

The Chess Journalist

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CHESS JOURNALISTS OF AMERICA



Photo by Chris Martinez G

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Hello From the Editor

What a fun issue! We received lots of great submissions. Keep them coming. They make the editor job much more fun.

We lost GM Mihai Şuba in late October. He had a fascinating life story. Did you know he was fluent in seven languages? How about him wanting to be an artist? Check out my short obituary on page five to learn more. Sriaditya Pendyala sends in a very heartfelt ode to the late Daniel Naroditsky.

There is a new website for selling chess books and stamps (ad on page four). We also have a short update on the American Chess Archives project. We will discuss this more at the semi-annual zoom meeting that will be held on February 23. COSSU (Chess-on-Stamp Study Unit) has provided everyone with a link to their 200th issue. They are having an online auction on March 14 that you may be interested in as there will be many items including a few books.

There is a chess and Alzheimer's research project that you can help with (page six).

We reviewed a lot of books. I want to thank all our reviewers for helping out. I would love to review all the books myself, but it isn't possible. I joke around and tell my wife that I need to live to 279 to have a shot at reading all my books! Ha! Ha! The reality is that it's probably a lot longer! I was reviewed several excellent books: Dana Mackenzie's *Did You Come Here to Play Chess or Have Fun?*; Luis Fernández Siles' *The Stories, Games, and Intrigues of Capablanca and Alekhine*; and *Chess Family Belavenets* by Ludmila Belavenets, Sergey Yanovsky, and Vladimir Barsky. Jon Edwards reviewed *Obsession: A Chess Biography of Vsevolod Rauzer* by Alexander Konstantinopolsky and Grigory Bogdanovich. Rex Gray reviewed Jennifer Shahade's new book *Thinking Sideways*. Akshaj Bodla reviewed Steve Rauls' *Chess Villian* (about Alexander Alekhine). *A Zillion Chess and Life Hacks* by Maria Manakova was reviewed by Samika Nettem. Dan Heisman's *Maximize Your Chess Potential!* was reviewed by Pranav Srinivasula. And finally *Blackmar-Diemer Gambit Revisited* by Eduardo Piza was reviewed by Dr. Anthony Saidy. Being part of the Blackmar-Diemer Gambit cult, as soon as I saw Dr. Saidy's email, I immediately had to buy the book!

Patricio Robayo interviews author Lance Wilson about his book on healing (using chess) entitled: *A Wizard's Guide to Family Recovery*.

Chris Martinez G was a new author last issue with the column *Resurfaced*. We put him in the **limelight** for this issue to go along with his continuing column. We found out he dabbles at photography too. I really liked one of his pictures and it now is on the front cover! Thanks Chris.

There are so many chess blogs available anymore. I try to read a few regularly, but I also try to read something by a new author every month. This issue we are fortunate to be able to reprint two blogs by new authors and one by a continuing author. Rebecka Ratcliffe (first time author for us) wrote a study on the differences between the sexes as it relates to chess on the USCF Sales Blog. I think you will agree that it's very well done. Frank Elley (first time author for us) writes on his personal blog about his path to becoming the managing editor of *Chess Life & Review* many years ago. Great practical advice for anyone in the job market. We also have the third installment of Michael Agermose Jensen blog on the Pierce Gambit.

Eric Vigil provides some levity as he explains what happens when you take a chess clock (or two suitcases of them) on your travels.

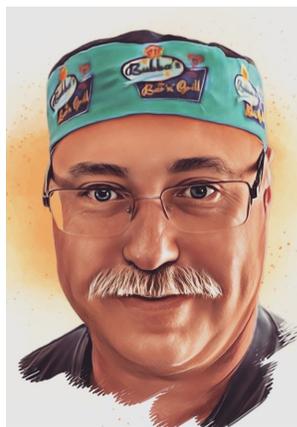
Robert Irons concludes the 1984 Midwest Master tournament and Ed Tassinari gives us some history about the 1975 Florida State Championship.

We have a couple cartoons: one by Tony Sullivan and one by Edward Sorel.

Dennis Wasson returns with more "Passing Clouds."

Awani Kumar wishes everyone a happy new year!

The "Queens Corner" returns with an interview, and so much more, from multiple time U.S. Blind Champion Jessica Lauser. She plays some swashbuckling chess! Here is a very fascinating story.



Thanks to Rex Gray, Diane Dahl, Joshua Andersen, and Rachel Schechter for their excellent proof-reading 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 April 5.

Let me know how I am doing. Send your comments, suggestions, or even better, send me a story or idea for the next issue:

mcapron243@mchsi.com

—Mark Capron

"A spirit with a vision is a dream with a mission" — Neil Peart

Semi-Annual Meeting

Time: Feb 23, 2026 09:00 PM Eastern Time (US and Canada). Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89297305572?pwd=ltF7acb4f1CkIP9g6dlzmxvuenTbvs.1>

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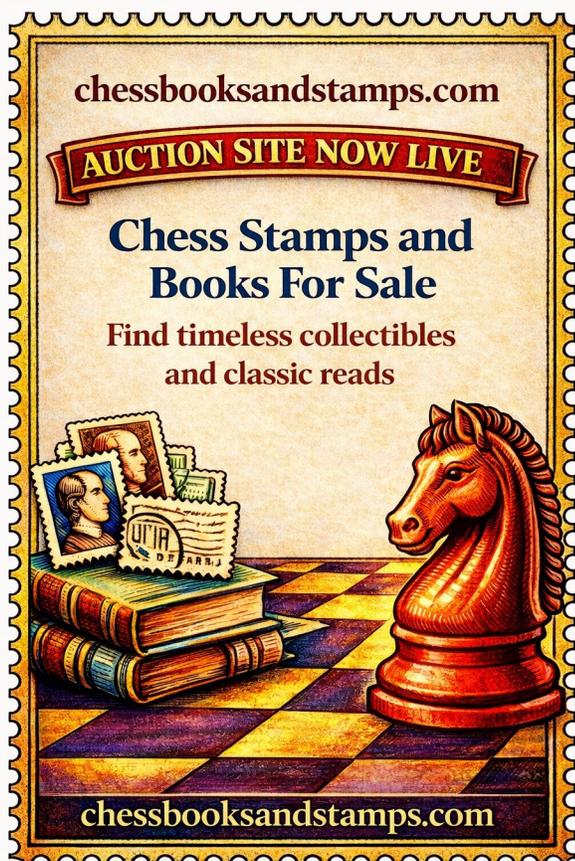
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Charan Perumalla, who designed the 2025 Awards, for the Chess Journalists of America designed this ad for the new [Chess Books and Stamps](#) site. Nikki Khmelnitsky, a marketing major in the Schreyer Honors College at Penn State University, helped provide some inspiration for the design.



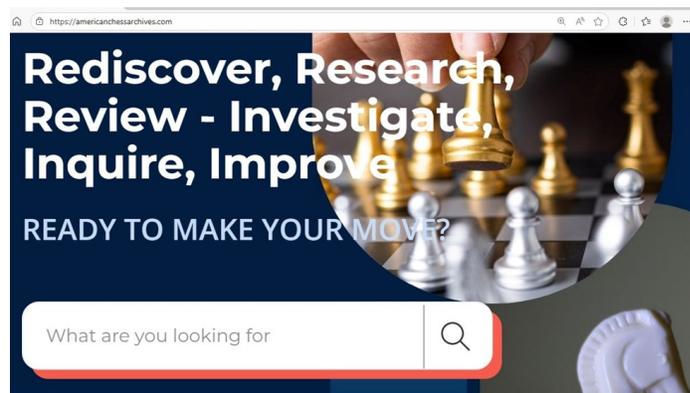
American Chess Archive Update

By Joshua Anderson

The American Chess Archive strives to bring together as much research of the past 150 years in chess as possible. As a website, this site will include pictures, games, but predominantly be designed to service and store all the periodicals that have been published at the state and national level since 1846. This is a project that will constantly be growing overtime. We aim to have about 90% of it done in the next decade.

The process for how this is done has been laid out previously and can be found by contacting Joshua Milton Anderson at

joshuamiltonanderson@gmail.com. We are in the beginning of the magazine collection (scanning) phase. There are a few that have been collected/ scanned including West Virginia, Iowa, New Jersey; as well as chess periodicals not focused on geography like *Leaves of Chess*. Much of this collection has been done by World Champion Jon Edwards, who we thank for his support and excitement over this project.



We have not quite gotten to the stage where we are requesting people to help us test run the website, but if you are interested in that sort of activity, please let us know as we will certainly be aiming to do that in fairly short order.

Though we have made a strong effort to be fiscally responsible, the cost of such a project is substantial. As such, we have spent much of the money that the growths of the CJA Awards have raised over the last decade. In fact, we have already had several generous donations, but we still will have ongoing costs, projected at roughly \$500 a year. We would be grateful to cover those with donations.

GM Mihai Şuba (1 June 1947 – 26 October 2025)

By Mark Capron



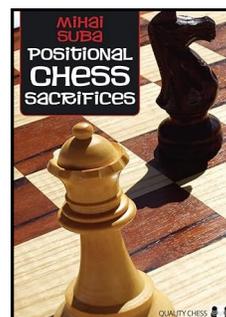
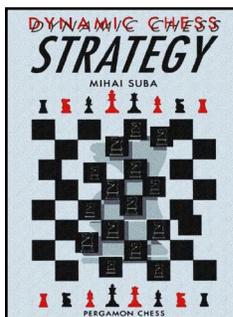
Photo source: Facebook/Romanian Chess Federation

Just before we released the last issue Romanian GM Mihai Şuba passed away. Şuba's peak rating was 2542, achieved in 1983. He earned the International Master title in 1975 and the Grandmaster title in 1978. An interesting fact was that Şuba didn't start his chess career until he was age 19! His breakthrough tournament was the 1982 Las Palmas interzonal where he finished third behind Vasily Smyslov and Zoltan Ribli.

cal asylum for himself and his son. Şuba complained of difficulties in obtaining visas to play in tournaments and blackmail threats by the Romanian authorities.

Then he played for England at the 1989 European Team Chess Championship. After political changes in Romania, he returned briefly in 1992, but later in the 1990s settled in Spain, where he worked as a chess coach. He eventually obtained Spanish citizenship in 2017. He was married twice and had two sons from his first marriage. In his later years, he lived alone.

Şuba was an expert on the "Hedgehog" structure. Şuba wrote three books *Dynamic Chess Strategy* (1991), *The Hedgehog* (2003), and *Positional Chess Sacrifices* (2012). *Dynamic Chess Strategy* has become a classic and New In Chess even released a new edition in 2016.



Larsen, Bent (2605) - Suba, Mihai (2500) [A17]

Interzonal-12a Las Palmas (13), 29.07.1982

1.c4 ♖f6 2.♗c3 c5 3.g3 e6 4.♗f3 b6 5.e4 ♘b7 6.d3 d6 7.♗g2 ♙e7 8.0-0 0-0 9.♞e1 a6 10.d4 cxd4 11.♙xd4 ♗bd7 12.b3 ♙c7 13.♘b2 ♞ac8 14.h3 ♞fd8 15.♙e3 ♙f8 16.♗d4 ♞e8 17.♞e2 ♙b8 18.♞d1 g6 19.♙h1 ♙g7 20.g4 h6 21.♙g3 ♗c5 22.♙a1 e5 23.♗c2 b5 24.cxb5 ♗cxe4 25.♗xe4 ♗xe4 26.♙d3 ♗c5 27.♙xd6 ♞ed8 0-1

The highlight of his career was winning the 1983 Dortmund tournament over players such as Vlastimil Hort and Nigel Short. Şuba won the Berlin Summer in 1985 — sharing first place with Viktor Korchnoi but taking the title on tie-break. He also shared first place in the 1985 Zonal Tournament in Prague (with József Pintér and Vlastimil Jansa). Şuba won the Romanian Championship three times (1980, 1981 and 1985). From 1978 to 1992 Şuba played in six Chess Olympiads representing Romania. He won the 2008 World Senior jointly with Larry Kauffman and in 2011 he became the European Senior Champion.

In his younger years Şuba enjoyed drawing and was a member of a semi-professional theatre group. He wanted to study art in college, but this subject was highly politicized in communist Romania, so he opted for mathematics. A much safer choice. Şuba was also passionate about bridge and continued to play it as a tournament player all his life.

In 1988 at the Lloyds Bank Masters tournament in London Şuba defected from Romania and applied for British politi-

Şuba was gifted in languages, he could converse fluently in Romanian, Russian, Serbo-Croatian, English, Spanish, Italian, and French.

Şuba's contributions to the game will always be remembered.

Korchnoi, Viktor (2635) - Suba, Mihai (2525) [A70]

Beersheba (11), 1984

1.d4 ♗f6 2.c4 e6 3.♗f3 c5 4.d5 exd5 5.cxd5 d6 6.♗c3 g6 7.♙f4 a6 8.e4 ♙g7 9.♙a4+ ♙d7 10.♙b3 ♙c7 11.♙xd6 ♙xd6 12.♙xb7 0-0 13.e5 ♙c8 14.♙xa8 ♙b6 15.♙xa6 ♙xa6 16.0-0 ♗g4 17.d6 ♗xe5 18.♗xe5 ♙xe5 19.♙f3 ♗d7 20.♞d2 ♞b8 21.♞e1 ♘b7 22.♙e3 ♙d4 23.♙g3 ♗f6 24.♞e7 ♙c8 25.♗a4 ♙b5 26.♙b3 ♙xb3 27.axb3 ♙e6 28.♞c7 ♗e4 29.♞e2 ♗xd6 30.♗xc5 ♗f5 31.♞d2 ♙xc5 0-1

Miles, Anthony (2565) - Suba, Mihai (2525) [A06]

Olympiad-26 Thessaloniki (10), 29.11.1984

1.♗f3 c5 2.b3 d5 3.e3 a6 4.c4 e6 5.♘b2 ♗c6 6.d4 ♗f6 7.♗bd2 ♙e7 8.cxd5 exd5 9.♙e2 0-0 10.0-0 ♙f5 11.a3 ♞c8 12.♞a2 ♗e4 13.dxc5 ♙xc5 14.b4 ♙a7 15.♗b3 ♙d6 16.♙a1 ♙h6 17.♗bd4 ♙g4 18.♞e1 ♞fe8 19.♙d1 ♘b8 20.g3 ♗xf2 21.♙xf2 ♗e5 22.♙b1 ♗xf3 23.♗xf3 ♙xf3 24.♙xf3 ♙xh2 25.♙d4 ♙xg3+ 26.♙e2 ♙g2+ 27.♙d3 ♙e4+ 0-1

Chess and Alzheimer's Research Project Looking for Volunteers

by Caton Tsao and Aman Sreshta

There has been long-standing speculation on the potential health benefits of an otherwise unsuspecting board game: Chess. With the recent chess boom happening since 2020, many have pondered the potential positive effects it could have on the brain, given its mentally stimulating nature.

Two South Carolinian chess players went forward with this idea: Meet Aman Sreshta and Caton Tsao. Aman Sreshta is a freshman at Clemson University, while Caton Tsao is a junior at D.W. Daniel High School. Both of them have their own stories when it comes to Alzheimer's disease.

Aman had always loved hearing stories from his grandparents, so in elementary school, when he visited the Jewish Community Center and heard the stories of some of the most senior members, it felt like he was listening to his own grandparents speak. Aman had visited the center many times and had seen the effects of Alzheimer's disease in real time as it had onset, progressed, and worsened with some of the members. "It was heart-breaking to see how the disease worked. Right in front of my very eyes, these people were losing their memories and pieces of their identity; they were quite literally losing themselves. It is a very tragic condition."

Caton had his life impacted by Alzheimer's disease as well when it affected his grandparents. Personally, witnessing the disease's dangerous progression instilled a promise in Caton's mind to do something to help prevent that situation for others.

Both Aman and Caton are also avid chess players, with Aman starting when he was just 4 years old, and Caton beginning when he was in elementary school. They both quickly rose as professional players, and they met at the 2024 SC Scholastic State Chess Championship. In 2025, Aman and Caton led their respective high school chess clubs to the 2025 SC Scholastic State Chess Championship, and both had their teams finish in the top 5, out of 30 teams, with Caton placing 3rd individually out of 69 players, and Aman placing 8th.

After hearing Caton speak on stage at the 2025 SC Scholastic State Chess Championship about his project—Checkmating Alzheimer's, Aman Sreshta had an idea. He had already thought of a research project regarding chess and Alzheimer's, so he reached out to Caton about the idea, and the two chess opponents met across the board and became partners in the lab for Alzheimer's.

Initially, recruitment seemed a bit bleak, but after reaching out to hundreds of clubs across the country and being featured on local news by [FOX Carolina](#), they started to pick up more participants. However, they are still in need of many chess players aged 65 and older, so if you know anyone who may be interested, please reach out to our lab email at decisionlab@clemson.edu

The research study follows a cross-sectional design in a two-part format, with a prescreening digital survey administered through Qualtrics (~10-15 minutes), and a remote Zoom session (~25-30

minutes). To be eligible for participation, individuals must be 65 or older, must be fluent in English, must have at least an 8th grade level of education, and must not have any history of neurological conditions.

*Note: This study compares a group of chess players over the age of 65, to non-chess players over the age of 65, so if you know anyone who fits the eligibility criteria and is interested in participating, whether or not they play chess, they should reach out.



COSSU, the Chess-on-Stamp Study Unit, has just mailed out its 200th issue of the *Chesstamp Review*. This special issue contains a list of the 39 chess items, including four books by David DeLucia, that will be featured in COSSU's March 14, 2026 live auction.

The Editor, Jon Edwards, is sharing a link to the issue here with our readers and welcomes everyone's participation.

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For more information about joining COSSU, kindly contact Jon at jedwards.chess@gmail.com

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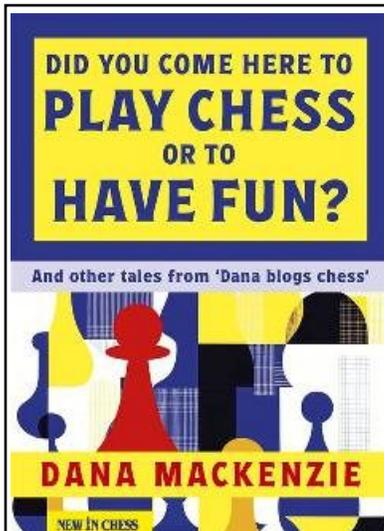
Not quite the first US Chess Stamp

Happy Holidays from COSSU to you and yours!

Did You Come Here to Play Chess or Have Fun?

by Dana Mackenzie

Reviewed by Mark Capron



Author Dana Mackenzie has written a book that is just plain fun. The origin of the book is a curated collection of selected and revised stories from Dana Mackenzie's long-running blog, "[Dana Blogs Chess](#)." The stories are fascinating and informative. The games and game fragments have been selected with purpose. Rather than a conventional training manual or a game anthology, the

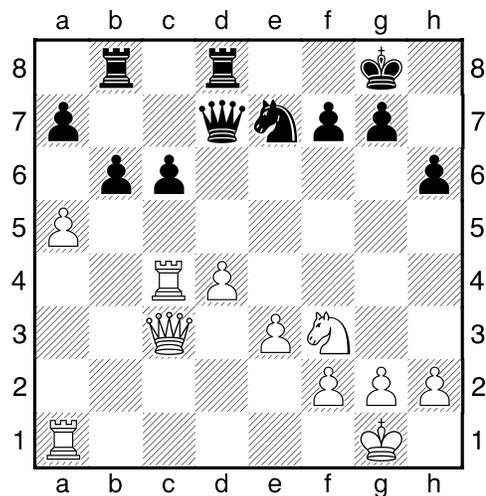
book blends his personal narrative, his philosophical reflection, and his annotated chess content to celebrate the chess experience.

The book includes five parts: 1) Between the Booms; 2) Bryntse Gambit – The Last Chess Wilderness; 3) Chess Parties (and the Mike Splane Question); 4) Chess Personalities; and 5) Everything Else. Each part includes multiple chapters all tied together in some way. Each chapter comes from one of his blogs. The author computer checked all the analysis with Stockfish 16.1 which was the most current program at the time of writing the book.

Once I started reading this book I didn't want to put it down. I read the book using the *Forward Chess* app late into the night while my wife slept. Usually, I prefer to read chess books the conventional way with a physical copy, but this book was easy to read using *Forward Chess*. I even found the games easy to go through in this format.

Mackenzie writes vividly about the broad social fabric of the chess community including many interesting characters and memorable moments. One of these characters was Victor Pupols. It seems that Pupols provided much inspiration for Mackenzie to write about with his unprecedented antics such as when he "horizontalized" an onlooker. The section on Chess parties stood out as exceptionally interesting.

The annotations are written in such a way that they are compelling and accessible to any chess player. One of my favorites was after Whites 23.♖f3 in the game GM Alex Yermolinsky – Dana Mackenzie (Harper's Ferry, WV, March 1995)



"If I could pick one position and one move from my chess career to sum up the Dana Mackenzie philosophy of chess, this might be the position. One of my goals in any position is to *fight for the initiative*. Yermolinsky has built up a lot of pressure against my b- and c- pawns, and I have no patience to defend against a protracted siege. If possible, I want to create some threats of my own, and give my opponent something to worry about. Secondly, I love to *play 'impossible' moves*. My favorite kind of move is one that my opponent thinks he has definitely prevented. Such moves are strong from the psychological point of view, and also often strong from the chess point of view as well. If he thinks that the move is impossible and you think it's possible then one of you has missed something, I'm wary of ever saying that a strong GM like Yermolinsky missed something, but he may have underestimated my sacrifice.

23...c5!? 24.dxc5 ♖d1! This is the 'queen sacrifice' I mentioned. It isn't really a sacrifice, though, because I am certain to win the queen back; it's more of a fancy way to trade material. However, the pawn sacrifice that preceded it is real.

25.♖e1 Yermolinsky declines the pseudo-sacrifice. Here are the other options:

(a) If he accepts with 25.♞xd1 ♞xd1+ 26.♗e1 then I force him to give back the queen with 26...♗d5. After 27.♖c1 ♞xc1 28.♞xc1 bxa5 I have won back the pawn. You could argue that my doubled a-pawns don't 'count' as two full pawns. But that argument doesn't really hold water, because there are many variations where we would trade his c-pawn for my lead a-pawn, and then my remaining a-pawn would definitely 'count'.

(b) The most interesting variation is 25.♗e1, which is very complex. Now White is, in fact, threatening to take my

queen, so I have to play 25...♖e2. Do I get compensation for the pawn? Even after copious computer analysis, I'm not sure. (Stockfish says it is about even: +0.2 pawns for White.) But instead of going down a rabbit hole of variations, let's think about it from the point of view of a grandmaster playing against someone 400 points below him. He really does not want to roll the dice in a complex and obscure tactical line. He wants to keep the position simple, placing his bets on his superior understanding of strategy and endgames, and expecting that I will eventually make a mistake.

His decision proved to be correct."

25. ... ♖xe1+ 26. ♗xe1 b5! 27. ♖c3 ♗c6 28. ♗d3?!

The game went to move 50 where Mackenzie finally had to resign. Still the psychological and strong move 23. ...c5! was worth admission to the show.

In the summer of 1996, Mackenzie went to the Volunteer Center of Santa Cruz to see what volunteer opportunities were available. After filing out the paperwork, the woman working there noticed that he was a chess player. She said the Aptos Chess Club was looking for an organizer as the last one had moved away. Mackenzie jumped at the chance. His role in this club set the stage for what was to come later at ChessLecture.com.

