 11...♗c5! {With this exchange, Black liberates his opponent's pieces. 10. ... c5! Is indicated to deal with the advancing c-pawn.} 11.♗xf3 ♗h4 12.♗c3 If 12.c5?, Black had calculated upon the following variation: 12...♗xc5! 13.dxc5? [13.♗d1! g6 14.♗c3] 13...♗xc5+ 14.♖f2 (must) 14...♖ae8 15.♗d2 (If 15.♗f1, then 15...♗g3+!) 15...♖e3? [15...♗f6] 16.♗xe3 fxe3 (He has no better move.) 17.♖e2 ♖f4 18.♖xe3? [18.g3 ♖xe2+ 19.♗xe2] 18...♖e8 [18...♗e1+! and mate in 2] and wins --ILN. {If 12.c5, Black had calculated upon the following variation: 12.c5 ♖xc5 13.dxc5 ♗xc5+ 14.♖f2 (must) 14...♖ae8 15.♗d2 (If 15.♗f1, then 15...♗g3+!) 15...♖e3? 16.♗xe3 (He has no better move.) 16. ... fxe3 17.♖e2 ♖f4 18.♖xe3 ♖e8 and wins --ILN.} 12...b6 13.♗e4 g5? [(see diagram)] Better 13...♖ae8 ... 14.♗d1? ...for now White can play 14.♗d2!, threatening 15.♗e1. {Stopping the g-pawn isn't a priority. White is much better after 14.♗d2 and if 14. ...g4 15.♗e1!} 14...♗df6 15.♗xf6+ {After eliminating the Queen by 15.♗f2, White retains a small advantage.} 15. ... ♗xf6 16.♗f2? Activating the light-squared bishop with 16.♗a4 is



After 13. ... g5?

more effective. 16...♗h6 {Even better than 16. ... ♗xf2+ 17.♖xf2 ♖ae8. White's king gets nicely sieged.} 17.h4? Allowing Black to put through a tactical subtlety, which could be avoided by 17.♗f3. 17...♗e4 18.hxg5 ♗g7! White likely overlooked this defense. 19.♗f3 ♗xd4+ 20.♖h2 ♗g3 21.♖f2 ♗c5? Better something like 21...♖ae8 or 21. ... f6, since the ♗d6 must hold his position, as shown on the next move. 22.♗xf4 ♗xf2 Now after 22...♗e4 23.♖f1 Black cannot play 23...♗d2, for the ♗f4 is no longer pinned. 23.♗xf2 ♗xf2 24.♗xg3 ♗xg3+ 25.♗xg3 ♖ae8 26.♗f3 ♖e5 27.♗f4 ♖fe8 28.♖c1 ♖g7 29.b4 ♖g6 30.g4 ♖xg5 31.c5 f5 32.cxb6 fxg4 33.bxc7?? After 33.♗e4+ ♖xe4+ 34.♖xe4 cxb6 the endgame is balanced. 33...gxf3 34.♖xf3 Or 34.c8♖ ♖xc8 35.♖xc8 f2 and wins. 34...♖f5+ 35.♖g3 ♖c8 36.♖c5 ♖f6 37.b5 ♖f7 38.♖c4 ♖d6 39.♖h4 ♖xd5 40.♖xh7+ ♖g6 and Black wins--ILN. Source Illustrated London News September 19, 1868. 0-1

It felt like the authors reported on everything historically that could be found with Potter's or Wisker's name in it. Funny, in many cases they were so thorough they even provided the actual street address of the happening. As a result, some of the writing could be a bit dry. However, much of it was also quoted from various sources. Helpful footnotes throughout provided more info about a specific topic or a source to go read more on. One thing I wished was done differently was that some of the tournament's pairings were listed in paragraph format rather than a table. I'm sure this was to save room, but a table would have been my personal preference. The other thing I am not a fan of was that the book is only out in paperback. I understand this is a decision by the publisher, but a book of this size and cost (\$95 normally, on sale at [McFarland](#) for \$76 right now) should be available in hardback, which makes it easier to read and more durable for continued use. Another thing I always find fascinating is to see an opening being played by its originator. The book includes Henry Bird playing the Bird's Opening in several games. I thoroughly enjoyed the book. I learned much about Victorian chess and got to meet a couple of its masters that I had known very little about previously. This book is a must-read for enthusiasts of 19th-century chess history. The authors told a nice story, and the book is a great resource. I would give the book 4.0 stars out of 5.0.

I have come to the conclusion that buying books and reading them are actually two entirely different hobbies.—Danika Ellis

More Passing Clouds from *The Pawn*

by Dennis Wasson

The following is from 'The Pawn' (published from 1/1/1910 - 5/15/1911). The dates listed are the publication date, not when the event happened. Hopefully, there are folks that would want to do some research on these people/events from the chess past, this can be looked at as a starting point of where to start looking, as it has some of the details.

1/1/1910 - Nebraska and Staten Island are playing a match by correspondence.

1/1/1910 - While the exact date is not set, the Kansas Chess Association expect to hold their annual tourney some time in January.

1/1/1910 - The annual tournament for the championship of the Mercantile Library Chess association of Philadelphia, began Dec. 27.

1/1/1910 - The Greater New York Correspondence Chess League is a new organization. Players residing within 100 miles of NYC are eligible for membership.

1/1/1910 - Albert Halgarton, the American consul general at Hamburg, has contributed \$500 towards the funds of the international tournament to be held in Hamburg in July. [DW - a Google search of what \$500 in 1910 is worth today resulted in about \$17,000]

1/1/1910 - The Washington D.C. club's annual tournament will start Jan. 18. It promises to be more than interesting this year. Among the players is the 18-year-old Chinese youth, Rudolph Sze, who is attending school there and will enter college next year. He is rapidly coming to the front as a strong player, and is currently leading, by a wide margin, in the club's Rice Gambit tourney. This club has also been conducting a series of correspondence games with the strong Columbia Chess club of Philadelphia. One game is finished, resulting in the favor of Washington. Columbia had an unbroken record in correspondence play until they met Washington.

1/15/1910 - The Pittsburgh Leader's Rice Gambit tourney has started with 100 entrants. [DW - fixed typo of 'Pittsburg']

1/15/1910 - Louisiana has just organized a state chess association, with Judge L. L. Labatt as president, and H.M. McGuire, secretary.

1/15/1910 - In the Quadrangular College Chess League tourney Harvard and Yale tied for first place with a score of 7-5. Columbia was third with 6.5-5.5 and Princeton fourth with 3.5 - 8.5. Chandler of Yale, Byerly of Harvard and Beadle of Columbia made perfect scores of 3-0. The tie will probably be played off at New Haven sometime this month. [DW - I fixed what I thought was a typo - it stated 'with a scare of 7-5']

1/15/1910 - Pennsylvania won the eleventh annual chess tourney between two students, each from Brown, Cornell and the University of Pennsylvania. Score: Pennsylvania 6.5 - 1.5, Cornell 5.5 -

2.5, Brown 0-8. Pennsylvania takes the trophy donated by Prof. Isaac L. Rice.

1/15/1910 - Bro. Foster, in the St. Louis Globe-Democrat asks: "What has become of the Missouri State Chess Association, of which Dr. J. L. Ormsbee was secretary." We hope Dr. Ormsbee will again get into the harness. Missouri has too many good players to let its state association become a dead one.

1/15/1910 - The New York, Dyker Heights, Lyceum and Pillsbury Chess Clubs of NYC have organized the Interborough Chess League, and will begin a tournament this month, in the course of which each competing club will meet the other three times. The league is the successor of the Brooklyn Chess Association, of which the Dyker Heights Chess club won the championship a year ago.

1/15/1910 - The Washington D.C. Departmental Chess League expects to begin its schedule sometime this month. There will be four Class A teams and four Class B teams, each section playing two rounds. This is a change from former years in which all teams played together. The Interior A team has won the three years the league has been in existence.

I was going to stop with just the first month of stuff, but the next one from February was just too interesting:

2/1/1910 - A challenge from V. N. Sournin of Washington D.C., has been sent to George H. Wolbrect of St. Louis to play a match of seven games up for \$350 a side, either in St. Louis or the capital. The Western player has decided to accept, but his acceptance is conditioned on the match being played in St. Louis and for a less sum of money. [DW - Fixed the typo of 'less some of money'. \$700 in 1910 is worth around \$23,000 today -- pretty steep to 'pony up' that amount]

To conclude this article: I found it interesting to do further research on some players mentioned (mainly Iowans as that is where I am originally from):

Here is an example: Dr. B. F. Philbrook (1853-1941) of Dunlap, Iowa. He was a dentist who practiced in Denison Iowa. While the games he had published in 'The Pawn' had him 0-2, in his dental business he came up with methods/equipment for casting gold inlays. Later, a Chicago dentist came up with a similar methods/tools, and was charging royalties of other dentists to use his methods/equipment. Barnabas Frederick Phillbrook, I predict, stated something like 'hold the phone!'. At this time, the courts got involved, and U.S. Judge Kenesaw Mountain Landis (yes, the guy who later was Commissioner of baseball) held hearings, and B. F. Philbrook won. His equipment has a patent: number 533,738. He retired in the late 1930's, so, and this is just my hopeful wish, that he might have been Donna Reed's dentist. She lived her early life in the Denison, Iowa area from 1921 through about 1938 before 'going Hollywood'. For those too young to instantly know who Donna was, let me just say: It's a wonderful life.

Way Back

By Dennis Wasson

Originally self-published and distributed by Craig Campbell and Dennis Wasson Less than 30 copies in circulation. Reprinted with permission.

Way back in the day, when I needed to have a Category R tournament on my TD resume, we held the Council Bluffs Invitational. Back then it had to be an 8 player round robin with at least a mean rating of 1800 (I see in the latest rulebook they have reduced both the rating and number of players). Anyway - I blew the crap out of that 1800 rating requirement :-).

Here is a report of the event that Craig Campbell and I wrote back at the time.

The 1986 Council Bluffs Invitational Chess Tournament (A Round-Robin Event)

By
National Master Craig T. Campbell and
Tournament Director Dennis L. Wasson

INTRODUCTION

The 1986 Council Bluffs Invitational Chess Tournament was held on February 8, 9, 15 and 16, 1986 at Craig Campbell's home. To entice the higher rated players to participate, the organizers provided free food, pop, coffee, and chips. The players could also stay at Craig's to cut down on their expenses. Dennis Wasson also added almost \$200 to the prize fund.

The prize fund was structured as follows:

1st - \$200, 2nd - \$100, 3rd - \$50

There was 'point money' for those not finishing in the top three places, each of these players received \$5 for each win and \$2 for each draw they had in the tournament.

The Time Control was 40 moves in two hours. The second Time Control was 30 moves in one hour.

THE TOURNAMENT PARTICIPANTS

Sponsoring USCF Affiliate: Council Bluffs Chess Club
Tournament Organizers: Craig Campbell and Dennis Wasson
Tournament Director: Chief – Dennis Wasson,
Assistant – John Mac Arthur

Tournament Players:

Last Published		
Name	Rating	From
1. Craig Campbell	2259	Council Bluffs, IA
2. Robert Grande	2136	Bellevue, NE
3. Mansour Eshragh	2135	Omaha, NE
4. Matt Mahowald	2132	Lincoln, NE
5. Gary Colvin	2100	Lincoln, NE
6. Mike Blankenau	2062	Omaha, NE
7. Neil Reeves	2026	Omaha, NE
8. Mike Crooks	1940	Lincoln, NE

ROUND 1

Craig T.Campbell (2259) - Crooks,Mike (1940) [A03]

(1), 08.02.1986
1.g3 d5 2.f4 ♖f6 3.♗f3 ♙g4 4.♗e5 ♖bd7 5.♗xg4 ♗xg4 6.e3 f5 7.b3 e6 8.♙b2 ♗g6 9.♙g2 ♙e7 10.♗e2 c6 11.0-0 0-0 12.d3 ♗e8 13.♗d2 ♙c5 14.♗h1 ♗h5 15.♗xh5 ♗xh5 16.♙ae1 ♗hf6 17.e4 dxe4 18.dxe4 ♗g4 19.♙e2 ♗e3 20.♙c1 ♗xg2 21.♗xg2 ♗f6 22.♙xf6 ♙xf6 23.♗f3 h6 24.♙d1 ♙b6 25.exf5 exf5 26.♙e7 ♙f7 27.♙xf7 ♗xf7 28.♙d7+ ♗g8 29.♙xb7 ♙d8 30.♙e7 ♙d1 31.♙e6 c5 32.♙e1 ♙xe1 33.♗xe1 ♗f7 34.c4 g5 35.♗f3 g4+ 36.♗e3 ♗e6 37.♗d3 ♙d8 38.a3 a5 39.♗c2 ♙b6 40.♗e3 h5 41.♗d5 ♙d8 42.♗c3 h4 43.b4 cxb4+ 44.axb4 axb4+ 45.♗xb4 ♗d6 46.♗b5 h3 47.♗e3 ♗e6 48.c5 ♙c7 49.c6 ♙xf4 50.gxf4 g3 51.♗xf5 ♗xf5 52.c7
1-0

Grande,Robert (2136) - Reeves,Neil (2013) [A48]

(1), 08.02.1986
1.d4 ♗f6 2.♗f3 g6 3.b3 ♙g7 4.♙b2 d5 5.♖bd2 ♗e4 6.e3 c5 7.♙d3 ♗a5 8.0-0 ♙f5 9.♙xe4 dxe4 10.♗g5 cxd4 11.♗gxe4 ♗c6 12.♗c4 ♗c7 13.♗g3 ♙d8 14.♗xf5 gxf5 15.♗f3 e6 16.♙ad1 b5 17.♗a3 a6 18.♙fe1 h5 19.e4 f4 20.♗b1 b4 21.♗d2 ♗e5 22.♗xf4 ♗xc2 23.♗g5 ♙g8 24.♙a1 ♗d3 25.♙f1 ♗xa2 26.♗xh5 ♙e5 27.♗c4 ♙h8 28.♗f3 ♙xh2+ 29.♗h1 ♙b8+ 30.♗g1 ♙h2+ 31.♗h1 ♙c7+ 32.♗g1 ♙h2+ 33.♗h1
½-½

Eshragh,Mansour (2135) - Blankenau,Mike (2062) [B00]

(1), 08.02.1986
1.e4 b6 2.d4 e6 3.c3 ♙b7 4.♙d3 c5 5.♗e2 ♗f6 6.f3 d5 7.e5 ♗fd7 8.0-0 ♗c6 9.a3 ♗c7 10.f4 0-0 11.♗d2 ♙e7 12.♗f3 f6 13.f5 fxe5 14.fxe6 ♗f8 15.♗g5 ♙xg5 16.♙xg5 ♙e8 17.♙f7 ♗d6 18.dxe5 ♗xe5 19.♙f5 ♗xe6 20.♙xg7 ♙hg8 21.♗a4 ♗f8 22.♙xg8 ♗xg8 23.♙f4 ♙f8 24.♙h3 ♗g6 25.♙g3 ♗d8 26.♙d1 ♗g5 27.♗g4 h6 28.♗f4 ♗h7 29.♗e6+
1-0

Mahowald,Matt (2132) - Colvin,Gary (2109) [E86]

(1), 08.02.1986
1.d4 g6 2.c4 ♙g7 3.♗c3 d6 4.e4 ♗f6 5.f3 0-0 6.♙e3 e5 7.♗ge2 ♖bd7 8.♗d2 c6 9.g4 h5 10.gxh5 ♗xh5 11.♗g3 exd4 12.♙xd4 ♗e5 13.♙e2 ♗h4 14.0-0-0 ♗f4 15.♙e3 ♗xe2+ 16.♗xe2 ♙e6 17.♙xd6 ♗xc4 18.♙xe6 ♗xe3 19.♙d6 ♗f4 20.♙d2 ♙h6 21.♗b1 ♙ad8 22.♙xd8 ♙xd8 23.♙g1 ♗e5 24.h4 ♗d4 25.h5 ♗d5 26.exd5 ♗xg1+ 27.♗f1 ♗g5 28.a3 cxd5 29.hxg6 ♗xg6+ 30.♗a1 ♗g5 31.♗h2 ♗c1+ 32.♗a2 ♙g7 33.♗g4 ♙xc3 34.bxc3 ♗xc3 35.♗e7 ♗d2+ 36.♗a1 ♙c8
0-1

ROUND 2

Craig T.Campbell (2259) - Grande,Robert (2136) [C28]

(2), 08.02.1986
1.e4 ♗c6 2.♗c3 e5 3.♙c4 ♗f6 4.d3 ♙e7 5.f4 d6 6.f5 ♗a5 7.♗f3 ♗xc4 8.dxc4 c6 9.0-0 ♗c7 10.♗d3 ♙d7 11.a3 a6 12.♗h1 b5 13.b3 ♙c8 14.♙e3 ♙b7 15.♙ad1 ♙d8 16.♙g5 ♗g8 17.♙xe7 ♗xe7 18.c5 dxc5 19.♗xd8+ ♗xd8 20.♙xd8+ ♗xd8 21.♗xe5 ♗e7 22.♗d3 c4 23.♗c5 ♙c8 24.b4 ♗f6 25.h3 ♙d8 26.♙f2 ♙d4 27.♙e2 ♗d7 28.♗xd7 ♙xd7 29.g4 f6 30.e5 fxe5 31.♙xe5+ ♗f6 32.♙e2 h5 33.♗e4+ ♗f7 34.♗g2 hxg4 35.hxg4 g6 36.♗g5+ ♗f6 37.♗e4+ ♗f7 38.fxg6+ ♗xg6 39.♗f3 ♙d1 40.♙d2 ♙f1+ 41.♗e2 ♙f7 42.♙d6+ ♗g7 43.♗f2 ♗f8 44.♗e3 ♗e7 45.♙g6 ♙e6 46.♗h3 ♙d5 47.♗f4 ♙h7 48.♗xd5+ cxd5 49.♗d4 ♙h2 50.♗xd5 ♙xc2 51.♙xa6 ♙g2 52.♗c5 ♙xg4 53.♗xb5 ♗d7 54.♙h6 c3 55.♙h3 c2 56.♙c3 ♙g3 57.♙xc2 ♙xa3 58.♗b6 ♙b3 59.b5 ♙b1 60.♙c5 ♙b2 61.♗b7 ♗d6 62.♙h5 ♙b1 63.b6 ♙g1 64.♙h6+ ♗d7 65.♙h2 ♙d1 66.♙b2 ♙d3 67.♙a2 ♙b3 68.♙d2+ ♗e7 69.♙d4 ♗e6 70.♗c7 ♙c3+ 71.♗b8 ♙a3 72.b7 ♙a1 73.♗c7 ♙c1+ 74.♗b6 ♙b1+ 75.♗c6 ♙b2 76.♙e4+ ♗f7 77.♙c4 ♗e6 78.♗c7
1-0

Reeves,Neil (2013) - Eshragh,Mansour (2135) [E18]

(2), 08.02.1986

1.c4 ♖f6 2.♗f3 e6 3.g3 b6 4.♗g2 ♖b7 5.0-0 ♖e7 6.♖c3 0-0 7.d4 d5 8.cxd5 exd5 9.♗f4 ♗h5 10.♗d2 ♗d7 11.♖c1 ♖e8 12.♗e5 ♗hf6 13.♗b3 c5 14.♗xd5 ♗xd5 15.♗xf7 ♗xf7 16.♗xd5+ ♗xd5 17.♗xd5+ ♗f8 18.♗f4 ♗f6 19.♗xd8 ♖xd8 20.dxc5 ♗xc5 21.♖fe1 ♖b4 22.♖ed1 ♖xd1+ 23.♖xd1 ♖xe2 24.a3 ♖c5 25.♗d6+ ♗xd6 26.♖xd6 ♖xb2 27.♖d8+ ♗e7 28.♖a8 a5 29.♗f1 ♖a2 30.h4 ♖xa3 31.♗e2 b5 32.♗d2 a4 33.♖b8 ♖b3 34.♗c2 ♗d7 35.♖c8 ♖f3 36.♖a8 ♖xf2+ 37.♗c3 ♖f3+ 38.♗b2 ♖xg3 39.♖a5 ♖b3+ 40.♗a2 ♗d6 41.h5 ♗c5 42.♖a7 ♖d3 43.♖c7+ ♗b4 44.♖c2 ♗c5 45.h6 g×h6 46.♖h2 ♖d6 47.♗b2 ♖f6 48.♖d2 ♖f2

0-1

Crooks,Mike (1940) - Colvin,Gary (2109) [E60]

(2), 08.02.1986

1.d4 g6 2.♗f3 ♗g7 3.g3 d6 4.♗g2 ♗f6 5.0-0 0-0 6.c4 c6 7.♗bd2 ♗bd7 8.♗c2 e5 9.dxe5 dxe5 10.♖d1 ♗e7 11.e4 a5 12.b3 ♗c5 13.a4 ♗g4 14.♗a3 ♗fd7 15.h3 ♗xf3 16.♗xf3 ♖ad8 17.♗e1 f5 18.♗d3 f4 19.♗xc5 ♗xc5 20.♖xd8 ♖xd8 21.♖d1 ♗f8 22.gxf4 exf4 23.f3 ♖xd1+ 24.♗xd1 ♗e5 25.♗h2 ♗d6 26.♗c2 ♗xe4 27.♖b2 ♗e7 28.♖a1 ♗f6 29.♗c3 ♗f7 30.♗xa5 ♖b4 31.♗g5 h5 32.♗e5 ♗xe5 33.♖xe5 ♗d2 34.h4 ♗d7 35.♗d6 ♗e6 36.c5 ♗d5 37.♖h3 ♗xc5 38.♗xc5 ♗xc5 39.♖e6 ♗b4 40.♗f7 c5