In 2006, Mackenzie uncorked an opening he had been working on for several years, the Bryntse Gambit. It wasn't new (had been played in Correspondence Chess by Arne Bryntse in the 1960s and 70s), but he didn't know that at the time. The game (Mackenzie-IM David Pruess, Western States Open. Reno, NV 2006. Round 6, 1-0.) was published in *Chess Life*, *Chess Informant*, in Jonathan Speelman's Agony Column, and even a Game of the Day on Chessgames.com. The Bryntse Gambit features a queen sacrifice on move 6! In the years leading up to playing the gambit in an over-the-board game Mackenzie had developed a set of five commandments to follow after the sacrifice. In other words, he was prepared. This opening makes its appearance in multiple chapters.

This game got Mackenzie a job at ChessLecture.com. But his learning how to teach and relate to others came from multiple other areas such as the Aptos Chess Club and his profession as a mathematician. He has delivered over 100 lectures. Just in case you are wondering, no, the Bryntse Gambit doesn't win every time (see Chapter 19).

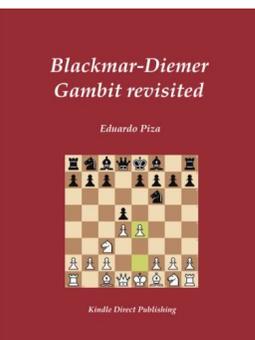
I felt like the chapter on chess humor was a bit forced and not really needed. However, some of the comments/stories by his readers were a hoot. When he wasn't trying to write a specific chapter on humor, he used humor freely and frequently in other chapters.

Again, I couldn't put this book down once I started reading it. Mackenzie kept the book conversational, reflective, and

often humorous. He wrote not to impress with deep analytical details, but to invite readers into the world of chess. I believe the author's intent was to show that enthusiasm and enjoyment are integral to chess—not just competitive seriousness. It was definitely not the normal type of chess book I usually read but I am very glad I did. The mix of storytelling, anecdotes, analysis, and reflection will keep the reader engaged. It did me. The portrayal of personalities and odd quirks that make the chess world function are so true and yet very entertaining. I think all chess players will find something of value in the book. I highly recommend this book.



Apotheosis of Blackmar-Diemer Gambit Theory by Dr. Anthony Saidy



Just received *Blackmar-Diemer Gambit Revisited* by former Costa Rica champion, mathematician Eduardo Piza (2022, Kindle Direct Publishing =Amazon self-publishing). It's a large 449-page paperback. Encyclopedic & Stockfish-checked with 500 games(!)

Obviously, a labor of love.

Armand Blackmar was a contemporary of Paul Morphy in New Orleans. An early example:

Armand Edward Blackmar - Farrar [D00]

New Orleans CC Tournament New Orleans, LA USA, 11.1881

1.d4 d5 2.e4 dxe4 3.f3 exf3 4.♗xf3 e6 5.♗d3 ♗f6 6.c3 ♗e7 7.0-0 ♗c6 8.♗bd2 h6 9.♗e4 0-0 10.♗fg5 hxg5 11.♗xg5 ♗d7 12.♖xf6 ♗xf6 13.♖h5 ♖e8 14.♗h7+ ♖h8 15.♗xf7# 1-0

Emil Diemer improved the gambit by postponing f3 to move 4, averting 3...e5. In Berlin in 1983 this tall unsmiling gent introduced himself to me, amid the smokiest tournament I ever partook in. His life included being a key Nazi chess journalist, winning tournaments, becoming a crank, entering a mental ward, advice to shun the stress of chess, release, winning some more, and then devoting the final phase of his life to intensive study of Nostradamus, about whom he wrote 10,000 letters. This character died in 1990 at 82.

I never faced the Blackmar-Diemer Gambit proper, but once I faced 1d4 d5 2♗c3 ♗f6 3e4. And now, to take the guy out of the Blackmar-Diemer Gambit "book" I captured with the knight -a debatable weakening of the Kingside.



Chess: The Difference Between the Genders

Written by Rebecka Ratcliffe for the [USCF Sales Blog](#)

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If you were to look at the FIDE ratings list for the top 100 players in chess today, you might be surprised to find that not one of them is a woman. The top woman in the world, GM Yifan Hou, is just off the leaderboard at #115 in active players with a Standard FIDE rating of 2620 (November 2025).

This difference in achievement in chess has been a topic interesting to social scientists for a long time, as chess ratings are a relatively objective measurement. In 2025, Chessable sponsored a new study, “Across the Board: Sex, Ratings, and Retention in Competitive Chess” by Angela Li, Mark Glickman, and Christopher Chabris to delve further into the disparity.

Spoiler: The findings were not that girls and women aren’t good at chess.



Are men and women inherently different when it comes to chess?
Image by Tumisu from Pixabay

What Does Evidence Say?

There have been several theories applied to the disparity in chess advancement between women and men. **The reality is clearly that women progress to elite levels in chess less often than men.** In fact, the proportion is incredibly skewed, with only 2% of FIDE grandmasters being women in 2025. The separate title Woman Grandmaster (WGM) has about 300 holders worldwide, but the WGM requirements are slightly less difficult. What could be behind this?

The Conventional Wisdom Is Simple—Too Simple

The *ability distribution hypothesis* theorizes that the building blocks of ability are distributed unevenly, creating an

inherent difference in raw ability. This has been a pervasive theory in science, business, engineering, mathematics, and yes, chess, for quite some time.

Empiric evidence tells a more nuanced story. In “Males and Females Have the Same Distribution of IQ Scores” by R.T. Warne, it’s conceded that males have a more variable distribution of IQ scores on both the top and bottom of the scale, but the mean IQ is relatively equal. The ranges also overlap across the spectrum—meaning that while there may be more men in high and low areas, both sexes are represented at every data point on the curve.

What may be of interest in this research are the areas where this intelligence is concentrated:

“While males and females are equal in average intelligence, the distribution of their abilities differs in other ways...Females tend to score higher (on average) on verbal abilities, while males have higher average performance on spatial ability and mathematical reasoning. Across these abilities, though, the differences average out to produce equal means on overall IQ.” (Warne, 2020)

On social media, I received several comments along the line of “men have higher IQs.” That oversimplification does the population of chess players two disservices. One, it suggests there is an innate, immutable difference that means male players will always be superior, possibly discouraging talented girls and women. Two, it’s a lazy conclusion. If women are never going to excel at the same levels, why invest the time and effort to increase the pipeline of girls and women entering the sport? There are women at every point on the IQ continuum, so something else must be keeping highly intelligent women from pursuing chess.

It's the Numbers, Chat

Two additional theories are the *participation rate hypothesis* and the *differential dropout theory*. These are related to the number of girls and women who choose to participate in chess and how long they stick with it. It’s no surprise that the data shows a serious numbers advantage for boys taking up chess. They often enter competition at a higher level as well, suggesting more practice and preparation before their first tournament. Girls will show up at chess club as rank novices, eager to learn but basically starting from scratch. Boys typically have some experience.



Girls who enjoy chess in elementary school leave the sport in high numbers in middle and high school. Photo by Tahir Xælfø for Pexels.

*For the girls who do start playing, they fall away at much greater numbers. Over nine years, a group of roughly 32,000 players was tracked, and the percentage of girls went from 18% to only 11% during that time (Li, Glickman, & Chabris, 2025). Do girls drop out because they can't succeed against the boys? Ratings suggest there's no innate disadvantage. When girls and boys are placed in matched cohorts, their progression is relatively equal. Additionally, dropout rates decline significantly. **This is strong evidence that the reason girls leave chess is more environment and interest-based and not due to innate ability differences.***

The Exit Precedes the Expertise

In the study “Gender Differences: The Chess Delusion,” Chassy noted that the mean age of active female chess players was much younger—around 20 years for women vs. 31 for men. The age range for most players (not prodigies, of course) to reach peak expertise is between 30 and 40 years old. *This suggests that men are actively playing chess for more than a decade longer than women, many much longer, and are more likely to reach grandmaster skill.*

When the data is examined using both gender and age as covariables, an interesting fact comes to light. **Mean ratings are virtually identical when women and men reach their peak, around 1770 (Chassy 2023).** Why, if this is the case, does it seem obvious that men are “better” at chess than women? The most compelling explanation is a rapid drop in participation rate. Women quit playing chess before they reach their peak performance, often in adolescence and well before they would hit those higher ELO levels. There is evidence that men are more likely to focus intently on one activity, while women generally have a broader range of interests (Warne, 2020).

Another interesting finding from Chassy is the equalization of ELO ratings between men and women in their 30s. For an entire decade, the ratings are virtually the

same despite the large disparity in participation rates. This is another reason to question the *ability distribution hypothesis*. If the difference in chess achievement was really due to inherent ability gaps, there should not be any age group with parity.

Where Does That Leave Us?

If girls and women have the same potential for great play as boys and men, we're missing out on some fantastic female chess players because they aren't encouraged to start chess or stick with it. Next we ask—what barriers exist for women in chess?

Bias Can Be Subtle

In the study “Checking gender bias: Parents and mentors perceive less chess potential in girls,” by Arnold, Bailey, Ma, Shahade, & Cimpian, the authors considered whether parents and mentors exhibited bias against the female players in their lives. **While it doesn't necessarily take the form of overt bias, they did find that parents and mentors were less likely to take a girl's ambitions seriously due to the perception the girls and women do not have equal potential.** They were more likely to associate a girl dropping out with lack of ability rather than due to other factors (Arnold et al, 2024). Fully 90% of mentors and parents thought female youth players ratings ceilings were a full bracket lower than a male player of the same age, despite stating that they thought ability was similar.

Hostile Playing Environment

The world of organized chess has been rocked in recent years by revelations of sexual harassment and assault at events. Accusations by WGM Jennifer Shahade and others have created a “Me Too” movement in chess. As women share their experiences, a disturbing picture of what it's like to be a girl or woman in chess has emerged. It's hard to play your best and climb the rankings if you're distracted and uncomfortable due to harassment and unwanted attention.



Women should be able to focus on playing chess when they attend events without harassment. Photo by Picas Joe for Pexels.

New initiatives are in place to make chess safer and more welcoming for everyone. The USCF has adopted SafePlay standards, the same guidelines used in youth sports to protect athletes from harassment and abuse. FIDE has committed to changing the way they handle accusations, and several high-level players have been censured or even banned for their behavior.

It's up to every chess player to help support a safe playing environment for everyone. It's also up to parents and mentors to acknowledge the barriers that exist and work to create a more inclusive and supportive experience for girls and young women. Start early! What looks like teasing in the elementary or middle school chess room may feel quite different to the person being "teased."

Unequal Time, Opportunities, and Resources

Three GM norms are required to achieve grandmaster status. A GM norm requires a performance rating of 2600, based on the average rating of opponents. Because there are so few women playing at this level, it can be harder for women to chase those all-important norms.

Another fact that bears pointing out is that the age where peak expertise is typically reached (late 20s to early 30s) is also the range where women are typically making decisions about having children and careers. Participation rates reflect a shift in priorities away from chess during those years. Competitive chess, like any sport, requires training and resources, time and money, and it's not surprising that it takes a backseat for many women.

The Potential IS There—So What Can Be Done?

If the gender differences we see in chess are primarily down to the enormous imbalance in male/female players, the obvious first answer is to do everything possible to stuff the pipeline with girls. Perhaps that's a little too obvi-

ous, though. **While encouraging and attracting more girls to the game is a great start, building an environment where they feel safe and supported is equally important.** Providing the same support, encouragement, and resources to **all** young chess players is essential to developing promising girls and women into elite players.

Citations:

Li, A., Glickman, M. E., & Chabris, C. F. (2025). Across the Board: Sex, Ratings, and Retention in Competitive Chess. *CHANCE*, 38(3), 11–19. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09332480.2025.2560279>

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Arnold SH, Bailey AH, Ma WJ, Shahade J, Cimpian A. Checking gender bias: Parents and mentors perceive less chess potential in girls. *J Exp Psychol Gen*. 2024 Jan;153(1):1-14. doi: 10.1037/xge0001466. Epub 2023 Oct 5. PMID: 37796575.

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Warne RT. Males and Females Have the Same Distribution of IQ Scores. In: *In the Know: Debunking 35 Myths about Human Intelligence*. Cambridge University Press; 2020:239-246.

Original article can be found here:

<https://www.uscfsales.com/blogs/general/chess-the-difference-between-the-genders>



How Daniel Naroditsky Changed My Life

by Sriaditya Pendyala

Many top players have shared their anecdotes of Danya's graciousness and kindness over the past few weeks and months. They have all been extremely expressive of his compassion and just how amazing a person he was. However, I would like to give my own experience as a viewer. I've never known Danya personally, but I do vividly remember the energy, humor, and excitement of watching his late-night streams. I distinctly remember the bullet sessions with 0gZPanda that would last for hours and marathon streams that would lapse over nearly 24 hours during the pandemic. Those streams blurred the days and nights. I often found myself falling asleep at my desk with the stream open, to find out he's still going strong seven hours later. My days used to be a hectic and mindless blur: wake up, classes, work, and sleep, but his streams were the coffee in my evenings, and the hot cocoa in the nights— they were the single thing I looked forward to every day. Perhaps the fondest memories I have are from analyzing moves during his speedruns with his community, and working out enthralling lines in fiery middlegames. I believe I can speak for most of his audience and express enduring sorrow for his passing. Danya will be forever remembered as a remarkably kind and compassionate mentor in the hearts of his fans.



Resurfaced: La Plata – Nueva York, 1947

by Chris Martinez G

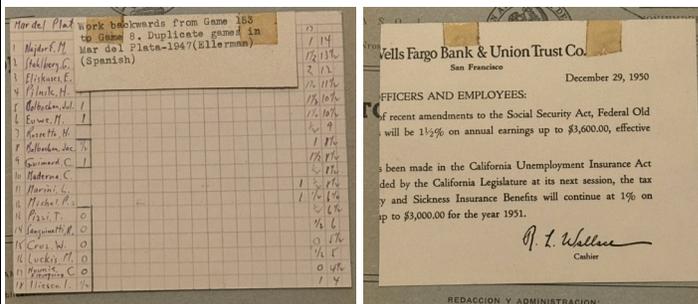
This time, we dug deeper into the archive. The magazine that surfaced came from even further back than the last title—an issue dated 1947. What makes this collection compelling is not its chronological order, but the freedom it allows. I can choose the issue that speaks at the moment. There is no imposed direction, no prescribed path these stories must follow, so long as what emerges is worth reading, preserving, and sharing. That freedom, in this realization, is part of the beauty it brings me and that in turn brings joy to our readers as well.



The story that emerged belongs to *La Plata – Nueva York*, the memorable victory of the Jockey Club from the Province of Buenos Aires over their counterparts in the United States. Holding a magazine that documents such an encounter—printed in 1947—is already remarkable, especially considering the seventy-six-year journey that brought it into my hands. Leafing through its pages, I feel almost like a curator handling an artifact with white gloves. The magazine captures a crucial moment when international chess was reconnecting after years of global disruption, and

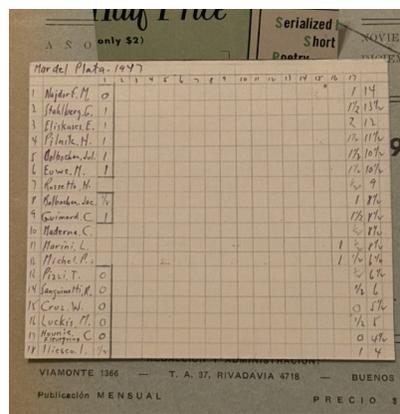
when distance did not yet prevent ambition.

This issue, along with many other publications, found its way into the collection of the Mechanics' Institute Chess Room, one of the oldest chess institutions in the United States, based in San Francisco, California. There it circulated for years before eventually reaching me. Tucked inside the magazine is an extraordinary detail: a loose, type-written printout of the games. The paper appears to have been cut from the reverse of a Wells Fargo advertisement, stamped *December 29, 1950 — San Francisco*, a reminder of how ordinary materials were once repurposed without hesitation.



On its own, the insert is nothing more than a scrap of paper. Yet the fact that it has traveled across cities, institutions, and hands for more than seven decades transforms it into something else—a quiet testament to the endurance of chess history, preserved not by intention alone, but by use and chance.

The document itself stands apart. It is not a formal scoresheet, nor something prepared for publication. Instead, it reads like a personal working ledger: names written out by hand, results marked in halves and totals, and a



grid left open for further work. At the top, a narrow strip of typewritten text explains the method—working backward through the games, identifying duplicates, comparing sources. The paper appears to have been repurposed from a magazine or office document, an ordinary piece of mid-century life

pressed into service for chess study. Together, the handwriting and the typewritten note suggest a slow, deliberate way of working, long before engines or databases existed. Whoever took the time to do this remains unknown, but the care is still there on the page.

And now, to the story.

It was 1947. The Jockey Club team from Mar del Plata faced the Manhattan Chess Club in what was then known as a *match telefónico*. The games were not played across a shared board, but simultaneously in separate locations, with each move relayed by telephone and radio. Today the format may sound unusual, but at the time it represented one of the most ambitious ways chess could cross borders.

Little detail survives about who coordinated every aspect of the logistics. The article itself credits the generous support of Dr. Don Uberto F. Vignart, along with the enthusiasm of Dr. Don Luis G. Herrera, without whom the match might not have taken place. Even so, sustaining multiple games in this manner required careful organization: offi-

EL AJEDREZ ARGENTINO 301

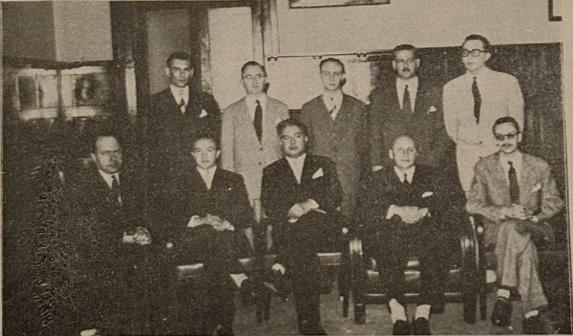
La Plata - Nueva York

MEMORABLE VICTORIA DEL EQUIPO DEL JOCKEY CLUB DE LA PROVINCIA DE BUENOS AIRES SOBRE EL MANHATTAN CHESS CLUB DE NUEVA YORK EN EL MATCH RADIOTELEFONICO.

Las reñas actividades ajedrecísticas en la Argentina durante los últimos 10 años despertaron en forma justificada el interés del ajedrez mundial, no sólo por la magnitud de las competencias organizadas por la Federación Argentina de Ajedrez sino también por las múltiples justas a cargo de diversas instituciones deportivas y sociales.

Entre estas se destaca el **Jockey Club de la Provincia de Buenos Aires con sede en La Plata**, que siempre bajo la comprensión generosa de su presidente **Dr. don Uberto F. Vignart** hizo posible la realización de más de una iniciativa propuesta por el dinámico y entusiasta director de la comisión de ajedrez **Dr. don Luis G. Herrera**, como lo fueron el torneo internacional en el año 1944 en La Plata y la colaboración prestada a la FADA para el torneo Sextangular en el año 1947.

INTEGRANTES DEL EQUIPO DEL JOCKEY CLUB DE LA PLATA



PARADOS: de izquierda a derecha: Maderna, Michel, Julio Bolbochán, García Balado, Pilnik. SENTADOS: de izquierda a derecha: Stahlberg, Najdorf, Guimard, Luckis y Rossetto.

Si estas competencias fueron testimonios de la actividad ajedrecística argentina en general, el match con el Manhattan Chess Club de Nueva York comprobó el alto nivel individual del ajedrez argentino. La responsable idea de concertar este match y seleccionar los integrantes del

cials to relay moves, arbiters to ensure accuracy, and players on both sides setting up mirrored boards, trusting that each move arriving over the airwaves would be faithfully reproduced. One is left to wonder who was responsible for translating and transmitting moves between English and Spanish in real time, and how easily a single miscommunication might have altered a result.

The games were recorded in descriptive notation, the standard system of the era. Files were named after the pieces that originally occupied them, and moves were described relative to each player's perspective. A move such as *P-K4* indicated a pawn advancing to the king's fourth square; *N-KB3* placed a knight on the king's bishop file; *BxN* recorded a bishop capturing a knight. This system predated the widespread adoption of algebraic notation, which would later gain international traction through European—and particularly Soviet—chess culture.

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equipo, estuvieron a cargo del Dr. Luis G. Herrera y el favorable resultado del encuentro fué el mayor premio y la mejor satisfacción para la entidad organizadora como lo prueban las numerosas congratulaciones que llegaron hasta sus autoridades.

Así el 2 de noviembre de 1947, poco antes de las 14 horas, el presidente del Jockey Club Dr. Uberto F. Vignart, que actuó como fiscal por el Manhattan Chess Club de Nueva York, invitó a los 10 jugadores argentinos a dar comienzo al encuentro. La sala de armas de la entidad platense, donde en forma cómoda fueron ubicados los tableros, fué visitada por numeroso público, que seguía con sumo interés las alternativas de la lucha durante las 12 largas horas de su duración.

Es indudable que el resultado del match, tan categórico, dió resonancia y trascendencia universal, pues los Estados Unidos, cuyos mejores jugadores intervinieron en la disputa, ha sido considerado como la segunda "potencia ajedrecística" después de Rusia!

Los resultados individuales fueron los siguientes:

Jockey Club - La Plata	Manhattan Chess Club - Nueva York
1. G. Stahlberg 0	S. Reshevsky 1
2. M. Najdorf 1	I. Kashdan 0
3. Jul. Bolbochán 1/2	A. Denker 1/2
4. H. Pilnik 1/2	I. A. Horowitz 1/2
5. C. H. Maderna 1/2	A. Kevitz 1/2
6. P. Michel 1	A. S. Pinkus 0
7. H. D. Rossetto 1/2	M. Pavay 1/2
8. C. E. Guimard 1	G. Kramer 0
9. L. García Balado 1/2	G. Shainswit 1/2
10. M. Luckis 1	D. Byrne 0
Total 6 1/2	Total 3 1/2

A continuación publicamos todas las partidas del match con las notas técnicas más importantes:

No 1. SISTEMA CATALAN

<p>S. Reshevsky</p> <p>1. C3AR, P4D; 2. P3CR, C3AR; 3. A2C, P3CR; 4. P4D, A2C; 5. O-O, O-O; 6. P4A, P4A!;</p> <p>Lo habitual es 6., P3A, sin embargo la novedosa idea, que emplea Stahlberg, es jugable para conseguir el equilibrio.</p> <p>7. PDxP, PxP; 8. D2A, D4D; 9. C3T, DxP; 10. DxPA, DxD;</p>	<p>Era de considerar 10., D4TR.</p> <p>11. CxD, C3A; 12. C(4)5R, CxC; 13. CxC, C1R; 14. C3D, C3D; 15. A5C, T1R; 16. TD1A, P3TR; 17. A3R, A4A;</p> <p>Con 17., A5C hubieran mantenido las negras el equilibrio de chances.</p> <p>18. T7A ,AxC?</p> <p>Stahlberg considera debil este cambio insinuando como mejor 18. TD1A y si 19. TR1A, entonces 19., TxT; 20. TxT, P3C y a 21. TxPT seguir con 21., C5A.</p>
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Spanish-language publications did not employ a separate system but adapted descriptive notation linguistically. Piece names changed—*Peón* for pawn, *Torre* for rook, *Caballo* for knight—but the structure remained the same. A Spanish score might read *P-4R* or *C-AR3*, moves that remain surprisingly legible once the reader adjusts.¹ This is precisely what appears in the games recorded here.

Behind every move was a quiet choreography. Players noted moves by hand on simple score sheets or loose paper, boards mirrored across continents, and decisions made without ever seeing an opponent across the table. All of this depended on the technology of the moment—

telephone lines, radio signals, and human intermediaries—used not as novelty, but as a requisite.

According to the account, the match unfolded over the course of twelve hours. Such a duration hints at the care required to sustain a telefónica contest: moves relayed by voice, confirmed, written down, and only then played. What survives in print, therefore, is not a single score, but the consolidation of many handwritten traces.