1/2-1/2

Blankenau,Mike (2062) - Mahowald,Matt (2132) [B40]

(2), 08.02.1986

1.e4 c5 2.♗f3 e6 3.d4 cxd4 4.♗xd4 ♗f6 5.♗c3 ♖b4 6.e5 ♗e4 7.♗d2 ♗xc3 8.bxc3 ♗xd2 9.♗xd2 d5 10.♗d3 ♗c6 11.f4 ♗b6 12.♗e2 a6 13.a4 ♗d7 14.♗e3 ♖c8 15.♖hb1 ♗c7 16.♗g3 g6 17.♗h4 ♗a5 18.♖a3 ♗c5 19.♗f6 ♖g8 20.♗b3 ♗xa3 21.♗xa5 ♗e7 22.♗xb7 ♗xf6 23.♗d6+ ♗d8 24.exf6 ♖xc3 25.♗xf7+ ♗c7 26.♗e5 ♖xa4 27.♖a1 ♗xc2 28.♗d2 ♖xd3+ 29.♗xc2 ♖e3 30.♖xa6 ♖e2+ 31.♗d3 ♖xg2 32.♖a7+ ♗d6 33.♖xh7 ♖a8 34.♖d7+ ♗c5 35.♖c7+ ♗b6 36.♖c6+ ♗b5 37.f7 ♖xh2 38.♖xe6 ♖a3+ 39.♗d4 ♖d2+ 40.♗d3 ♖dxd3+ 41.♗e5 ♖a8 42.♗f6 ♖f3 43.♖e8 ♖xf4+ 44.♗xg6 ♖xf7 45.♖xa8 ♖f2 46.♗g5 ♗c4 47.♗g4 d4 48.♗g3 ♖f7 49.♖c8+ ♗d3 50.♖d8 ♗e3 51.♖e8+ ♗d2 52.♖a8 d3 53.♖d8 ♗e2 54.♖e8+ ♗d1 55.♖a8 d2 56.♖c8 ♖f5 57.♗g4 ♖f2 58.♗g3 ♖e2 59.♗f3 ♖e1 60.♖h8 d1♗

0-1

ROUND 3**Eshragh,Mansour (2135) - Campbell,Craig T (2259) [C95]**

(3), 09.02.1986

1.e4 e5 2.♗f3 ♗c6 3.♖b5 a6 4.♖a4 ♗f6 5.0-0 ♖e7 6.♖e1 b5 7.♖b3 0-0 8.c3 d6 9.h3 ♗b8 10.d4 ♗bd7 11.♗bd2 ♖b7 12.♖c2 ♖e8 13.♗f1 ♖f8 14.♗g3 g6 15.♖g5 h6 16.♗d2 c5 17.d5 ♖g7 18.♗c1 ♗h7 19.h4 ♗b6 20.b3 ♖c8 21.h5 a5 22.hxg6+ fxg6 23.♗h2 ♗g4 24.♗xg4 ♖xg4 25.f3 ♖d7 26.♗f2 ♖h8 27.♖h1 ♗f8 28.♖e3 ♗g8 29.♖d3 b4 30.cxb4 axb4 31.a3 bxa3 32.♖xa3 ♖xa3 33.♗xa3 ♖a8 34.♗xa8+ ♗xa8 35.♖a1 ♗c7

1/2-1/2

Colvin,Gary (2109) - Blankenau,Mike (2062) [A22]

(3), 09.02.1986

1.c4 e5 2.g3 ♗f6 3.♗g2 d6 4.♗c3 ♖e7 5.d3 0-0 6.♗f3 c6 7.0-0 ♗a6 8.♖b1 ♗c7 9.b4 ♗d7 10.b5 ♗e6 11.♖a3 ♗d4 12.♗xd4 exd4 13.bxc6 bxc6 14.♗e4 ♗xe4 15.♖xe4 f5 16.♗g2 ♖b8 17.♖xb8 ♗xb8 18.♗a4 ♗b6 19.c5 dxc5 20.♗c4+ ♗h8 21.♖c1 ♖b8 22.♖xc5 ♖xc5 23.♗xc5 ♗xc5 24.♖xc5 ♖b1+ 25.♖f1 f4 26.♗g2 fxg3 27.hxg3 ♖d6 28.♖a5 ♗d5+ 29.f3 ♖b7 30.♗f2 ♖f7 31.♖h3 g5 32.♖g4 ♗g7 33.♖h5 ♖e7 34.a3 ♗h6 35.g4 ♗g7 36.♖a4 c5 37.♖a5 ♖c7 38.♖e8 ♗f6 39.♖b5 ♗e5 40.♖a6 ♖f7 41.♖e8 ♖e7

1/2-1/2

Mahowald,Matt (2132) - Reeves,Neil (2013) [B01]

(3), 09.02.1986

1.e4 d5 2.exd5 ♗f6 3.d4 ♗xd5 4.♗f3 ♖g4 5.♖e2 e6 6.h3 ♖h5 7.0-0 ♗d7 8.c4 ♗f6 9.b3 ♖b4 10.♖b2 ♖e7 11.♗c3 ♗f6 12.♗c2 0-0 13.♖ad1 c6 14.♗e5 ♖xe2 15.♗xe2 ♗fd7 16.f4 ♗c7 17.f5 exf5 18.♖xf5 ♗xe5 19.dxe5 ♖c5+ 20.♗h1 ♗d7 21.♗e4 ♖ad8 22.♖df1 ♖e7 23.♗g4 ♗c5 24.♗f4 ♗e6 25.♗xe6 fxe6 26.♖xf8+ ♖xf8 27.♗xe6+ ♗h8 28.♖xf8+ ♖xf8 29.♗e8 ♗e7 30.♗xe7 ♖xe7 31.g4 ♗g8 32.♗g2 g6

33.♗f3 ♗f7 34.♗e4 ♗e6 35.♗d4 a6 36.♖b6 ♖h4 37.♖c5 ♖e1 38.♖d6 ♖h4 39.a4 ♖f2 40.b4 b5 41.cxb5 cxb5 42.a5 ♖e1 43.♗e3 ♖c3 44.g5 ♗d5 45.♗f4 ♖d4 46.h4 ♖c3 47.♗f3 ♗e6 48.♗f4 ♖d2+ 49.♗g4 ♖e3 50.♖b8 ♖f2 51.♖c7 ♖g1 52.h5 ♖h2 53.hxg6 hxg6 54.♗f3 ♖g1 55.♗e4 ♖f2 56.♖d6 ♖e1 57.♗f4 ♖c3 58.♗e4

1/2-1/2

Grande,Robert (2136) - Crooks,Mike (1940) [E19]

(3), 09.02.1986

1.c4 ♗f6 2.♗f3 e6 3.♗c3 b6 4.g3 ♖b7 5.♗g2 ♖e7 6.0-0 0-0 7.d4 ♗e4 8.♗c2 f5 9.♗e5 d6 10.♗xe4 ♖xe4 11.♖xe4 fxe4 12.♗xe4 d5 13.♗d3 c5 14.♖e3 ♖d6 15.♗f3 h6 16.dxc5 ♖xc5 17.♖xc5 bxc5 18.cxd5 exd5 19.♖ad1

1-0

ROUND 4**Campbell,Craig T (2259) - Mahowald,Matt (2132) [D30]**

(4), 09.02.1986

1.d4 d5 2.c4 e6 3.g3 dxc4 4.♗g2 c6 5.♗f3 b5 6.♗e5 ♖b7 7.0-0 ♗f6 8.a4 a6 9.b3 cxb3 10.♗xb3 ♗c7 11.♖f4 ♖d6 12.♖c1 ♗d5 13.axb5 axb5 14.♖xa8 ♖xa8 15.♗c3 ♗xf4 16.gxf4 0-0 17.♗xb5 ♗e7 18.♗xd6 ♗xd6 19.e3 ♗d7 20.♗xc6 ♗f6 21.♗b4 ♗d7 22.♗e7+

1-0

Grande,Robert (2136) - Eshragh,Mansour (2135) [B20]

(4), 09.02.1986

1.e4 c5 2.♗e2 d6 3.g3 g6 4.♗g2 ♗g7 5.d3 ♗c6 6.c3 h5 7.♗d2 h4 8.gxh4 ♖xh4 9.♗f3 ♖h8 10.♖e3 ♖d7 11.♗c2 ♖a5 12.♗d2 ♖a6 13.♗f4 ♗f6 14.♖f1 ♖a5 15.♗b3 ♗c7 16.♖e2 e5 17.♗d5 ♗xd5 18.exd5 ♗e7 19.♗f1 ♗xd5 20.0-0-0 ♗b6 21.♗c2 0-0-0 22.♗g3 f5 23.♖g5 ♖de8 24.h4 ♖c6 25.f3 ♗d5 26.♖dg1 ♗f7 27.♗b3 ♗d7 28.h5 ♖h6 29.♖xh6 ♖xh6 30.hxg6 ♖xg6 31.♗f1 ♗g7 32.♖xg6 ♗xg6 33.♗c4 ♗f4 34.♖d1 b5 35.♗b3 ♗xd3+ 36.♗b1 c4 37.♖a3 ♗b7 38.♗e3 ♖d8 39.♖a5 ♖d7 40.a4 ♗g5 41.axb5 ♗xe3 42.♖a6+ ♗c7 43.♗xc6+ ♗d8 44.♖a8+ ♗c7

1/2-1/2

Reeves,Neil (2013) - Colvin,Gary (2109) [E93]

(4), 09.02.1986

1.c4 g6 2.♗f3 ♖g7 3.♗c3 d6 4.d4 ♗f6 5.e4 0-0 6.♖e2 e5 7.d5 ♗bd7 8.♖g5 h6 9.♖h4 a5 10.a3 ♗c5 11.b4 axb4 12.axb4 ♖xa1 13.♗xa1 ♗a6 14.♗b1 g5 15.♖g3 ♗h5 16.♗d2 ♗f4 17.f3 ♖xg2+ 18.♗f2 ♗f4 19.h4 ♗h3+ 20.♗e3 g×h4 21.♖xh3 ♖xh3 22.♖f2 c5 23.dxc6 bxc6 24.c5 ♗g5+ 25.♗d3 dxc5 26.bxc5 ♖d8+

0-1

Crooks,Mike (1940) - Blankenau,Mike (2062) [B00]

(4), 09.02.1986

1.e4 b6 2.d4 e6 3.a3 ♖b7 4.♗c3 d6 5.♗f3 ♗f6 6.♖d3 ♗bd7 7.♗e2 ♖e7 8.0-0 0-0 9.♖e1 c5 10.e5 ♗d5 11.♗e4 cxd4 12.exd6 ♖f6 13.♖eg5 g6 14.h4 ♗c5 15.h5 ♗xd3 16.♗xd3 ♗xd6 17.♗e4 ♗c6 18.♗xf6+ ♗xf6 19.♗xd4 e5 20.♖xe5 ♖fd8 21.♗h4 ♖d1+ 22.♗h2 ♗xh5 23.♗g4 ♗d6 24.♖f4 ♗xf4 25.♖xd1 ♗xd1 26.♗xf4 ♖xf3 27.gxf3 ♗xc2 28.♗d4 ♗c7 29.♗g2 ♖d8 30.♗f4 ♗g7 31.♗e3 ♖d7 32.b4 ♗d6 33.♗c3 ♗d4 34.♗xd4 ♖xd4 35.♖e7 a5 36.b5 ♖d5 37.a4 ♗f6 38.♖b7 ♖d6 39.♗g3 h6 40.f4 ♗e6 41.♗g4 ♗f6 42.f3 h5+ 43.♗g3 ♗g7 44.♗h4 ♖d4 45.♗g3 ♖xa4 46.♖xb6 ♖b4 47.♖b8 a4 48.b6 a3 49.♖a8 ♖xb6 50.♖xa3 ♖b1 51.♖a6 ♖g1+ 52.♗f2 ♖d1 53.♗g3 ♖e1 54.♖b6 ♖e6 55.♖b7 ♗f6 56.♖a7 ♖d6 57.♖b7 ♖d5 58.♖b6+ ♗f5 59.♖b7 f6 60.♖b4 g5 61.fxg5 fxg5 62.♖b8 h4+ 63.♗h3 ♗f4 64.♖b3 ♖d2 65.♖b8 ♗xf3 66.♖f8+ ♗e4 67.♖e8+ ♗f5 68.♖f8+ ♗g6 69.♖g8+ ♗f6 70.♖f8+ ♗g7 71.♖a8 ♖d3+ 72.♗g4 ♖g3+ 73.♗f5 h3 74.♖a7+ ♗h6 75.♖a8 ♗g7 76.♖a7+ ♗f8 77.♗f6 ♗e8 78.♖h7 g4 79.♗f5 ♖g2 80.♗e6 ♗d8 81.♗d6 ♖d2+ 82.♗e5 ♖f2 83.♖h8+ ♗d7 84.♖h7+ ♗c6 85.♖h6+ ♗c5 86.♗e4 h2 87.♗e3 ♖f3+ 88.♗e2 ♖h3

0-1

ROUND 5**Colvin,Gary (2109) - Campbell,Craig T (2259) [A21]**

(5), 15.02.1986

1.c4 e5 2.g3 g6 3.♖g2 ♖g7 4.♗c3 ♗e7 5.e4 0-0 6.♖ge2 d6 7.0-0 ♖e6 8.d3 c6 9.h3 ♗d7 10.♗h2 d5 11.cxd5 cxd5 12.d4 ♖d8 13.exd5

42

THE TOURNAMENT CROSSTABLE

Name	Pre Rtg	Post Rtg	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	TOT
C. Campbell	2273	2292	X	D	D	W	W	W	W	W	6.0
M. Eshragh	2127	2158	D	X	D	D	W	D	W	W	5.0
G. Colvin	2130	2140	D	D	X	D	D	W	D	W	5.0
R. Grande	2114	2124	L	D	D	X	L	W	W	D	4.0
M. Blankenau	2099	2101	L	L	D	W	X	L	W	W	3.5
M. Mahowald	2136	2100	L	D	L	L	W	X	D	D	3.0
M. Crooks	2020	2016	L	L	D	L	L	D	X	W	2.0
N. Reeves	2016	1967	L	L	L	D	L	D	L	X	1.0

Continued from page 13

I prefer the eastern NC style vinegar sauces without any ketchup, and I'll totally use a South Carolina mustard sauce if I smoke chicken. It's surprising there isn't better 'cue in Nebraska since it's cattle country, but, even if there was, that wouldn't be Carolina pulled pork.

Actually, I learned how to make khachapuri from Dr. Alexey Root, WIM's "Grandmaster Chef" article from 2020 where she talks about GM Alexander Grischuk's love of the cheesy, eggy Georgian delicacy. I hadn't heard of it before, but realized I had seen it and thought it looked delicious, and I was living in Chicago at the time, so it was easy to find some eastern European markets that had the perfect cheeses for it. I've even found a place in Lincoln that has a perfectly sharp cheese. I've been craving it ever since the Women's World Cup earlier this year (held in Georgia).



Khachapuri. Photo by Kingarthurbaking.com

The bio also says you enjoy college basketball. Being we are both from the Midwest, Iowa for me and Nebraska for you, did you catch the wave with Caitlin Clark as she broke tons of NCAA records while playing at the University of Iowa?

Yes! My college basketball affiliation will always be with my Tar Heels, and it's a shame that the result of the academic cheating scandal was essentially dismantling the women's basketball team.

It's actually soured my relationship with college basketball more generally. But being able to watch Clark has been awesome, and overall I've been getting more into following the WNBA since Clark, Reese, and a number of other players are so easy to root for. Now that I've been in Lincoln for five years (in a week), I'm finally starting to drink the Kool Aid and learn how to watch women's volleyball, which is a lot of fun.

Nebraska seems to have had a recent flourish of chess activity. What would you attribute it to?

Me and John Hartmann's cuddly personalities? FM Nate Solon moved to Omaha shortly after I moved to Lincoln, and even though neither of us have been super-regular participants in local events, I think the presence of a strong player like Nate has helped. There have been a number of kids who are taking chess really seriously and have the family support to get them the training they need and travel to regional events to get experience competing against stronger players, and that's really led to a boom, as well. I can't take credit for any of that, but I think a lot of them regularly attend Hartman's weekly club, so he can take credit.

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

"Whenever you have to make a rook move and both rooks are available for said move, you should evaluate which rook to move and, once you have made up your mind...move the other one!" – GM Oscar Panno

What will your chess legacy be?

At this rate, I wonder if I'm on track for, "Oldest chess player to become a National Master." I'm never more proud than when somebody tells me that the way I wrote or taught something made them see the game differently, so that is a legacy I'm already proud of.

Thank you for agreeing to this interview. Any final parting words for our audience?

Thanks for reading! Feel free to reach out to me at jjlang@uschess.org as well.

THE SNARKY DICTIONARY OF CHESS

By Bob Basalla

Taking a cue from Ambrose Bierce's *Devil's Dictionary* with its many pithy, clever, sarcastic and irreverent entries liberally salted with pellets of truth (Example: "Peace: A period of cheating between two wars."), presented here are samplings of a prospective chess version in the same vein: *The Snarky Dictionary of Chess* which may or may not amuse or infuriate. You be the judge.

**

Adjournment

An integrity maintaining method of suspending a two-player game to be continued at a later time after the position has been thoroughly dissected by other players, endgame book consultation and/or chess engine scrutiny. (See also Correspondence Chess.)

Ajeeb

A chess term which inevitably elicits the reflexive response, "Gesundheit."

Analysis

The process of breaking one's butt to competently understand a particular opening, middlegame or endgame position, appropriately consolidating the two root words: "anal" and "lysis."

Arabian Mate

One of a harem.

Bare King

An embarrassing situation where a monarch is exposed to naked aggression.

Bishop

The piece most readily sharpened into a shiv.

Black

The side first privileged with information on what the other side (White) intends to do, undoubtedly an advantage.

Blackburne

A supposed player who burned those with the black pieces or burned the opponent when handling the black pieces. *The first proof that many supposed famous names from chess history are really concocted fakes. More will follow...*

Blitz

Chess contested at the spinal cord level.

Blunder

A brilliancy appreciated by a cult of one.

Brain

Organ intelligently designed for the cognition of chess. How this is advantageous to the organism as a whole and its continued propagation is still a mystery to evolutionary biologists who sweep the whole controversy under the rug by refusing to address it at all.

Brilliancy

A blunder later discovered to be sound.

Bye

Only opponent with which all players truthfully claim a plus score, though some just barely.

Caissa

Yet another goddess to which no one prays.

Capablanca

Translated, the name of this alleged chess great in English means White Head (actually Head White), in other words, the head of the white chessmen, an obvious fake.

Caro Kann

Yeah, but you can't.

Castling

Unlikely procedure codified in the rules where, violating common sense, a building passes over, under, around or even through the king, a one square at a time only piece here inexplicably moving two.

Center

The squares a1, h1, a8 and h8 to those of the hypermodern school according to Eliot Hearst (*Chess Life*, July, 1962).

Cheapo

A slang term coined by Dr. Karl Burger, a specialist in the technique, whose modus operandi is to threaten something so obvious only an idiot would fall for it, and usually does. (Also from Eliot Hearst's *Chess Life*, July, 1962 article.)

Check

In general praxis a move most often played with the hope that it will actually turn out to be a mate.

Checkmate

An elitist rule designed to preserve the dignity of two cross-bearing pieces of wood or whatever by disallowing their capture.

Chess

A popular variant of Bughouse employing only a single board and usually just two players.

Chess Clock

Paired relativistic time pieces that temporally dilate for the opponent while simultaneously constricting for the observer.

Chess Club

Ego-system of piscine denizens looking to improve their game's fitness through judicious natural selection of good moves.

Chess Problems

Artificial positions you cannot solve, as if you weren't having enough trouble solving the non-artificial chess positions you faced.