Any account of the match must also acknowledge the caliber of those involved. The Argentine side was anchored by Miguel Najdorf, already among the strongest players in the world by 1947, supported by an international lineup that included Gideon Ståhlberg. Opposing them, the Manhattan Chess Club, one of the country's most prestigious chess establishments, fielded a team of leading American masters.

Seen from the present, the match invites reflection. Long before digital platforms made global play effortless, chess had already found ways to travel. Distance was crossed not by players, but by voices, wires, and ink—leaving behind a paper trail that still speaks decades later.

In this sense, the magazine itself becomes as important as the games it contains. Published in the immediate aftermath of the Second World War, it journeyed from South America to the United States, passed through an institution, and continued to be handled and studied. Its pages show signs of use rather than display.

The handwritten notes and repurposed paper inside suggest how chess was studied in an era without engines or databases. Games were reconstructed move by move, boards reset by hand, understanding earned slowly. The unknown person who wrote these names and tallied these results may remain anonymous, but their effort endures on the page.

What remains is not merely a record of a match, but evidence of how chess lived beyond the moment it was played. For now, the magazine rests with me—not as a possession, but as a responsibility: a temporary holding place in a much longer journey, waiting for the next set of hands, and the next story to be uncovered.

¹Note on notation:

The games shown here are written in Spanish descriptive notation, the system used throughout much of Latin America in the mid-20th century. Moves are recorded from each player's perspective, using the original files of the pieces rather than coordinates. The piece names shift into Spanish—Peón (pawn), Torre (rook), Caballo (knight), Alfil (bishop), Dama (queen), and Rey (king)—but the structure remains unchanged. A move such as P-4R corresponds to P-K4 in English descriptive notation; C-AR3 to N-QR3; T-D1 to R-Q1; D-K2 to Q-K2; R-KB1 to K-KB1. What differs is not the method, only the language. Before algebraic notation became universal, this was simply how chess was written—meant to be read with patience, understood through familiarity, and carried across borders one move at a time.



*In the **Limelight***: Chris Martinez G

Interview by Mark Capron

Tell us a little bit about yourself and what you do for a living.

I grew up in Colorado and lived there most of my life, though I'm originally from Mexico City. About eight years ago, my family and I relocated to the Bay Area in California, where I currently work in retail management.

Previously I spent time working in software development, which shaped how I approach systems, problem-solving, and pattern recognition — interests that naturally overlap with chess.

Today, I genuinely enjoy working in retail leadership: connecting with people, building momentum, teams and working toward shared goals. Outside of work, I spend as much time as possible outdoors. Snowboarding is still something I hold onto when I can, even living in California, and photography remains a creative outlet for me.

Most of my energy, though, goes to my three children, who are all at different stages of life. Staying active is less of a choice and more of a requirement — but it keeps me present and grounded.

Where did your story with chess begin?

My chess story began in Basalt, Colorado, during an after-hours chess club in the mid-1990s. Chess felt familiar to me almost immediately, but more than that, it felt meaningful. I enjoyed it from the start and never fully stopped playing, though I often wish someone had encouraged me to continue more seriously early on.

At the time, resources were limited. Around 1994–95, there weren't many books, magazines, or consistent opponents, at least for me as a teen. Online chess as we know it today didn't yet exist. I played casually with my uncles and friends and later spent time in early online spaces like Yahoo Chess chat rooms just to find games.

In my mid-20s, my interest deepened again. I subscribed to *Chess Life* magazine and played every Thursday at a local art gallery where the owner would set up a few boards for the community. Trips to New York — particularly playing at Washington Square Park — were humbling experiences. I quickly realized just how strong some players were.

Around 2010, I became focused on completing Chess Magnet School titles, 20 of them. Which were widely advertised at the time. Life soon shifted — my child was born, responsibilities increased, and chess slowly stepped into the background. Eventually, life simply got in the way.

After settling in California and watching my children grow, chess found its way back into my life once again. Teaching my kids to play — especially now my toddler — has given the game new meaning. Today, I continue to play across platforms like Chess Magnet School, Chessable, and Lichess, and Chess.com. Chess has never fully left me; it has grown alongside me.

What most excites you about starting a column for *The Chess Journalist*?

What excites me most is the opportunity to give something back to a game that has given me so much — from mental endurance and patience to pattern recognition and perspective.

I'm especially drawn to uncovering stories from Spanish-language chess publications and bringing them to an English-speaking readership. That bridge — honoring overlooked history while expanding access — is deeply meaningful to me. Being able to contribute in this way is both humbling and energizing.

What did you learn while researching and writing the column?

Researching the column has shown me just how deeply chess is tied to its historical moment. While writing about Argentina in 1953, for example, I gained a broader understanding of what was happening politically, socially, and culturally at the time.

Bobby Fischer was still a child, yet the Cold War was already unfolding, and chess was emerging as a symbolic battleground between global powers. That context reshaped how I viewed the games, the players, and the publications themselves. Every piece feels like stepping into a specific moment in history, and I continue learning with each column.

What inspires you to write?

I'm inspired by connection. In my daily work, I enjoy making ideas approachable and engaging, whether I'm explaining a concept or simply making someone laugh.

Writing operates in much the same way. If I can share a perspective that resonates, sparks curiosity, or helps someone see something differently — while still maintaining my own voice — then I feel compelled to keep writing. Turning everyday observations into something meaningful is what motivates me most.

What inspires you in general?

Innovation, creativity, and thinking outside the box inspire me deeply. I used to draw frequently, and while I don't do it as much now, I still find inspiration in visual storytelling — from comic books to design and technology.

I'm especially fascinated by how technology reshapes the way we view the world and interact with one another. Even small moments can be inspiring — waiting at a train crossing, watching railcars pass with striking graffiti. While I don't condone vandalism, I can still recognize the creativity and expression behind it. Inspiration is everywhere if you're willing to notice it.



You have used the term, meaningful a few times during this interview. It is very important to you. Would you expand on this concept further as it relates to chess?

Chess had a sense of meaning — the pieces, the way it was taught, and the intricacies of how the game worked and how you could win. It's one thing to learn the moves, but another thing entirely to know how to play. Even the color of the board and the whole essence of chess felt meaningful. And although I didn't yet understand what chess truly meant at the time, I knew it was something I wanted to learn and be part of.

What aspects of chess draw you in most when choosing what to read or write about?

All of it. Openings offer insight into structure and preparation, while endgames teach patience, accuracy, and restraint. In today's game, many players arrive extremely well-prepared, which makes understanding every phase essential.

Lately, I've been especially drawn to Chess960. I enjoy how it minimizes memorized theory and emphasizes creativity, sound principles, and original thought. Variants like Horde or other alternative formats initially felt unconven-

tional to me, but I now appreciate how they challenge assumptions and expand understanding.

I also enjoy chess biographies and podcasts, especially during my commute. Learning about players, eras, and even unconventional stories — like astronauts studying chess to sharpen their thinking — reminds me how universal and adaptable the game truly is.

What would you like your chess legacy to be?

Above all, I want to pass the game on. Teaching chess to my toddler, while my older children already play, has been incredibly rewarding. At times, we find ourselves at opposite ends of the house playing each other online — small moments made possible by modern technology.

Still, nothing replaces over-the-board chess. I'd love to help grow a stronger local chess community where I live in the greater Bay Area. I've even considered proposing city-supported chess tables — possibly made from recycled materials — where people can sit, play, and connect.

Ultimately, I want to expand the game locally, continue improving as a player, and help ensure that chess remains a space for creativity, learning, and human connection.

Please add an explanation of the "G" at the end of your name.

The "G" comes from my second surname, González, which reflects a long-standing naming tradition in Spain and much of Latin America. Historically, individuals carry two surnames: the first from the father (paternal) and the second from the mother (maternal). This practice became standardized in Spain centuries ago and remains widely used today, in Latin America and parts of the US southwest.

Rather than dropping my maternal surname entirely or using my full legal name in every context, I chose to represent it with a single initial. In that sense, the "G" serves both a cultural reference and a personal one. It acknowledges my maternal lineage — particularly my mother — who has since passed away.

Many people are familiar with using a middle initial or going by a middle name, but it's less common to see someone include an initial from a second surname. Using the "G" felt like a way to honor that tradition while keeping my name concise and practical. "Chris Martinez" works well in most settings, and the added initial allows me to preserve that heritage without extending the name further.

Chris Martinez G

The Death of a Variation part 3

by Agermose2 (Michael Agermose Jensen)

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The Battle of Marciano by Giorgio Vasari (1565)

Pierce Gambit Part 3

The battle of Marciano took place in Tuscany 1554. A decade later, Vasari painted an enormous fresco of the battle which is in the Palazzo Vecchio in Florence. At the top of the fresco there is a green flag with the words “cerca trova”, meaning “seek and you shall find”. The message, and the possibility of hidden layers within the fresco, played a pivotal part in the plot of Dan Brown’s mystery novel “Inferno”.

Here we shall dig deeper into the Pierce gambit, to expose its hidden layers.

The Vienna gambit had a brilliant 1992, as described in [Part 2](#). Meanwhile, players of the black pieces were seeking - and finding. One game that did not make it into Tseitlin & Glazkov’s *The Complete Vienna*, even though White was one of the authors, was the following:

Zeitlein, Michael (2495) - Ciolac, Gheorghe (2385) [C25]

Wattens op 07th Wattens (8), 1992

[agerm]

1.e4 e5 2.♗c3 ♘c6 3.f4 exf4 4.♗f3 g5 5.d4 g4 6.♗c4 gxf3 7.0-0 ♗xd4 [As mentioned in [Part 1](#), this move-order is better than the immediate ♗g5.]

8.♗xf4 [8.♗xd4?? ♗g5 and White must lose king or queen.; Arnason suggested 8.♗xf3 but it looks a bit desperate.]

8...♗g7 9.e5 [An improvement may be 9.♗e3 but here T. Horvath’s suggestion 9...♗f6! is strong. (9...c5 should be met by adding more fuel to the attack with 10.♗xf3! (10.♗b5 d5! Konstantinopolsky & Lepeshkin. To which Tseitlin & Glazkov adds 11.♗xd4 followed by ♗xf3, but 11...cxd4 12.♗xf3 ♗f6 fails to impress the engine.) 10...♗xf3+ 11.♗xf3 ♗f6 12.♗e2 and White has many new threats.) 10.♗d5 ♗g6 11.♗xf3 ♗xf3+ 12.♗xf3 ♗d8 0–1 Komissarov, Y (2183)-Jones, P (2161) LSS CP-2008-P-00055 LSS email and White might have some play for the rook, but hardly enough.; 9.♗xf7+ ♗xf7 10.e5 was recommended by T. Horvath. However, 10...♗f5! refutes this. (Tseitlin & Glazkov’s book gave only 10...d5 11.♗xd4 after which White has decent compensation.)]

9...d5 [So far was given by Konstantinopolsky & Lepeshkin (K & L)]

10.exd6 [10.♗xd4 dxc4 11.♗e3 is the best chance to confuse matters. If Black is not alert and tries to castle with 11...♗e7? then after 12.♗ad1 ♗d7 13.♗e4 White has a strong attack for the piece.; 10.♗xd5 c6 and if the bishop moves, the queens get traded.; 10.♗xd5 ♗e2+ 11.♗h1 fxg2+ 12.♗xg2 ♗xf4+ 13.♗xf4 and here the simple 13...♗e6 is winning.]

10...c6? [A little too clever. 10...cxd6 gives White very little for the sacrificed knight.]

11.♖e1+ [White has alternatives here. See Exercise 1.]

11...♗e6 12.♖d1 ♖f6 13.d7+ ♜f8? [It was safer to use the white pawn as shield and go for 13...♜d8!]

14.♗d6+ ♜e7 15.♜e4? [White gets tangled up in all the zwischenzugs. White had the chance to liquidate with 15.♗xe6! ♖xe6 16.♖xe6 ♜xe6 17.♖xf3∞ Black is in an annoying pin and White should be able to win back the sacrificed material.]

15...♖g6 16.♖f2 [16.♜g3 was unclear according to Ciolac in Informator, but that seems very generous. Perhaps he was enticing future opponents to repeat the variation? Black has two good tries: 16...♖xc2-+ hits c4 and threatens mate on g2. (16...♖d8 picks off the pawn on d7.)]

16...♗xc4 17.♗xe7+ ♜xe7 18.♖b4+ ♜d8 19.♖xb7 ♖xe4 20.♖xa8+ ♜e7 21.♖xa7 ♗d5-+ [Black has consolidated and the white king is the one in danger now.]

22.gxf3 ♖g6+ 23.♖g2 ♜xf3+ 24.♜h1 ♜d4 25.d8♖+ ♜xd8 26.♖b8+ ♜d7 27.♖a7+ ♜e6

0-1

This was a bit of a blow, but there were some suggestions of improvement for White, so perhaps the pieces could be stitched back together?

Joe Gallagher's *Winning With the King's Gambit* (1992), contained the following game, where Black came up with a "novelty" on move 8. In fact, it had been played as early as in Langborn-Rydborg, Stockholm 1897.

The game was annotated by the winner in *Kingpin* 16, 1990. White is a Czech International Master, while Black later made a name for himself writing amongst other things, biographies on Mikhail Tal and Boris Spassky.

**Polasek, Jaroslav (2340) - Karolyi, Tibor Jr (2475) [C25]
Prague Bohemians Prague, 1988
[agerm]**

1.e4 e5 2.♗c3 ♗c6 3.f4 exf4 4.♜f3 g5 5.d4 g4 6.♗c4 gxf3 7.0-0 ♜xd4 8.♗xf4 ♗c5 [This position was already seen in 1897 but became all the rage in 1993. 8...♗g7 was the previous game (Zeitlein-Ciolac).]

9.♗xf7+! [It appears this is the least bad move. Here Gallagher recommended 9.♜h1 without further analysis. More on that later; Karolyi also considered. 9...♗e3 ♜e2+ 10.♜h1 ♗xe3 11.♖xf3 ♜f4 12.♖xe3 which is actually fine for White, but Black can improve on this, see next time.]

9...♜xf7 10.♗e3 [The Pierce book ended with "&c." here. Presumably meaning that Black has no good answer, but Karolyi found one.]

10...♜e8! [Black is dead lost after 10...♜g6? 11.♗xd4 ♗xd4+ 12.♖xd4 ♖f6 13.♖d3+- Konikowski/Przewosnik (1990); 10...♖f6 11.♜d5 ♖g7 see **EXERCISE 2**. White to move. How to continue the attack. (11...♖e5 12.c3)]

11.♗xd4 ♗xd4+ 12.♖xd4 ♖f6 13.♖d3 ♜e7 14.♖xf3 [Time to take stock. White ends up with only one pawn for the piece and too few pieces to mount a serious attack.]

14...♖e5 15.♜d5 c6 16.♜f6+? [16.♜xe7 is actually tricky. 16...♖c5+ 17.♜h1 ♖xe7 18.♖af1 d6 (18...♖g8 19.e5 ♜d8 20.♖d6! ♖xd6 21.exd6 White wins another pawn and stifles the black King and bishop. For starters there is also the threat of mate in 2.) 19.♖f7 ♖xf7 20.♖xf7 ♖xf7 21.♖xd6 ♖e8 22.♖h6 with some drawing chances due to the exposed king.]

16...♜d8 17.♜xd7 ♗xd7 18.♖d1 ♜d5! [18...♖c7 19.♖c3 ♖e8 20.♖fd3 ♜c8 (The engine likes 20...♜g6 and claims a winning advantage.) 21.♖xd7 ♖xd7 22.♖xd7 ♜xd7 23.♖h3+ unclear, Karolyi.]

19.exd5 cxd5 20.♖e3 [20.♖xd5 ♖xd5 21.♖xd5 ♖c8 22.♖f7 ♖c7 holds.]

20...♖d6 21.c4 ♖c5 22.♜h1 ♖f8 23.cxd5 ♖b5 24.♖b1 ♖c8 25.♖b3 ♖e2 26.♖e1 ♖f2 27.♖xb7 [White has enough pawns now, but the weak back rank is a problem.]

27...♖c2 28.♖g1 ♖g8 29.♖f1 ♖f8? [29...♖xf1 was simpler. 30.♖xf1 ♖gxg2 31.♖f7 ♖ge2 Karolyi. (31...♖gd2)]

30.♖xf2 ♖xf2 31.♖xa7 ♖xb2 32.a4 ♗f5 33.♖g7 ♖a2 34.h4? ♖xa4 35.♜h2 ♖xh4+ 36.♜g3 ♖ff4 37.♖a1 ♖hg4+ 38.♖xg4 ♖xg4+ 39.♜f3 ♖d4 40.♖a5 [The game continues, as there is still hope for the infamous rook and bishop vs rook endgame, which in some cases is a draw.]

40...♜d7 41.♜e3 ♖e4+ 42.♜f3 ♜d6 43.♖a2 ♜xd5 44.♜g3 [This endgame is not easy to win. In his comments Karolyi suggests the reader work out the winning plan before playing through the rest of the moves. Stockfish 17 is quite useless in this endgame.]

44...♜e5 45.♖b2 ♜f6 46.♖a2 ♜g5 47.♖b2 ♖d4 48.♜h2 ♖d3 49.♖a2 ♖c3 50.♖b2 ♗e4 51.♖e2 ♜f4 52.♖f2+ ♜e3 53.♖f7 ♖c2 54.♖g7 ♖c6 55.♖a7 ♖c2 56.♖g7 ♗g6 57.♖a7 ♜f2 58.♖a4 ♖b2 59.♖f4+ ♜e1 60.♜g1 ♖e2 61.♖g4 ♖e4 62.♖g3 ♜e2 63.♖a3 ♖c4 64.♖a2+ ♖c2 65.♖a4 ♖d2 66.♖f4 ♜e3 67.♖f3+ ♜d4 68.♖g3 ♗e4 69.♖g5 ♜e3 70.♖g3+ ♜e2 71.♖g7 ♖c2 72.♖e7 ♜e3 73.♖g7 ♖c1+ 74.♜h2 ♖a1 75.♖g3+ [75.♖g8 ♖a8 76.♖g7 ♖a6 77.♖f7 ♖h6+ 78.♜g1 ♖g6 79.♖f2 Karolyi.]

75...♜f2 76.♖g7 ♖a2 77.♖d7 ♖e2 78.♖d1? ♗xg2 79.♖d2 ♗f3
0-1

Another difficult loss, and the improvements were at best to hold a draw. So what now?

In his comments to the game, Gallagher gave the laconic suggestion "Better was 9.♜h1!".

That idea did not have to wait long for a test.

The Case of the Disappearing Game

**Zeitlein, Michael (2485) - Marciano, David (2430) [C25]
Ciocaltea Memorial Bucharest, 1993
[agerm]**

1.e4 e5 2.♗c3 ♗c6 3.f4 exf4 4.♜f3 g5 5.d4 g4 6.♗c4 gxf3 7.0-0 ♜xd4 8.♗xf4 ♗c5 9.♜h1 [This was the move given by Gallagher (1992). However it had first been analyzed by Konikowski and Przewosnik (1990), who also gave the antidote.]

9...♜d6! [Black has other ways of defusing the attack, but this is best.]

10.♗e3 ♗e6 [Not that Black needs an improvement, but 10...♖f6! is even better.]

11.♗xd4 fxe2+! [without the threat to f7, Black can take the pawn.]

11...♔c4 was given in Konikowski/Przewosnik (1990).]

12.♙g2 ♔c4 13.♙h8 ♔xf1+ [In Neil McDonald's book on the King's Gambit, the Tseitlin-Marciano game is also absent. There the continuation is 13...♗g5+ 14.♖h1 ♔xf1 15.♗xf1 0-0-0 16.♗xf7 ♖h6 17.♗f6 ♗g4 winning. The text move is cleaner.]

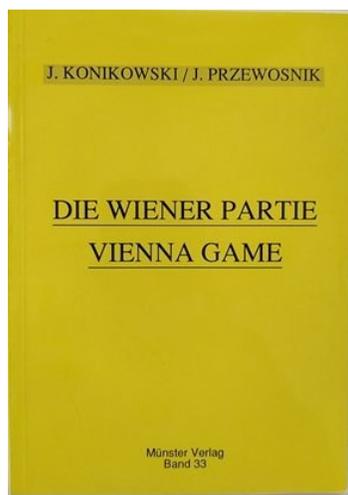
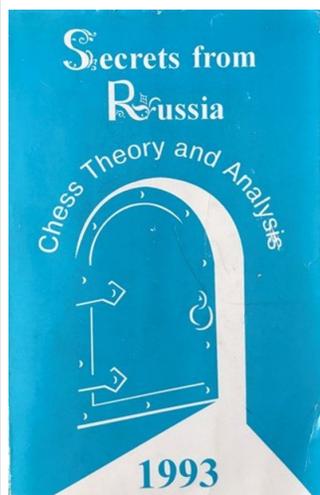
14.♗f1 ♗d7 15.♗f4 [15.♖h1 improves slightly but still lost in Eccles-Tait, corr 1997.]

15...0-0-0 [White's attack is gone, Black has a solid extra pawn and the bishop on h8 is in trouble.]

16.♚f1 ♖h6 17.h3 ♚xh8 18.♗xh6 ♔d4 19.♗h5 ♚g8+ 20.♖h2 ♗e6 21.♚f3 ♔e5+ 22.♖h1 ♔xc3 23.bxc3 ♗xe4 24.♗xf7 ♚g3 25.♖h2 ♚xf3 0-1

Strangely, that game of the ♔c5 line only made it into Zeitlein and Glazkov's Vienna book, because the editor (John Nunn) included it. It also mysteriously did not find its way into Neil McDonald's 1998 King's Gambit book.

I saw the game Zeitlein-Marciano first in this book: *Secrets from Russia* (1993)



A very interesting tome, which contained an interesting article on the Pierce gambit by IM David Marciano, based on the above game.

However, the first analysis of 9.♖h1 I know of is in Konikowski and Przewosnik's

German book *Wiener Partie - Vienna Game* from 1990.

There is also an earlier game, Henkel-Gerber, corr. DDR 1968, that seemed to go completely unnoticed.

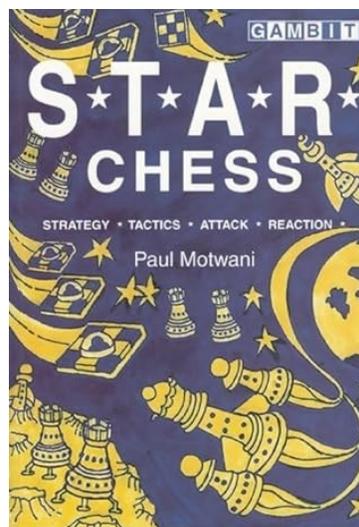
Apparently, Polish-German FM Jerzy Konikowski holds the record as most prolific chess writer with hundreds of books to his name (thank you [Junior Tay](#), for the information). The Vienna book contains some nice analysis, but no text or explanations.

Konikowski & Przewosnik Vienna Game (1990)

In his book *S*T*A*R*Chess* (1998) Paul Motwani describes the game that made him quit the Pierce Gambit.

A simultaneous game on the 23rd of April 1994 in a bookstore in

Glasgow. The opponent, Douglas Smith, found 10...Be6 on the board and won.



*S*T*A*R*Chess* (1998)

Another blow, but again there were possible improvements.

At move 10 White has another try in 10.b4, and now we come to some correspondence games. The next game was played in the Danish team correspondence league in 1997. Engines were still weak, but what mattered was that the refutation was known.

Jensen,Erik H. - Jensen,Michael Agermose [C25] corr 2.division, 1997 [Jensen,M.]

1.e4 e5 2.f4 ♖c6 3.♖c3 [3.♖f3 f5 - the Adelaide countergambit - was Black's other idea. This was also popular in the mid-1990s.]

3...exf4 4.♖f3 g5 5.d4 g4 6.♔c4 gxf3 7.0-0 ♖xd4 8.♔xf4 ♔c5 9.♖h1 d6 10.b4! [An interesting move intending to improve on Tseitlin's play. It came as a complete surprise to me, as I did not know that it had been played otb two years earlier. A few years after this game, I talked to Erik Søbberg, who told me he had played the position against the same opponent in the correspondence league a year earlier.]

10...♔b6 11.♖d5 [The real idea is to swap off the Black bishop.]

11...fxg2+! [Usually, Black should stay miles away from this line-opening capture, but here it is check and gives Black a tempo to organize the defence. Søbberg chose 11...♖e2 12.♚xf3 ♖xf4 13.♚xf4 which is less clear. 13...♔e6 (13...♗g5!? 14.♚xf7 looks scary.) 14.♗h5 ♗d7 15.♖xc7+! ♔xc7 16.♔b5 0-0-0± E.Jensen - E.Søbberg, corr DEN 1996. Black has some compensation for his queen, although White won in the end.]

12.♙g2 ♖e6 [With a knight on e6 Black cannot lose' - is an old adage that rings true here. 12...♗h4! is the engine solution. I have long since forgotten why this wasn't played.]

13.♗f3 [Giving up the bishop in return for the knight is relatively best, but Black's position remains eminently defensible. The alternatives are equally bleak: 13.♖xb6 ♖xf4+-; 13.♗h5 ♖f6! 14.♖xf6+ ♗xf6 15.♔xd6 ♗g5+ 16.♗xg5 ♖xg5+-; Previous games went 13.♔g3 h5 (Also good and played the same year was 13...♗g5 14.a4 ♗g6 15.♗d3 c6 16.♖xb6 axb6 17.♗c3 ♖g5+ 0-1 Bocksberger,S-Wollmann,A GER-ch24 corr 1995.) 14.e5 h4

15. dxf4 dxe5 16. dxb6 cxd1 17. Eaxd1 axb6 18. dxe5 Eh5 Ramik,Z (2345)-Narciso Dublan,M (2390) Brno-A 1995 (4) White has nothing for a piece. If anything, the White king is less safe. Black (a King's Gambit expert!) won in 31.]

13... dxf4+ ? [This actually spoils most of the advantage. 13... c6!-+]

14. cxf4 [14. dxf4 cxf6 15. cgh5 cgh7+ -+]

14... cxd7 [The cosy looking 14... dxe6 15. dxb6 dxc4 16. dxc4 is just equal.]

15. dxb6 ? [Later engine analysis revealed that Black has some problems after 15. cgh1 ! dxd4 16. dxc7+ cxd8 (16... cxc7 17. dxf7+ cd8 18. Ead1) 17. dxa8 de5 18. cxf7 cxf7 19. Exf7 dgh6 20. Eaf1!! dxf7 21. Exf7 and the knight is not easy to trap.]

15... axb6 16. dxf7+ cxd8 17. cgh1 cgh4 [Black repels the attack and now only needs to untangle his pieces.]

18. cgh3 cgh7 19. Eae1 dxd7 20. dxd5 dxe7 21. dxc4 Eh8 22. Exf8+ cxf8 23. Eh1 cgh8! 24. cgh5 cxd4 25. dxd5 c6 26. Eh7 cxd1+ 27. cgh2 cxc2+ 28. cgh1 cgh1+ 29. cgh2 cgh2+ 30. cgh1 cgh5 31. cghxe5 dxe5 32. dxb3 c5 33. Ehx7 dxc6 34. bxc5 bxc5 35. dxe6 dxe8 36. Ehb7 dxd4 37. dxd5 dxc6 38. Ehb6 dxd5 39. Ehd6+ cxc7 [39... cxc7 40. Ehd5 cxc6 freezes the white rook and then the c4-pawn starts running.]

0-1

Conclusion Part 3

The hidden meaning of "cerca trova" refers to the soldiers of Siena who searched for their freedom but found only death, as described in Dante's *Inferno*:

He goes in search of freedom, which is so dear, As he who gives his life for it would know. (Purgatorio, Canto I, 71-72)

Gambiteers were searching for beauty in the Pierce Gambit but, after 5... g4 6. dxc4 gxf3 7.0-0 dxd4 8. dxf4 , found only defeat.

Following the losses, Zeitlein and Motwani gave up on the Pierce Gambit, Gallagher gave up the King's Gambit and Arnason gave up on chess altogether!

Today, Paulsen's 3.g3 Vienna is a sound opening in postal play, but our Pierce gambit is definitely not. 8... dgh7 is a tough challenge and 8... dxc5 seems even stronger.

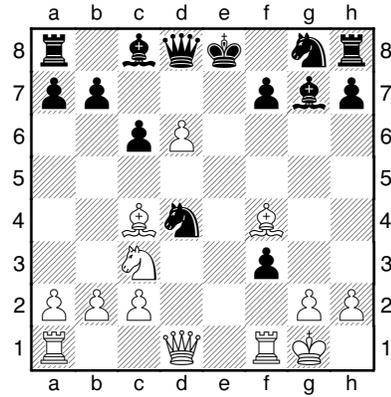
Still, I kept searching, and for some years tried to fix the problems for White. The definitive verdict will be dealt with in Part 4.

See you next time.

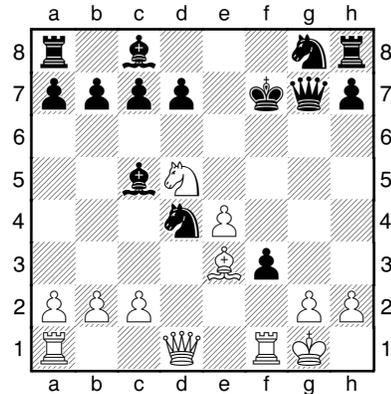
Please drop a comment or try and solve the exercises below.

Exercise 1:

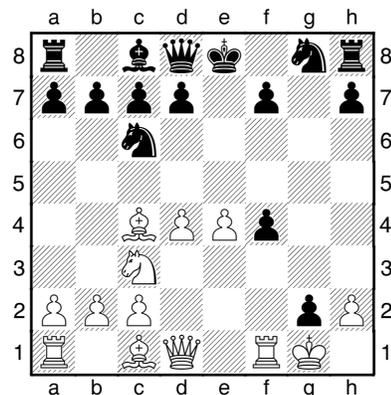
Here Zeitlin checked with Qe1 . Is there a better continuation?



Exercise 2: White to move. How to continue the attack?



Exercise 3: Max Lange - Drygalski, Magdeburg 1856 (!). Black has just played 7... fxg2 ? Punish this.



Solutions on page 52.

1975 Florida State Championship

by Ed Tassinari

Over Labor Day weekend, 1975, I played in the Florida State Chess Championship, held in Legion Hall in Miami. I was in the second year of a doctoral program in Inter-American Studies at the University of Miami, hoping to become a college history professor (which would eventually happen after a few unforeseen detours).

This was my second stretch at the UM and I had learned a lot of chess playing and studying with a group of stronger players at the Coral Gables and Capablanca chess clubs. Players such as Luis Busquets (who became a Life Master, served as Colombian IM Miguel Cuellar's second at an Interzonal and would leave the U.S. for Italy years later), Jerry Lynch (a master and state champion and UM graduate student who later gave up competitive chess), Henry Garcia (an opening savant who always carried the latest issues of the *Chess Informant* with him in his satchel and had wins over every leading Florida master), David Brummer (strong enough to play in the 1976 Lone Pine tournament, then the strongest Swiss in the U.S.), Eduardo Celorio (whose results were perhaps best of all, a strong life master, many-time state champion who would score 9.5-2.5 in the 1985 U.S. Open in Hollywood, Florida behind Boris Spassky, Yasser Seirawan and Joel Benjamin, but ahead of IGMs William Lombardy, Nick DeFirmian, Roman Dzindzichashvili, and Arthur Bisguier with wins over Bisguier and DeFirmian).

But the leading player in the tournament was Dr. Juan Gonzalez, a six-time champion of Cuba, who had played on their Olympiad teams in 1952 and 1960. He also played in Capablanca Memorial international tournaments in 1952 (where he scored 11.5-8.5 finishing seventh behind Samuel Reshevsky, Miguel Najdorf, Svetozar Gligorich, Erich Eliskases and Larry Evans, but ahead of other masters and every other Cuban player) and 1962 (where he had a minus score, but defeated IGM Lev Polugaevsky, a game annotated by Edmar Mednis for *Chess Life* long ago). Gonzalez was a known quantity in U.S. chess, since he won the U.S. Speed Championship for 1946-7 (then played at ten seconds per move) while serving his surgical residency at a New York City hospital (check the January 1947 issue of *Chess Review* for more details). In the early 1960s he left Cuba after Fidel Castro came to power and settled in south Florida where he became a force in the chess scene.

The 1975 state was a strong event with two rated masters, eight experts, and twenty-three A-players in a field of fifty-eight. And from the start it was a tournament of upsets. In round two, Gonzalez and Celorio were upset which opened things up for outsiders. In the final round, young

college student Luis Alfonso (1947) won the title defeating another "interloper", Chip Boven (1879). Celorio would finish second (5-1) with a final round victory. And I was paired with Dr. Gonzalez, having won three games and drawn two with two wins over experts. He had won three after his second-round loss.

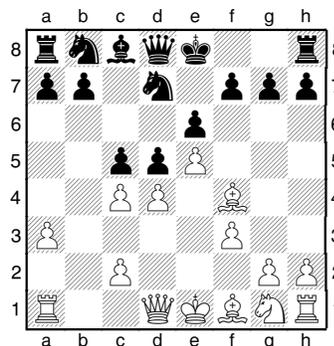
I had already lost to him in a Miami tournament a year earlier and was fortunate enough to get white in this game (my fourth white of the tournament). To make up for my slipshod opening knowledge in those days, I often played stuff like the Veresov, Trompovski or 1.f4 and 1.b3. I knew he played the King's Indian for black, so that gave me a chance to play a Trompovski. I had just read a great book, *How to Open a Chess Game* from RHM Press with contributions from seven IGMs. I prepared a line based on a recommendation from IGM Hort. Armed with this knowledge and playing on an elevated stage along with the other top board games, I began the game.

Tassinari,Ed (1931) - Gonzalez,Juan (2251) [A45]

Florida State Chess Championship Miami (6), 01.09.1975

1.d4 ♖f6 2.♗g5 ♜e4 3.♗f4 d5 4.f3 ♜f6 5.e4 e6 Hort gives 5...dxe4 6.♜c3 ♗f5 7.fxe4 ♜xe4 8.♞f3 with good play for White. But the doctor played more solidly.

6.♜c3 ♗b4 7.e5 ♜fd7 8.a3 ♗xc3+ 9.bxc3 c5 10.c4?



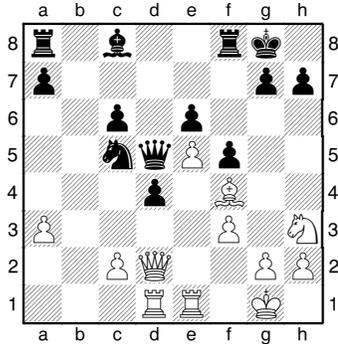
This lemon simply loses a pawn. I had intended 10.♗b5, but crossed it out on my score pad. You could write out a move before playing it in those days. After 10...♞a5 Black is better, but material is equal. It took me 27 minutes thus far. The doctor had used up about ten minutes.

10...cxd4 11.♜h3 If 11.♞xd4 ♜c6 12.♞e3 dxc4 wins a pawn.

11...♜c6 12.cxd5 ♞a5+ 13.♞d2 ♞xd5 Let's face it, I'm busted. The idea was not bad, but I've completely misplayed it. Thus far a great example of the difference between an A-player and a player of IM strength. Black can win a second

pawn hereabouts, but chose not to do so. At this stage I was just trying to survive until move 25, but for some reason the doctor plays superficially and gives me chances to survive.

14.♖d3 ♜c5 15.♗b5 0-0 16.♗xc6 bxc6 17.0-0 f6 18.♞fe1 f5 19.♞ad1



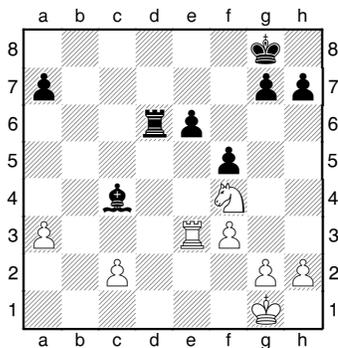
Grabbing a tactical chance thanks due to the d-file lineup.

19...♞d8 20.♗e3 dxe3 1f 20...d3 21.♜f2 ♗a6 22.♗xc5 ♞xc5 23.cxd3 ♞d4 is winning.

21.♞e2 ♗a6 22.♞xd5 ♗xe2 23.♞xc5 ♞d2 24.♞xc6 1f 24.♜f4 ♞ad8 wins.

24...♞ad8 25.♞d6 (otherwise 24. ...♞d1 wins for Black.)

25...♞8xd6 26.exd6 ♞xd6 27.♜f4 ♗c4 28.♞xe3

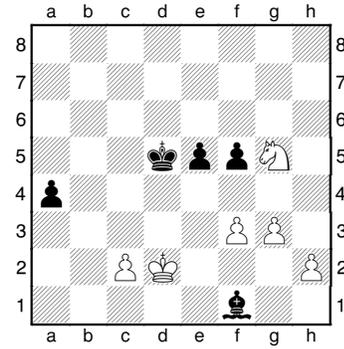


White has finally repaired the pawn deficit, but Black still has the upper hand. I had about 18 minutes to make 13 moves, while Dr. Gonzalez had about a half hour more. He generally played fairly rapidly. He soon wins back the pawn.

28...g5 29.♜d3 29.♜xe6 ♞d1+ 30.♞f2 f4 31.♜xf4 gxf4 wins.

29...♞g7 30.♞f2 ♞f6 31.♞e2 ♗a6 32.♞d2 ♞xa3 33.♜c5 ♞xe3 34.♞xe3 e5? 34...h5 appears better aiming at a passed pawn on the kingside. Dr. Gonzalez tries to force matters with his QRP and my Cheapo Potential materializes!

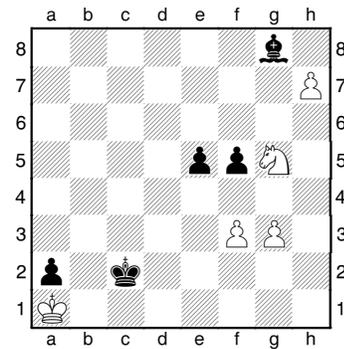
35.♜d7+ ♞e6 36.♜f8+ ♞d5 37.♜xh7 a5 38.♜xg5 a4 39.♞d2 ♗f1 40.g3



Making the time control with four minutes on the clock. He had 45 minutes left.

40...♞c4 41.h4 Now it becomes a race between the two rook pawns, but both can be stopped.

41...a3 42.♞c1 ♞c3 43.♞b1 ♗c4 44.h5 a2+ 45.♞a1 ♞xc2 46.h6 ♗g8 47.h7

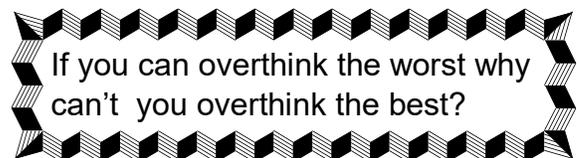


47.g4 also leads to a draw.

47...♗xh7 48.♜xh7 e4 49.fxe4 fxe4 50.♜g5 e3 51.♜f3 ♞d3 52.g4 ♞e4 53.♜e1 ♞f4

1/2-1/2

Somehow, I salvaged a draw from a clearly lost position. When the prize money was handed out (six players tied for 4th with 4.5 points, each received \$33.33), Dr. Gonzalez, when given his check and seeing the amount, crumpled it up and threw it away. I was later told that the number "3333" stood for an element of Cuban dictator, Fulgencio Batista's, secret police. For me, the draw pushed me over 2000 and into the expert category, after seven years of trying.



[The Road \(Almost\) Not Taken](#)

by Frank Elley

Originally published on March 14, 2025 at FrankElley.com, reproduced here with the author's permission.



[Career Serendipity](#)

I almost missed that fork in the road, which led East to the U.S. Chess Federation and a completely different life

I've shared [how I was convinced](#) to take a leap that propelled my professional and personal lives down an unexpected path. But I should also relate how I landed myself in that conundrum in the first place. How in the world, sitting at a desk in my hometown of Springfield, Missouri, did I get an offer to travel to New Windsor, New York, for a job at, of all places, the U.S. Chess Federation?

And is there also a lesson in this story? A small one, I think.

But First: Life Leading Up to the Big Event

Through the magic of *Encyclopedia Britannica*, I'd taught myself how to play chess around age 13. I was nearly 17 when Bobby Fischer became a U.S. sensation in the summer of 1972, aiming to unseat the reigning world champion, Soviet grandmaster Boris Spassky. This extreme introvert took a deep breath and showed up at the first meeting of the Springfield Chess Club. I played there through high school and college, and joined the college club too. For a time, I even got involved in the state chess organization.



Part of my early "chess career" involved producing this newsletter for local Springfield-area chess clubs. They provided me entrance into the most niche of niche organizations: The Chess Journalists of America.

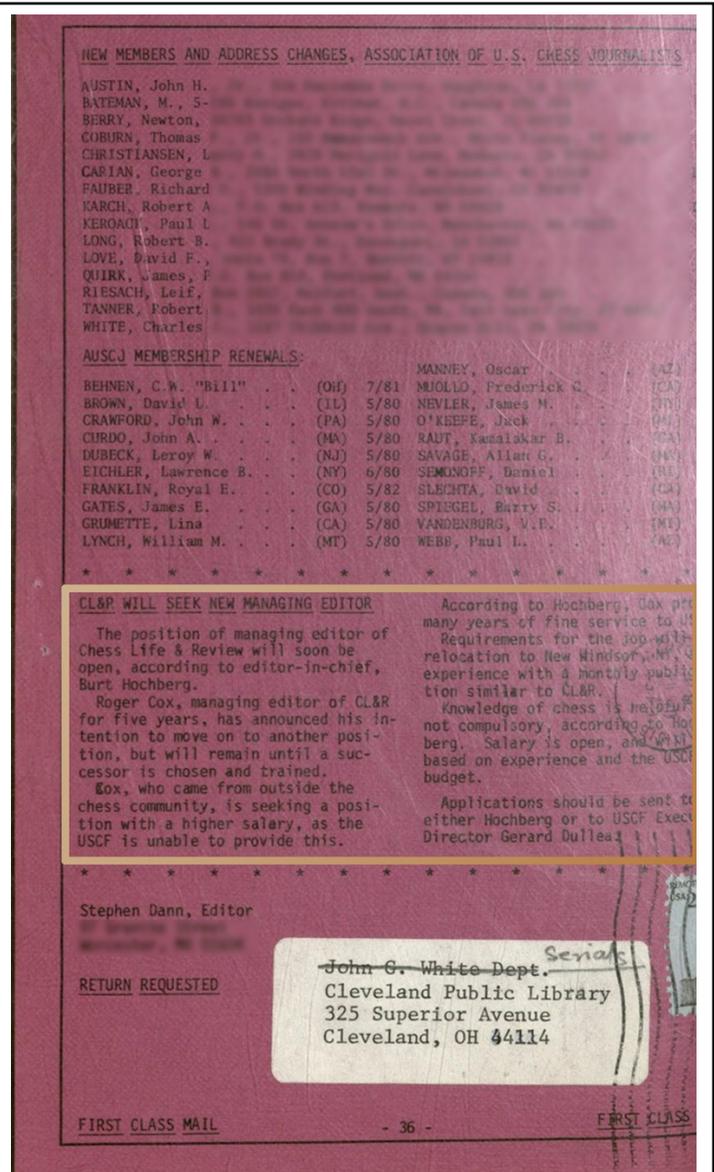
Most important, as I mention in [Ever the Nerd](#), I produced four issues of the *Queen City Chess Bulletin* (Springfield being the "Queen City of the Ozarks"). That distinction qualified me to join, for the shocking price of \$3 per year, the Chess Journalists of America. Main benefit: *The Chess Journalist*, their quarterly newsletter.

Fast forward: Summer of 1979 arrives. I've graduated from college and, after a short stint at the [Bass Pro Shops HQ](#), I'm a copyeditor at the Springfield Daily News. A few years earlier I'd realized being a chess master wasn't in my DNA, but I still attended the city chess club and was considering ideas for creating another chess newsletter as a pastime.

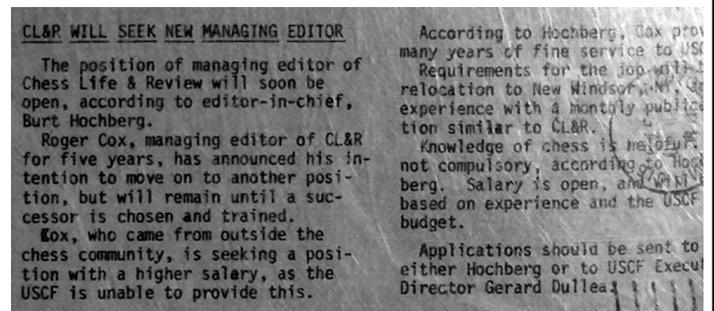
And Then It Happened

The Summer 1979 edition of the *The Chess Journalist* arrived.

It was a juicy one: 36 pages of complaint and outrage about the state of both chess journalism and U.S. chess in general. I plowed through it all and was probably exhausted as I came to the end. So perhaps it was even luck that I found myself peering at an obvious last-minute notice shoehorned in on the bottom of the last page: "Chess Life & Review Will Seek New Managing Editor." See the illustration for the actual artifact.



The *The Chess Journalist* newsletter, Summer 1979, purloined from the [Chess Journalists of America](#) website archive. Last page, last story. My life would have been far different had I missed it!



The fateful announcement, just seven sentences. (Manipulated here for readability.) Click to open and read in a separate tab.

At the very moment this news arrived, I'd been sitting at my desk in my apartment (one much more modest than the AI-generated concoction up top), mulling ideas about starting a chess newsletter. Was The Universe sending me a message?

But hold that thought. The previous 35 pages seemed to militate against the idea of a career in chess being a sane choice. During the “Fischer Boom” of 1972, USCF membership mushroomed; cash flowed in. But Bobby failed to show for the next championship in 1975, and so by 1979 the “Fischer Boom” had become the “Fischer Bust.” The USCF, with vastly diminished revenue and facing daunting debts on the horizon, was imploding. The executive director and several staffers had been replaced or laid off. In-fighting for board of directors positions was vicious. So it was not shocking that magazine staff would be bailing too.

Still, I gave it some thought. I was about 50% qualified. Despite the announcement saying chess knowledge was optional, I figured they’d be deluged with resumes from master-level players far above my middling skills. A hard requirement was professional experience with a monthly magazine. My short tenure on the college student newspaper and now the city newspaper ... could I talk a good game there?

Probably a waste of time, I decided. But ... it would be fun to try, and I had time to waste. I crafted a resume, wrote a compelling cover letter, and stuffed the envelope with a sample of the *Queen City Chess Bulletin*. What’s the worst that could happen? It disappears into the darkness of a disintegrating chess org. Or at least hopefully I get a polite note detailing my shortcomings.

Another milestone in the summer of 1979: The movie “Alien” had been out a few weeks. I’d read it had a shocker scene so, being a science-fiction nerd, I wanted to see it before I encountered a spoiler. My shift at the newspaper usually ended between midnight and 1 a.m., so I took in a late-night viewing. Intense! I didn’t exactly have nightmares, but it took me a while to get to sleep, probably 4 a.m. or so.

So, What Happens That Morning?

The phone rings. Early.