Chessboard Circumscribed universe where all meaningful action occurs according to self-imprisoned unfortunates. Chessmen The original “tools of ignorance.” The term later became better known in another context as a quote by Herold “Muddy” Ruel (career from 1915-1934) describing the equipment required for his career as a baseball catcher (oversized mitt, face mask, chest protector, shin guards, etc.). Combination An agglomeration of tactical elements determined to be connected post hoc. Correspondence Chess Long distance competition based on the honor system where two chess programs battle it out with minimal assistance from other chess programs or their human possessors. Damiano's Defense A discredited opening, which should have been obvious considering its name stems from a misspelling of a pizza box. Development An often-random occurrence in a chess game akin to fate or karma. Chess, like s***, happens. The true acolyte fancies they can control the game's evolution, especially in the opening stages. Discovered Check The dawning realization that one or both kings have been under attack for one or more moves. Doubled Pawns Visual multiplicity due to inebriation. (See Scotch Gambit) Draw Controversial conclusion to a chess game caused mainly by the schism between adamant factions, some in support, some not, in other words, the eternal rift between the halves and the halve nots. Echecs A chess term which inevitably elicits the reflexive response, “Gesundheit.” En Passant An arbitrary and confusing rule, rendered in French to lend it a certain cachet, designed to make chess seem more abstruse and difficult to the already perplexed student. En Prise An efficacious method of relieving oneself of extraneous material (a <i>Chess Life</i> reader's response to a call for additional definitions beyond those given in Eliot Hearst's July, 1962 article.) English Spin put on a piece slid into place. Euwe Results of an exercise to construct the shortest possible unpronounceable name. Family Fork Communal utensil in a chess-minded household.	Felt Pool table remnants pointlessly affixed to the base of chessmen. Fianchetto Pinnocchio's “uncle.” File Tool employed to rasp down bad bishops, so they won't stand out as tall pawns. Fischer The particular spelling of this common surname has a certain likelihood of indicating the possessor is Jewish, thus making it the perfect sobriquet behind which to hide an anti-semite. Fool's Mate Spouse of an inveterate chess player. French Defense An opening system whose trademark pawn skeleton replicates the famed Maginot Line which, as we all know, worked so well in the second World War. Gambit According to Samuel Boden, giving up a pawn for the sake of being seen as a swashbuckling player, while getting a lost game. Game Term misused by the lay public to mean “match.” Grandmaster (See Master) Harrwitz Bishops Proprietary configuration of clerics that is best avoided so as to not incur the steep licensing fee. Helpmate See King's Gambit Hypermodern A young chess adherent with ADHD issues. In-Between Move Taking an extra turn while your opponent avails themselves of the restroom. Indian Defenses Originally named in “honor” of the supposedly ambushing nature of these openings. Somehow the nomenclaturists missed the Pawnee. J'Adoubé An utterance most often heard just after the wrong piece is touched, and realized as such. Kibitzer In chess, a meddler, a loathsome giver of unsolicited advice on how others should run their games. In other words, a politician. King Privileged piece so cowardly that it runs away or must be shielded from danger, so germ averse that it always keeps social distance of at least one square from its riff-raff counterpart, all the while hypocritically insisting that everyone else, whatever their individual interests, must be sacrificed if need be to the “greater
---	---

good,” defined as his well-being. In other words, a politician.

King’s Gambit

Synonym of Helpmate.

Knight

A piece known for its deceptive movement as well as its deceptive name glorifying the unseen rider rather than his mount.

Legal’s Mate

Any continuation that has to actively profess it is comporting with the rules has a lot to hide, as when someone begins an assertion, “Let me be honest with you...”

Life

Intervals of varying length between two chess games.

Living Chess

A contradiction in terms, a Maroczymoron if you will (see Life above).

Losing the Exchange

Getting the worst of a trade, as a pack of gum for the latest opening treatise or a confiscatory entry fee to an expensive Open.

Master

Designation marking the moment where chess gains full control of its victim. In extreme cases of subordination, the term is inflated to Grandmaster.

Match

Term misused by the lay public to mean “game.”

Morphy

“Morph,” loosely meaning “change into,” makes an unlikely name for a chess player constantly altering the positions of pieces, a name sort of like Dick Tracy (“Dick” a policemen, combined with “Tracy” one who traces, i.e. a detective). A bogus moniker, clearly.

Move

Onerous obligation to change a chess position against one’s will, whether or not the position actually needed changing, all in service of the paramount goal of starting the opponent’s clock.

Najdorf

A phony chess historical name apparently designed to gain maximum points as a Scrabble “bingo.”

Noah’s Ark Trap

Mount Ararat, traditionally.

Opening Trap

Unnecessarily speaking at the board.

Overprotection

A positional theme first emphasized by Aron Nimzovich later discovered to be merely a symbolization of Nimzo’s relationship with his mother. (Based on Eliot Hearst’s item in his July, 1962, *Chess Life* article).

Passed Pawn

A chess foot soldier that successfully traversed the alimentary system.

Patzer

A relative term derisively applied to weak chess players such as all humans when compared to the latest chess engine.

Pawn

A nuisance unit, cheapened by sheer numbers which mainly serve to chain one’s game, blocking key lines at inopportune moments, only becoming useful upon promotion into something else. But at that point they are no longer pawns, are they?

Pawn Majority

A pawn preponderance on one side of the board that stands to prevail provided it comports with the outcome of the electoral college.

Perpetual Check

Misleading terminology as all instances conclude in a finite amount of time.

Pin

Effective tactic in chess despite holding it for a three count does not guarantee a win, nor does knocking one off constitute a spare, nor does possessing one portend a trip to the prom.

Post Mortem

After the game outgrowth by which one takes back his bad moves and endeavors to keep the opponent’s bad moves intact, thereby proving that one had a won game all along.

Quad

Muscle most likely to cramp up during a six-hour game.

Queen

Like Victor Borge’s distinction between a viola and a violin, the chess queen’s essential difference from pieces other than the king is that it burns longer. As far as distinguishing the queen from the king, well, queens are hornier.

Rank

Common stratagem where a tourney participant eschews showering for a few days before or during the event.

Ratings

Three or four digits holding far greater significance than Social Security Numbers and IQs combined.

Reuben Fine

The penalty paid for bringing deli fare into the tournament hall.

Rice Gambit

Matrimony.

Rook

A chess piece whose chief attribute derives from its use as the base of all stable towers of chessmen so far devised.

Ruy Lopez, Exchange Variation

A once popular line in the venerable Ruy Lopez opening which in subsequent analysis was greatly improved by *not* making the exchange.

Sacrifice

A piece or a pawn giving up its life for the game’s greater good, or even more altruistically for no good whatsoever, a condition sometimes termed a Mistake-rifice. The more selfish among us

prefer to follow Tartakower's dictum and sacrifice only their opponent's pieces, sort of like favoring raising taxes in ways that only affect the other guy.

Scotch Gambit

Plying your upcoming opponent with alcohol before the round.

Selfmate

Caissic onanism.

Short

Not Tal.

Skewer

A player engaging in ratings puffery.

Skittles

Candy ass play.

Space Advantage

Greater room to draw back your chair as opposed to your opponent's backed against the wall.

Spielmann

"Spiel" meaning game in German makes the name "Game Man" rather too cute to be owned by an actual chess player.

Spite Check

Gallows humor, chess style.

Square

The smallest parcel of chessboard real estate within which a piece still active in the game must sit, unless of course it is advantageous to ambiguously straddle a few lines during a time scramble.

Stalemate

An unjust loophole in the Laws of Chess, obviously inserted by defense attorneys, wherein the condemned monarch is awarded an undeserved reprieve from loss by pleading poverty of moves.

Strategy

Pretending to know what you are doing when there is really nothing to do.

Swindle

A successful tactic appreciated from the victim's vantage.

Swiss

An outrageous but inexplicably popular pairing system possessing the following holes as recognized by those trapped in its cheesy vortex: Getting paired up; Getting paired down; Getting Black unless one wants it; Getting an opponent one doesn't personally get along with; Getting put on a table too near (or far away) from the air conditioning, the rest room or the water fountain, plus other complaints too numerous to mention.

Tactics

Pretending to know what you are doing when there is something to do.

Tal

Not Short.

Threat

A perk of the game, allowing one to publically take out one's aggressions in contradistinction to all those anonymous occasions on social media.

Time Control

A laughable concept for all too many players.

Time Pressure

Life affirming exhilaration partaken of by only the most discerning of chess players. The addictive qualities of this rush, more dear to them than mere wins, draw them again and again to the practice, moths to flames. "Why else play?" say many.

Touch Move

Duh, physical handling being the only reasonable way of shifting chessmen given that telekinesis is unproven and finely directed gusts of sufficient force are impractical, especially for weighted pieces.

Tournament

Group therapy pooling of the chess afflicted akin to Alcoholics Anonymous. Patients are judiciously paired to more effectively probe each other's weaknesses, sometimes resulting in catharsis for one.

Underpromotion

Cardinal reason given for poor attendance at a tournament.

White

The side obligated to prematurely tip their hand by being cursed to move first. You don't see college football overtime coin flip winners going on offense first, do you? There's a reason for that, just as in chess.

Zukertort

A combined German/English moniker slightly altering "Zug" (German for "move") and "Retort." What are the odds a real chess player would happen to have "move response" as their name?

**

Per Wikipedia, we open up *The Snarky Dictionary of Chess* for submissions from the alleged outer world (after all, this could all be a figment of my solipsistic imagination or maybe a Matrix-style pseudo-reality). Find a way to get them to Bob Basalla and see your creative brain (pawn?) storms shower (credited, of course) onto a later iteration of this compendium.

After completing this article I came upon "A Gentle Glossery" by Eliot Hearst first published in the July, 1962 issue of Chess Life and later reprinted in Bruce Pandolfini's The Best of Chess Life and Review, Volume 2 (1987). It too created a chess dictionary based on the Ambrose Bierce model. A couple entries are remarkably similar to mine (see "Adjournment" and "Euwe"). I have included a few of his items here (with citation) as a presaging contributor (over six decades earlier!) to these efforts.

Play the Mackenzie! A Sharp White Attack in the Ruy Lopez

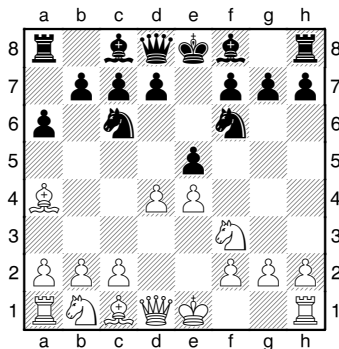
By FM David Gertler
Elk and Ruby, 2024, 108 pp., \$16.00

Reviewed by NM Randy Bauer
Randy's Rating: 8/10

For the average player, the primary goal of the chess opening is to get a reasonable position with an understanding of how to conduct the middle game. Chess theory, particularly in the age of the ever-present Stockfish and similar computer software, has become a thicket too dense for most players to cut through. How then to safely reach that comfortable middle game?

This is where a book like *Play the Mackenzie* comes in. The author analyzes a perfectly sound method of play for white in the main line of the Ruy Lopez, and he provides plenty of discussion and analysis to put together a white repertoire based on it.

The Mackenzie arises after 1.e4 e5 2.♘f3 ♘c6 3.♗b5 a6 4.♗a4 ♗f6 5.d4.



White immediately engages black in the center before black has had a chance to complete development. This confronts black earlier than after the main lines, the classical 5.0-0 or the more recent 5.d3, and thus poses immediate questions about how black wishes to resolve (or not) the central pawn tension.

By way of background, the variation is named after George Henry Mackenzie, a leading U.S. player in the late 1800s who played it against many of the strongest players in the world. Though named after Mackenzie, it was played even earlier by the great Paul Morphy. It is notable that the illustrative games within the book include it being played by the likes of world champions Lasker, Capablanca, Alekhine and Fischer.

I will confess that when I was first contacted about reviewing the book, I had to Google Mackenzie Variation to know what exactly the book was about. That, no doubt, is part of its charm. While perfectly sound, 5.d4 is certainly not the first thing a player of this line in the Ruy Lopez will be studying. Further, unlike some forcing variations, this one doesn't readily resolve itself into a dull and lifeless middlegame – there are plenty of possibilities for both sides, and lots of ways that black can go wrong.

From the start, I could tell that this was a labor of love for the

author. Unlike what I call 'mercenary authors' (hired guns to write an opening book about a line they don't necessarily play themselves) Gertler plays white in 6 of the book's 57 illustrative games. Gertler continues to play it regularly, including in online blitz games. According to the author, he has played it over 1,000 times in those games against similarly rated opponents, with 68% wins, 28% losses, and 7% draws – which is a remarkable winning percentage.

I appreciated the logical way that the author organized the material. There is a nice introduction that explains the history of the line. This includes sections titled:

- Why an early d4 in the Ruy Lopez makes sense.
- Is the Mackenzie the 'best' way to play.
- How good is it really?
- Mackenzie successes.

The author points out Mackenzie's success with the variation, with 16 unearthed games resulting in 11 wins, 5 draws, and no losses, including games against the likes of Zukertort, Winawer, and Gunsberg, all leading players at the time. At the same time, the author doesn't 'oversell' the line, freely admitting that a well-prepared black player should be able to obtain equality. Of course, that requires good preparation, and even then, the equal positions are far from sterile in most cases.

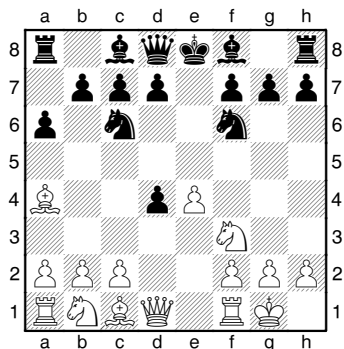
The introduction also includes a discussion of the typical plans and play for white, while describing the key factors in the position. This is helpful for assimilating the variations in the rest of the book.

Following the introduction, the author provides another brief chapter, entitled 'How to use this book.' This provides good practical advice ('don't read this whole book and memorize tons of variations:'), which is focused on understanding and getting a reasonable grasp on the key early moves and ideas. The author then provides a one paragraph summary of the six key black responses, each the subject of a chapter. Perhaps to help guide study, the author also provides statistics on use of these six black replies from a database of games with both players rated at least 2200. Parenthetically, one line, 5...exd4, occurred in 87% of those games. Needless to say, that helps the reader get a sense of where they might want to focus their study.

This is a white repertoire book, which means that while the author will mention white alternatives (and often explain why he has chosen the line he analyzes), there is little theoretical discussion of these alternatives. On the one hand, that limits the amount of study (and pages), but it also means that should a chosen line be found wanting, there is little guidance on alternatives. That said,

from my review, the author has chosen lines that generally align with theory, and it is unlikely any of them will be 'busted.' Rather, it most likely means that white should be satisfied now (and in the future) with equality or a slight advantage. The goal, as expressed by the author, is to get familiar positions where the white player is better prepared.

Each chapter includes coverage of black's primary moves, as well as illustrative games. It is helpful that the author generally provides a short description of the major alternatives. For example, after 'the popular 5...exd4' and the author's suggested 6.0-0, black has six key moves.

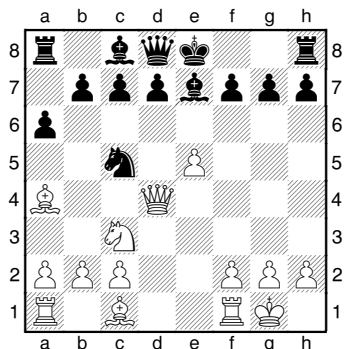


They are described as 'the sensible 6...Ae7' 'the greedy 6...Axe4' 'the counterpunching 6...b5' 'the active 6...Ac5' and 'the cautious 6...d6.'

Each analytical chapter also includes a summary that gives the author an opportunity to provide some context to the analysis and his own recommendations to guide white's play.

As previously noted, 5...exd4 is the primary black response, and the pages devoted to it reflect that fact. There are 44 pages devoted to this response, while the rest of the black alternatives are collectively 40 pages.

How does the theory hold together? In this age of large databases and 'computer support' for analysis, it would be highly unlikely that you would find major errors, and the author, as a practitioner, focuses his attention on playable lines. I was interested in one particular line, which my database suggested was equal and even had a slightly positive score for black. After 5...exd4 6.0-0 Ae7 7.e5 Ae4 8.dxd4 dxd4 9.0-0 dxc5, the author recommends 10.dxc3.



After 10...Axa4, the author writes that '13.0-0 Ae7 14.0-0 Ae6 15.d5 is objectively equal, White has enough pressure to make Black's job less pleasant.' Really? After the logical 15...Ee8, it

doesn't look like anything but comfortable equality to me. I checked it with Stockfish 17, which also evaluated it as fully equal for black.

This, of course, is quibbling, and I don't want to suggest that the book's analysis is seriously flawed. That said, it is always a good idea to 'trust, but verify.'

The author also includes a 'bonus' chapter, giving white an option against the Berlin (1.e4 e5 2.d3 dxc6 3.Ab5 dxf6 4.d4). The author explains how this can lead to familiar issues for black as in the Mackenzie proper, and this alone may make the book worthwhile for some white players. That said, the last time I played the Ruy against a (senior master) opponent, he played the Schliemann (3...f5), and I struggled to draw. This is a useful method to cut down on study in the Ruy, but it still leaves black numerous other options as well.

All told, the book has a number of other attractive features. It has an index of illustrative games that includes the players, year played, as well as the variation played. At the end is also an indexed summary of variations and a bibliography. The book has clear print, decent formatting, and uses bold print in ways to separate content. In summary, this is well-written, and thoroughly enjoyable book.

Solutions to Exercises found in *From Vienna with Love* issue #161 pages 34-39.

Exercise 1 Solution

8. d6! c6 (8. ... cxd6 leads to a position mentioned in Paulsen-Englisch) 9. d4 (P. Van der Weide I L. Kerkhoff Leeuwarden 1970) with a transposition to Paulsen-Minckwitz.

Exercise 2 Solution

10. h4 (10. g3! is also promising. 10... f6 11. gxf4 gxf4 12. f1 dxd6 13. dxf4 dxf4 14. fxf4 fxf4 15. fxf4) 10... h5 (10... dxd6 11. d2) 11. hxg5 fxf5 12. de2 dxd6 13. dxf4 (with a decisive advantage, E.Schallop-H.Von Gottschall, Frankfurt 1887.)

Exercise 3 Solution

8. h4! g4 9. d4 dxf6 10. f5 a6 11. dxf4! axb5 12. dxb5 f8 13. O-O (White has tremendous play for a piece. Already f4-c4 is a nasty threat.

Exercise 4 Solution

9. dxc5! fxc5 10. fxf8 dxf6 11. h4 (and the queen escapes.)

Exercise 5 Solution

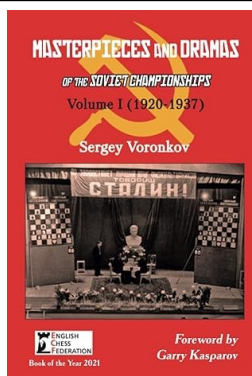
10. h4 (the pawn is poisoned. 10. dxc5? fxc5 11. fxf8 ddf6! 12. h4 gxh4 13. fxf4 f7 and the queen is trapped.

Masterpieces and Drama of the Soviet Championships, Volume I (1920-37)

by Sergey Voronkov

published by Elk and Ruby (2020) 534 (!) pages.

Reviewed by Andy Ansel



This is the first of three volumes of an amazing series the author (and publisher) has produced on the early Soviet Championships through 1953. Originally published in Russia (2007), the only changes made were to critical game analysis. The books are available in both paperback and hardcover as well as electronically through Forward Chess and Kindle. They can be purchased direct from the publisher's web site (<https://www.elkandruby.com>) or from Amazon.

Elk and Ruby is a relatively new entrant to chess publishing. Many of their books are English translations of previously published Soviet titles. The books are well researched, nicely produced and have been excellently translated. The author, Voronkov, is among the top historians on Russian chess. His depth and resources are very impressive and proudly displayed in this (and the other) volumes.

This book contains 107 games and fragments spread across the first 10 Soviet Championships. It includes all cross tables and a very detailed bibliography. The author's work brings these events to life. All (or almost all) material is in English for the first time, including translations from very scarce bulletins and tournament books.

This book offers so much more than games as it provides behind the scenes details, as well as biographical information, which really allows one to learn much more about the events and players. There are also many interesting caricatures throughout the book plus some great photos. One of my favorites is a picture of games notes from the 1st Soviet Championship written by Alekhine that were in Kotov's archives. In fact, 12 new games were found within such notes.

Starting with the 1st Championship in 1920 and the "bread revolt" through the Botvinnik-Levenfish match of 1937, this book covers 10 championships and matches. Among the highlights are the games and stories of many lesser-known players.

The book has many interesting details about the political climate in the Soviet Union at the intersection of chess and politics. A couple of interesting tidbits include Bohatyrychuk's, commentary on the political and economic systems in the Soviet Union (These come from the translation of his book *My Life Path to Vlasov and the Prague Manifesto*, which was actually published in San Francisco!), and a discussion of Botvinnik's age on page 174, where *Shakhmatny Listok* says he is 17, yet other sources claim he is 16. The author blends translations of older Soviet materials such as books, bulletins and magazines and helps untangle the "politicalization" of such writing using newer uncovered sources and various personal archives.

While all this other information is interesting, the highlight of the book is clearly the games. Sourcing many was a challenge as

records were not always kept. Many of the annotations are by the players themselves, which gives deeper insight into their thoughts. The games are, in a single word, amazing. For many, this was the one chance they had to showcase their talent as well as impress the political bosses. The style of play seems more modern given the time period and the depth of opening preparation is quite deep. There were many blunders, as well, since these tournaments were almost a battle of attrition through the qualifying events, the large number of players, and the meager food portions.

A couple example games (Some diagrams that are in the book were left out of the review intentionally):

The game, Nenarokov-Rabinovich, won the 2nd Brilliancy prize in Petrograd 1923. What is most interesting was the "war" of annotations between the victor in *Shakhmaty* and Levenfish in *Shakhmatny Listok*, showing the political backing of Russian chess magazines. This also highlights the Moscow-Saint Petersburg chess power struggle.

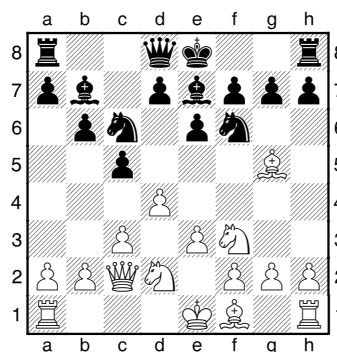
No. 10. Queen's Pawn Game A45

Nenarokov – I. Rabinovich

Petrograd 1923, round 5

Annotated by V. Nenarokov

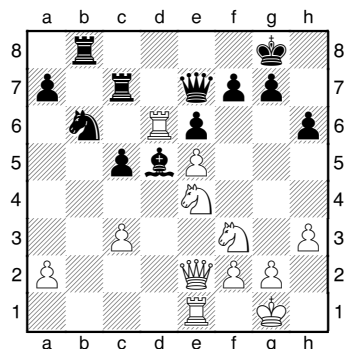
1.d4 e6 2.c3 ♘f6 3.♙g5 b6 4.♘d2 ♙b7 5.♙c2 c5. Black's development system with c7-c5 is hardly satisfactory. The resulting pawn structure is not solid enough and vulnerable to white's attacks. 6.e3 ♙e7 7.♘gf3 ♘c6.



8.dxc5! Black probably didn't consider the consequences of this move, because at first glance he gets a strong pawn center. However, as the course of the game shows, white can weaken and break down this center. 8...bxc5. After 8...♙xc5, black's center is still weak, because 9...d5 can be met with 10.♙d1, threatening to push the e-pawn. **Levenfish:** "White's previous move, weakening the center, was dubious, but now it pays off: after d7-d5, black gets hanging, awkward c5 and d5 pawns. It was better and calmer to play 8... ♙xc5 9.♙e2 (9.♘e4 ♘b4! 10.cxb4 ♙xe4 11.♙c4 ♙d5) 9...d5 10.0-0 ♙e7 11.♙ad1 ♙c8 with a great position."

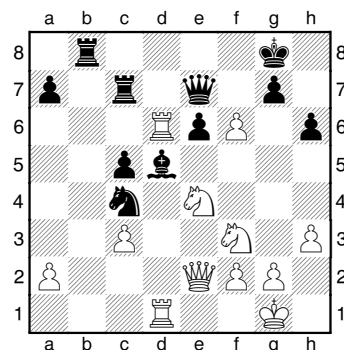
Nenarokov: "Instead of the passive and weak 9.♙e2?, it was easy to play 9.♙d3, the move I made in the actual game. The position changes significantly. White threatens to eventually play e3-e4, and it's enough to look at the board to see who actually

has a "great" position." *9.♖d3 does look more active. 1–0 to Nenarokov. 9.♖d3 h6 10.♙h4 d5 11.0-0 0-0 12.♞ad1. 12...♜d7. Probably the best move. Black can't play 12...e5 13.e4 d4 because of 14.♙b5!, threatening ♝xc6 and ♜xe5. Black has no good defense, for instance: 14... ♜d7 15.♙xc6 ♝xc6 16.♙xe7 ♞xe7 17.cxd4 exd4 18.♜xd4 or 14...♞c7 15.♙g3 ♜d6 (15...♜d7? 16.cxd4 etc.) 16.♜c4!, and black loses material. 13.♙xe7 ♞xe7 14.e4 d4. Any other move is met with 15.exd5, weakening the black pawns. Levenfish: "This move is not well thought-out. Black tries for a c5, d4, e5 structure, but this proves to be impossible, and black's center becomes very shaky." Nenarokov: "The commentator does not show any "well thought-out" moves, and it's easy to see why: the only way to avoid the threat exd5 is to play d5-d4." *The computer, after a bit of thought, also prefers 14...d4. 2–0 to Nenarokov. 15.♙b5!* Preventing 15...e5, which will be met with 16.♙xc6 ♝xc6 17.cxd4 exd4 18.♜xd4, winning a pawn. 15...♞fc8 16.♙xc6 ♝xc6 17.e5! White's plan turns out to be correct: black's center is crumbling, while white will retain the strong central e5 pawn. 17...♞ab8 18.♞fe1. If 18.b3, intending cxd4 and ♞b2, then 18... ♙b5 19.♞fe1 d3 20.♞c1 c4, and white's queenside is compromised. **Levenfish:** "A serious mistake that deprives white of all the advantage. 18.b3 was correct, and if 18...♙b5 19.♞fe1 d3 20.♞c1 c4, then 21.♜xc4 ♙xc4 22.bxc4 ♜c5 23.♞a3 ♞b7 24.♞d2, and white, threatening ♜f3-d4-b5, retains his extra pawn." **Nenarokov:** "What's possible in bad analysis is impossible when playing against a strong opponent. Indeed, what would I have done had Rabinovich, instead of Levenfish's suicidal move 23... ♞b7?, shutting down both black rooks, just played 23...♙b6 here, threatening ♞cb8 and ♞a6? Perhaps I could still have achieved a draw, but certainly nothing more, for instance: 24.♜d4! ♞a6 25.♞b2 ♙b6, etc." *Fritz and Junior, as if by prior agreement, offer a healthy compromise – they consider both the "suicidal" 23...♞b7 and 23...♙b6 equally good. Moreover, they don't even see much difference between 18.♞fe1 and 18.b3, evaluating both positions as roughly equal. So, this round ends in a draw. Nenarokov leads 2.5–0.5. 18...d3!* (forced, because 19.b3 is now a threat) 19.♙xd3 ♝xb2 20.♞a6 ♞bb8 21.♜e4 ♝c7 22.h3! To escape with the king to h2 after 23.♞d6 ♙xe4 24.♙xe4 ♙b1+. 22...♜b6 23.♞d6! This move, constricting black's position, required precise calculation, because 23...♙d5 cuts off the rook. 23...♙d5 24.♞e2*



24.... f6. Nenarokov has no commentary on this important move. **Levenfish:** "Rabinovich swallows simple bait. By just winning one tempo after another, black could gain an advantage: 24... ♜c4 25.♙a6 ♞d7 26.♞c2 ♙b2 27.♞c1 ♞db7 28.♜d6 ♙xf3! 29.♜xc4 ♙b1! 30.♞xb1 (30.♞e3 ♞g5!) 30...♙xb1 31.♙xb1 ♙e2 32.♞a4 ♞d7 33.♙b8+ ♞h7 34.♜b2 ♞d2, and black should win." **Nenarokov:** "Winning "one tempo after another" – the commentator just takes away my queen, no big deal. Or is it? I think if this line had occurred in the game, I wouldn't have been as profligate, and instead of 28.♜d6?, I would have played 28.♞f4, saving the endangered

queen and retaining the center and kingside pressure, as in the game. *Levenfish's line is too long to be absolutely correct. And Nenarokov is probably right about 28.♞f4 (black has an inventive reply 28...♙b1 29.♞h2 ♙xe1 30.♜xe1 f5! 31.exf6 ♞c7 32.♞xc7 ♙xc7, but after 33.f3 ♙xe4 34.fxe4 gxf6 35.♙xe6 ♞f7 36.♞a6 it's unlikely he'd hold this endgame a pawn down). But there's another problem! After 24...f6?, the king's position was severely weakened, while 24...♜c4 25.♙a6 ♞d7 26.♞c2 ♙b6? gave black good counterplay. For instance: 27.♙xb6 axb6 and ♞a7 or 27.♞a4 ♜b2 28.♞a5 (28.♞a3? ♜d3!) 28...c4 etc. Levenfish narrowed the gap after this round, 2.5–1.5. 25.♞d1!* Protecting the d6 rook in case of the exchange on e5. 25.exf6 is bad, since after 25...gxf6, black threatens f6-f5. 25...♜c4. **Levenfish:** "Here, black could still correct the mistake made on the previous move: 25...f5! 26.♜ed2 ♜a4 27.♞c1 c4, and black is better." **Nenarokov:** "Again, the inexplicably bad move 26.♜ed2? Why not 26.♜g3!, after which black's position is quite difficult. No rook can go to the d-file because of the threat c3-c4 after the rook exchange. The knight cannot attack the rook either, for example: 26...♜c4 27.♜xf5 ♞f7 (27...♞f8? 28.♙6xd5! exd5 29.♜3h4 and so on) 28.♜3h4 (threatening ♙xd5) 28...♙xd6 29.exd6 ♞d7 30.♜e7+ is to white's advantage. This variation alone demonstrates just how strongly the rook stands on d6 and that white has so many options in this position." *Unfortunately, this variation alone doesn't prove anything. Instead of the cooperative 26...♜c4? black could have perfectly well played 26...♞d7 (as white cannot reply 27.♙xd7? ♞xd7 28.c4? ♙xc4!), but 26...♙f8 or 26...♞e8 are even more interesting, and black's chances are nevertheless better. After a languid start Levenfish has fought back hard – 2.5:2.5! 26.exf6*



26...♞f7! The immediate 26... gxf6 is met with 27.♙1xd5! exd5 28.♜xf6+ with a crushing attack: 28...♞g7 (28...♞f7 29.♜g5+! hxg5 30.♞h5+ with a mate in three) 29.♜h5+ ♞f7 30.♜g5+! ♞xg5 (30... hxg5 31.♞f3+ ♞g8 32.♞xd5+ etc.) 31.♞e6+ ♞f8 32.♙xd5, winning the queen. 27.♙a6 ♙b2! 28.♞d3 ♙b6 29.♙xb6 axb6 30.♞e1 gxf6 31.♜fd2 ♜xd2 32.♞xd2 ♞g6. After 32...♙xe4 33.♙xe4, black has no good defense against ♞xh6 or ♞d6. **Levenfish:** "There was only one way to save the game: 32...f5! 33.♜g3 ♞g7." **Nenarokov:** "The commentator doesn't notice that after the next move 34.c4, which was decisive in the actual game as well, black could only look at the board one last time and... resign, for instance: 34... ♙xc4 35.♜h5 ♞g5 (relatively best) 36.f4 ♞e7 37.♞e3, threatening ♞c3 and ♞g3+, and white's attack is irresistible. Yes, it is irresistible after 36... ♞e7?, but what should white do after 36...♞h4! For instance: 37.♞e3 ♙d5 38.♞g3+ ♞h7 39.♞e2 ♞d7! (white threatened the cunning 40.♞e5), white's attack fizzles out, and black has a healthy extra pawn. And so, with a great finishing spurt, Levenfish manages to win this analytical dispute – 3.5–2.5! However, this does not diminish the creative achievements of his competitor: Nenarokov's play in the game was very strong, inventive and bold. 33.c4! ♞g7 34.♜xf6+! ♞xf6 35.cxd5 ♞f3! 36.g3 exd5.

Black defends very well. He manages to trade off almost all the pieces without losing material, but the black king's position is poor, and he can't save the game. 37.♖e8+! ♕f7. After 37...♖h7 38.♖c2+ ♖g6 39.♖e7+ black loses a rook. 38.♖e1 ♖f6 39.♖b8 ♖d6 (39... ♖g6 40.♖b1+, winning) 40.♖e8+ ♖f6 41.♖d8 ♖e6 42.♖f8+ ♖f7. If 42...♖f7, then 43.♖xh6+ ♖e5 44.♖e8 etc. 43.♖d6+ ♖e6 44.♖f4+. Black resigned.

The game Verlinsky-Levenfish won the Brilliancy prize in the 3rd Soviet Championship. From a quiet opening, Black was able to provide a bold Rook sacrifice. On another note, this game was included in Asimov's book *Pebble in the Sky*.

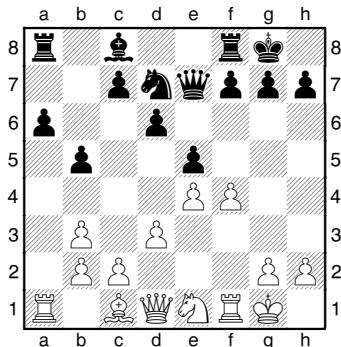
No. 15. Ruy Lopez C84

Verlinsky – Levenfish

Moscow 1924, round 15

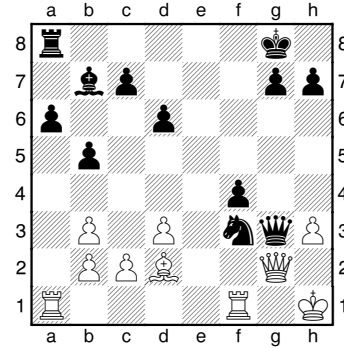
Annotated by G. Levenfish

1.e4 e5 2.♖f3 ♖c6 3.♖b5 a6 4.♖a4 ♖f6 5.♖c3 (an old move that is now considered quite harmless and isn't played much) 5...♖e7 6.0-0 b5 7.♖b3 d6 8.d3. 8.♖d5!? was more energetic, intending 8...♖a5 9.♖xe7 ♖xe7 10.d4. 8...0-0 9.♖d5 (9.a4 is better) 9...♖a5 10.♖xe7+ ♖xe7 11.♖e1. White's plan – prepare the push of the f-pawn – is not well thought-out, and its execution is poor, because it hinders the a1 rook's development. I think that white should have played on the queenside, for instance: 11.♖d2 ♖d7 12.a4 ♖xb3 13.♖xb3 f5 14.f3 etc. 11.♖g5 h6 12.♖xf6 ♖xf6 13.♖d2 ♖d7 14.f3 ♖xb3 15.♖xb3 led to a rather quick draw (Spassky – Beliavsky, Tilburg 1981). 11...♖xb3 12.♖xb3 ♖d7 13.f4. White should have played 13.♖e3 f5 14.f3, then c2-c3 etc. Notably, after f2-f4, white can't cope with the arising problems.



13...f5! Opening of the f-file is beneficial only to black, who can quickly get his rooks into the game. And, what's even more important, by removing the e4 pawn, he gets the long diagonal for his bishop. Strategically, the game is easy to understand, but the tactics are rather interesting. 14.♖xf5 ♖xf5 15.♖f3. Trying to rectify the error. 15.♖f3 ♖b8 16.♖c6 ♖c5 gained nothing because of the threat ♖b7; 15.fxe5 ♖xf1+ 16.♖xf1 ♖xe5 17.d4 ♖g4 18.♖d2 ♖f8+ 19.♖g1 ♖f7 etc. is even worse. 15...♖b7! Of course, not 15...♖xf4 16.♖d4, then ♖(♖)xf4, and white is safe. 16.♖d2. White hurries to connect the rooks, planning a drawing combination. 16.fxe5 ♖xe5 17.♖xe5 ♖xe5 and then ♖e2 lost immediately. 16...♖xf4 17.♖d4 ♖g5 18.♖f3. White's defensive plan hinged on this. It seems that he regains the pawn or forces a draw by repetition. 18...♖g4! Starting the decisive combination. Black threatens 19... ♖e5 and ♖f8. 19.h3 ♖xg2+! 20.♖xg2 ♖g5+ 21.♖h1. The only move (21.♖f2 ♖g3+ 22.♖e2 ♖g2+ 23.♖e1 ♖e8+; 21.♖h2 ♖g3+ 22.♖h1 ♖xh3+ 23.♖g1 ♖g4+ 24.♖h2 ♖e5). 21...♖e5. Not 21...♖g3 due to 22.d4, and black can't get the a8 rook into play because of the threat d4-d5. Was it a hallucination? It didn't even go away years later: in

the book *Selected Games and Memories*, Levenfish repeats the same idea. Actually, after 22...♖f8! White can't save the game: 23.♖xf4 (23. d5 ♖xd5) 23...♖xf4 24.d5 ♖xh3+ 25.♖g1 ♖g3+ 26.♖h1 ♖e5 or 23.♖e2 ♖xh3+ 24.♖h2 ♖xf3+ 25.♖g1 ♖g4+ 26.♖f2 ♖f6. 22.♖e2. After 22.♖e1 (preparing ♖h2), black had a pretty win: 22... ♖h5 23.♖g2 ♖e8!, for instance: 24.d4 ♖xf3 25.♖xf3 ♖xe1 or 24.♖c3 ♖xf3 25.♖xf3 ♖xf3+ 26.♖xf3 ♖e2+. To give you the full experience, I'll also add 22...♖xf3! 23.♖xf3 ♖e8 24.♖f2 ♖e3! 25.♖h2 (25.♖xe3 ♖g3) 25...♖xf3, crushing. 22...♖g3 23.♖g2 ♖xf3! Threatening 24...♖xg2+ and ♖xd2+.



24.♖c3. The only way to prolong the game was 24.♖xg3 ♖xg3 25.♖xf3 ♖xf3+ 26.♖g1, but after 26...g2 the endgame, despite the opposite colored bishops, is hopeless for white. 24...♖d4! The final combination, forcing checkmate. 25.♖xb7 ♖xh3+ 26.♖g1 ♖e2+ 27.♖f2 ♖e3+. A funny detail: annotating the game for Shakhmatny Listok, Levenfish shows 28.♖e1 ♖xc3# as the finale; however, his annotations for Shakhmaty end with the words "and mate in two", i.e. 28.♖g2 ♖g3+ 29.♖h1 ♖h3#. A split personality?

I highly recommend this book (and the complete series) to those that love chess history and historical games. This volume is my personal favorite, as I find the games and players so interesting, and much of the details were unknown to me as an English reader. This is definitely a "keeper", and in fact, I would consider it a "desert island" book as it can be read over and over again. While no book is perfect, I would have to nitpick to find flaws with this one. Two come to mind. There are more fragments, instead of complete games than I would like, but that could be due to the challenge of actually finding many of these games. Also, at times the text is a little wooden and overly detailed, but that is symptomatic of earlier Soviet writings. All in all, a great chess book.

Replace These Habits and Improve

Replace the fear of losing with the desire to win.
Replace focusing on result with focusing on growth.
Replace overconfidence with caution.
Replace playing bullet with playing rapid.
Replace trappy openings with fundamental ones.
Replace one-move attacks with hidden threats.
Replace impulsive moves with careful planning.
Replace resign early with fight til the end.

From the ChessMood FaceBook page.

The Pawn

By Paco Cerdá (Translated by Kevin Gerry Dunn)

Deep Vellum Publishing (2025), 264 pages

Reviewed by Mark Capron

PACO CERDÁ
TRANSLATED BY KEVIN GERRY DUNN



“... is stuck, like an isolated pawn, with no defense from any other piece of his color. Like a pawn that has advanced far on the board, he is weak, unarmed, easily captured. Or perhaps he has already been removed from the board, is no longer part of the game. The victim of an ambush. Of a sacrifice made for the good of the team and tolerated by servile miters, common crooks; a flock impersonating a shepherd.”

A pawn can be defined as a chessman having the least value, allowed to move only

one square forward ordinarily, to capture diagonally forward, and can be promoted to any piece except a king upon reaching the eighth rank. It can also be defined as one that is used to further the purposes of another.

The author melds these definitions of a pawn as he weaves the storyline. *The Pawn* is a masterful blend of history, politics, and human drama. Layers upon layers of plot and storyline are offered. At first glance, it is a book about Spanish Chess prodigy Arturito Pomar, but it is about so much more. Every chapter begins with a white and a black move from the game Bobby Fischer – Arturito Pomar, Stockholm 1962. Each chapter describes a snippet from history, moving fluidly across cities and continents—from Stockholm to Madrid, New York to Reykjavik. The two chess prodigy's fates were shaped as much by global politics (Cold War and Franco-era Spain) as by their own ambitions.

All chapters are interconnected, since each describes a “pawn.” In between, we get glimpses into the lives of Pomar and Fischer. The author's descriptive, harsh, in-your-face, writing style is especially effective at forming substantial imagery in your mind's eye. You feel as if you're right there with “the Pawn” being described.

A prime example was that of Fischer's “Game of the Century” vs Donald Byrne.

“...an almost unknown Bobby (black pieces) faces international master Donald Byrne (white pieces) in the eighth round of the Rosenwald Trophy Tournament in New York, and Bobby is about to swerve into the special lane reserved for legends. At this point in the game, the seventeenth move, Bobby abandons his threatened queen and shifts his bishop back two squares, swapping an active position for an unremarkable one. No one understands what's happening. Murmurs bounce off the venerable Marshall

Club's dark wood and the heavy vermillion-velvet curtains that have witnessed the living history of chess. It's a mild, 64-degree October night, and the usual din of the street shuffles between Fifth and Sixth Avenue. Professor Byrne, who is twice his opponent's age and the U.S. Open Champion, studies the board from behind his horn-rimmed glasses and captures the black queen with his long, slender, elegant, intellectual, lily-white fingers. Then Fischer gets to work.”

I could almost feel as if I were part of the collective audience, gasping.

This is a difficult book. Be prepared to consult a dictionary, and to learn some Spanish history, especially the Franco years. The history knowledge will help with understanding the first few chapters. Definitely not mandatory, just helpful.

An example is the word Falangist. The dictionary states, “relating to or characteristic of the Spanish Falange movement” and “a member of the Spanish Falange movement”. Well, that wasn't too helpful. After further research, Falangism was a political ideology that combined Spanish nationalism, authoritarianism, Catholic traditionalism, and anti-communism, along with a call for national syndicalism. Many of the chapters deal with Falangism and Falangists as they confronted the oppression caused by the dictator Francisco Franco.