It’s Gerry Dullea, the new executive director of the Chess Federation. He wants to talk about the managing editor’s job. Sure, no problem.

I don’t remember a single word – not any of his questions, not any of my answers. He said he was off to the Federation’s annual meeting in Chicago in a few days, so it would be a while before he could get back to me. He seemed polite but not obviously impressed, so I figured that might be the last I’d hear from him.

A week or so later, early August, he calls again. He’d caught up with some Missouri Chess Federation folks in Chicago. Apparently, they had said not-discouraging

things about me. (I never did learn who the culprits were.) I was incredulous. He was offering me a job. We’d talked probably less than an hour altogether. No interview with anyone else, not even the editor, Burt Hochberg (I learned when I arrived that he was leaving too). No offer to come out to see the office and meet the other staffers. The money? Hardly more than the paycheck-to-paycheck amount I was making. And New York would be more expensive I reckoned.

Cut to the chase: Early September found me driving East, headed for a new job and a new life in New Windsor, New York.

By the way, today the rebranded U.S. Chess is a thriving, professionally run organization, completely unlike the organization I joined forty-plus years ago. Now headquartered in St. Louis, membership had been growing steadily for years before the Pandemic gave it an even bigger boost. The internet is chock full of websites, influencers, and affable chess professionals available to help you learn more.

Despite those initial trepidations, my time in New York left me with nothing but good memories. I learned a lot about writing, editing, getting along with people outside my past Midwestern experience, and what constitutes a great Reuben sandwich. I made many good friends. At the risk of sounding a bit high-minded, I can’t help but recall these closing lines from the poem whose title I’ve appropriated:

I shall be telling this with a sigh
Somewhere ages and ages hence:
Two roads diverged in a wood, and I—
I took the one less traveled by,
And that has made all the difference.
Robert Frost, “The Road Not Taken”

Any Directly Applicable Lesson Here?

I’ll try to be honest: not so much. Well, maybe a little.

Job hunting today is fundamentally different from my experience throughout the bulk of my career. Today’s job seekers may submit hundreds of applications electronically in hopes they’ll beat the algorithm and make it through to a handful of candidates who get one phone call and are then ghosted. I was fortunate to have spent a big chunk of my professional career during a time when humans sized you up not just on the keywords in your resume but by applying a sixth sense as they talked with you directly: not just your experience but your demeanor.

*****Continued on Page 27*****

A Game of Healing

by Patricio Robayo

When Lance Wilson sat awake at three in the morning, he wasn't planning to write a book. He had spent decades writing for the federal courts—formal memos and reports. But that night was different.

Out of the darkness, a story appeared in his mind all at once.

"I saw the whole book flash before my eyes," Wilson said. "It was such a strange experience. I just started typing and never looked back."

That story became *A Wizard's Guide to Family Recovery*, a novel that mixes fantasy, humor, and real-life pain. It's about addiction, healing, and the power of letting go.

"An absolutely brilliant approach to understanding the recovery process."

—Hugh Patterson, Recovery and Chess Coach

A WIZARD'S GUIDE TO FAMILY RECOVERY

Fictionalized
Inspirational
Self-Help



A Novel

Lance S. Wilson

Chess as Refuge

Wilson first found peace in an unexpected place: a chessboard.

He was in eighth grade when his father, who struggled with alcoholism, took his own life during the holidays.

"Chess became a lifeline for me," he said. "It gave me something steady when everything else was falling apart."

He joined the school chess club, became president, and found purpose through the game. Teachers drove him to tournaments miles away.

"It surrounded me with positive role models," he said. "It gave me a sense of identity and belonging."

Writing Through Loss

Years later, after a long career in the federal courts, Wilson faced another loss—his son went missing while battling psychosis and addiction.

"It was one of the darkest times of our lives," he said.

That's when *A Wizard's Guide to Family Recovery* came to him. The story follows a wizard in the form of a chess queen, an insecure pawn, and two men attending group meetings – all searching for healing.

"I never planned to write fiction," he said. "But once I started, I couldn't stop. It helped me through that time."

The Pawn's Lesson

One of the book's most memorable characters is QP, a pawn who doubts her own worth.

"QP represents someone struggling with codependency," Wilson said. "That's something I've lived with most of my life."

"When we assign point values to chess pieces, we limit what we think they can do," he said. "QP learns she's worth more than she believes."

Recovery Together

Wilson discovered that addiction affects the whole family.

"When our son first had challenges, his counselor suggested we go to meetings," he said. "At first, I thought, 'Why? I'm not the one using drugs.' But I learned it's a family illness."

Through Al-Anon and Nar-Anon, he learned to let go—without giving up.

“You learn you’re powerless over the addict,” he said. “It doesn’t mean you stop caring. It means you start caring for yourself too.”

Even now, with his son 20 months into recovery, Wilson still attends weekly meetings. “You don’t graduate from recovery,” he said. “You keep showing up.”

Lessons on the Board

For Wilson, chess and recovery share the same truth: patience and acceptance.

“In both, you can only control your own moves,” he said. “Not the whole board.”

His book’s final checkmate isn’t about winning—it’s about peace. “It’s realizing that you can survive what you once thought you couldn’t,” he said.

A Son’s Help

Wilson’s son, now healthy, helped him write parts of the book.

“He’s a mathematician and game-theory expert,” Wilson said. “He helped me with a chapter about strategy.”

When Wilson doubted the book’s reach, his son told him, “Dad, this book already succeeded—it helped you heal.”

“That meant everything,” Wilson said.

Letting Go

In the novel, the wizard Merlin teaches that life keeps changing—and peace comes from letting go.

“When I stopped trying to control what I couldn’t, life became easier,” Wilson said. “That goes for work, family, everything.”

He remembers someone at an early recovery meeting saying, “I’m grateful to have an addict in my life, because I’ve grown so much.”

“At first, I thought that person was crazy,” Wilson said. “But years later, I found myself saying the same thing.”

Moving Forward

Wilson still speaks publicly about codependency and recovery. He still plays chess and writes.

When asked what he would say to his younger self—the boy who turned to chess after losing his father—Wilson paused for a moment. “I hope he’d say thank you,” he said softly. “I hope he’d feel proud that we made it through.”

Wilson has heard from several readers who said his book helped them through difficult times. Those comments, he said, warm his heart.

His book is available on Amazon and through his wife’s Etsy shop, *Starved Raccoon*.

“Life’s a lot like chess,” Wilson said. “You can lose a few pieces and still win the game.”



*****Continued From Page 25*****

What matters now? Looking back, I realize how close I came to talking myself out of even applying. I made assumptions about *their* assumptions. I didn’t have faith in my own credentials. Even after I got the offer, I dithered until I got [the best career advice ever](#) from my cousin Mike. Loading up my car and taking the Eastern highway to New York was a life-changing event that I almost missed. Not because I didn’t qualify. But because I almost didn’t even try.

Yes, job hunting today feels more like playing the lottery. But you can’t win if you don’t buy the ticket. Sure, odds in some cases are low. But *someone* will win. Why not you? Don’t sell yourself short. Give it a shot.

Buy the ticket.

The 1984 Midwest Masters Invitational – Part 2

by Robert Irons

Round 3

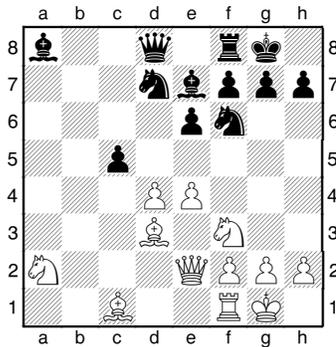
The players stepped up the aggression a bit in the third round, with 15 games ending decisively. Ken Mohr withdrew from the tournament before this round began.

Albert Chow was having an off day when he faced Fred Lindsay. Chow's Queen's Gambit Accepted helped Lindsay pick off a piece before the 30th move.

Chow, Albert (2305) - Lindsay, Fred P (2225) [D22]

Midwest Masters-B Chicago (3), 1984 [Irons, Robert]

1.d4 d5 2.c4 dxc4 3.f3 a6 4.e3 b5 5.a4 Qb7 6.b3 e6 7.axb5?!=
Liquidating too soon. Better is 7.bxc4 bxc4 8.Qxc4 Qf6 9.0-0 c5± and White maintains a slight plus. 7...axb5 8.Rxa8 Qxa8 9.bxc4 bxc4 10.Qxc4 Qf6 11.0-0 Qbd7 12.Qc3 Qd6 13.Qe2 0-0 14.e4 Qb4 15.Qa2 Qe7 16.Qd3 c5



17.Qc2?+ 17.Qb2? 17...cxd4 18.e5 Qg4 19.Qxh7+ Qh8 20.Qe4 Qdx5 21.Qxa8 d3 22.Qd1 Qxa8 23.Qxe5 Qxe5 24.Qh5+ Qg8 25.Qb4? 25.Qxe5 Qxa2 26.Qe3 holds on longer. 25...Qe4 26.Qd2 26.Qd2 g6 27.Qd1 Qxb4 and Black is up a knight and a passed pawn. 0-1

Edward Frumkin transposed from my favorite Four Knights' Sicilian to the Kalashnikov Sicilian, and caught James Ellis in a tactical error in just 26 moves.

Ellis, James S - Frumkin, Edward A (2215) [B33]

Midwest Masters-B Chicago (3), 1984 [Irons, Robert]

1.e4 c5 2.f3 e6 3.d4 cxd4 4.Qxd4 Qf6 5.Qc3 Qc6 The Four Knights variation - a fighting line, and my favorite! 6.Qdb5 d6 I prefer the continuation 6...Qb4 7.a3 Qxc3+ 8.Qxc3 d5= 7.Qf4 e5 Frumkin transposes into the Kalashnikov pawn structure, preferred by professional players even today. 8.Qg5 a6 9.Qa3 b5 10.Qxf6 gxf6 11.Qd5 f5 12.c3 Qg7 13.exf5 Qxf5 14.Qc2 0-0 15.Qce3 Qe6 16.g3 f5 17.f4?! 17.Qg2 f4 18.Qc2 looks a bit better. 17...Qc8 18.a4?! 18.Qg2 b4 19.0-0 bxc3 20.bxc3. 18...b4 19.Qxa6 bxc3?! 19...Bb8 20.Qb5 bxc3 21.bxc3 (21.Qxc6 cxb2 22.Bb1 Bc8) 21...Qa7 looks just fine for Black. 20.Qxc8 Qxc8 21.Qc1? 21.bxc3 is necessary here. 21...exf4 22.Qxf4 cxb2 23.Qxc6 Qe8 24.Qfd5 Qe4 25.0-0 Qd4

26.Qc7?? 26.Qxd6 Qxe3+ 27.Qxe3 Qxe3+ 28.Qf2 keeps the game alive. The text is a blunder that loses instantly. 26...Qxd5 0-1

Doug Eckert played the Mar Del Plata variation against Morris Giles' King's Indian Defense, but on move 16 he let up the pressure by exchanging pawns, and it took Giles only 10 more moves to force resignation.

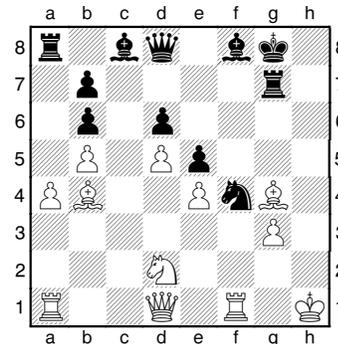


Fore: Ben Finegold. Back: Morris Giles, Tom Unger, John Tomas.

Eckert, Doug D - Giles, Morris [E97]

Midwest Masters-B Chicago (3), 1984 [Irons, Robert]

1.d4 Qf6 2.Qf3 g6 3.c4 Qg7 4.Qc3 0-0 5.e4 d6 6.Qe2 e5 7.0-0 Qc6 8.d5 Qe7 9.Qd2 Qd7 10.b4 f5 11.f3 f4?! Giles has the opportunity to redevelop his bishop here: 11...Qh6 12.c5 (12.Qb3 Qxc1 13.Qxc1 f4) 12...Qe3+ 13.Qh1 Qd4. 12.Qa3 g5 13.c5 Qg6 14.Qc4 Qf7 15.Qh1 Qf8 16.cxd6? 16.b5 Qxc5 17.Qxc5 dxc5 18.a4 keeps up the pressure. Now Giles is free to go after Eckert's king. 16...cxd6 17.b5 Qb6! 18.Qxb6 axb6 19.Qb4 h5 20.a4 Qg7 21.Qb1 Qh4? 21...Qh8 22.Qa3 Qf7 with the knight behind the pawns looks better. 22.Qd2?! 22.Qe1 g4 23.fgx4 hxg4 24.Qd2 keeps things in control. 22...g4 23.fgx4 hxg4 24.g3 Qg6 25.Qxg4? 25.Qf2 Qh7 26.Qxg4 fxg3 27.Qg2 Qxh2+ 28.Qxh2 gxh2 29.Qxc8 Qxc8 30.Qa3 and everything is good. The text loses instantly. 25...fxg3 26.Qf3 26.hxg3 Qf4!!



Now the heavy pieces take over the game. 26...Qh4 0-1

Tucker Moore's Vienna Opening gave Billy Colias trouble early on when Colias tried for more than the position could offer. Once the center was cleared, Tucker went after the king fiercely, forcing Colias to give up the game on move 24.

Moore, Tucker - Colias, Billy [C25]

Midwest Masters-B Chicago (3), 1984 [Irons, Robert]
1.e4 e5 2.♖c3 ♗c6 3.♗c4 ♗c5 I prefer 3...♗f6. 4.♗g4 ♗f8
5.♗g3 ♗f6 6.d3 ♗d4 7.♗b3 d5?! 7...d6 8.♗ge2 a5 9.♗xd4 exd4
 10.♗e2 a4 is better for Black than the text. 8.♗g5 ♗e6?! 8...h6 9.♗xf6 gxf6 10.♗ge2 a5 keeps Black in the game. Now Moore grabs the initiative. 9.exd5 ♗xb3 10.axb3 ♗xd5
11.♗f3 ♗d6 12.0-0 ♗d7?! 12...♗xf3 13.♗xf3 c6. 13.♗h4 g6
14.♗h6+ ♗e7 15.d4 ♗xd4 16.♗b5 ♗c6 17.♗xd4 exd4
18.♗fe1+ ♗e6? 18...♗d8 19.♗f4 f6 20.♗xd4 ♗e8 keeps Colias in the game. After the text he is lost. 19.♗f3 ♗d6 20.♗f4 ♗d5 21.♗xc7 ♗ac8 22.c4 dxc3 23.♗ad1 ♗f5 24.♗d4 1-0

FM Eduard Zelkind was outplayed by Allan Savage for 39 moves, when Savage made a classic mistake at the time control, giving away his advantage and giving Zelkind the draw.

Savage, Allan George - Zelkind, Eduard [C02]

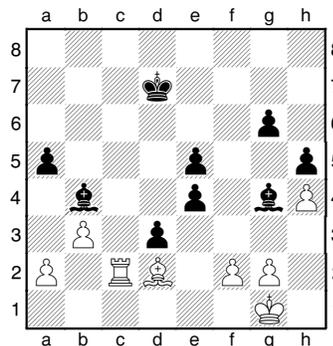
Midwest Masters-B Chicago (3), 1984 [Irons, Robert]
1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5 3.e5 c5 4.c3 ♗c6 5.♗f3 ♗b6 6.♗e2 cxd4
7.cxd4 ♗h6 8.♗c3 ♗f5 9.♗f1 ♗e7 10.h4 ♗d7 11.♗a4 ♗c7?!±
11...♗a5= 12.a3 ♗c8 13.♗f4?! 13.g4 ♗h6 14.♗g1 13...♗d8
14.g3 f6 15.♗c1 fxe5 16.♗xe5?! 16.dxe5 16...♗xe5?! 16...0-0
 17.♗g2 ♗xe5 18.♗xc8 ♗xc8 19.♗xe5 ♗d6 leaves Black with an edge. 17.♗xc8 ♗xc8 18.♗xe5 0-0 19.♗g2 ♗f6 20.♗f3 b6
21.♗c3 ♗b8 22.♗d3 ♗c6? 22...♗xd4 23.♗xd4 ♗xd4 24.♗xh7+ ♗xh7
 25.♗xd4 ♗d8 23.♗e1?! 23.♗e2 ♗d6 24.♗e1 g6 25.♗b1! leaves Savage with more options and better control in the center. 23...♗e8?! 23...♗xd4 24.♗xd4 ♗xd4 25.♗xh7+ ♗xh7
 26.♗xd4 ♗c8 holds on better than the text. 24.♗e5?! 24.♗b1 24...♗xe5?! 24...♗xd4 25.♗xh7+ ♗xh7 26.♗xd4 ♗b7 keeps Black in the game. 25.♗xe5 g6 26.♗xf5 exf5 27.f4 ♗xe5 28.fxe5 ♗d8 29.♗d2 ♗g7 30.♗f4 ♗e7 31.♗f2 h6 32.♗e3 ♗e6 33.♗f2 ♗d7 34.♗f3 ♗c6 35.♗f4 ♗d7 36.♗f3 ♗c6 37.♗d1 ♗b7 38.♗e3 ♗c6 39.h5 ♗c1 40.hxg6?± This gives up the entirety of his advantage, and the game heads towards a draw. 40.♗e2 ♗c8 41.hxg6 ♗b1 42.♗g2 ♗xg6 43.♗f4++- 40...♗xb2+ 41.♗g1 ♗xd4 42.♗xf5 ♗xe3+ 43.♗h2 ♗e2+ 44.♗g1 ♗e1+ 45.♗h2 ♗e2+ 46.♗g1 ½-½

Michael Brooks used the Modern Defense and held John Rose to equality for 41 moves, when Rose underestimated Brooks' space advantage. One slip-up and the game was over in three more moves.

Rose, John - Brooks, Michael A (2330) [B07]

Midwest Masters-B Chicago (3), 1984 [Irons, Robert]
1.e4 g6 2.d4 ♗g7 3.♗c3 d6 4.♗e2 ♗f6 5.h4 h5 6.♗g5 ♗c6
7.♗d2 ♗h7 8.♗e3 e5 9.♗f3 exd4 10.♗xd4 ♗f6 11.♗g5 0-0
12.♗xc6 bxc6 13.e5 dxe5 14.♗xd8 ♗xd8 15.♗e4 ♗d6 16.♗xd6

cxd6 17.c4 ♗e6 18.0-0 ♗b8 19.b3 ♗e4 20.♗ac1 f5 21.♗fd1 ♗f7 22.♗e3 ♗e7 23.♗f3 a5 24.♗xe4 fxe4 25.♗g5+ ♗d7 26.♗d2 ♗g4 27.♗e1 ♗f5 28.♗e3 ♗e6 29.♗ed1 ♗f8 30.♗c1 ♗e7 31.♗g5 ♗f8 32.♗e3 ♗a8 33.♗cd1 ♗a6 34.♗g5 ♗g4 35.♗c1 d5 36.cxd5+ cxd5 37.♗dc2 d4 38.♗c6+ ♗xc6 39.♗xc6+ ♗d7 40.♗c2 ♗b4 41.♗d2 d3

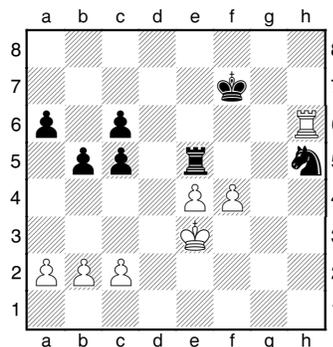


42.♗b2? Returning the exchange with 42.♗c3 keeps the position level. The text loses quickly. 42...♗e2 43.a4 ♗xd2 44.♗xd2 ♗c6 ♗c6-c5-b4-c3 threatens to take both the b3- and a4-pawns as well as to promote the d3-pawn. 0-1

Peter Pelts and Eric Schiller discussed the Exchange Ruy Lopez, and all was copacetic for 37 moves. Then Schiller tried to use a tactic that immediately backfired, and Pelts forced resignation by move 51.

Pelts, Peter - Schiller, Eric Andrew (2220) [C69]

Midwest Masters-B Chicago (3), 1984 [Irons, Robert]
1.e4 e5 2.♗f3 ♗c6 3.♗b5 a6 4.♗xc6 dxc6 5.0-0 ♗d6 6.d4 f6 7.♗bd2 ♗e6 8.dxe5 fxe5 9.♗g5 0-0-0 10.♗e2 h6 11.♗xe6 ♗xe6 12.♗c4 ♗g6 13.♗b3 ♗f6 14.f3 ♗h5 15.♗c5 ♗xc5+ 16.♗xc5 ♗d6 17.♗e3 ♗xc5 18.♗xc5 ♗d2 19.♗f2 ♗hd8 20.♗b4 ♗xf2 21.♗xf2 ♗f4 22.♗c3 g5 23.♗h1 ♗g6 24.g3 ♗f8 25.♗e3 ♗d7 26.h4 gxh4 27.gxh4 ♗e6 28.h5 ♗f4 29.♗g1 c5 30.♗e1 c6 31.♗g7 b5 32.♗h4 ♗h8 33.♗g3 ♗xh5 34.♗g6+ ♗f7 35.♗xe5 ♗e8 36.♗xh6 ♗xe5 37.f4



37...♗f6?? 37...♗g7 38.♗xc6 ♗e8 39.♗xa6 ♗f8= keeps Black in the game. 38.♗xf6+ ♗xf6 39.fxe5+ ♗xe5 40.c3 c4 41.a3 a5 42.♗f3 c5 43.♗e3 b4 44.♗f3 a4 45.♗e3 ♗f6 46.♗f4 ♗e6 47.e5 ♗e7 48.♗f5 ♗f7 49.e6+ ♗e8 50.♗e5 ♗d8 51.♗f6 1-0

Ken Wallach used the Saemisch line against Milidar Stevanovic's King's Indian and kept the pressure up through most of the game, and into a middlegame that saw dueling

king attacks. Wallach got there first, forcing Stevanovic to resign on his 30th move.

Wallach,Kenneth - Stevanovic,Milidar [E84]

Midwest Masters-B Chicago (3), 1984 [Irons,Robert]
1.d4 ♖f6 2.c4 g6 3.♗c3 ♕g7 4.e4 d6 5.f3 0-0 6.♗e3 ♗c6
7.♗ge2 ♖b8 8.♗d2 a6 9.g4 b5 10.h4 h5 11.g×h5 ♗×h5
12.0-0-0 bxc4 13.♗e1 e5 14.d5 ♗b4 15.♗g3 ♗f4 16.♗×c4 c6
17.a3?!+ 17.dxc6 ♗e6 18.♗d5 ♗×c6 19.♖h2♣ 17...cxd5
18.exd5 ♗c7 19.♗f1 ♗h3? = 20.♖×h3 ♗×h3 21.♗×h3 ♗×c4
22.a×b4 ♗×b4 23.♖d2 ♖fc8?!+ 23...e4 24.♗gxe4 ♖fe8 =
24.♖c2?! = 24.♗ge4 ♖×c3+ (24...f5 25.h5 fxe4 26.♗e6+ ♗h8
27.♖h2 ♖×c3+ 28.♗b1+; 24...♗a5 25.♗d1 ♖×c3 26.♗×c3+)
25.♗×c3 e4 26.♗d1 exf3 27.♗×f3 ♖c8+ 28.♗b1 ♗×h4 29.♖f2
♖c7 30.♗f4+ 24...♖c4?!+ 24...e4 25.♗gxe4 f5 26.h5 fxe4
27.♗e6+ ♗h8 28.h×g6 ♖×c3 29.♗h3+ ♗g8 30.♗e6+= 25.h5
♖h4 26.♗g2 ♖c4 27.h×g6 f×g6 28.♗ge4 ♖xe4 29.fxe4 ♖f8
30.♗×g6 1-0

Thomas Unger and Stevn Hudson argued an odd English Opening-like structure, and Hudson wasted time on queenside play and left his king in the center for too long. Hudson admitted defeat on his 27th move.