In 1946, at the peak of Pomar's fame, a book entitled *Over Fifty Games with Masters* was released. “The book concluded with a question that, in the heat of Arturo-mania, was ubiquitous: Will Pomar reach the apex of world chess? Who knows. He could become a genius or a notable figure in global contests. And if things go poorly, he'll be a fleeting but bright meteor that sets the skies ablaze before burning out into oblivion.”

In 1949, Pomar traveled to Argentina without giving proper notice to Spanish authorities. He was censured by the Spanish Chess Federation and restricted for one year from competing in the national championship.

Pomar's run-ins with authorities didn't stop here. In 1952, he set sail for Cuba to avoid getting a “real” job, since tournaments didn't pay enough. He found that exhibitions paid best. He then traveled to America for more exhibitions. However, he didn't have permission. In 1953 he was charged with absentia and had 20 days to report. He stayed until 1954, so he obviously missed that timing. Both Mexico and the US offered political asylum and citizenship, but he still chose to go back home and face the consequences. Luckily a high ranking General, who was also a chess player, got Pomar off the hook and out of prison.

Pomar never got to challenge for the World Chess Championship and his life, as the author imagines, became sad ...

"It's hard not to remember the panegyrics of his childhood as he works now in this post office in an irrelevant town forty minutes outside Madrid, sorting letters and packages from regular people as if he himself were a regular person. He, one of the most brilliant, privileged minds in the history of chess, the pride of his nation. It's clear that this pawn has been placed on the wrong board (Spain) in the most difficult round (the Franco era). But Arturo doesn't complain. He carries on. He always has. Resignation is one of his favorite words."

Chess comes down to winning and losing just like life itself as the author points out in the following passage.

"Losing. It seems like it's simply the flipside of winning; one of the three possibilities that every life offers when the clock starts ticking and the game begins. Winning is the hoped-for, childishly idealized, single-mindedly pursued outcome, until relentless time proves that an insipid, stultifying tie – a result reviled, often ignored, scarcely considered when the dimensions of the theater are confused with the true plot of the play- is usually the best that most players can hope for. Born for victory, we settle for draw. But no one is taught to lose, because nobody wants to learn to lose. There are no teachers or students in the school of Raymond Poulidor, with his eight second-or third-place trophies from the Tour de France, a dusty Parisian Sisyphus who never once wore the yellow jersey despite his status as universally beloved; he was a kindly, unsung loser without laurels, the epic face of admirable tragedy, the sweet poetry of missed opportunity, of dangerous relaxation, of false delight. Losing is taught only by life, the singular teacher who gives instruction on the supreme value of a timely draw, an outcome that is cold and useless, but also soothing and analgesic."

The rich, multi-layered approach is very interesting. Cerdà positions each move on the board as a metaphor for larger ideological battles that really made me stop and think. I enjoyed the 264-page book a lot. The translator Kevin Gerry Dunn did a fabulous job as I did not notice any awkward language spots. I did find a couple of other small errors. In one case, Black's move 70 had a typo. In another case, move 41 was not correct for either player. I had an uncorrected, proof copy to review, so these may have been fixed once the final version was issued. Is this the book for the person wanting to improve their chess game? No. Cerdà's storytelling is both thought-provoking and expansive, making this a standout work for fans of literary nonfiction, chess history, and Cold War history. It's a book that lingers long after the final page, because of its quiet revelations about power, vulnerability, and the cost of greatness. There is much to be learned within. Self-reflection. Empathy. Anger. Intrigue.

"Slow, small, weak, insignificant, often manipulated, easily instrumentalized. Poor playthings of destiny who never surrendered or abandoned the board. I can't anymore, I'm staying here. They knew they were pawns. A few perhaps dreamed of being crowned queen. But they all knew that a pawn is never just a pawn."

5.0 out of 5.0 stars.

World #2 Hikaru Nakamura Plays in Iowa Open By Mark Capron

Almost a year ago I agreed to help Eric Vigil direct the 70th Iowa Open. In September, like a shot heard around the world, we all found out GM Hikaru Nakamura attended a local FIDE rated tournament in Louisiana. The following Monday I was talking with Eric about the Iowa Open, and I joked about GM Nakamura randomly showing up. Eric said "can you keep a secret?" I told him I could and he let me know that "yes, Virginia there is a Santa Clause!" GM Nakamura was headed to Iowa, but he wanted it to be a secret for a multitude of reasons. GM Nakamura signed up for the tournament online about one hour before online registration ended. Soon the word was out.

I was pairing chief and right after I finished pairing the first round I saw GM Nakamura's first round opponent walk in. I moved to meet my friend Ben Darr, and let him know his pairing. At first Ben absolutely thought I was joking with him. Once I convinced him I wasn't pulling his leg he took the news as an exciting challenge as I thought he would. Ben has a nice write up about this and his game in the [October 2025 Iowa Chess News En Passant](#).

Shortly, Eric started receiving phone calls. He received one phone call asking if a player could still register for the tournament. Eric told them online registration was closed and first round pairings had been made. But, if they arrived well before the second round pairings were made they could enter as a late entrant with a half-point bye for the first round. So NM Artemii Khanbutaev and his father took off from the Chicago area and raced to Iowa City (3.5 hour drive). They made it before I paired the second round. A few more late entrants showed up as well. NM Khanbutaev got his wish and ended up playing GM Nakamura in the last round (see photo below).



The crowd was increasing in size as the day progressed. One lady was the girlfriend of a chess player who was out of town and he asked her come to get an autograph. Another was a reporter for the Chicago Tribune. Along with the chess players themselves, many more were friends and relatives. The line between rounds for autographs and pictures was quite long.

As expected GM Nakamura swept the field. He beat Ben Darr of Iowa in the first round. He then defeated Matthew Pikus of Missouri. In the third round he beat CM Dane Zagar of Minnesota. In

the penultimate round he defeated second place finisher NM Anjaneya Rao. Lastly he finished off NM Artemii Khanbutaev from Illinois. I think all of GM Nakamura's opponents had a good time and found playing him the experience of a lifetime.



GM Nakamura and NM Anjaneya Rao

The Iowa Open turned out to be a successful event for the Iowa State Chess Association. The event featured an Open section, an U1600 Reserve section, and a Rated Beginner's Open section for a total of 112 players. In the Open section, GM Nakamura placed first, NM Anjaneya Rao, CM Alec Aimdilokwong, and Luke Hengen tied for second through fourth. The Reserve section was won by Robert Hingstrum Jr. The RBO was won with a perfect score, 5.0/5.0, by Michael C.R. Johnson. The event was directed by the team of FA Eric Vigil, IA William Broich, NA Mark Capron and NA Dane Zagar.



Left to right: TD group with Hikaru Nakamura; Eric Vigil, Nakamura, Mark Capron, William Broich, not pictured Dane Zagar.

Rex Gray came aboard *The Chess Journalist* as a proofreader and contributor a while back, but I don't think we have ever featured a picture of him ... until now. Rex played in the Reserve section and here he is shown below in the yellow.



Here is one of my promising young students, Chaitra Kambham, awaiting her opponent.



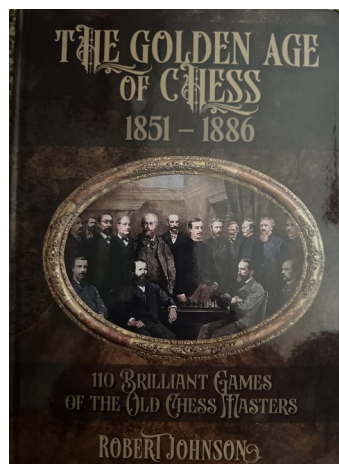
Reporter, Gregory Pratt, from the Chicago Tribune speaking to GM Nakamura while the line for autographs and pictures builds up behind.

On the Monday following the tournament GM Nakamura, GM Kris Littlejohn (Naka's second), Eric Vigil, William Broich and I all went to eat lunch at Thai Spice in Iowa City, one of the best Thai restaurants around the U.S. What a fun few days!!

The Golden Age of Chess 1851–1886, 110 Brilliant Games of the Old Chess Masters

By Robert Johnson

Reviewed by Mark Capron



Australian author Robert Johnson has blessed us with another great book. His follow-up from the excellent 2020 Adolf Anderssen book covers the golden age of chess, 1851–1886. The book is lavishly produced and meticulously researched; this 540-page tome offers a deep dive into the evolution of chess from the romantic brilliance of Adolf Anderssen to the strategic mastery of Wilhelm Steinitz. Meet masters Henry Bird, Joseph Blackburne, Daniel Harrwitz, Lionel Kieseritzky, Johann Löwenthal,

George Mackenzie, James Mason, William Potter, Jackson Showalter, Siegbert Tarrasch, Johannes Zukertort to name just a few of the 43 players featured. What a cast!

Johnson presents 110 games with notes from the original contemporary sources and adds some new notes of his own when needed. Many famous games can be found within such as Adolf Anderssen's "Immortal", Paul Morphy's win vs. Louis Paulsen at the first American Chess Congress and his "Opera Game", and Wilhelm Steinitz's "immortal" vs. Curt von Bardeleben. You will also find many other not so famous games that are just as engrossing. Johnson argues that the creativity and intuition of 19th-century players remain unmatched. Their games are still used to teach fundamentals, and their ideas—though sometimes outdated—sparked the theoretical revolutions that followed.

What openings did these greats play? Of course, they played the Evan's Gambit and the King's Gambit, but they also played more traditional openings like the Queen's Gambit, the Scotch, the Ruy Lopez, the Petroff, the French, and the Sicilian. There are others as well, such as the Reti, Bird's, English, Vienna, Scandinavian, Giuoco Piano and the Dutch.

The book has many full-page photographs and caricatures of the players. These help set the mood and give us a glimpse into the time period.

Over 100 pages are dedicated to the first World Championship Match in 1886. This includes a section on the death of Zukertort.

The book ends with a two-page epitaph to Steinitz.

I always find it fascinating to see an opening being played by the originator of that opening or variation. On pages 339-341, Game 76, one of my favorite historical players, George Mackenzie, played Henry Bird who employed use of his Bird Variation in the Ruy Lopez.

Mackenzie, George Henry - Bird, Henry E [C61]

Hamburg Tournament 1885 Hamburg, 1885

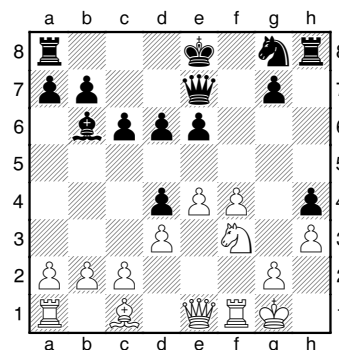
1.e4 e5 2.♟f3 ♘c6 3.♟b5 ♘d4? Mr. Bird's own defence which, we believe, stands inferior to others, if only for the reason that though in several more usual variations a doubled pawn is also created on Black's side, the latter generally obtains some fair compensation by retaining the two Bishops as against two Knights or Knight and Bishop - Steinitz.

4.♟xd4 exd4 5.0-0 h5? Also a pet move of the same author and player. Whilst presenting hardly the least prospective advantage, it obviously reduces Black's option of castling on the King's wing - Steinitz.

6.d3 ♟c5 7.♟d2 c6 8.♟a4 In reply to 8.♟c4 Mr. Bird generally continues 8...d5 9.exd5 cxd5 10.♟b5+ ♖f8 - Steinitz.

8...d6 9.♟b3 ♟g4 10.f3 ♟e6 11.♟e1 h4 12.♟xe6 fxe6 13.h3? An unnecessary precaution which is objectionable on principle, as it weakens his g pawn. His only motive could have been to prevent the advance of 13. ... h3, which he could well afford to allow, as after 14.g3 he stood quite safe, whilst the adverse h pawn was all the weaker for the ending, as is usually the case when a pawn advances too far without sufficient support - Steinitz.

13...♟b6 14.f4 ♟e7 15.♟f3



15...0-0-0? Black has already an inferior game, but instead of the injudicious castling, he should develop his forces on the King's side - Hoffer and Zukertort.

Not advisable in view of the hostile attack with the pawn on that wing, which at any rate, taxed Black's attention to a greater extent than he required to bestow on his defence by leaving that opponent in doubt on which side the King would take shelter. The following plan was preferable: first of all advancing 15. ... d5 with the object of inducing the opponent to reply 16.e5, in which case Black would protect the d pawn by 16. ... c5, followed by 17. ... ♟d8 and 18. ... ♟h6 with the view of planting the Knight at g3. There was, we think, no serious loss of time involved in that scheme, which presented a prospect of utilizing the weakness created on White's King's wing by the advance of h3 on the 13th move - Steinitz.

16.a4 c5? Black gives the opponent another fixed mark for his pawn attack. As usual, its ultimate result is that the adversary can prepare at leisure his breaking in at that side. 16. ... a6 was much

better. If then White advanced the b pawn as far as b5, he could only open the a-file at the utmost, or Black had the option of first taking with the a pawn and then to advance c5 - Steinitz.

17.a5 ♖c7 18.b4 d5? From bad to worse: there was still some resistance possible, if he proceed with 18. ... e5 - Hoffer and Zukertort.

Ill-judged altogether. He ought to have reserved, as long as possible, the connection of his pawns, in order not to be forced to capture with the Queen when White exchanged the b pawn for the c pawn, as this also involved the isolation and ultimate fall of his further advanced d pawn - Steinitz.

19.e5 ♖d7 20.♙d2? Captain Mackenzie, who is usually dashing in his attack, nurses this time the crisis with precautions which might have caused a long delay at least. He ought not to have given the adversary a chance of preserving his chain of pawns, and at once 20.bxc5, followed by 21.♗f2, was superior - Steinitz.

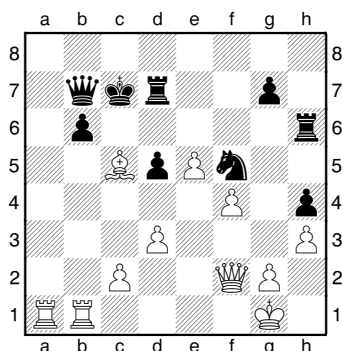
20...♗b8? For now, we believe, 20. ... b6 might have given a good deal of trouble, while the move in the text is worse than useless - Steinitz.

21.♗f2 b6 Too late now, especially as the King is so badly placed - Steinitz.

22.♖fb1! White now breaks up his adversary's game by a few vigorous strokes - Hoffer and Zukertort.

22...♙h6 23.bxc5 ♗xc5 24.♙b4! And now White is, of course, in his element, having a vehement attack against the adverse King in hand, which he begins to pursue with accustomed vigour and accuracy - Steinitz.

24...♗c6 25.♙xd4 ♗b7 26.♙xe6 ♙f5 27.♙xc7 ♗xc7 28.axb6+ axb6 29.♙c5 ♖h6



30.♙xb6+! In Captain Mackenzie's happiest mood he has 'missed many checks' in this game, but his first is final and decisive - Steinitz. **1-0**

If 30...♖xb6, then 31.♖xb6 (better than 31.♗c5+ ♗c6 32.♖a7+ ♗c8, etc.) 31...♗xb6 32.♖a7+ ♗c6 33.♗xb6+ ♗xb6 34.♖xd7 - Hoffer and Zukertort.

For if 30. ... ♖xb6 31.♗c5+ ♗c6 32.♖a7+ ♗c8 (best) 33.♖a8+ (he might also win by 33.♗f8+, and taking the Knight with a check) ♗c7 (best, for if 33. ... ♗b7, then follows 34.♖b8+) 34.♗a5, threatening 35.♖a7+, and wins – Steinitz.

The Golden Age of Chess is printed on high-quality paper with large, crystal-clear diagrams that make the pages pop. It weighs over 2 kg and measures 30.5 cm x 21.5 cm x 3.5 cm. For a self-published book, the production is first class. If I had to nitpick, I would prefer figurine algebraic notation rather than just algebraic notation, but that is personal preference. Some readers may find the large format a disadvantage. I believe the chess outweighs everything and the book is an excellent investment. Johnson's book doesn't just preserve history, it shows how the DNA of modern chess was forged in candle-lit cafés and handwritten score-books. Whether you're a historian, a competitive player, or a passionate enthusiast, this book offers a rich and rewarding journey through the roots of the royal game. I give it 4.0 stars out of 5.0.

Several chess stores carry the book, but not in the US. In order to obtain a copy, contact the author by email at melis-sarobert@bigpond.com. You might want to consider getting both his books: *Adolf Anderssen: Combinative Chess Genius* and *The Golden Age of Chess 1851-1886*. Or you could go in with some friends to reduce the mailing costs from Australia.

Continued from page 4

Here is one of Danya's most famous games where he defeated GM Caruana at the 2021 US Championship.

Caruana, Fabiano (2800) - Naroditsky, Daniel (2623) [C79]

USA-ch Saint Louis (5), 11.10.2021

1.e4 e5 2.♗f3 ♙c6 3.♙b5 a6 4.♙a4 d6 5.0-0 ♙d7 6.c3 ♙f6 7.♖e1 g6 8.d4 ♙g7 9.♙bd2 exd4 10.cxd4 0-0 11.h3 ♙b4 12.♙xd7 ♗xd7 13.♗b3 a5 14.a3 ♙c6 15.♙f1 a4 16.♗d3 ♙a5 17.♙g5 ♙b3 18.♖ad1 h6 19.♙xf6 ♙xf6 20.♙1d2 ♙a5 21.♙b1 b5 22.♗c2 ♙g7 23.♙c3 c6

24.e5 ♖fe8 25.♙e4 ♙c4 26.exd6 ♙xd6 27.♙e5 ♗f5 28.g4 ♗e6 29.♙c3 ♖ac8 30.♖e2 ♗b3 31.♗xb3 axb3 32.♗g2 c5 33.dxc5 ♙c4 34.♙xc4 ♖xe2 35.♙xe2 bxc4 36.♖c1 ♙xb2 37.♖xc4 ♙xa3 38.c6 b2 39.♙c3 ♙f8 40.♙b1 ♙g7 41.♗f3 ♗f8 42.h4 ♗e7 43.h5 ♙d6 44.hxg6 fxg6 45.♖b4 ♖xc6 46.♖b7 ♙e5 47.♙d2 ♖c2 48.♗e3 ♗c6 49.♖b3 ♖c3+ 50.♖xc3+ ♙xc3 51.♙b1 ♙b4 52.f4 ♙d5 53.♙d3 h5 54.f5 hxg4 55.fxg6 ♗e6 56.♗e4 g3 57.♗f3 ♙d6 **0-1**

The World will miss Danya! He was one of the most personable and respected grandmasters to grace the game. Rest in Peace Daniel.



Illustrated by Tony Sullivan

KYLA ZHAO — May the Best Player Win

Interviewed By Samika Nettem

Hi I am Samika Nettem and I will be a guest interviewer helping Rachel out for this issue.

May the Best Player Win is a novel that explores friendship, the pressure of competition, and identity. May Li, a promising seventh-grade chess player, put on a stellar performance at the California Middle School State Chess Championship, winning the inaugural ChessBase–Judit Polgár Award. Instead of feeling proud for being named the best female chess player at the event, May starts to experience self-doubt. One of her friends, Ralph, firmly believes that there is no way that girls are better than boys at chess. This disagreement sparks a rivalry between the two as they compete to see who the team captain at the National Team Chess Championship will be. The pressure of needing to win all of her games gets to May as she navigates through challenges to learn that she doesn't need to be the team captain or live up to others' expectations to show her worth.

The author, Kyla Zhao does a beautiful job of writing a story that is engaging and meaningful. Zhao created relatable characters that are full of depth and emotion, like the resilient and passionate May Li who thought about chess every minute. On top of all of this, Zhao does a wonderful job of conveying many heartfelt messages. For example, May was stressed about being team captain to prove that she is a strong chess player. This teaches the reader that no one is perfect, and you should be proud of who you are instead of always trying to win. Whether you know how to play chess or not, I would highly recommend this inspiring book to any kid that loves a great journey.

Key: SN=Samika Nettem; JA=Joshua Anderson; KZ=Kyla Zhou

Thanks to Charan Perumalla for his help with the transcription and parsing of the interview.



Kyla Zhao

SN: Hello Kyla. First question is what does your day-to-day life look like right now? And do you have any interest in returning to chess at some point?

KZ: Yeah, so I still play chess, but really casually. I play chess online, sometimes with friends. I just no longer play in competitions, because that's not really something I have time for anymore. I think on a day-to-day basis, I'm happy writing my books. I'm happy talking to people about my books. And I think I'm always just trying to look for new ideas, new inspiration. I also just started taking

an improv comedy class. So that's been a lot of fun.

SN: Oh, nice. So, when did you first start playing chess and how did you get into it?

KZ: I first started playing chess when I was six. My grandpa taught me the game. I just really like my grandpa. I wanted to spend time with him. And so, I figured that playing chess with him would be a good way of spending time. And I just lost to him like all the time at the very beginning. I remember the very first game I won against him. That was a big milestone for me, and I only found out much later that he let me win.

SN: Oh... Yeah. In your book, you mentioned that you were inspired by your true-life experiences as a little girl. So, what was your favorite experience?

KZ: I think there were some real-life memories that I kind of wrote into the book. For instance, when I was younger, I was a very tiny



kid, and so they would have to stack up two chairs so that I could sit on them and reach the other side of the board. I remember that at the very first tournament I played in we had to use a clock. At home when I play with my grandpa, we don't use a clock, we just like play casually. Then when I participated in my first tournament, I didn't really know that you were supposed to hit the clock after you made your move. And so, I just never did that, and my opponents never told me. They happily flagged me every single time. I

think I lost every single round on time, except for the last round when I had a bye and I got one pity point out of eight. That was my very first tournament. So, I remember that. I wouldn't say it's a favorite memory, but it's just one of these things that stick in your mind.

SN: Yeah, how did you feel? Did you feel upset? And did you learn for next tournament?

KZ: I definitely learned my lesson. I don't remember being upset. I remember being so excited because like, wow, like this is my first tournament. I feel like a real chess player now. I got so excited, because that was my very first time seeing a chess clock in real life. So yeah, and you know, when I was writing this book, I wrote it after I had quit chess for many, many years. The reason why I quit chess was because at some point it got very stressful. The performance anxiety, the pressure to do well, the pressure to always get a medal and a trophy. It felt like the focus on getting results and getting medals was just overshadowing any joy and love that the game brought me. But when I was writing this book and I was thinking about my very first tournament, I was like, oh, wow, like there was a time in my life when I didn't care about how badly I did. Like, I just love chess so much that I would have loved any opportunity I got to play chess. It was only much later on in my chess career when, you know, winning and losing became such a big deal that it became the very first thing on my mind. So, I think back to my very first tournament with a lot of fondness.

SN: Oh, that's nice. You say you started when you were six or so. That's really young. Have you ever felt scared to play anyone who was older or who you think was better than you?

KZ: I think I quit competitive chess when I was around 14. Towards the end of middle school, I remember I would feel so scared every time a young kid sat across from me. Because, you know, young kids can be so scary sometimes, especially when they're unrated. It's like you never know whether you're sitting opposite the next prodigy or something. I feel like chess is becoming a younger and younger person's game. And prodigies in chess are, you know, always very glorified, always being put on a pedestal. In some ways, it's nice that so many young people want to join the game. On the other hand, it's stressful because this is, I mean, even as an adult, I don't always know how to lose graciously. I don't always know how to handle the emotions in a sense of disappointment and failure that I experience when I lose graciously. And then you have kids as young as like three, four,

five, who have to know how to face a loss. And I'm not sure they have the emotional capacity to do that. And so, I worry for the young kids. I think that's why we need to talk more about things like performance anxiety, about pressure, about expectations and how to deal with all of them.

SN: Yeah, I agree. You know you're a very successful author, right? You've written a lot of books. How did you first become an author after you played chess for many years?

KZ: Yeah, so I began writing when I was in college. I was a third-year student at Stanford University and then the pandemic hit. This was in 2020. I'm from Singapore, but during the pandemic, Singapore shut down its borders really early. They weren't really letting people from the United States go into Singapore and so I ended up staying in California by myself for most of 2020. I got very lonely and I was very homesick. I was also witnessing a lot of anti-Asian racism during the pandemic. The Asian community was being blamed, was being criticized, and we were even becoming the victims of hate crimes. I felt very helpless whenever I saw an Asian woman like myself being portrayed in a very negative manner. I think I started writing as a way for me to kind of take control of the narrative for myself, to reclaim a sense of pride in my own heritage and being an Asian and being a member of the Asian community. I always make sure that I write stories where Asian characters are the main characters. We're not just the main characters of some sad, depressing story, but we are also exploring ambition and belonging and joy and happiness. Yeah, and I think that's just really important to me.

SN: Yeah. Being Asian, have you ever felt invisible or even just being a girl in chess? Have you ever felt like there were no other girls there? Have you felt like your opponent was rude to you? Because you know, in the book you talk about how Ralph was a problematic character and how he wasn't the nicest to Mae. Did that sort of reflect your experiences?

KZ: Yeah. The thing is, most people wouldn't be rude enough to come up to you to your face and be like, oh, girls can't be as good as boys at chess. Boys are better. Like no one really came up to my face to say that. But I kind of sensed it in the things that they were saying around me. For example, if I played with a boy and he lost to me, his friends would make fun of him and be like, oh, how could you lose to a girl? Aren't you embarrassed? Or there was this one time I remember when I was 11, and I was playing at this open tournament, and it was before round four, I was looking at a pairing sheet and I saw that I was paired against this boy. I didn't know him very well, but I kind of recognized his face and he was standing just a few feet in front of me, also looking at a pairing sheet. He didn't know I was behind him. Then he had a friend next to him, another boy. He turned to his friend and said, oh, next round I'm playing against this person called Kyla Zhao. And his friend said, oh, it's a girl. That's an easy win. So just things like that. But I kind of felt like people didn't think girls were as capable as boys. And I would also hear things like, you know, like girls play too emotionally, girls are too timid, girls are not aggressive enough, girls are not competitive enough. And I would just hear that a lot over and over again. I began to believe in that, and as I said, it was just so weird because I began to believe and I began to feel like oh maybe as a girl I don't deserve to be in this space. and then I felt this very desperate need to prove myself to prove that I was good enough that I did deserve to be there and I think that's also why I place so much pressure on

myself to get medals to get trophies you know some sort of achievement that would really prove that I was good enough. But as my performance anxiety got worse, my performance also got worse. And then I began to wonder, like, why does it seem like I'm the only one who can't handle the pressure of competition? Is it because what they are saying is true, that girls are not aggressive enough, that girls are too emotional? It kind of just became this very vicious cycle that was hard for me to snap out of.

SN: Yeah, so is there like, I'm a girl, I play chess, or any girl who does anything, if they ever felt like they didn't belong there, or they couldn't do something that a boy could do is there a message you would like tell them?

KZ: Yeah, so I would say, you know, if you ever hear anyone saying anything like that, it doesn't reflect anything about you. It reflects something about them. Because I think only people who are insecure will go out of their way to try to put down someone else. You can't control what other people do, but what you can control is how you want to respond to that. The thing is, you don't have to respond. You just have to focus on your own game. You don't have to make sure that you always win, but you want to make sure that you're always learning something. I think that's the importance of it, that you shouldn't be playing to win you should be playing to... that's not true... I mean ultimately you need to have some sort of ambition, if you want to go far in chess. But you know, at the end of the day, what I think the real message is? I want to impart failure isn't the opposite of success, it is a part of success. You can become successful with failing along the way, because that teaches you way more than winning would, so yeah, I think that's what I want them to take away from my book.

SN: In your story, you talk a lot about how Mei's experience sort of reflected your experiences. Was there ever a moment in the story that you had trouble writing or really made you feel how you felt as a kid?

KZ: Oh gosh. Yeah. That's such a good question. You know, I think I didn't think anything was too hard to write. I found it very therapeutic, very cathartic because I think, writing is. This book was a way for me to answer the question of, why did I quit? Why didn't I continue with chess? What would have made me want to continue? It became a way for me to explore all the negative emotions I had towards chess by the end of my competitive career. As I began to write, I began to think of all the good memories, like I said, and I was like, yeah, I mean, I really did love chess so much once upon a time. It was such a beautiful game. It brought back a lot of happy memories for me. Ultimately, because this is something that is inspired by a really personal event in my life, it's very close to my heart. I really wanted to make this story as good as it could be before I shared it with the whole world. I think I spent four years writing and rewriting this book, just trying to get it better and better with every single draft.

SN: Yeah, well, that's really great to hear. Do you want to talk about your other books? What do they have to do with your stories or anything?

KZ: Yeah, for sure. So right now, I'm working on my next book. It comes out next fall. It's called *Heirs of Infamy*, H-E-I-R-S. It is a young adult historical fiction. It was inspired by my visit to the Mafia Museum in Las Vegas. It's set in 1949, San Francisco,

Chinatown, the oldest Chinatown in the United States. It's about two gangs who have to team up to pull off a heist. I'm really excited about that. You know, this, I think is the first book that has, it completely has nothing to do with my personal life at all. But I'm really excited about it. I did a lot of research into the mafia, into the underworld, into the gang world. I learned a lot about all of that. I think it does tackle a similar theme to the story about Mei, which is what it is like being a girl in a very male-dominated world? Because, you know, like the underworld, it is very male dominated. Women, girls, they are pushed to the sidelines. They're not really offered a role in the organization. Our main character is a teenage girl. She is trying to carve out a place for herself in this very male-dominated society. And I think in some ways, she faces similar challenges to what Mei faces.



SN: Yeah, that's really cool. That's all the questions that I have for you. Thank you so much for sharing.

KZ: Of course.

SN: Do you have anything to add Joshua?

JA: Thank you. I do have one question. We were surprised that you have no published games. My background is in history and political science. My chess work is mostly in historical chess games and historical chess events.

KZ: Ya.

JA: And so, games are everything. And we were kind of curious, if this was an act of rebellion that you just got rid of them all, or if they had just kind of gotten lost along the way. But we were asking is this on purpose? Could somebody purposely do this?

KZ: Oh, no, it's just because Kyla's a pen name, so it is not my real name. You wouldn't find any games under Kyla Zhao.

JA: Ah, so we'd find real games under your real name.

KZ: Yeah, there are real games out there. I mean, not under USCF, because I didn't grow up in America, but there are definitely real games out there. Just not under my pen name. In a way, I'm happy about that because I feel like, you know, I do so many book events. Sometimes it's with chess organizations and I get asked so many questions about what's your rating on [chess.com](https://www.chess.com/)? What's your highest rating? But, you know, I'm just like, I don't want to talk about my chess rating. So yeah.

JA: Okay. You do have games that do still exist. We won't pry, I mean, we're a very, I don't know how many of the magazines you looked at, but we're a very soft, gentle, and pleasant sort of organization generally.

KZ: ya

JA: So, we're not particularly concerned, but I guess it's just very odd, especially considering both the editor and I are both big chess history guys. We were like, how could this be right? How would you do this? We were very confused. That was our question and that explains it. So, thank you, that explains a lot.

KZ: That makes sense. Yeah, I understand the confusion. I'm also a huge fan of chess history. In fact, I think sometimes I like talking about chess history more than I actually like playing the game itself. I think even when I stopped playing chess, even when I no longer competed in chess, I still really love reading about the history of it. I'm quite a nerd in that way.

JA: Yes, we have a lot of nerd comments about us, but that's okay. I run our club, I don't know if you can see, but this is our library?

KZ: It's so beautiful. I was like, wow, that's quite a library.

JA: Yeah, so we have about 1,200 books in here, which a few of the kids actually use. The ones who are good, right? There should be a, you know, we try to convince them, look, the people who are good use the library. The people who are not good do not use the library.

KZ: Yeah. Yeah.

JA: Seems like it should be. We're very interested in those sorts of things. And obviously a lot of this is chess history, though there's a fair amount on getting better and improving your game in this way or that way or whatever.

KZ: Yeah.

JA: But yes, it's a fun and very interesting thing. Thank you very much for speaking with us.

KZ: Of course, thank you so much for all the very thoughtful questions. I appreciate that. Have a nice rest of your day.

JA: Thanks, you too.

Described as a family-friendly take on *The Queen's Gambit*, **May the Best Player Win** explores the pressure to succeed through the eyes of a young chess prodigy. Carissa Yip, the current **U.S. Women's Chess Champion**, praised it as: "A game-changer for readers of all ages, whether or not you play chess! This book will leave you inspired to conquer your next match in life."

It is available in print, audiobook, and eBook formats on [Amazon](#) and [other major retailers](#).

Author [Kyla Zhao](#) competed in scholastic chess tournaments for many years and was selected for her country's national junior squad. Her books have been featured by CBS, NBC, Good Morning America, *Vogue*, BuzzFeed, and more. A Stanford University alum, Kyla has been named a *Forbes* 30 Under 30 honoree, a *Tatler* Leader of Tomorrow, and awarded a Certificate of Recognition by the California State Assembly. Learn more at [kylazhao.com](#).

May the Best Player Win ACHIEVEMENTS

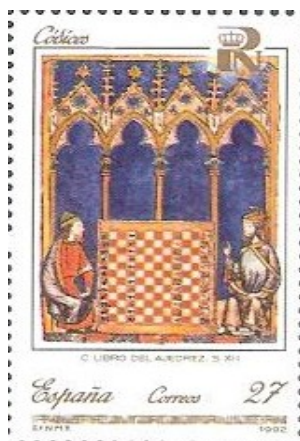
- Featured at **2024 World Chess Championship** and **International Chess Olympiad**
- Selected for **Hong Kong Battle of the Books** 2025-26
- Selected for **Singapore Battle of the Books** 2025-26
- Shortlisted for the **Switzerland Golden Cowbell Book Award** 2025-26
- Recommended Book by **International Chess Federation**
- Selected for **New York Public Library's** Vibrant Voices list
- **Mathical Award Honor Book**
- **U.S. National Spelling Bee** book club pick
- **The Week Junior's** Book of the Week
- Selected for **American Library Association's**
- Feminist Book Project 2025
- Shortlisted for **Chess.com Book of the Year**
- *The Straits Times* **bestseller**
- Exhibited at **World Chess Hall of Fame**

Chess, like life, is not won with a single brilliant move, but with consistency, patience and long-term vision. – Benjamin Franklin

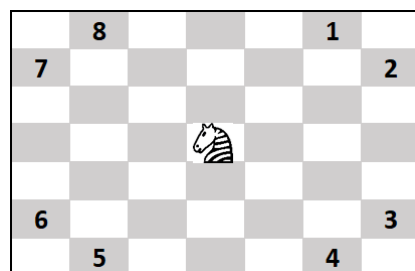
Studies in Tour of Zebra {2,3} on Square Board

By Awani Kumar, Lucknow, India

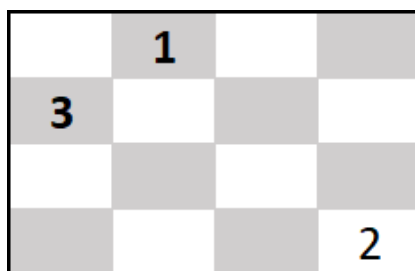
Knight is an old piece and its move has not changed since the conception of chess around 6th century AD. Tour of knight is a fascinating, evergreen puzzle almost as old as the game of chess – the oldest record dates back to 840 AD. Zebra is also an old piece and has appeared in chess variants under different names. Its oldest name dates back as *Zaraffa* in Grant Acedrex, a 13th century book of chess and games composed during the reign of Spanish king Alfonso X. Postage stamps depicting it on a 12x12 board have been issued. The painting on which these stamps are based comes from the above book.



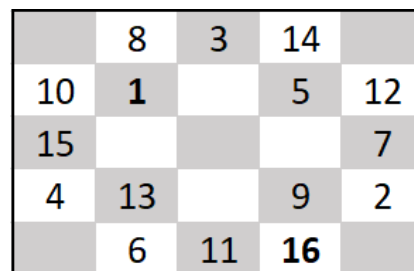
It is called *Elephant* in Ciccolini's Chess (1820) and *Courtier* in Mideast Chess (1971). Dickins [1] and Pritchard [2] have mentioned it in their renowned book. Although tour of knight has a vast literature spanning over several centuries in myriad languages but the tour of zebra – a {2,3} leaper and thus a longer-legged cousin of knight – has got scanty attention and thus offers wide scope and fertile ground for further studies. Primarily it is because of the complexity of zebra tour. Early knight tours had asymmetric pattern and Roget and Beverley came up with more improved technique in mid 19th century. No such powerful technique has been discovered yet for zebra tour. Kumar [3], [4], [5] has looked into zebra tours on oblong boards. 10x10 is the smallest board size on which a zebra tour is possible and A. H. Frost, a mathematician and magic square buff, was the first to find it in 1886. Later Kraitichik, Cross and Willcocks composed few zebra tours. Cozens, Jelliss and Marlow have constructed symmetric tours. Jelliss [6] has meticulously compiled the details. What can be the longest path on various square boards? Can there be tours having magic lines? The author plans to look into these questions. Zebra can't move on 3x3 and smaller boards. Figure 1 shows possible zebra moves. Figure 2 shows longest path on 4x4 board covering 3 cells. No tour is possible on 5x5 board because zebra can neither get in nor come out from the central cell. Jelliss [7] has given the longest circuit covering 16 cells and Figure 3 is an example. Jelliss has also proved that zebra cannot tour any board of side 6, 7 or 8.



1.



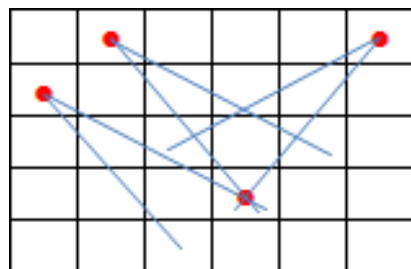
2.



3.

Figure 4 (by Jelliss) shows a board of side 6 where the cell d4 is being 'impinged' by three zebra moves. This rules out the possibility of closed tour. If we try to get open tour by deleting one of the three connecting moves then "we always have either more than two triple points or two points where at least four moves converge, or one point where at least five moves converge". This rules out the possibility of open tour. Similar logic proves that zebra tour is not possible on board of side 7 or 8. Figure 5 shows the longest circuit

with axial symmetry on 6x6 board. The difference between move numbers is 15 from the vertical axis. Figure 6 has the longest path on 6x6 board. [Circuit is a closed tour and path is an open tour.] Figure 7 is the longest rotary symmetric circuit visiting 32 cells on 7x7 board. The diagonally opposite pairs of numbers differ by 16. Figure 8 shows longest path covering 38 cells when the tour starts from a dark cell. Figure 9 shows a longer path covering 39 cells when the tour starts from a light cell. Figure 10 and Figure 11 show the longest axial symmetric path and the nearest rotary symmetric path visiting 54 cells and 53 cells respectively on 8x8 board. There is no rotary symmetric path 54 cells long. Figure 12 shows the longest path visiting 55 cells on 8x8 board. Kotesovec [8] has also looked into tours on 8x8 board.



4.

	19	26	11	4	
21		1	16		6
8	3	14	29	18	23
25	12	5	20	27	10
30	17	22	7	2	15
	28	9	24	13	

5.

1	18	11	26	3	
16		6	21		31
29	4	23	8	19	14
12	25	2	17	10	27
7	20	15	30	5	22
	9	28	13	24	

6.

		22	1	8		
		13	26	19		
32	11	28	15	4	21	30
25	18	7		23	2	9
14	5	20	31	12	27	16
		3	10	29		
		24	17	6		

7.

1		19	28		38	3
		30	23	34		
27	12	37	2	25	18	
20	35	8	15	4	29	10
31	24	17	6	13	22	33
		26	11	36		
7	14	21	32	9	16	5

8.

	1	20	13	24		
		37	26	7		
12	23	16	35	2	21	14
19		29	4	33	10	25
36	27	6	31	38	17	8
	34	11	22	15		3
30	39	18	9	28	5	32

9.

19		25	34	7	52		46
2			9	36			29
15	6	51	20	47	24	33	42
26	35	18	1	28	45	8	53
39	10	3	16	43	30	37	12
50	21	14	5	32	41	48	23
17		27	38	11	54		44
4		40	49	22	13		31

10.

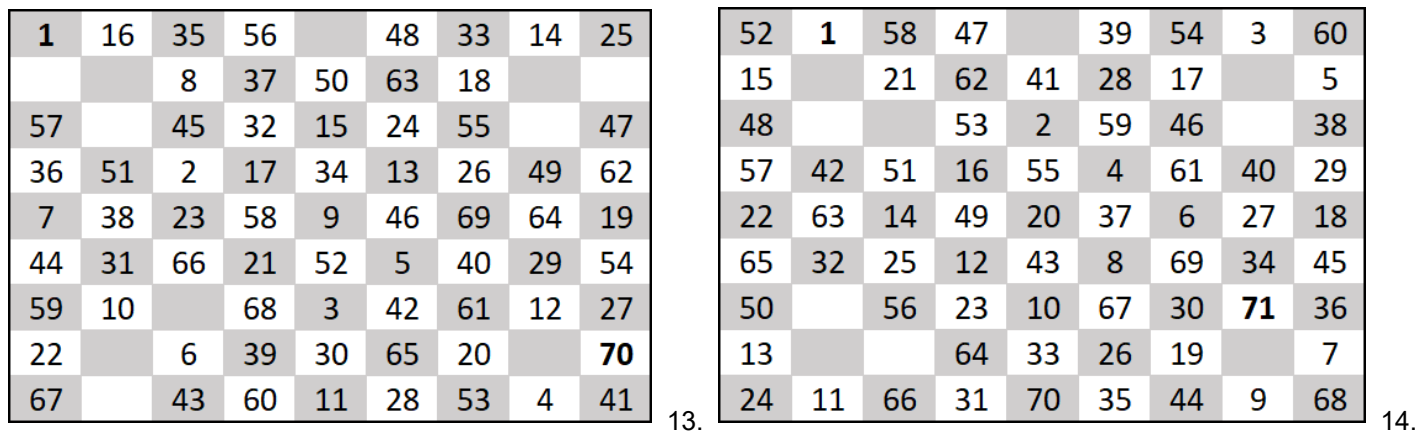
18		14	37	30	7		25
		27	48	9	20		
38	29	6	17	24	13	42	31
47	36	19	2	15	26	49	8
34	23	52	41	28	45	10	21
5	16	39	50	43	32	3	12
	1	46	35	22	53		
51		33	4	11	40		44

11.