Unger,Thomas - Hudson,S. [A18]

Midwest Masters-B Chicago (3), 1984 [Irons,Robert]
1.c4 ♗f6 2.♗c3 e6 3.e4 b6?!± 3...d5 4.e5 ♗g8 5.d4 ♗b7 6.♗f3
c5?!+ 6...d6 7.d5 a6 8.♗e2 exd5 9.cxd5 d6 10.0-0 dxe5
11.♗xe5 ♗d6 12.♗a4+ b5 13.♗×b5+! axb5 14.♗×b5+ ♗d7
15.♗c4 ♗×h2+ 16.♗×h2 ♗a6 17.♖e1+ ♗f8 18.♗a4 ♗h4+?
18...♗gf6 19.♗g1 h6 19.♗g1 ♗gf6 20.♗e5 20.♗c6! 20...♗xa4
21.♗xa4 ♗b7 22.♗xd7+ ♗xd7 23.♗c3 ♗f6 24.d6 ♖d8 25.♗e3
♗d7 26.b3 f6 27.♗a4 1-0

Mike Zelkind (who did not play in the first two rounds) and Steven Szpisjak argued a sharp line in the Najdorf Sicilian, with both players keeping the play sharp for 19 moves, when Szpisjak thought he had found a tactic. In fact, he had overlooked another tactic, and two moves later had to resign.



Steve Szpisjak, Peter Bereolos

Zelkind,Mike - Szpisjak,Steven [B98]

Midwest Masters-B Chicago (3), 1984 [Irons,Robert]
1.e4 c5 2.♗f3 d6 3.d4 cxd4 4.♗xd4 ♗f6 5.♗c3 a6 6.♗g5 e6
7.f4 ♗e7 8.♗f3 h6 9.♗h4 ♗bd7 10.♗d3?! = 10.0-0 0±
10...♗c7?!± 10...♗b6 = 11.f5 ♗e5 12.♗e2♣ 12.♗h3 12...b5
13.fxe6 fxe6 14.0-0 0-0 15.a4 ♗b6 16.♗f2 ♗fg4 17.♗f5 ♗xf2
18.♗xe7+ ♗h8 19.♖xf2 ♗g4?+ 19...♗d7± 20.♗g6+ ♗g8
21.♗xf8 1-0

Leonid Kaushansky played his usual Vienna Game against Peter Bereolos, who tried too hard to relieve the pressure on his kingside. Bereolos moved a kingside pawn on move 19, and it took another 30 moves for Kaushansky to force his resignation.



Leonid Kaushansky, Eugene Martinovsky

Kaushansky,Leonid (2355) - Bereolos,Peter [C26]

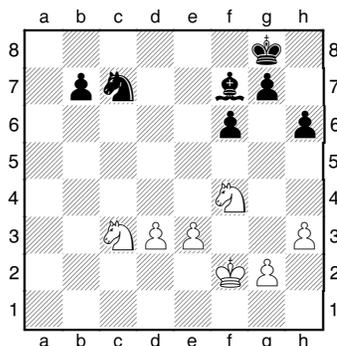
Midwest Masters-B Chicago (3), 1984 [Irons,Robert]
1.e4 e5 2.♗c3 ♗c6 3.g3 ♗f6 4.♗g2 ♗e7 5.♗ge2 0-0 6.0-0 d6
7.d3 ♖e8 8.h3 ♗f8 9.f4 h6 10.♗e3 ♗h7 11.♗d2 exf4 12.♗xf4
♗e7 13.g4 ♗g6 14.♗×g6 f×g6 15.d4 ♗e7 16.♗d5 ♗g5 17.♖ae1
♗×e3+ 18.♗×e3 c6 19.♗f4 g5?+ Enough to lose the game.
19...♗f8± holds. 20.♗b3+ d5 21.♗h5 g6 22.♗g3 ♗f6 23.exd5
♖xe1 24.♖xe1 ♗xd5 25.♗xd5+ ♗xd5 26.♗xd5+ 26.♖e8+ ♗f7
27.♗e3 tightens White's grip. 26...cxd5 27.♖e5 ♗f7 28.♖xd5
♗e6 29.♖c5 ♗e7 30.♖c7+ ♗d6 31.♖xb7 ♗xa2 32.♗e4+ ♗c6
33.♖g7 ♖g8 34.♖xa7 ♗b1 35.♖a1 ♖e8 36.d5+ ♗b6 37.♖xb1
♖xe4 38.♖d1 ♗c7 39.d6+ ♗d7 40.♗f2 h5 41.g×h5 g×h5
42.♖d5 ♖f4+ 43.♗e2 ♖e4+ 44.♗d2 ♖h4 45.♖×g5 ♗xd6
46.♖g3 ♗c5 47.c3 ♗c4 48.♗c2 1-0

Other Games from Round 3:

Sage,T. - Karklins,Erik [A00]

Midwest Masters-B Chicago (3), 1984 [Irons,Robert]
1.c4 c6 2.b4 Theory goes out the window! The players are

on their own now, and they are up to the challenge - at least for the first 33 moves. Karklins chooses a solid defensive structure that offers plenty of play. 2...d5 3.e3 ♖f5 4.♙b2 e6 5.♗f3 ♗f6 6.b5 ♙b4 7.♗e2 0-0 8.a4 a6 9.♙b3 ♗e7 10.0-0 dxc4 11.♙xc4 axb5 12.axb5 ♖xa1 13.♙xa1 cxb5 14.♙xb5 ♖c8 15.♗c3 ♗c6 16.h3 h6 17.♖c1 ♗a3 18.♙b2 ♙xb2 19.♙xb2 ♙b4 20.♗a4 ♙xb2 21.♗xb2 ♗a7 22.♖xc8+ ♗xc8 23.♗d4 ♗d6 24.♗e2 ♗g6 25.f3 e5 26.♗b5 ♗fe8 27.♗c3 f6 28.♗d3 ♗f7 29.f4 exf4 30.♗xf4 ♗c4 31.♙xc4 ♙xc4 32.d3 ♗f7 33.♗f2 ♗c7



34.♗e2?? 34.e4 g5 35.♗fe2 b5 36.♗e3 and it's still a game. The text is fatal. 34...g5 35.♗d2 gxf4 36.exf4 ♗d5 37.♗e4 ♗xf4 38.♗xf6+ ♗g7 39.♗d7 ♗xg2 40.♗c5 ♗d5 41.♗c3 0-1



Mitchel Weiss

Sandrin,Angelo - Weiss,Mitchel J [E92]

Midwest Masters-B Chicago (3), 1984 [Irons,Robert] 1.♗f3 ♗f6 2.c4 g6 3.♗c3 ♗g7 4.e4 d6 5.d4 0-0 6.♗e2 e5 7.♗e3 The Gligorich variation is a flexible line that allows Black many options to choose from. 7...♗c6?! But this is among the worst of the options available. Modern players typically prefer 7...♗g4 or; 7...c6 or; 7...♗bd7 or even; 7...a5 8.d5 ♗e7 9.♗d2 ♗d7 10.b4 f5 11.f3 a5 12.a3 ♗f6?! 12...b6

13.♗b3?!= 13.c5!± 13...axb4 14.axb4 ♖xa1 15.♙xa1 fxe4?! 15...h6 intending g6-g5 and ♗g6. 16.fxe4 ♗g4 17.♙xg4 ♙xg4 18.h3 ♗d7 19.♖f1 c6?! 19...♗f5!? opens lines for the black queen to go on the hunt. 20.exf5 ♙h4+ 21.♗d1 ♙xf5 22.♖f2 ♙xc4 23.♗c1 ♗e4 24.♖xf8+ ♙xf8 25.♗xe4 ♙xe4 26.♗d2 ♙xg2= Black is having all of the fun. 20.♗d2 cxd5 21.cxd5 ♗c8 22.♙a5 b6 23.♙a6 ♙h4 24.♖xf8+ ♙xf8? 24...♗xf8 preparing ♗e7 to defend the ♗d7. 25.♙b7 ♙d8 26.♗d3 h5 27.♗d2 ♙e7 28.♗c4 h4 29.♗e2 ♙f7 30.♗d2?! 30.♗g5 wins the h4-pawn. 30...b5 31.♗a3 ♙e8 32.♗c3 g5 33.♗axb5 g4 34.hxg4 ♙xg4 35.♙c6 ♗d7 36.♙b7 ♗g4 37.♗a3 ♙g6 38.♗c2 ♗e7 39.♗e1 ♗f3? 39...♗f7 frees up the ♗f8. 40.♗d7? 40.gxf3 h3 41.♗d1 h2 42.♗f2 and Black has nothing for the piece. 40...♙xg2 41.♙e6+ ♙xe6 42.dxe6 h3 43.♗g1 ♗f1 44.♗e2?! 44.♗f3 44...♗h6+ 45.♗d1 ♗f8 46.♗d3 ♗g2 47.♗f2?! 47.♗c3 47...♗g5 48.♗g3 ♗f4 49.♗fh1?! 49.♗h2 49...h2 50.♙b6? 50.♙xh2 ♙xh1 51.♗xh1 ♙xh2 is better than the text, although not by much. 50...♙xg3 51.♗xg3 h1♙+ 52.♗xh1 ♙xh1 53.♙c7 ♗c8 0-1



Tim Redman

Redman,Timothy P - Dandridge,Marvin [B31]

Midwest Masters-B Chicago (3), 1984 [Irons,Robert] 1.e4 c5 2.♗f3 ♗c6 3.♙b5 g6 4.♙xc6 dxc6 5.d3 ♗g7 6.0-0 e5 7.♗bd2 ♗e7 8.♗c4 ♙c7 9.♗e3 b6 10.♙c1 h6 11.♗d2 ♗g4?!± 11...g5 12.a4 ♗g6= 12.♗fxe5 ♗e6 13.♗f4 ♙d8 14.♗g3 f6 15.♗f3 g5?! 15...0-0 16.♗d6+ ♗f8 17.c3 h5 18.h4 g4 19.♗h2 ♗g6 20.d4 ♗xh4 21.dxc5 ♗g6 22.♗f5 ♗g8 23.♗d6 bxc5 24.♖d1 c4 25.♙e3 ♙c8 26.♙c5 ♙xf5 27.exf5 ♗h4 28.♗e7?= 28.f3 ♙xf5 29.♙xc4+ ♗h7 30.♗g3+ - 28...♙xf5?!+ - 28...♗f7= 29.♙xc6?! 29.♙xc4+ 29...♖c8 30.♙xc8+ ♙xc8 31.♖d8+ ♗f7 32.♖xc8 ♖xc8 33.♗d6 f5 34.♗f1 ♖c6 35.♖d1 ♗e6 36.♙b4 ♗f6 37.♗g3 f4 38.♗xh5 ♗e5 39.g3 fxg3 40.♗xg3 ♙xg3 41.fxg3

43.f3+ 42.4f2 43.c7?!+ 42...4e5= 43.4e3 44.f7 44.4d6+ 45.f5 45.4d8 46.4f8+ 47.4g8+
1/2-1/2

Lief,Adam - Myers,Hugh Edward [A04]

Midwest Masters-B Chicago (3), 1984 [Irons,Robert]
1.f3 b6 2.g3 4b7 3.4g2 g6 4.0-0 4g7 5.c4 d6 6.d4 4d7 7.4c3 h6 8.e4 e6 9.4c2 4e7 10.b3 0-0 11.4b2 4c6 12.4ad1 a6 13.d5 4b4 14.4b1 a5 15.a3 4a6 16.4c2 e5 17.4b1 4c8 18.4c1 4h7 19.4h4 4f6 20.4d1 4c5 21.b4 axb4 22.axb4 4cd7 23.4e3 4g8 24.4d2 4e7 25.4a1 4b7 26.4c3 4f6 27.4f3 h5 28.4b2 4h6 29.4h3 4ab8?!+ 29...4fb8+ 30.4a7 4g8 31.4h1 4f8 32.4fa1 g5 33.4f5+ 4g6 34.4e1 4d8 35.4d3 4xf5 36.4xf5 4e7 37.4xe7 4xe7 38.4e2 4h6 39.4e3 4d7 40.c5 bxc5 41.bxc5 dxc5 42.4xe5 4e8 43.h4 f6 44.hxg5+ fxg5 45.4b1 4d6 46.f4 4xe5 47.4xe5 4xd5 48.fxg5+?± 48.4xb8 4xb8 49.fxg5+ 4h7 50.4xc7+ 4g6 51.exd5+ 48...4xg5 49.4a6+ c6 50.4xb8 4xe5
1/2-1/2



Sergey Berchenko

Kuroda,Paul - Berchenko,Sergey [E17]

Midwest Masters-B Chicago (3), 1984 [Irons,Robert]
1.c4 4f6 2.4c3 c5 3.g3 e6 4.4f3 b6 5.4g2 4b7 6.0-0 4e7 7.b3 0-0 8.4b2 d5 9.cxd5 4xd5 10.4xd5 4xd5 11.d4 4d7 12.4c1 4c8 13.4d3 cxd4 14.4xd4 4c5 15.4d2?! 15.4b1= 15...4xg2 16.4xg2 4d5+?! Better is 16...e5 17.4f3 e4

18.4d4 4g5 19.e3 4d7 followed by 4d3. 17.f3?+ 17.4f3= 17...4fd8? 17...e5 wins. 18.4fd1?+ 18.e4 18...4b7?!= And here 18...4g5 19.e3 e5 20.4xc3 4b7 21.4b5 4d3!+ wins. 19.b4?+ 19.4e3= 19...4a4 20.4xc8 4xc8? 20...4xc8+ 21.b5 4d6 22.4a1 a6 23.4b4 4c5 24.4b1 a5 25.4c4 4xd4 26.4xd4 f6 27.4d1 4c7?+ 27...e5 28.4c4+ 4f7 29.4d5= 28.4d8+? 28.4g4 4d7 29.4xd7 4xd7 30.4xf6+ 28...4f7 29.4b2 e5 30.4a3 4e6 31.4d3 h6 32.4d6 4d7 33.4c4 g6 34.4d3 4a8 35.h4 4d8 36.4d5 h5 37.a4 4c8 38.4c6 4d8?+ 38...4xc6 39.bxc6 4d8 40.c7 4c8 41.4b3± 39.4c7 4xc7 40.4xd8 4xc6 41.bxc6 4e7 42.4d1 4e8 43.e3 4e7 44.4f2 4e8 45.4e2 4e7 46.4d2 4e8 47.4d1 1-0

Mills,James A (2215) - Van Meter,Lester [A11]

Midwest Masters-B Chicago (3), 1984 [Irons,Robert]
1.4f3 d5 2.b3 4f6 3.4b2 g6 4.g3 4g7 5.4g2 0-0 6.0-0 4e8 7.c4 c6 8.4e1 4g4 9.cxd5 cxd5 10.4e5 4b6 11.d4 4c6 12.4xg4 4xg4 13.e3 4f6 14.4c3 e6 15.4a4 4d8 16.4f1 4d7 17.4b5 4c8 18.4c1 4f8 19.4xc6 4xc6 20.4xc6 bxc6 21.4c2 4c7 22.4c1 4c8 23.4c3 h5 24.4d2 h4 25.4a5 4b8 26.gxh4 4f6 27.f4 4e7 28.4e2 4g7 29.4a6 4e4 30.4xc6 4xc6 31.4xc6 4xh4 32.4c3 4f2+ 33.4g2 4xe3?+ 33...4xc3 34.4c7 4f8 35.4xc3 4h4= 34.4c7 4b4 35.4xe4?! 35.4e5+ 4g8 36.4xe4 dxe4 37.4xe4 35...dxe4?! 35...4e1 36.4e5+ 4h6 37.4g3 4f2+ 38.4h3 4xf4 39.4xf4+ 4xf4 36.4xe4? 36.4e5+ 4g8 37.4xe4+ 36...4d2+ 37.4h3 4xd4 38.4xd4+ 4xd4 39.4e5+ 4xe5 40.fxe5 f5 41.exf6+ 4xf6 42.4g4 4e5 43.4g5 4d5 44.4xg6 e5 45.h4 e4 46.h5 e3 47.h6 e2 48.h7 e1 49.h8 4g3+ 50.4f5
1/2-1/2

Finegold,Benjamin - Odendahl,Steven M (2380) [D52]

Midwest Masters-B Chicago (3), 1984
1.c4 e6 2.4c3 d5 3.d4 4f6 4.4g5 4bd7 5.e3 c6 6.4f3 4a5 7.4d2 dxc4 8.4xf6 4xf6 9.4xc4 4c7 10.4c1 4e7 11.4e2 0-0 12.0-0 4d8 13.4b3 4d7 14.4f3 4e8 15.4fd1 4ac8 16.a4 4d5 17.4e2 4b4 18.4f4 g6 19.4e5 4d6 20.4g4 4g7 21.d5
1/2-1/2

Tomas,John - Dubin,Aaron [D42]

Midwest Masters-B Chicago (3), 1984 [Irons,Robert]
1.c4 c6 2.e4 d5 3.exd5 cxd5 4.cxd5 4f6 5.4c3 4xd5 6.d4 4c6 7.4f3 e6 8.4d3 4e7 9.0-0 0-0 10.4e1 4xc3?! 10...4d7± 11.bxc3 4f6 12.4f4 b6 13.4e2?! 13.h4! 4b7 (13...4xh4 14.4c2 g6 15.4xh4 4xh4 16.4d2 4e7 17.d5 4a5 18.4ad1+) 13...4b7 14.4ad1 4c8 15.4e5 4e7 16.c4 4g6 17.4g3 4e8 18.4g4 4a6?! 18...4xe5 19.dxe5 4c7± 19.h4 4xe5?!+ 19...4e7 20.4e3 4xe5 21.dxe5 h5± 20.dxe5 4c7 21.h5 4f8 22.4h4 4h8 23.4e3 4c5 24.4de1 4c7 25.4g3 g6 26.4f6+ 4g8 27.4g5 Mate is inevitable. 1-0

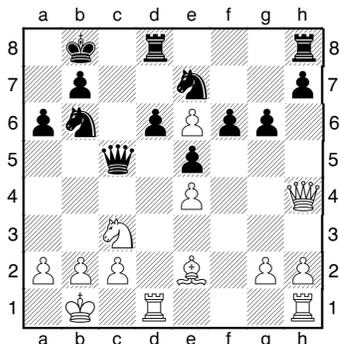
Martinovsky,Eugene Simeon (2230) - Miller,Todd Q

(2260) [A41] Midwest Masters-B Chicago (3), 1984
1.d4 g6 2.c4 4g7 3.4c3 d6 4.4f3 4d7 5.e3 e5 6.4e2 f5 7.b4 e4 8.4d2 4e7 9.0-0 0-0 10.f3 exf3 11.4xf3 4f6 12.4d3 c5 13.4b1 f4 14.exf4 cxd4 15.4xd4 4g4 16.4de2 a5 17.h3 axb4 18.4xb4 4xc3 19.4xc3 4a5 20.4b5 4xc3 21.4b2 4e3 22.4xc3 4xd1 23.4xd1 4xf4 24.4b2 4c6 25.4e2 4a3 26.4e1 4d4 27.4bd2 4xd2 28.4xd2 4f7 29.4d1 4e6 30.4b3 4e7

31. Qh4+ Qd7 32. Ag3 Ba8 33. Bxd6+ Qe7 34. c5 Qxb3
 35. axb3 Ba1+ 36. Qf2 Bc1 37. Bd3 Qe6 38. Ad6 Bb1 39. Ac7
 Bb2+ 40. Qg3 Bc2 41. Ab6 Bb2 42. h4 Qb4 43. Be3+ Qd7
 44. Bf3 Qe6 45. Qh3 Qd5 46. g4 Bb1 47. g5 Bh1+ 48. Qg3 Bg1+
 49. Qh2 Bg4 50. Qh3 Bf4 51. Bxf4 Qxf4+ 52. Qg4 Qe2 53. b4
 Qd4 54. h5 Qd5 55. h6 Qe6
 1/2-1/2

Sprenkle, David (2325) - Chachere, Lawrence [B68]

Midwest Masters-B Chicago (3), 1984 [Irons, Robert]
 1. e4 c5 2. Qc3 Qc6 3. Qge2 d6 4. d4 cxd4 5. Qxd4 Qf6 6. Ag5 e6
 7. Qd2 a6 8. 0-0-0 Qe7 9. f4 Qd7 10. Qe2 Qc7?! \pm Now is the
 time for 10... h6 11. Qh4 (11. Qxf6 Qxf6 12. Qf3 Qe7 13. Qb1
 b5=) 11... b5= 11. Qf3?! = White can maintain his advantage
 with 11. Qb3 b5 12. a3 Bb8 13. Bhf1 \pm , preparing to open the
 center with f4-f5 or e4-e5 . 11...0-0-0?! \pm Black is better off
 after either 11... h6= or; 11... Bc8= or; 11... Bd8= . 12. Qb3 Qe8
 13. Qe1 Qb8 14. Qb1 Qd7 15. Qxe7 Qxe7 16. Qe3 Qb6 17. Qe2
 f6 18. Qd4 Qf7 19. f5 e5 20. Qe6 Qxe6 21. fxe6 Qc5 22. Qg3 g6
 23. Qh4



23... Bdf8 \pm 23... d5 24. exd5 Qbxd5 25. Qxd5 Qxd5 26. Qf3 f5
 27. c4 Qe7 28. Bxd8+ Bxd8 29. Qd5= and Black can hold this
 position. 24. Bd2 d5 25. exd5 Qexd5 26. Qxd5 Qxd5 27. Qf3
 Qb4? \pm 27... Qb6 28. Bhd1 f5 \pm is a bit better, but not much. It
 is difficult to recommend anything beyond a conciliatory
 drink. 28. c3 Qc6 29. Bhd1 Qe7 30. Qxc6 bxc6 31. Qc4 Qb7
 32. e7 If 32... Qxe7 33. Bd7! forces mate within a few moves.
 1-0

Scores at the end of round 3:

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

Round 4

This round saw the effects of the fighting nature of the play so far; Al Chow, Lawrence Chachere, Steven Hudson, and

Steven Szpisjak all withdrew from the tournament. Mike Zelkind was given a bye. Of the 19 games played in this round, only 10 had a decisive result.

Allan Savage and David Sprenkle had a "Battle of Errors" in a Closed Sicilian Defense, with Savage holding the advantage and then managing to give it away, while Sprenkle missed opportunity after opportunity. In the end, a draw seemed appropriate.

Savage, Allan George - Sprenkle, David (2325) [B24]

Midwest Masters-B Chicago (4), 1984 [Irons, Robert]
 1. e4 c5 2. Qc3 Qc6 3. g3 e6 4. Qg2 Qf6 5. Qge2 d5 6. exd5 exd5
 7. d4 Qg4?! \pm 7... cxd4 8. Qxd4 Qg4= 8. Qe3?! = 8. h3 Qe6 9. 0-0 \pm
 8... c4?! \pm 8... cxd4 9. Qxd4 Qe7= 9. h3 Qh5 10. 0-0 Qb4 11. Qg5
 Qe7?! \pm 11... Qxc3 12. bxc3 0-0 12. Qxf6 gxf6 13. Qd2 Qd6
 14. Qf4 Qg6 15. Qb5?! \pm 15. Bfe1 0-0-0 16. Bc3 Qb8 17. Bae1+
 15... Qxd2 16. Qxd6+ Qd7 17. Qxg6 hxg6 18. Qxb7 Bab8
 19. Qc5+ Qd6 20. Bab1 Bb5 21. Bfd1 Qb4 22. Qa6 Qa5?! \pm
 22... Bb6 23. Qxb4 Qxb4 \pm 23. b3 Bb6 24. Qc5 Bhb8 25. Qa4
 B6b7 26. Qc5 Bb5 27. Qf1 Qc6 28. Bbc1 Qxd4 29. Bxd4? =
 29. Na6 keeps up the pressure. 29... Bxc5 30. bxc4 Bb2
 31. Bcd1 Bxa2 32. Bxd5+ Bxd5 33. Bxd5+ Qc7 34. Qd3 Qc3
 35. Bc5+ Qd7 36. Bb5 Bb2 37. Qe4 a5 38. Bb3 Qxb3 39. cxb3
 Qd4 40. Qd5 Qe7 41. Qg2 f5 42. h4 f6 43. f3 Qc5 44. Qh3
 Qe3?! \pm Recognizing the importance of the f4 square, but
 permitting White to set up a bind with f3-f4 . 44... f4 45. g4 f5
 46. Qg2= keeps things level. 45. Qc6?! = A waste of time.
 45. f4+ stifles Black's kingside play, at least for the moment.
 45... Qd2?! \pm Again, 45... f4= is necessary. 46. Qb5?! =
 And here, centralizing with 46. Qd5+ is best. 46... Qe3
 47. Qa6 Qd6 48. Qb5 Qe7 49. Qg2 Qc5 50. Qa6 Qe3 51. Qb7
 Qd6 52. Qc8 Qc5 53. g4 fxg4 54. fxg4 Qe5 55. Qf3 f5?! \pm The
 next-to-last mistake. Better is 55... Qb4 \pm 56. gxf5? = After
 this, the game fizzles out to a draw. 56. g5+ maintains an
 edge. 56... gxf5 57. h5 Qf6 58. h6 Qg6 59. h7 Qxh7 60. Qxf5+
 Qg7 61. Qe4 Qf6 62. Qd5 Qf2 63. Qh3 Qe7 64. Qc6 Qd8
 65. Qb5 Qe1 66. Qb6 Qd2 67. Qg4 Qe1 68. Qf5 Qd2 69. c5 Qe3
 70. Qc6 Qf2 71. Qd6
 1/2-1/2

Tim Redman played an odd Semi-Tarrasch line against Lester Van Meter, refusing to strike back against the White pawn center. Van Meter chose queenside play rather than pressing on the kingside, allowing Redman back into the game. Tim tried for a sacrificial attack that failed, giving the game back to White. Redman resigned on the 33rd move.

Van Meter, Lester - Redman, Timothy P [D35]

Midwest Masters-B Chicago (4), 1984 [Irons, Robert]
 1. d4 e6 2. c4 Qf6 3. Qc3 d5 4. cxd5 Qxd5 5. e4 Qxc3 6. bxc3
 b6?! \pm 6... c5= is the standard counter in the Semi-Tarrasch
 variation. 7. Qf3 Qe7 8. Qc4 Qd7 9. Qe2 0-0 10. 0-0 h6 11. Qf4
 Qb7 12. e5 Bc8 13. Bd1 Qc8?! \pm 13... c5 \pm is best. 14. d5?! =
 Better is 14. Qd2 intending Qd3 and Qh5 . 14... Qxd5 15. Qxd5
 exd5 16. e6 Qf6 17. exf7+ Qxf7 18. c4?! \pm 18. Qc2 f7 18... c6
 19. Bfe1?! \pm 19. Qc2 f7 19... Qg8 20. Qd3 Qg4 21. g3 Qc5 22. Qe5

Wg3 23.Wg6 Ax2+? Trying for more than is really there. 23...Ee7 maintains the advantage. Now it is White's game to lose. **24.Wx2 Ee5?!** 24...Ee6 holds on a bit longer. **25.Ee5 Qg4+ 26.Qf3 Qxh2+ 27.Qe2 Wg2+ 28.Qd3 dxc4+ 29.Qc3 b5 30.Ed2 b4+ 31.Qxc4 Wf1+ 32.Qb3 Wf3+ 33.Ee3 1-0**

Stevanovic – Lief was a Closed Sicilian Defense by way of 1.g3, and it was another “Battle of Errors.” The advantage changed hands more than once, with Lief making the final mistake. Adam chose to resign just after the time control was reached.

Stevanovic, Milidar - Lief, Adam [A15]

Midwest Masters-B Chicago (4), 1984 [Irons, Robert]
1.g3 Qf6 2.Qg2 g6 3.b3 Qg7 4.Qb2 0-0 5.Qf3 d6 6.0-0 e5 7.d3 Qc6 8.c4 h6 9.Qbd2 Qe6 10.c5?! 10.d4= **10...Qh5 11.cxd6 cxd6 12.Eb1 d5 13.Qa3 Ee8 14.b4 a6 15.Qb3 b6 16.Wd2 Wd7 17.Qb2 Qh3 18.a4 Qxg2 19.Qxg2 Wg4?!= 19...d4? 20.b5 Qd8 21.d4 e4 22.Qe5 Qxe5 23.dxe5 Qe6 24.Qh1 Qg5 25.Qd4 Ee5?!** 25...axb5 26.axb5 Qg7= **26.Qc6 Eee8 27.Wd4?!= 27.a5! Wd7 a) 27...axb5 28.axb6 Wd7 29.Ebc1+; b) 27...bxa5?! 28.b6 Eac8 29.Efc1 Wd7 30.Wxd5! Wg4 (30...Wxd5 31.Qe7+ Qh7 (31...Ee7 32.Exc8+ Wd8 33.Exd8+ Ee8 34.Ee8+ Qh7 35.Eh8#) 32.Qxd5+); 28.axb6 axb5 29.Ebc1+ 27...Qh7 28.Wxb6?!? 28.We3= **28...e3 29.Wd4?!+ 29.Qe5= 29...Wxe2 30.Wxd5 exf2 31.Qg2 axb5?!= 31...Wg4+ 32.axb5?+ 32.Exf2= 32...Qe6?! 32...Ea2! 33.Qe5 (33.Wxa2?? Wf3#) 33...Ee5 34.Qe5 Ed2+ 33.Qe5 Ea2 34.Qd4 Wd2?! 34...Ed2 35.Qe2 Exd5 35.Ebd1 Wg5?!+ 35...Wa5 36.Wxa2 Wxe5 37.Wxf2 We4+ 38.Qf3?! 38.Wf3 Qxd4 39.Wxe4 Ee4 40.Exf7+ Qg8 41.Ea7+ 38...Qg5?! 38...Wb7 39.Ede1 Wxf3+ 40.Wxf3 Qxf3 41.Ee8 1-0****

Dr. Martinovsky played his favorite Gruenfeld Defense against Ben Finegold, and the fighting was tense for more than 50 moves, until Finegold made a mistaken rook move in the R+B+Ps endgame. Martinovsky finished the game with a rather pretty forced checkmate.

Finegold, Benjamin - Martinovsky, Eugene Simeon (2230) [D80]

Midwest Masters-B Chicago (4), 1984 [Irons, Robert]
1.d4 Qf6 2.c4 g6 3.Qc3 d5 4.Qg5 Qe4 5.Qh4 c5 6.cxd5 Qxc3 7.bxc3 Wxd5 8.e3 cxd4 9.Wxd4 Wxd4 10.cxd4 e6 11.Eb1 Qe7 12.Qg3 Qc6 13.Qb5 Qd7 14.Qf3 a6 15.Qd3 Qb4 16.Qe4 f5 17.Qxb7 Ea7 18.a3 Exb7 19.axb4 Qxb4+ 20.Qd2?!? 20.Qf1? 20...Qc6 21.f3 Qe7 22.Eb2 a5 23.0-0 Qxd2?!= 23...Qb5? 24.Exd2 Ea8 25.Ea1 a4 26.Eda2 Eb3 27.e4?!? 27.Qf4= 27...Ed3 27...fxe4! 28.fxe4 Eb4? 28.Qf2 fxe4 29.fxe4 Qxe4?!= 29...Qd7? 30.Exa4 Exa4 31.Qh4+ Qd6 32.Exa4 Ed2 33.g4 Ee2+ 34.Qf1 Ee4 35.Qg3+ Qd5 36.Qf2 Qf5 37.Qe5 h5 38.Ea5+ Qe4 39.Ea3 h4 40.Eb3 Ee5 41.Qf6 Eh5 42.Eb7 Qh3 43.Qe1 Qf3 44.Eb2 Qf5 45.Ef2+ Qg4 46.Ed2 Qe4 47.Qe5 Eh7 48.Ef2 g5 49.Ee2 Qd5 50.Ee3 Ef7 51.Ec3 Eb7 52.Ec2 Eb3 53.Qf2 Qh3 54.Ed2?+ 54.Ec8= 54...g4 55.Qf1 g3 56.hxg3 hxg3 57.Ed1 Eb2 58.Ec1 Qf3 59.Ee1 Eh2 60.Qxg3 Qxg3 0-1

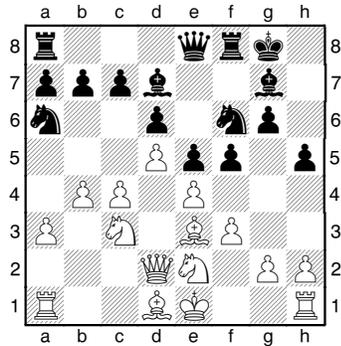
Ed Frumkin used the Averbach variation against Ken Wallach's KID, and kept up steady pressure right from the opening. It took a few positional mistakes, but Frumkin was able to force resignation on move 38.



Erik Karklins, Ken Wallach, Adam Lief, Ed Frumkin

Frumkin, Edward A (2215) - Wallach, Kenneth [E73]

Midwest Masters-B Chicago (4), 1984 [Irons, Robert]
1.d4 Qf6 2.c4 g6 3.Qc3 Qg7 4.e4 d6 5.Qe2 0-0 6.Qg5 h6 7.Qe3 e5 8.d5 Qbd7 9.Wd2 h5 10.Qg5 Qc5 11.f3 Qd7 12.Qd1 Qe8 13.b4 Qa6 14.a3 Qh7 15.Qe3 f5 16.Qge2 Qf6

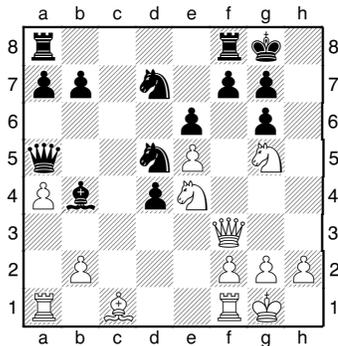


17.Qc2± Instead 17.exf5! gxf5 18.Qc2+- leaves White with weak pawns to attack. **17...f4 18.Qf2 g5 19.h3 g4 20.hxg4 hxg4 21.0-0-0 Qf7?!+ 21...g3± 22.Qxf4 exf4 23.Qd4 Eh8 24.Wxf4 We7 25.b5?!** White comes out better here with 25.e5! dxe5 26.Qxe5 Eae8 27.Qd4 c5 28.d6 Ehx1 29.Ehx1 Wd8 30.bxc5 Eh8 31.Qh7!+- **25...gxf3 26.bxa6 fxg2 27.Ehx8 Ehx8 28.axb7 Eb8 29.Eg1 Qh3 30.Wh4 Qxd5 31.Wh5+ Qg8 32.Qxd5 Wf8 33.Wxh3 Qxd4 34.Exg2+ Qg7 35.Eg5 Exb7 36.We6+ Wf7 37.Qe7+ Qf8 38.Ef5 1-0**

Thomas Unger misplayed the main line of the Slav Defense against Odendahl and was forced to resign in 23 moves.

Odendahl, Steven M (2380) - Unger, Thomas [D19]

Midwest Masters-B Chicago (4), 1984 [Irons, Robert]
1.d4 d5 2.Qf3 Qf6 3.c4 c6 4.Qc3 dxc4 5.a4 Qf5 6.e3 e6 7.Qxc4 Qb4 8.0-0 Qbd7 9.We2 0-0 10.e4 Qg6 11.Qd3 Wa5 11...Qh5 looks good to me. 12.e5 Qd5 13.Qxg6 hxg6 14.Qe4 c5 15.Qfg5 cxd4 16.Wf3



16...♗e7+ 16...♖c7 17.♗h3 ♜fe8 18.♗h7+ ♕f8 19.♗h8+ ♕e7 20.♗xg7 ♗xe5 21.♗xf7+ ♕d8 22.♗xg6 is somewhat better than the text, but good moves are getting hard to find. 17.♗h3 ♜fd8 18.♗h7+ ♕f8 19.♗h8+ ♗g8 20.♗h7+ ♕e7 21.♗g5+ ♗df6 22.♗xg7 ♗xe5 23.♗hxf6 1-0

Myers – Sage was an odd d-pawn opening that Sage never fully seemed comfortable playing against. He overlooked a tactic against his king shortly after the time control, and after that Sage was unable to get back in the game. He threw in the towel on move 58.

Myers, Hugh Edward - Sage, T. [D00]

Midwest Masters-B Chicago (4), 1984 [Irons, Robert]

1.♗c3 d5 2.d4 ♗c6 3.♗g5 h6 4.♗h4 g5 5.♗g3 ♗g4 6.f3 ♗h5 7.e3 ♗g7 8.♗b5 ♗d7 9.♗a4 e6 10.♗c5 ♗c8 11.c3 ♗ge7 12.h4 a6 13.hxg5 hxg5 14.♗d3 b6 15.♗b3 f6 16.♗c2 ♕f7 17.♗h3 ♗g6 18.0-0 a5 19.e4 a4 20.♗d2 ♗a5 21.♞de1 ♗d7 22.♕b1 c5?!+- 22...a3 23.exd5 ♗xd5 24.♗xg6+ ♗xg6+ 23.exd5 ♗xd5 24.♗xg6+ ♗xg6 25.♗xa4?!= 25.♗e4+- 25...♗c6 26.♗c4 cxd4 27.cxd4 ♗xd4 28.♗xd5 exd5 29.♗f2 ♗b5 30.♗b3 ♞ab8 31.♞d1 ♞hd8 32.♞he1 ♗f8 33.a4 ♗c7 34.♗d4 ♞d7 35.♗g3 ♞a8 36.♗xc7 ♞xc7 37.b3 ♗g6 38.♞e6 ♞b8 39.♞de1 ♗f8 40.♗b5 ♞d7 41.♞c6 ♗e7 42.♗d4 ♗e5?!+- 42...♗c5= 43.♗xg5+ ♕g8 44.♞e6 ♗b4 45.♞e2 ♕g7?! 45...♞f8 46.♞xb6 ♗c5 46.♞2xc5 fxe5 47.♗c6 ♞h8?! 47...♗d6 48.♗xb4 ♞h1+ 49.♕c2 ♞h2 50.♞xe5 ♞xg2+ 51.♕d3 ♕f6 52.f4 d4?! 52...♞g3+ 53.♕c2 ♞g2+ 54.♕c3 ♞g3+ 55.♕b2 ♞g2+ 56.♗a3 ♞d2 holds on a bit longer. 53.♗d5+ ♕g6 54.♕xd4 ♞f2 55.♕c3 ♞d6 56.♗e4 ♞c6+ 57.♕b4 ♞f3 58.♗e7+ 1-0

Erik Karklins won by forfeit when Hudson chose to withdraw from the tournament.

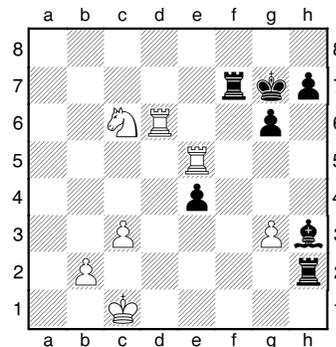
Giles and Pelts played a sharp variation of the Scheveningen Sicilian, and right after the time control Giles ate a poisoned pawn. He had to resign after Pelts' 51st move.

Giles, Morris - Pelts, Peter [B85]

Midwest Masters-B Chicago (4), 1984 [Irons, Robert]

1.e4 c5 2.♗f3 d6 3.d4 cxd4 4.♗xd4 ♗f6 5.♗c3 e6 6.f4 a6 7.♗e2 ♗e7 8.0-0 0-0 9.♗e3 ♗c6 10.♗f3 ♗c7 11.♗e1 ♗xd4 12.♗xd4 e5 13.fxe5 dxe5 14.♗g3 ♗c5 15.♗xc5 ♗xc5+ 16.♕h1 ♗e6 17.♗e2 ♕h8 18.♗d3 ♗h5 19.♗f2 ♗xf2 20.♞xf2 ♗f4 21.♗f1 ♞fd8 22.♕g1 ♕g8 23.g3 ♗h3+ 24.♗xh3 ♗xh3 25.♗d5 b5 26.a4 ♕f8 27.c3 g6 28.♗b4 ♕g7 29.♗c6 ♞e8 30.♞d2 ♞ac8

31.♞d6 ♞c7 32.axb5 axb5 33.♞a5 f5 34.exf5 ♞f8 35.♕f2 ♞xf5+ 36.♕e3 ♞cf7 37.♞xb5 ♞f3+ 38.♕d2 ♞f2+ 39.♕c1 e4 40.♞e5 ♞xh2



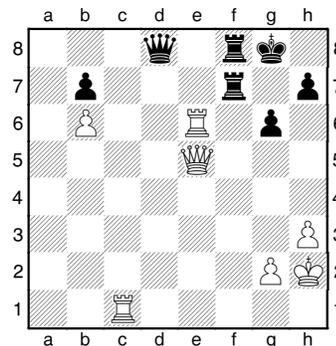
41.♞xe4?!+- I suspect that this was the first move after the time control (assuming it was 40/2), and it is legendary for being a blunder opportunity - I myself have experienced it. 41.♞d2= maintains equality, whereas the text is enough to lose the game. 41...♞ff2 42.♗b4 ♞xb2 43.♞h4 ♞bg2 44.c4 h5 45.c5 ♞xg3 46.♞c4 ♞g1+ 47.♞d1 ♞xd1+ 48.♕xd1 ♗e6 49.♞c3 h4 50.♗d3 h3 51.c6 ♞g2 0-1

Dandridge – Mills was an Exchange Gruenfeld that both men played strongly until the time control, when Mills let down his guard for one move. It only took 12 more moves to force resignation.

Dandridge, Marvin - Mills, James A (2215) [D87]

Midwest Masters-B Chicago (4), 1984 [Irons, Robert]

1.d4 ♗f6 2.c4 g6 3.♗c3 d5 4.cxd5 ♗xd5 5.e4 ♗xc3 6.bxc3 ♗g7 7.♗c4 0-0 8.♗e2 c5 9.♗e3 ♗d7 10.0-0 ♗b6 11.♗d3 cxd4 12.cxd4 ♗e6 13.♗d2 ♗c4 14.♗xc4 ♗xc4 15.♞fd1 e5 16.d5 ♗d6 17.a4 ♞fc8 18.♞db1 ♗a6 19.♗c1 ♗f8 20.a5 f6 21.f3 ♞c7 22.♗f2 f5 23.♗b2 fxe4 24.fxe4 ♗d3 25.♗xd3 ♗xd3 26.♞e1 ♗xe4 27.♗xa7 ♗xd5 28.♗xe5 ♗d6 29.♗b6 ♞cc8 30.♞f1 ♗g7 31.♗a2+ ♕h8 32.♞e6 ♗d7 33.♗e2 ♞f8 34.♞e1 ♗d4+ 35.♕h1 ♗xb6 36.axb6 ♞f7 37.♗e5+ ♕g8 38.h3 ♞af8 39.♕h2 ♗d8 40.♞c1



40...♗b8?!+- This attempt to force the trade of queens is misguided, and brings the end of the game on quickly. 40...♞f5= maintains equality. 41.♞c7 ♗d8 42.♞ee7 ♞xe7 43.♞xe7 ♗xe7 44.♗xe7 ♞f7 45.♗e5 ♕f8 46.g4 ♕g8 47.h4 ♞f8 48.h5 gxh5 49.gxh5 ♞f7 50.h6 ♞f6 51.♗d5+ ♞f7 52.♕g3 1-0

Aaron Dubin and James Ellis duked it out in a line of the English Opening, with both players seeking to sharpen the position right from the opening. Ellis was able to force his b-pawn through to a queen by the 22nd move!

Dubin,Aaron - Ellis,James S [A32]

Midwest Masters-B Chicago (4), 1984 [Irons,Robert]
 1.d4 ♖f6 2.c4 e6 3.♗f3 c5 4.♗c3 cxd4 5.♗xd4 ♙b4 6.♗db5 d5
 7.♗f4 0-0 8.e3?! ♣ 8.cxd5 ♗xd5 9.♗d2 ♣ 8...♗c6?! = 8...a6 ♣
 9.♗a4?+ 9.a3 9...a6?! ♣ 9...e5-+ 10.a3 ♗xc3+?! 10...axb5
 11.♗xa8 ♗xc3+ 12.bxc3 dxc4-+ 11.♗xc3 ♗h5 11...♗b6 12.0-0
 -0 e5 13.♗g3 12.cxd5 exd5 13.♗d1?! ♣ 13.♗e2 ♣ 13...d4 14.♗g3
 ♗f5 15.♗d3 b5 16.♗c2 ♗xd3 17.♗xd3 ♗a5 18.exd4? 18.♗d6
 18...b4 19.♗d1 bxa3+ 20.♗d2 ♣fe8+ 21.♗e3 axb2 22.♗e2?
 ♗a2 0-1

Other Games from Round 4

Weiss,Mitchel J - Rose,John [B44]

Midwest Masters-B Chicago (4), 1984
 1.e4 c5 2.♗f3 e6 3.d4 cxd4 4.♗xd4 ♗c6 5.c4 ♗f6 6.♗c3 ♙b4
 7.♗xc6 dxc6 8.♗xd8+ ♗xd8 9.♗d2 e5 10.0-0-0 ♗e7 11.f3
 ♗e6 12.♗e2
 1/2-1/2

Zelkind,Eduard - Berchenko,Sergey [D01]

Midwest Masters-B Chicago (4), 1984 [Irons,Robert]
 1.d4 ♗f6 2.♗c3 d5 3.♗g5 g6 4.♗d2 ♗bd7 5.f3 h6 6.♗f4 c6?! ±
 6...♗g7 ± 7.e4 g5 8.♗g3 ♗g7 9.0-0-0 ♗a5 10.♗b1 ♗h5 11.♗f2
 ♗b6 12.g4 ♗f4 13.e5 ♗d7 14.h4 0-0-0 15.♗ge2 ♗c4 16.♗c1
 ♗xe2 17.♗xe2 f6 18.hxg5 hxg5 19.♗xc4 dxc4 20.exf6?! ±
 20.♗xh8 ♗xh8 21.d5 fxe5 22.♗xg5 ♗f6 23.♗g6 ♗e8 24.♗f5+
 ♗d7 25.♗e4+ 20...exf6?! + 20...♗xf6 21.♗xh8 ♗xh8 22.♗e3
 ♗h3 ± 21.♗e4 ♗d5 22.♗e3 ♗b8 23.♗c3 ♗e6 24.♗g3+ ♗a8
 25.♗d2 ♗xh1 26.♗xh1 ♗f8 27.♗e1 ♗f7 28.a3?! ± 28.d5 ±
 28...♗c8 29.♗e4 c5 30.c3 cxd4 31.cxd4 b6 32.♗f2 f5 33.♗xg5
 ♗g6 34.♗f4 fxg4+ 35.♗a1 gxg3 36.♗xf3+ ♗b7 37.♗e3 ♗d5
 38.♗e6 ♗xe6 39.♗xe6 ♗xe6 40.♗xe6 ♗b7 41.♗e5 b5 42.♗b1
 a5 43.♗c2 b4 44.a4 ♗d7 45.♗g6 ♗f7 46.♗f6 ♗xf6 47.♗xf6
 ♗d6 48.b3 c3 49.♗d3 ♗c6 50.♗c4 ♗f4 51.♗d3 ♗c7
 1/2-1/2