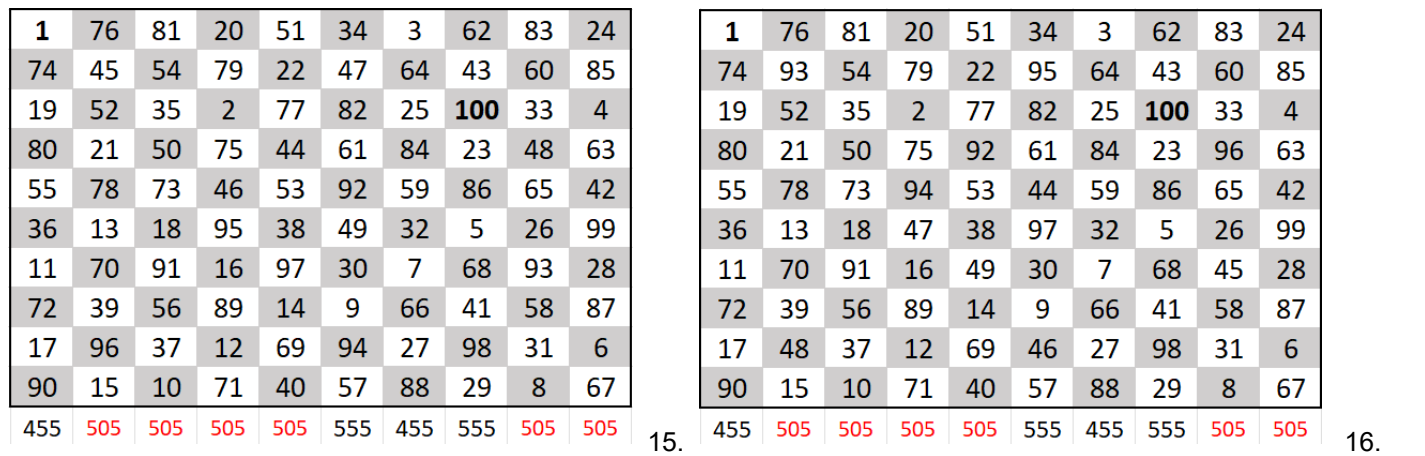
1		9	52	31	18		24
		26	41	16	45		5
51	32	19	2	23	10	53	30
8	15	46	35	4	25	40	17
27	42	37	48	33	6	13	44
20	3	50	39	54	29	22	11
47	34	7	14	43	36		
38		28	21	12	49		55

12.

Figure 13 shows longest path covering 70 cells on 9x9 board with the tour starting from dark cell. Figure 14 shows a longer path visiting 71 cells with the tour starting from light cell. Since zebra moves alternately from dark cell to light cell (or vice versa), one expects a longer tour on odd by odd size boards – say 7x7 or 9x9 etc – when the tour starts from dark cell but Figure 9 and Figure 14 show longer paths when the tour starts from light cell. Such counter-intuitive results – on 7x7 and 9x9 boards – are rare, perplexing, intriguing and amusing. As we will see later, it is not so for 11x11 and 13x13 board. Zebra on the chess board is more fascinating than the one in the wild.



10x10 is the smallest board size that can have zebra visiting all the cells. Naturally, it deserves more attention. Kumar [9] has also looked into it. Figure 15 and Figure 16 are tours having six magic columns and the four non-magic columns are 505 ± 50 . One can place two of them side-by-side, link cell 100 with cell 1 and get a tour on 10x20 board. This can further be extended to get tours on 10x30, 10x40, 10x50 boards ... ad infinitum. Figure 17 to Figure 19 are also prolific tours. They have six magic lines and one can get zebra tours on 10x20 board by stacking two of them one below the other and linking cell 100 with cell 1. This can be extended in the multiples of 10 board size – 10x20, 10x30 etc. – and all these tours will have six magic columns!



59	32	25	94	71	16	1	46	27	90
34	5	68	19	92	3	44	7	48	29
95	70	15	60	31	26	89	72	17	50
24	93	58	33	6	47	28	91	2	45
67	20	35	4	69	18	49	30	43	8
14	61	96	77	12	63	82	51	88	73
57	38	23	98	75	84	53	40	79	86
36	11	66	21	100	55	42	9	64	81
97	76	13	62	39	78	87	74	83	52
22	99	56	37	10	65	80	85	54	41
505	505	455	505	505	455	555	505	505	555

17.

67	20	43	76	65	38	1	6	45	80
18	31	56	41	78	49	8	29	4	47
75	58	37	68	21	44	81	64	39	2
42	77	66	19	30	5	46	79	50	7
55	22	17	32	57	40	3	48	9	28
36	69	74	59	34	51	88	93	82	63
99	14	25	72	61	86	95	12	91	84
16	33	54	23	70	97	10	27	52	89
73	60	35	100	13	92	83	62	87	94
24	71	98	15	26	53	90	85	96	11
505	455	505	505	455	555	505	505	555	505

18.

67	20	43	76	65	38	1	6	45	80
18	29	56	41	78	49	8	31	4	47
75	64	37	68	21	44	81	58	39	2
42	77	66	19	30	5	46	79	50	7
55	22	17	28	57	40	3	48	9	32
36	69	74	63	34	51	88	93	82	59
99	14	25	72	61	86	95	12	91	84
16	27	54	23	70	97	10	33	52	89
73	62	35	100	13	92	83	60	87	94
24	71	98	15	26	53	90	85	96	11
505	455	505	505	455	555	505	505	555	505

19.

										708
49	32	63	84	55	22	1	30	65	80	481
34	13	52	61	82	47	28	77	96	67	557
85	56	21	50	31	64	79	54	23	2	465
62	83	48	33	12	95	66	81	46	29	555
51	60	35	14	53	76	97	68	27	78	559
20	11	86	57	18	45	24	3	94	43	401
9	38	73	88	59	26	5	40	75	92	505
36	15	100	71	90	7	42	17	98	69	545
87	58	19	10	39	74	93	44	25	4	453
72	89	8	37	16	99	70	91	6	41	529
505	455	505	505	455	555	505	505	555	505	505

20.

Figure 20 has 7 magic lines (1 row and 6 columns) and sum of the long diagonals (302 and 708) is 1010 – twice the magic constant 505. Figure 21 has 7 magic lines and the sum of the long diagonals is same, namely, 502. Such tours are rare. Figure 22 has eight magic lines and the two non-magic lines are 505 ± 50 . Its long diagonals adding to 504 and 506, that is, 505 ± 1 . They are closest to the magic constant 505 and their sum is 1010 – twice the magic constant 505. This is the nearest to semi-magic tour the author has discovered. Readers are urged to improve upon it. It is curious (and amusing) that cell 1 and cell 100 in Figure 22 are connected by another fairy piece Giraffe {1,4} move. All these tours are open tours. Figure 23 and Figure 24 are closed (or reentrant) tours having six magic lines and the four non-magic lines are 505 ± 50 .

										502
3	86	63	40	19	96	15	88	61	44	
84	51	22	65	42	1	90	53	28	59	
39	20	97	4	87	62	45	18	95	14	
64	41	2	85	52	29	60	43	16	89	
23	66	83	50	21	54	27	58	91	46	
100	5	38	71	98	17	94	13	30	75	
7	80	69	36	73	92	11	78	55	32	
82	49	24	67	34	9	76	47	26	57	
37	72	99	6	79	70	31	74	93	12	
68	35	8	81	48	25	56	33	10	77	
507	505	505	505	553	455	505	505	505	505	502

21.

										504
3	86	63	40	19	96	15	88	61	44	
84	49	22	65	42	1	90	47	28	59	
39	20	97	4	87	62	45	18	95	14	
64	41	2	85	48	29	60	43	16	89	
23	66	83	50	21	54	27	58	91	46	
98	5	38	71	100	17	94	13	30	75	
7	80	69	36	73	92	11	78	55	32	
82	51	24	67	34	9	76	53	26	57	
37	72	99	6	79	70	31	74	93	12	
68	35	8	81	52	25	56	33	10	77	
505	505	505	505	555	455	505	505	505	505	506

22.

83	6	45	50	73	28	95	56	1	18	455
4	47	76	43	52	97	58	25	54	99	555
49	74	29	84	7	2	17	72	27	94	455
44	51	82	5	46	55	100	19	96	57	555
77	42	3	48	75	26	53	98	59	24	505
30	85	8	67	20	81	34	93	16	71	505
87	64	39	10	69	32	91	62	37	14	505
66	21	78	41	12	89	60	23	80	35	505
9	68	31	86	63	38	15	70	33	92	505
40	11	88	65	22	79	36	13	90	61	505

23.

83	6	45	50	81	20	95	56	1	18	455
4	47	78	43	52	97	58	23	54	99	555
49	80	29	84	7	2	17	72	21	94	455
44	51	82	5	46	55	100	19	96	57	555
77	42	3	48	79	22	53	98	59	24	505
30	85	8	67	28	73	34	93	16	71	505
87	64	39	10	69	32	91	62	37	14	505
66	27	76	41	12	89	60	25	74	35	505
9	68	31	86	63	38	15	70	33	92	505
40	11	88	65	26	75	36	13	90	61	505

24.

It is well known that tour of knight exists on 5x5 and larger boards. Similarly, one expects that tour of zebra will exist on all boards of size 10x10 and larger (because manoeuvring space increases with the board size). But this is not the case. Ed Pegg [10] has proved that there can't be zebra tour on 11x11 and 12x12 boards. Figure 25 is the longest path possible – covering 120 cells – on 11x11 board. 1 to 120 circuit is impossible and 1 to 118 circuit has remained elusive. Is it illusive? Figure 26 and Figure 27 show the longest path covering 142 cells on 12x12 board. Figure 28 is the longest circuit covering 140 cells. Can it be improved?

1	50	33	78	19	116	107	70	31	76	95
52	13	104	47	54	15	72	45	102	17	74
79	20	115	106	49	32	77	96	117	108	69
34	55	2	51	12	103	18	75	94	71	30
105	48	53	14	21	46	109	16	73	44	101
114	11	80	35	56		64	29	68	97	118
3	22	59	8	89	112	43	100	87	110	93
24	57	6	61	10	91	98	85	40	65	28
81	36	113	4	63	26	83	38	119	42	67
60	9	90	23	58	7	88	111	92	99	86
5	62	25	82	37	120	41	66	27	84	39

25.

17	24	47	106	57	134	3	22	45	96	71	120
26	5	108	49	92	19	142	35	90	59	132	69
105	56	135	16	23	46	95	72	121	2	21	44
48	93	18	25	4	107	58	133	70	119	34	97
109	50	27	6	141	36	91	20	131	68	89	60
136	15	104	55	94	73	118	33	84	43	122	1
7	140	37	110	51		67	88	61	98		130
28	79	74	137	14	85	54	123	12	117	32	83
103	52	125	76	139	30	81	10	115	64	87	42
38	111	8	127	78	101	40	113	66	129	62	99
75	138	29	80	53	124	13	86	31	82	11	116
126	77	102	39	112	9	128	63	100	41	114	65

26.

12	3	70	133	74	101	22	141	68	123	40	91
5	24	107	58	135	14	105	44	137	76	103	42
132	73	100	11	2	69	122	39	90	21	142	67
71	134	13	4	23	140	75	102	41	92	45	124
108	57	6	25	106	59	136	15	104	43	138	77
99	10	131	72	121	38	1	50	115	66	89	20
26		60	109	56	83	32	139	46	125	16	93
7	120	37	98	9	118	53	88	19	78	51	114
130	55	86	35	96	49	112	17	80	31	116	65
61	110	27	84	33	128	63	82	29	94	47	126
36	97	8	119	54	87		117	52	113	18	79
85	34	129	62	111	28	95	48	127	64	81	30

27.

55	26	9	78	129	108	45	72	19	76	127	118
28	43	70	23	30	41	116	21	88	139	106	125
79	130	109	56	25	8	77	128	119	46	73	18
10	31	54	27	44	71	140	107	126	117	20	75
69	24	29	42	115	22	87	40	105	124	89	138
110	57	80	131	36			7	74	17	120	47
53	114	11	32	1	98	63	90	137	86		104
132	37	68	111	58	39	4	121	48	93	6	123
81	2	99	66	113	134	35	50	95	60	91	16
12	33	52	101	64	83	14	97	62	103	136	85
67	112	133	38	3		59	92	5	122	49	94
100	65	82	13	34	51	102	135	84	15	96	61

28.

Zebra tour [11] on 13x13 board is an open question. Figure 29 show the longest path covering 168 cells discovered on 13x13 board. Figure 30 is the longest circuit covering 166 cells. Can it be improved? Figure 31 and Figure 32 show tours on 14x14 board. Both have two magic lines. The former has two magic rows and the latter, a row and a column. Readers are urged to look for tours having more magic lines.

51	142	41	120	83	96	53	140	27	114	85	158	55
144	107	16	39	118	125	164	129	116	29	98	127	156
121	82	95	52	141	42	1	84	159	54	139	26	113
40	119	50	143	106	17	28	97	126	157	56	115	86
15	38	145	108	165	130	117	124	163	128	155	30	99
94	105	122	81	110	67	160	43	2	25	112	7	138
49	166	131	14	37	146		18	31	74	87	162	57
80	109	68	93	104	123	24	111	8	137	100	3	154
13	36	147	48	167	44	73	66	161	6	19	32	75
132	71	64	149	46	11	34	77	4	21	58	9	88
69	92	79	62	151	134	103	90	23	60	153	136	101
148	47	12	35	72	65	168	45	10	33	76	5	20
63	150	133	70	91	78	61	152	135	102	89	22	59

29.

1	154	123	160	69	56	3	152	125	80	67	42	5
156	17	102	29	158	165		19	104	31	54	109	44
161	70	57	2	153	124	81	68	41	4	151	126	79
122	159	166	155	18	103	30	55	110	43	6	105	66
101	28	157	16	143	20	51	164	137	108	45	32	53
58	87	162	71	82	113	40	89	106	127	78	111	150
15	142	121	50	27	136		46	33	52	65	138	7
72	83	100	59	88	163	144	21	112	39	90	107	128
49	26	135	86	141	120	95	114	139	118	149	34	77
24	97	14	133	84	47	36	75	116	147	8	93	64
99	60	73	12	131	22		62	145	10	129	38	91
134	85	48	25	96	115	140	119	94	35	76	117	148
13	132	23	98	61	74	11	130	37	92	63	146	9

30.

4	113	76	109	146	69	2	15	78	35	144	67	196	13	1067
115	180	133	74	107	42	131	32	11	166	25	40	129	194	1379
110	147	70	3	112	77	36	145	68	1	14	79	34	143	1039
75	108	5	114	179	16	165	106	41	130	195	12	167	66	1379
134	73	116	181	132	31	10	43	24	33	128	193	26	39	1163
71	56	111	148	175	8	99	58	37	22	29	142	97	80	1133
182	153	162	89	6	105	178	17	164	27	168	65	50	127	1493
117	176	135	72	57	44	23	30	9	98	59	38	21	192	1071
90	149	104	55	154	163	174	7	100	51	96	81	28	141	1393
161	88	183	152	177	18	157	60	45	20	49	126	169	64	1469
136	155	118	185	150	159	86	93	62	47	124	191	84	171	1761
103	54	91	120	187	138	101	52	173	122	189	140	95	82	1647
184	151	160	87	156	61	46	19	158	85	170	63	48	125	1513
119	186	137	102	53	92	121	188	139	94	83	172	123	190	1799
1601	1789	1601	1491	1791	1023	1329	865	1109	931	1473	1409	1267	1627	

31.

28	157	10	45	94	55	26	155	8	53	64	171	24	153	1043
159	192	183	60	187	86	101	128	185	62	173	84	99	22	1721
44	93	56	27	156	9	46	95	170	25	154	7	52	65	999
11	188	29	158	193	184	61	54	85	100	23	152	63	172	1473
182	59	160	191	166	129	186	87	102	127	98	21	174	83	1765
57	194	43	92	189	180	169	140	47	96	51	66	119	6	1449
30	167	12	75	90	103	124	117	138	49	88	109	126	151	1379
161	190	181	58	141	42	165	130	179	120	175	82	97	20	1741
76	91	36	195	168	139	48	89	110	125	118	5	50	67	1317
13	74	31	162	15	116	137	104	123	114	19	150	121	108	1287
72	39	142	33	164	131	178	41	106	17	148	135	176	81	1463
37	196	77	144	35	70	111	2	79	146	133	68	113	4	1215
32	163	14	73	40	105	16	115	136	177	122	107	18	149	1267
143	34	71	38	1	78	145	132	69	112	3	80	147	134	1187
1045	1837	1045	1351	1639	1427	1513	1389	1537	1323	1369	1237	1379	1215	

32.

The results for the longest path are summarised in the table below:

Board size (nxn)		4x4	5x5	6x6	7x7	8x8	9x9	10x10	11x11	12x12	13x13	14x14
No. of cells		16	25	36	49	64	81	100	121	144	169	196
Longest path		3	16	31	39	55	71	100	120	142	168	196
No. of non-visited cells		13	9	5	10	9	10	0	1	2	1	0

Conclusion: The author has looked into zebra tour on square boards. Longest path (and circuit) covers 16 cells on 5x5 board. Longest circuit and longest path cover 30 and 31 cells respectively on 6x6 board. [Circuit is a closed tour and path is an open tour.] Longest circuit covers 32 cells and longest path covers 39 cells respectively on 7x7 board. However longest path visits only 38 cells if the tour starts from a cell having same colour as the corner cells. Longest circuit and longest path cover 54 and 55 cells respectively on 8x8 board. Longest circuit and longest path cover 68 and 71 cells respectively on 9x9 board. However longest path visits only 70 cells if the tour starts from a cell having same colour as the corner cells. 7x7 and 9x9 boards have counter-intuitive longest path lengths. 10x10 is the smallest square board that can have Hamiltonian circuit. Semi-magic tour has remained elusive – perhaps it is not there (illusive?). The closest to semi-magic tour has eight magic lines and the two non-magic lines are adding to 505 ± 50 . It is an open tour and readers are urged to improve it. The reentrant tour which is closest to semi-magic tour has six magic lines and the four non-magic lines are adding to 505 ± 50 . By suitably choosing 10x10 tours, we can get tours on board size 10x20, 10x30, 10x40 ... ad infinitum. All these tours can have six magic lines and the four non-magic lines will be 2010 ± 100 , 4515 ± 150 , 8020 ± 200 ... and so on respectively. In general, 10x10k board will have six magic lines with magic constant $5k(100k + 1)$ and the four non-magic lines will be $5k(100k + 1) \pm 50k$. How many zebra tours are there on 10x10 board? The estimation is difficult and one can be awfully off the mark. [Yes, it happened with the estimation of knight tour on 8x8 board. Sokolsky [12] states "Mathematicians have established that more than 30 million such routes are possible." Wikipedia [13] informs that the exact number of tours is 19,591,828,170,979,904 – some 653 million times more than the Sokolsky's estimation.] The author conjectures that there are approximately 100 million zebra tours on 10x10 board. Longest circuit and longest path cover 140 and 142 cells respectively on 12x12 board. It is 166 and 168 cells respectively on 13x13 board. Tours with two magic lines have been discovered on 14x14 board. Tour of zebra is calling for and deserves more investigation to unravel its mysteries.

References:

1. A. Dickins; A Guide to Fairy Chess, 1971, p.11
2. D.B. Pritchard; The Encyclopaedia of Chess Variants, 1994, p.227
3. A. Kumar; Studies in Tour of Zebra {2,3} on 5xn board, *idee & form* No.153, p.5187-5189, January 2022
4. A. Kumar; Further Studies in Tour of Zebra {2,3} on 5xn board, *idee & form* No.156, p.5286-5290, October 2022
5. A. Kumar; Studies in Tour of Zebra {2,3} on 9xn board, *idee & form* No.159, p.5405-5408, July 2023
6. G.P. Jelliss; *Knight's Tour Notes*, Volume 10, Augmented Knight & Leaper Tours, 2019, p. 31 – 33
7. G.P. Jelliss; *Leapers at Large*, available at www.mayhematics.com
8. V. Kotesovec; *Dual-free Leaper and Hopper Tours*, Prague 2009, p.41
9. A. Kumar; Studies in Tour of Zebra {2,3} on 10x10 board, *idee & form* No.165, p.5608-5610, January 2025
10. Ed Pegg; *Leapers*, available at www.mathpuzzle.com
11. *Zebra Graph*; available at www.mathworld.wolfram.com
12. A. Sokolsky; *Your First Move: Chess for Beginners*, Raduga Publishers, Moscow, page 15, 1987
13. Wikipedia; *Knight's tour*, as on 30 April 2025

Oddities and Peculiarities (and Obscurities)

The Haunted Chessmen by E.R. Punshon

First published in *The Novel Magazine*, March 1916.

1. *The Black Queen*

It was in Fred Kerr's rooms that I saw them first. For a wonder Kerr was by himself; he was the most popular man I ever knew, I think, and it was the rarest thing in the world to find him alone. But that I had done so this evening rather pleased me, for I was very full of my success against Jenoure Baume, and very anxious to tell Kerr all about it. Even he had never yet beaten Jenoure Baume.

Of course, Baume isn't a master of chess in the sense that are Lasker and Capablanca. Still, for a common or garden player like myself, with a purely local reputation, to beat him is something of an achievement, and I wanted very much to tell Kerr of my success. He was very sympathetic and very interested, and in analyzing the game with me he pointed out a move Jenoure Baume might have made which would almost certainly have cost me my piece. Fortunately Baume had not seen it—nor had I for that matter and I told Kerr he really ought to go in for chess seriously.

"Not enough open air about it for me," he answered laughingly. "I'll take it up when I'm sixty." When I rose to go he mentioned that the date of his wedding had been fixed for the following month.

I congratulated him warmly. Lady Norah was a charming girl, and the match most suitable in every way—and in one of his little confidential outbursts that everyone found charming he told me how happy he was and how fortunate he counted himself.

"And is that one of the wedding presents?" I asked, nodding toward a set of chessmen standing on a board on a small side-table.

I had noticed them as soon as I entered the room. Of Indian workmanship as I guessed, they were very beautifully carved and polished, and when I looked at them again I was conscious of a curious impression. I can not define it exactly—but it was almost as though they moved and stirred, as though they all watched eagerly, intently. The idle thought came to me that those inanimate carved pieces of polished bone were watching me as a spider from its web watches a fly hovering near.

Vexed until myself for having such foolish fancies—I remember I thought

they were due to the strain of my game with Jenoure Baume—I went over to look at them more closely.

"Awfully fine carving!" I said, picking up one of the white pieces. "Indian, isn't it? Are they a wedding present?"

"No," Kerr answered. "The fact is, I bought them from poor Will Lathbury's widow."

"Oh, indeed!" I said.

I had only met Lathbury once or twice, but, of course, I knew him well by reputation as a sound, steady player, and the mysterious tragedy that had ended his life had been a great shock to me.

"Those were the pieces they found near him," Kerr added.

Poor Lathbury had been discovered one morning lying dead across his chessboard, on which he had apparently been working out some problem, or analyzing a game. The razor with which he had cut his throat was in his hand, and there was no faintest explanation possible of his miserable deed. It was certainly shown in evidence that for a day or two before the end he had seemed slightly worried, and had spoken about some game of chess or problem that appeared to be troubling him. And he had complained of not sleeping very well, a most unusual thing with him. But that was all. The coroner suggested that his mind had become affected by his intense application to his favorite game, but that was all rubbish. However, the jury returned the usual verdict, and there the matter had to rest.

"Are they ivory?" I asked, looking more closely at the piece I was handling.

"Well, the story goes," answered Kerr, with a touch of hesitation—"the story goes that they are made from human bones."

"Oh, Lord!" I said, putting down a little quickly the piece I was holding.

"I don't know if it's true," Kerr added; "very likely it isn't. It may be just a yarn. But the tale is that an Indian raja some time in the Middle Ages captured a hated enemy, killed him, and had these made from his bones."

"Ugh!" I said. "What an idea! What on earth made you get them?"

"I hardly know," he answered.

"Mrs. Lathbury wanted to get rid of them—naturally. They hadn't very pleasant associations for her. She asked me what they might fetch. I said I would take them if she liked. I thought it was a way to help her, and then it's lovely carving."

"Rather too lovely for me," I said, and I could have sworn that the black queen turned her head and shot at me a glance of malignant and deadly hatred.

Of course, the notion was absurd, and when I looked again I saw the piece as immobile as any other bit of carved bone. And yet when I looked a third time I was once more aware of that air of cruel and furtive waiting as of some evil thing lurking patiently which before had seemed to me to hover over those two double rows of carved figures.

Determined to conquer my fancies. I picked up the black queen and, examining it more closely, I thought I made out that it was a trick in the arrangement of the eyes which gave the piece that aspect of alert watchfulness I had noticed.

"Carved out of human bones!" I repeated, weighing the piece in my hand. "What an idea! Well, shall we have a little game?"

I thought Kerr looked startled and even a little alarmed. He shook his head quickly without speaking. I felt relieved; for the idea was powerfully in my mind that it was not against him that I must play, but against some other—some unknown—antagonist.

I said good-night a little hurriedly and took myself off. The fact is, I had wanted to play so badly that I felt that if I stayed there much longer with that black queen in my hand and the pieces drawn up ready, I should find myself making the first move—against whom, I wondered? Whom or what?

I remembered very plainly that as I went out of the room I had a last impression of those pieces drawn up in line as though waiting—waiting with a malign and dreadful patience.

I know my heart was beating faster than usual, and my forehead was a little damp as I came out into the street. The idea was with me that I had escaped some great danger, but what or why I had no idea.

2. A Soul in Torment

A week or two passed, and I remembered my experience of that night only to be ashamed of the inexplicable agitation I had felt. Then one day I happened to meet Baume. He knew Kerr fairly well, and declared he was wasting on other pursuits talents that had been meant for chess alone. Then I chanced to mention those curious carved bone chessmen.

"He says they are made of human bone," I remarked with a laugh. "Gruesome idea, isn't it?"

To my surprise Baume looked very grave. Apparently the old man knew those chessmen well—and did not like them. Finally he blurted out: "You tell your friend to drop them in the river. That is best for them."

Going home that night I noticed on the placard of one of the evening papers, "Mysterious Suicide," and on that of another, "Strange West End Tragedy." I paid no attention just then, but the next morning over breakfast I noticed a column headed, "Mysterious Death of Well-known Sportsman," and, on glancing at it, I saw that it referred to poor Fred Kerr.

He had been found first thing in the morning lying dead with a bullet through his brain. The pistol with which he had committed the miserable deed was still clasped in his right hand, and the account mentioned that the body lay across a chessboard on which the pieces were arranged in what seemed an unfinished game.

It was a frightful shock to me indeed it must have been so to all who knew Kerr. I could hardly believe that a man so full of life and spirit, so richly dowered with all good gifts, had ended his life in such a way. There was no explanation. At the inquest a verdict of accidental death was returned, the idea being that Kerr had shot himself while cleaning or examining his pistol.

An attempt was made to suggest foul play on the grounds that the position of the pieces on the chessboard showed that a game had just been concluded, that this game must have been played with someone, and that that someone had disappeared and was, therefore, under suspicion. Conclusive evidence showed, however, that the unhappy man had been alone all that evening. Of course, the position of the pieces might be accounted for in many ways. He might have been working out an end game, or analyzing some position. It was not a problem he had been working on, though, as black was winning and, of course, the problem convention is for white to win.

However, not much attention was paid to the chessmen; and as foul play was ruled out and suicide seemed incredible, the jury fell back on the idea of accident, though there was not the least support for such a theory.

Poor Kerr! I called to leave a wreath and express my sympathy. I asked if I might see my old friend for the last time, and they agreed. With feelings of the utmost sadness I looked my last on my friend's face, and as I did so there came upon me slowly, irresistibly, the idea that he had died in terror and anguish of soul and body. I felt this impression slowly invade and possess my mind, till I shook and trembled with the knowledge that I stood in the presence of unnamable dread. I began to edge slowly away toward the door, very slowly, for I knew that if I went quickly my panic would overcome me, and I should run, and I knew that would be very dangerous, fatal perhaps. By an intense effort of will I kept my face toward the bed in which lay that which I no longer regarded as the earthly frame of my friend, but felt was changed into something unspeakably horrible and foul. My hair bristled; the flesh crept upon my bones; I forced myself to keep my eyes fixed steadily on the still form upon the bed, though I was sure it was watching me with an intent and evil patience as a spider in its web watches the fly fluttering near—the very sensation I had had before.

Somehow or other, I don't know how, I got to the bottom of the stairs. I stood there, a little dizzy, a little faint, trying to recover myself.

Presently I got out into the street somehow, and I know that for some time afterward I had no liking for the dark and no taste for being alone.

3. The Gates of Hell

Poor Kerr had been the owner of a good many curios he had collected, some of them of value, and when I heard after a time that his friends had decided to sell them at auction, I thought I would go and see if I could pick up some little memento of one I had so much admired and liked.

I bought two rather fine engravings by Meryon; very cheap they were, too. I noticed Mark Norand, the captain of our class chess club match team, and after speaking a word or two to him, I was thinking of going when the auctioneer put up the carved bone chessmen.

He did not repeat the tale that they were of human bone—perhaps he thought that wouldn't sound very attractive, or he may not have known the story—but he laid great emphasis on the excellence of the carving. Mark Norand made the first bid, and I know I was very startled. Somehow I hadn't thought of anyone actually buying the things. I said to him:

"I wouldn't have them if I were you."

He looked at me with rather a puzzled and slightly suspicious air. "Why, do you want them your self?" he asked. "Good heavens, no!" I answered, but I could see he did not quite believe me. In the auction room everyone is inclined to be suspicious of everyone else. It is a warfare there without quarter and without scruple. Mark Norand was a friend of mine, but he did not mean to be done out of any bargain that was going. He bought the chessmen for three guineas—cheap enough, considering the excellence of the carving. He was very pleased with himself and his purchase, and his idea that he had got ahead of me. He asked me to go round and play a game with his new possessions. I refused pointblank, and he laughed. I think he believed I was a little piqued at losing the chess men. We got busier than ever at the office, and I was kept very much occupied for some time. I could not even get a spare hour to slip round to the club for a game, and it was quite by accident that I happened to hear some one mention Mark Norand and say that he was looking very ill. I knew where it was he generally lunched. The place was out of the way for me, and I didn't like the cooking there, but I went the next day. Almost the first man I saw when I entered was Norand. He was sitting at one of the tables with food before him, but he had pushed it away untasted and was pouring over a chessboard. "Hullo, Norand," I said, "working out a problem?" He looked up at me. I could not help starting. He was greatly altered, but it was not that I noticed so much as the horrid fear I saw peeping out from his bloodshot eyes and lurking in the new lines that had come about his mouth. "Oh, you?" he said, and to mingle with the fear I read in his eyes there came a fierce dull resentment, so that he looked at me as though he held me for his deadliest enemy. "You knew, didn't you? Why didn't you tell me?" he demanded. "Knew what? Tell you what?" I asked. "Those chessmen," he muttered, shuddering. He added: "Why did you let me buy them?" "I told you not to; I warned you," I said. "Told me not to, warned me not to!" he repeated, and gave me a look of deadly hate. "If you saw a man knocking at the gate of hell without knowing it, would you just tell him not to do that and then walk away?" "Why, what's the matter?" I asked. He did not answer, and the waiter came up just then. I ordered the first thing I saw on the bill. Norand had become intent on his game again. I noticed it was a position in a game and not a problem he was working—and the waiter, who knew him as an old customer, and saw I was a friend, observed to me: "The gentleman's worrying too much over his chess. He hardly eats anything now." "Has he been long like this?" I asked. "Only about a week, sir," the man answered. He brought me what I had ordered, and Norand looked up presently. "What do you think of this position?" he asked.	"Well, white looks in rather a fix," I answered. "Good Lord, what's the matter?" I really thought he was going to have a fit; he fell back in his seat, panting for breath and ghastly pale. I might have pronounced his death warrant. I jumped up with some vague idea of getting a doctor, but he stopped me. "No, no, I'm all right," he said—croaked, rather. "For God's sake, look at the board, and see if you can find any way out!" "For white?" I asked. "For white," he repeated. I bent over the board. It seemed to me mate was pretty sure to come in three or four moves. I said: "Is it a game you're playing?" He nodded. "Who's your opponent?" I asked. He did not answer, and I could see well that a secret and terrible agitation possessed him. "I don't know," he stammered. And the idea came to me that he did know but that he dared not say. This seemed to me highly absurd and at the same time quite reasonable. He wiped his face again. "You see," he argued, "the thing's impossible." "I don't know what you mean; I don't know what you are talking about," I said angrily. But the idea burnt in my mind like fire, that I did know and that I also dared not say. He leant across the table, his eyes alight with that mingled desperate fear and deadly hate I had seen in them before. "You ought to have warned me," he muttered. "Mind this, if I lose I will leave you the things in my will." I remember it did not seem in any way absurd that he should couple together the ideas of losing the game and of making his will. I was studying the position of the pieces so intently that I, like him, pushed aside my lunch almost untasted. Gradually there was coming back to me a memory of the move poor Kerr had suggested. Jenoure Baume might have tried in the game he lost to me. It seemed to me a variation of Kerr's idea might be effective in Norand's present position. I explained the move. Norand jumped at the idea. We developed it together and, so far as we could see, an attack pressed on those lines was practically sure to win the game. Norand's relief was tremendous, mine scarcely less so. Then all at once his expression changed. He said: "Suppose when I play the knight it slips of itself on to some other square—when I'm not looking?" I stared at him and laughed. The suggestion seemed so absurd I could not help it. "Well, of course," I said, "if your pieces do that, I don't see much chance." He did not answer, and I left the restaurant and went back to the office feeling relieved in one way, but a good deal worried about poor Norand all the same. His obvious terror, my own odd impressions, all seemed to
---	--

me fanciful and even ridiculous in the face of his wild suggestion of pieces that moved of their own volition.

All the same I was not surprised when, a day or two later, I heard that the poor fellow had drowned himself in a small pond that lay at the foot of his garden. The account in the papers said he had been sitting up late at chess and that he must have gone straight from the chessboard to his doom.

4. *The Invisible Antagonist*

I could not help making some inquiries about the position of the men on the board. I found, as I had half expected, that they indicated the close of a game in which black had just brought off a mate. My informant told me that presumably poor Norand had been analyzing some game. He had not been working out a problem, as black was the winning side; and he had not been playing with anyone, as the evidence showed conclusively that he had been alone all the evening.

The usual verdict was returned, and I wrote to Norand's solicitor to say that I absolutely refused to accept any legacy he might have left me.

But I did not post the letter. At one time I had the feeling that the whole thing was pure fancy and that it would be foolish and cowardly to refuse the chessmen if he had really left them to me. And then, again, the idea would come to me that it was all true, but that I was forewarned, and forearmed.

As it happened, they were delivered one evening while the vicar was with me. While he was there I opened the parcel and showed him the chess men. He was mildly interested and mildly shocked when I told him the tale that they were carved from human bone. He thought it a most repulsive idea, but remarked on the excellence of the carving.

"That black queen, for example," he said, "what an idea of—of—well, vitality, almost, that figure has."

I agreed, and after I had seen the vicar to the door I went back to my room. I found those chessmen I had left lying on the table where the vicar had been looking at them, now all drawn up in position on the board.

No living soul, I knew well, had been in the room during my short absence. I stood for a moment or two on the threshold, a little daunted, a little confused, and as I watched I understood that I was expected to play—I saw, too, a thrill of sinister impatience run through the drawn-up lines of the pieces.

I sat down in front of them. I could not help myself. Each separate piece, from king to pawn, showed animate, palpitating, ready, one and all a-quiver with desire and greed, like hungry beasts of prey waiting for their living victim to be thrown to them. The impression grew in my mind that I was in a more dreadful and more imminent danger than any other living man that night, and that this danger was one that threatened not my life only.

I would have fled, but flight, I knew well, was no longer possible. I tried to mutter a prayer, but the words would not come. I tried to lift my hand to push board and pieces to the ground, but I seemed to have lost control of my arm. The quivering, eager, evil impatience of the pieces increased; I should not have been surprised to see them break into some wild dance of hideous ritual.

All at once they grew quiet, though still instinct with vivid, hungry eagerness, and I felt come upon me a sudden awe and fear and horror as I realized that my antagonist was there. I could see nothing, I heard nothing, only I knew well that he was there, that he had come and was seated opposite. I understood the game was about to begin. I could not help myself. Slowly I lifted my hand. I swear I did not touch it, but the king's pawn it had been my thought to move slid for ward two squares.

A moment's pause and then the black king's pawn, untouched, moved forward in reply. I made my next move, or rather, when I raised my hand

with the intention of doing it, the piece transferred itself untouched to the position I had in mind. The answering move came almost at once. And so the game was played on.

All the time I never touched a piece; once I had made up my mind and raised my hand the piece I was thinking of immediately took up the position I wished. The black pieces did the same; they moved, advanced, retreated, but all in harmony and all in evident obedience to the will of my unseen, unknown antagonist.

Invisible, but not unknown.

For I was very sure there sat opposite me a man long dead, with an evil face and cruel eyes and hungry, slobbering mouth, wearing the jeweled robes of an Indian prince, and playing with all his skill this game for his master in which the prize was myself.

I knew that now the game had begun it had to be finished. I called up all my powers to my aid. I felt my mind grow clear; my nerves were calm and steady. I played my best. I played as I had never played before; I believe I played that night a game that would not have disgraced a master. More than once I felt I had my antagonist in difficulties, but each time he retrieved himself. I won a pawn, but lost it again. Still, I began to believe I had a chance of winning.

I pressed hard. I felt a clearness in my brain, a vividness of thought and clearness of vision I have never known before or since. Once or twice, when I was tempted to make a move that might have been dangerous, it was as though I heard a secret whisper warning me to be careful. I knew, too, that my antagonist was troubled, and I understood that the pieces themselves, both black and white, felt this, and were troubled also.

I had begun a hot attack on the black queen. If I could win her I felt the game would be mine. It was not only that the queen is the most powerful piece, but I realized also that in her lay the focus of the opposing power, that from her or through her there radiated a sort of vigor and encouragement all the other pieces felt and not the black only but my own white as well.

My attack on the queen failed. I was a move too late, and she slipped out of the net I had so nearly drawn around her. The failure left my position less strong, and I found myself attacked in my turn. I rallied my forces, but the pressure grew stronger and stronger.

The critical point was on my left, where I was beginning to plan a counter-attack. It promised well, and I was beginning to make progress when I found a return thrust aimed at me.

I was puzzled, and, on looking, found that the position of my pieces was no longer as it had been, but a much weaker one. I could not understand, for I was sure I had not moved them. As I looked and wondered I was aware that my unseen antagonist smiled evilly to himself, and the black queen shook with a horrid, secret merriment that spread and spread till every piece upon the board, black and white, was laughing wickedly to itself, rejoicing in the prospect of my defeat.

I realized in a flash that one of my pawns had turned traitor and, when I was not looking, had slipped back from the square where I had placed it to the one behind, where it was so much less effective.

5. *At the Eleventh Hour*

It cost me my bishop before I could re-establish my position, and the small inner voice I had seemed to hear before whispered to me that I must watch closely and unceasingly, or the same thing would happen again. I understood that my antagonist, smiling evilly to himself, could make any one of my pieces betray me, and that this foul play he kept ever in reserve to help him at need. No wonder that he always won his games all through the centuries!

I was a piece to the bad now, and I had the double strain of playing and of watching to see that none of my men slipped from the squares on

which I had placed them. I set my teeth and played my best. I lost another piece, and my king, hotly attacked, was pinned into one corner. Still I fought on, though my brow was wet and my hands shook, and upon me lay the consciousness of impending doom.

I made one last feeble attempt at a counter-attack. I do not think it could possibly have saved me, but it was audacious, a little disconcerting, and meant delay at the least. And that was something, for I knew that if I could hold out till cock-crow I should earn at least a day's respite. That my antagonist knew also, and he grew, one must suppose, impatient.

I was watching my pieces intently, since there was not one of them but would have played the traitor had chance offered. My new attack hinged on the one rook I had remaining, and suddenly I saw it sliding away from where it stood to an adjoining square, where it would have been comparatively useless. It stopped when my eye fell on it, for apparently they had no power to move when I was watching, and then something made me look away again. Instantly the rook slipped off to the adjoining square, and at once again all the other pieces, black and white alike, shook with a passion of secret, evil laughter.

For a moment despair overcame me, for now it was only a question of mate in two moves.

But, as before a tiny voice had whispered to me to be cautious when I had contemplated an unsound move, so now again I heard that small, still voice sound clear and vivid in my ear. I knew that my one hope was to do as it advised.

I sprang to my feet. Pointing at the rook that had moved I cried with a loud voice:

"I appeal."

I was aware of an instant, fierce commotion all around me; I saw the pieces, black and white, all palpitant; I heard no sound, but I knew that my antagonist was dismayed and troubled.

Again I cried: "I appeal."

The fierce tumult and commotion I was aware of all round, grew yet wilder and more fierce. Though I heard nothing, saw nothing, I knew that all about was fury, dismay, excitement, a hurrying to and fro of strange and evil things, a passage of vast and awful shadows. The pieces were all quivering with hatred and alarm. My dread, long-dead antagonist seemed to me to be screaming hoarsely in an agony of protest and pain. Though still I heard, saw, felt nothing, I was somehow conscious that I stood in the very center of a chaos of invisible, conflicting powers; that unimaginable forces were aimed against me, but that nevertheless I stood protected. For the third time I cried out very loudly:

"I appeal."

That, strange and awful tumult passed. All was still and silent, all that had filled my small room so dreadfully fled swiftly far away. The chess men were no longer animate and palpitant, but were quiet as any other bits of carved bone; I had a vision of my antagonist, baffled, howling, far in the depths of the nethermost space.

I knew I was safe now, and I knew also what next I had to do. The still, small voice I had heard before had whispered that to me also, and I hurried to obey. I swept the chessmen into their box, and carrying it carefully in my hands, I went into the garden, out by the side gate, and up the lane that leads to the churchyard.

Dawn was gray in the east; the cocks were crowing as I reached it. There amidst the graves, in the earth consecrated by holy words for the last resting-place of men, I dug with my bare hands and buried deep the box and the pieces of carved bone it held, deep in the shadow of a cross reared on a grave near by. There I left them to rest forever; and so, drunk with weariness and terror, went back to my home to rest in peace and thankfulness and safety.

Happy Halloween