Brooks,Michael A (2330) - Kuroda,Paul [B17]

Midwest Masters-B Chicago (4), 1984 [Irons,Robert]
 1.e4 c6 2.d4 d5 3.♗d2 dxe4 4.♗xe4 ♗d7 5.♗c4 ♗gf6 6.♗xf6+
 ♗xf6 7.♗d3 e6 8.♗f3 ♗e7 9.0-0 0-0 10.♗g5 c5 11.♗ad1 ♗c7
 12.dxc5 ♗xc5 13.♗e2 b6 14.♗e5 ♗b7 15.♗xf6 ♗xf6 16.♗d7
 ♗c6 17.♗xf6+ gxg6 18.f3 ♗h8 19.♗h1 ♗g8 20.♗d4 ♗g5
 21.♗fd1 ♗ag8 22.♗d8 ♗c7 23.♗xg8+ ♗xg8 24.♗d4 ♗h5 25.h3
 ♗f8 26.♗f2 ♗g5 27.♗f1 ♗g7 28.c4 ♗c5 29.♗d2 ♗c7 30.b4
 ♗a6 31.♗d4 e5 32.♗d5 ♗b7 33.♗d1 e4 34.fxe4 ♗xe4 35.♗e3
 ♗b7 36.♗d2 h5 37.♗e2 ♗e5 38.♗g3+ ♗g5 39.♗d6 a5 40.♗f2
 ♗g6 41.a3 axb4 42.axb4 ♗c6 43.♗xc6 ♗xc6 44.♗f4 ♗g3
 45.♗h4 ♗g6 46.♗h2 ♗b3 47.b5 ♗b7 48.♗d4 ♗e3 49.♗d3+ f5
 50.g4 h4 51.♗xf5+ ♗g5 52.♗d7 ♗e2+ 53.♗g1 ♗g2 54.♗c6
 ♗xh3 55.♗f3 ♗c2 56.♗e4 f6 57.♗e2 f5 58.gxf5?! + 58.♗e5 =
 58...♗xf5 59.♗e5 ♗c1+ 60.♗f2 ♗f4 61.♗e8 h3 62.♗h8 ♗c2
 63.c5 ♗xc5 64.♗h4+ ♗g5 65.♗h5+ ♗g6 66.♗h8 ♗c8 67.♗xc8
 ♗xc8 68.♗f3 ♗f6 69.♗c6 ♗e5 70.♗g3 ♗d6 71.♗f3 ♗d7

72.♗e2 ♗c5 73.♗f1 ♗d4 74.♗h2 ♗e3 75.♗g3 ♗e6 76.♗h2
 ♗f2 77.♗d3 ♗d7 78.♗c4 ♗f5 79.♗d5 ♗g4 80.♗c6 ♗e6
 81.♗e8 ♗e3 82.♗c6 ♗d4 83.♗g3 ♗c5 84.♗e8 ♗f5 85.♗h2
 ♗d6 86.♗h5 ♗c5 87.♗e8 ♗d3?! ♣ 87...♗c8-+ 88.♗d7?! +
 88.♗xh3 = 88...♗f1?! = 88...♗xb5-+ 89.♗g1 ♗d6 90.♗c6? +
 90.♗f5 = 90...♗g2 91.♗e8 ♗e4 92.♗h2 ♗f5 93.♗h5 ♗d3? =
 93...♗d7 94.♗e2 ♗c5-+ 94.♗xh3 ♗xb5 95.♗g3 ♗c5 96.♗f2
 ♗d4 97.♗e1 ♗c3 98.♗d1 ♗b2 99.♗d2
 1/2-1/2



Billy Colias

Colias,Billy - Sandrin,Angelo [B24]

Midwest Masters-B Chicago (4), 1984
 1.e4 c5 2.♗c3 ♗c6 3.g3 g6 4.♗g2 ♗g7 5.d3 e6 6.f4 ♗ge7
 7.♗f3 d5 8.e5 ♗d7 9.0-0 0-0 10.♗d2 a6 11.♗b1 b5 12.♗e2 f6
 13.b4 cxb4 14.exf6 ♗xf6 15.♗xb4 ♗xb4 16.♗xb4 ♗a5 17.♗b1
 ♗c6 18.♗b3 ♗b6+ 19.♗h1 ♗a5 20.♗b4 ♗c6 21.♗b3 ♗a5
 22.♗b4 ♗c6
 1/2-1/2

Schiller,Eric Andrew (2220) - Eckert,Doug D [D86]

Midwest Masters-B Chicago (4), 1984
 1.d4 ♗f6 2.c4 g6 3.♗c3 d5 4.cxd5 ♗xd5 5.e4 ♗xc3 6.bxc3 ♗g7
 7.♗c4 0-0 8.♗e2 ♗c6 9.♗e3 b6 10.0-0 ♗b7 11.f3 ♗a5 12.♗d3
 ♗c8 13.♗d2 c5 14.♗ac1 ♗d7 15.♗h6 ♗xh6 16.♗xh6 cxd4
 17.cxd4 ♗xc1 18.♗xc1 ♗c8 19.♗f4 ♗c6 20.♗b5 a6 21.♗a4 e6
 22.♗f6 b5 23.♗b3 ♗a5 24.♗xc8+ ♗xc8 25.d5 exd5 26.♗xd5
 ♗xd5 27.exd5 ♗c5+ 28.♗f1 ♗xd5 29.♗xa6 ♗c4 30.♗a7 ♗d3
 1/2-1/2

Lindsay,Fred P (2225) - Kaushansky,Leonid (2355)

[C02] Midwest Masters-B Chicago (4), 1984
 1.e4 c5 2.c3 e6 3.d4 d5 4.e5 ♗c6 5.♗f3 ♗b6 6.♗e2 cxd4
 7.cxd4 ♗ge7 8.♗a3 ♗f5 9.♗c2 ♗b4+ 10.♗f1 h5 11.a3 ♗e7
 12.b4 ♗d7 13.h4 a6 14.♗b2 ♗a7 15.♗fe1 ♗a4 16.♗d2 ♗b5

17.g3 g6 18.♙g2 0-0 19.♖d3 ♗g7 20.♜f3 ♜fc8 21.♜e3 ♜c7
22.♜hc1 ♜ac8 23.♜xc7 ♜xc7 24.♜c1 ♜xc1 25.♜xc1 ♜c7
1/2-1/2

Miller,Todd Q (2260) - Moore,Tucker [A13]

Midwest Masters-B Chicago (4), 1984

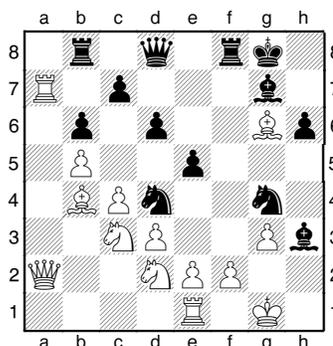
1.c4 e6 2.♜f3 d5 3.b3 ♜f6 4.g3 c5 5.♖g2 d4 6.e3 ♜c6 7.exd4
cxd4 8.0-0 ♖c5 9.d3 0-0 10.♜e1 ♜e8 11.a3 a5 12.♜e5 ♜xe5
13.♜xe5 ♜c7 14.♜e1 e5 15.♜d2 ♖d7 16.♜e4 ♜xe4 17.♖xe4
♖c6 18.♜f3 ♖xe4 19.♜xe4 ♜c6 20.f3 ♜xe4 21.♜xe4 f5
22.♜e1 e4 23.fxe4 fxe4 24.dxe4 d3+ 25.♙g2 ♖d4 26.♜a2 ♜a6
27.♜d1 ♜xe4 28.♜xd3 ♜ae6 29.♜ad2 ♖f6 30.♖b2 ♖xb2
31.♜xb2 h6 32.♜f3 ♜e1 33.b4 axb4 34.axb4 ♜f6+ 35.♙g2 ♜c1
36.c5 b6 37.cxb6 ♜xb6 38.b5 ♜c5 39.♜db3 ♜f5 40.g4 ♜e5
41.♜f3 ♜f6+ 42.♙g3 ♜b6 43.♜f4 ♜c5 44.♜b4 ♜f7 45.♙e4
♙e6 46.h4 ♜e5+ 47.♜f4 g5+

1/2-1/2

Bereolos,Peter - Tomas,John [A26]

Midwest Masters-B Chicago (4), 1984 [Irons,Robert]

1.♜f3 ♜f6 2.c4 g6 3.♜c3 ♖g7 4.g3 0-0 5.♖g2 d6 6.0-0 e5 7.d3
♜c6 8.♜b1 a5 9.a3 h6 10.b4 axb4 11.axb4 ♖e6 12.b5 ♜e7
13.♜b3 ♜d7 14.♖a3 f5 15.♜d2 ♜b8 16.♖b4 f4 17.♜a1 ♜f5
18.♜a7 ♜d4 19.♜a2 b6?! Better to keep the queenside pawn
structure intact with 19...♜c8. 20.♖e4 ♜f6 21.♖xg6 ♖h3
22.♜e1 fxg3 23.hxg3 ♜g4



24.♜de4?!= 24.♜ce4 keeps the advantage, whereas the text
is quickly punished. 24...♜xf2! 25.♜xf2 ♜xf2 26.♜xf2 ♜f6+
27.♙g1 ♜xg6 28.♙h2 ♜f8 29.♜a8 ♖c8 30.♜xc8 ♜xc8 31.♜f1
♙h7 32.e4 ♖f6 33.♜d5 ♖g5 34.♜f2 ♜e6 35.♜f5 ♜a8 36.♜xc7
♜xc7 37.♜f7+ ♜g7 38.♜xg7+?! Trading queens makes
White's weak pawns harder to defend. Better is 38.♖xd6±.
38...♜xg7 39.♖xd6 ♜a2+ 40.♙h3 ♜e6 In the tournament
book Tomas writes: "A decision based on the sudden re-
lease of tension in this difficult game. Objectively, of
course, black is much better since he ought to win all of
the queenside pawns." Stockfish rates the position as
slightly favoring Black, but given Tomas' place in the tour-
nament standings, it hardly seems worth the effort. A draw
seems reasonable.

1/2-1/2

Scores at the end of round 4:

- 3.5: Brooks, Kaushansky, Kuroda
- 3.0: Lindsay, Martinovsky, Odendahl, Pelts
- 2.5: Berchenko, Bereolos, Frumkin, Miller, Moore, Rose,

- Savage, Sprenkle, Weiss, E. Zelkind
- 2.0: Dandridge, Finegold, Giles, Karklins, Tomas, Unger,
Van Meter
- 1.5: Chow, Colias, Eckert, Ellis, Myers, Redman, Sandrin,
Schiller, Stevanovic, Wallach
- 1.0: Chachere, Hudson, Lief, Mills, M. Zelkind
- 0.5: Dubin
- 0.0: Mohr, Sage, Szpisjak

Round 5

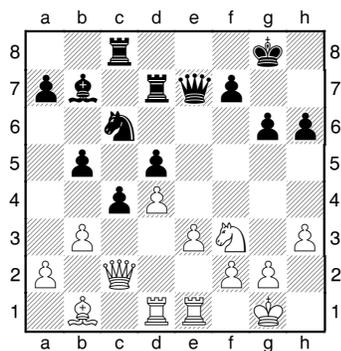
Tim Redman and James Mills withdrew before this round,
leaving only 18 games played. Ten of those 18 games
proved decisive.

Billy Colias played the solid Tartakower variation of the
QGD against Ken Wallach, and Wallach tried for too much
in the middlegame. Colias almost gave the game back, but
he managed to recover and capture the full point.

Wallach,Kenneth - Colias,Billy [D59]

Midwest Masters-B Chicago (5), 1984 [Irons,Robert]

1.d4 d5 2.c4 e6 3.♜c3 ♖e7 4.♜f3 ♜f6 5.♖g5 h6 6.♖h4 0-0
7.e3 b6 8.cxd5 ♜xd5 9.♖xe7 ♜xe7 10.♖d3 c5 11.♜c1 ♜c6
12.0-0 ♜d8 13.♜xd5 exd5 14.h3 c4 15.♖b1 ♖b7 16.♜e1 b5
17.♜c2 g6 18.♜cd1 ♜d7 19.b3 ♜c8



20.e4?! This attempt to take advantage of the R-Q opposi-
tion on the e-file backfires quickly. 20.h4 threatening h4-5
looks good. 20...♜b4 21.♜c3 dxe4 22.♜e5 ♜dc7 23.bxc4
bxc4 24.♖xe4 ♖xe4 25.♜xe4 ♜xa2+! Too greedy, and ex-
pensive. 25...♜d5 keeps the advantage. 26.♜d2 ♜b4
27.♜xh6?! This capture lets Black off the hook. 27.d5±
keeps up the pressure. 27...♜f8 28.♜e3 ♜d5 29.♜f3 c3
30.♜d3?!+ The final mistake, after which Colias takes over.
30.♜c1 and White is still in the game. 30...a5 31.♜e5 c2
32.♜c1 ♜b4 33.♜xa5 ♜c3 0-1

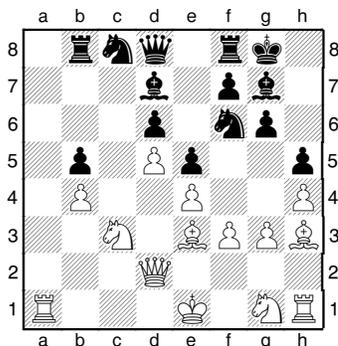
Stevanovic – Sandrin was another Saemisch King's Indi-
an, with Sandrin maintaining a slight advantage until move
18, when he tried for too much and quickly got the worst of
it. One more mistake on move 24 was enough to give Ste-
vanovic the game.

Sandrin,Angelo - Stevanovic,Milidar [E84]

Midwest Masters-B Chicago (5), 1984 [Irons,Robert]

1.d4 ♜f6 2.c4 g6 3.♜c3 ♖g7 4.e4 d6 5.f3 0-0 6.♖e3 ♜c6

7.♗ge2 ♖b8 8.♗d2 a6 9.a4 e5 10.d5 ♗e7 11.h4 h5 12.g3 c6
13.♗g1 cxd5 14.cxd5 ♗d7 15.♗h3 b5 16.axb5 axb5 17.b4 ♗c8

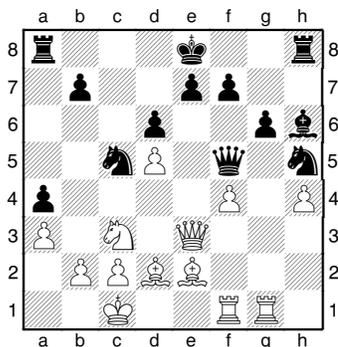


18.♗h6?! ♣ This trade helps Black. Much better is 18.♗xd7±
18...♗b6 19.♗xg7 ♣xg7 20.♗xd7 ♗c4 21.♗c1 ♗xd7 22.♗h3
♖fc8 23.♗g5 ♗b6 24.♖h2?!+- Preparing to swing it along the
2nd rank, but White is better off with 24.♗d2 ♣. After this
Sandrin never recovers. 24...♖c4 25.♗b2 ♖bc8 26.♗d1 ♗a4
27.♗b3 ♗a7 28.♗h3 ♗d4 29.♖b1 ♗c3 30.♖d2 ♗b6 31.♖a1
♗xd1 32.♣xd1 ♖c3 33.♗a2 ♖xf3 34.♗a6 ♗xa6 35.♖xa6 ♗xe4
0-1

Todd Miller played the Nimzovich Defense against Berchenko, quickly got into trouble, and then one mistake on move 22 made the loss inevitable.

Berchenko, Sergey - Miller, Todd Q (2260) [B00]

Midwest Masters-B Chicago (5), 1984 [Irons, Robert]
1.e4 ♗c6 2.♗f3 d6 3.d4 ♗f6 4.♗c3 ♗g4 5.d5 ♗b8 6.h3 ♗xf3
7.♗xf3 g6 8.♗e3 ♗g7 9.♗e2 a5 10.g4 a4 11.a3 c6 12.h4 h5
13.gxh5 ♗xh5 14.♗h3 ♗d7 15.f4 cxd5 16.exd5 ♗c8 17.♗d2
♗b6 18.♗d3 ♗d7 19.0-0-0 ♗c5 20.♗e3 ♗f5 21.♖hg1 ♗h6
22.♖df1



22...♗g7?!+- Is one mistake enough to lose a game? This
one is. 22...♗xf4± puts up stiffer resistance. 23.♗g4 ♗f6
24.♗b5 ♗f8 25.♗c3 ♗xh4 26.♗e2 e5 27.dxe6 ♗cxe6 28.♖g4
♗e7 29.♗b1 ♗c5 30.♗xe7+ ♣xe7 31.♗c7 ♖ac8 32.♗d5+ ♣e6
33.♗f3 ♗f5 34.♗b6 ♣e7 35.♖e1+ ♗e6 36.♗xc8+ ♖xc8
37.♗xb7 ♖c4 38.♗e4 ♗d7 39.♗xf5 gxh5 40.♖h4 ♗xf4 41.♖h8
d5 42.♖h5 d4 43.♗b4 f6 44.♖h7+ 1-0

Tim Sage chose a quiet opening (the Four Knights Game) known to have no real ambitions, and Mike Zelkind handed over the full point with only two questionable moves.

Sage, T. - Zelkind, Mike [C49]

Midwest Masters-B Chicago (5), 1984 [Irons, Robert]
1.e4 e5 2.♗f3 ♗f6 3.♗c3 ♗c6 4.♗b5 ♗b4 5.0-0 0-0 6.d3 d6
7.♗g5 ♗xc3 8.bxc3 ♗g4 9.h3 ♗h5 10.g4 ♗g6 11.♗h4 ♗e7?!±
11...h6 12.♗e3= (12.♗xc6 bxc6 13.♗e3=) 12.♗f3 ♗d8 13.♗f5
♗xf5 14.gxf5 h6 15.♗e3 ♣h7 16.♣h1 g6 17.♖g1 c6 18.♗c4
♗d7?!+- Preparing d6-d5 to reduce the pressure on f7, but
White has a better idea. 18...♖g8 seems reasonable.
19.♗g3 ♖g8 20.♗h4 g5 21.♗xg5 ♖xg5 22.♖xg5 d5 23.♖ag1
h5 24.♖xh5+ 1-0

Sprenkle – Weiss was a Tarrasch French that remained level until Weiss attempted a poorly-timed pawn break. He fought back to even, but then got cocky and sacrificed the exchange unnecessarily. Sprenkle insisted that Weiss remain in the game, handing over the full point shortly after the time control.

Sprenkle, David (2325) - Weiss, Mitchel J [C06]

Midwest Masters-B Chicago (5), 1984 [Irons, Robert]
1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5 3.♗d2 ♗f6 4.e5 ♗fd7 5.♗d3 c5 6.c3 ♗c6
7.♗gf3 cxd4 8.cxd4 ♗b6 9.0-0 ♗xd4 10.♗xd4 ♗xd4 11.♗f3
♗b6 12.♗a4 ♗b4 13.♗c2 ♗c5 14.♗e2 ♗b6 15.a4 a5 16.♗f4
♗c5 17.♗e3 ♗d8 18.♗b5+ ♗d7 19.♗d4 ♖c8 20.♖fc1 ♗e7
21.♗g4 ♗f8 22.♖c2 b6 23.♖ac1 h5 24.♗f3 g6 25.g3 ♗g7
26.h4 ♖e8 27.♗g2 f5?!± 27...♖c7= or; 27...♗xb5 28.axb5
(28.♗xb5 ♣g8=) 28...♗d7= are better than the text. 28.♗f4
♗f7 29.♗e3 ♖h8 30.b3 ♗g7 31.♗xd7 ♗xd7 32.♗b5 ♖c6
33.♗d6 ♖xd6?+- 33...♖b8= 34.exd6 ♗xd6 35.♗e5+ ♗xe5
36.♗xe5+ ♣h7 37.♖xc5?!= 37.b4 axb4 38.a5 b3 39.♖c3 b2
40.♖b1 d4 41.♖c4 ♗b5 42.♖xd4 ♗xa5 43.♗c7+ ♣h6
44.♖xb2+- 37...bxc5 38.♖xc5 ♖c8 39.♖xa5 d4 40.♖c5?+-
40.♗b5= 40...♖xc5 41.♗xc5 d3 42.♗c1 ♗d5+?!± 42...d2
43.♗d1 e5+- 43.f3 d2 44.♗d1?+- 44.♗c7+= 44...e5 45.♗f2 e4
0-1

The game Moore – Frumkin is difficult to describe; it started as a Dutch Defense, then Moore gambited a kingside pawn, then locked the center. The entire opening feels like a taunt, and while the game lasted for 47 moves, the result was clear by the 10th move.

Moore, Tucker - Frumkin, Edward A (2215) [A80]

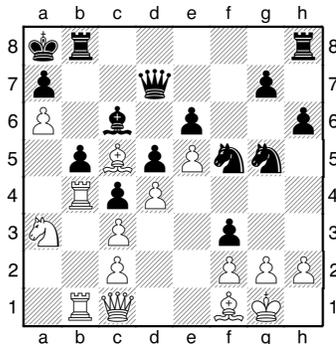
Midwest Masters-B Chicago (5), 1984 [Irons, Robert]
1.d4 f5 2.h3 d6 3.g4! ♣xg4?!± 3...e5= 4.e4 e5 5.d5?!± 5.hxg4±
5...♗h4 6.♗e2 ♗f6?!= 6...g6 7.♗d3 ♗h6 ♣f7 7.♗bc3?!± 7.♗g3=
7...♗e7 8.♗g3 gxh3 9.♗e3 ♗g4 10.♗d2 ♗xe3 11.♗xe3 0-0
12.♗f5 ♗xf5 13.exf5 ♗g5 14.♗xh3 ♗xh3 15.♗xh3 a6 16.f6
♗xf6 17.♗e2 g6 18.♗e4 ♗e7 19.♗e6+ ♣g7 20.♖ag1 a5
21.♖h3 ♗a6 22.♗g3 c6 23.c4 ♗c7 24.♗f5+ ♖xf5 25.♗xf5 cxd5
26.♖b3 ♖b8 27.cxd5 ♗xd5 28.♗e4?!+- 28.♗d7 28...♗f4+
29.♗f1 d5 30.♗f5 b5 31.♖c3 ♗f6 32.♗d7 ♗b4 33.♖c6+ ♣e7
34.♗g4 h5 35.♗e2 ♗d6 36.♗xh5 gxh5 37.♖g7+ ♗f8 38.♖h7
♗g8 39.♖a7 ♗f8 40.♖xa5 b4 41.♖a7 h4 42.♗g1 d4 43.♖cc7
d3 44.♖d7 ♖c8 45.♖ac7 ♖xc7 46.♖xc7 d2 47.♖d7 ♗e2+ 0-1

Pelts and Eduard Zelkind argued the Winawer variation in the French Defense, and both the center and the

queenside were blocked off. Rather than shifting to the kingside, Pelts sacrificed a knight for a pawn on the queenside, essentially handing over the game. It was all over by the time control.

Pelts, Peter - Zelkind, Eduard [C19]

Midwest Masters-B Chicago (5), 1984 [Irons, Robert]
1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5 3.♗c3 ♖b4 4.e5 c5 5.a3 ♗xc3+ 6.bxc3 ♗e7
7.a4 ♗bc6 8.♗f3 ♜a5 9.♗d2 ♗d7 10.♗e2 c4 11.0-0 f6 12.♖e1
0-0-0 13.♗f1 ♗dg8 14.♞e2 h6 15.♖eb1 ♗d8 16.♗c1 ♗c6
17.♗a3 ♞c7 18.♗c5 b6 19.♗d6 ♞d7 20.a5 b5 21.a6 f5 22.♗d2
♗f7 23.♗c5 f4 24.♖b4 ♗f5 25.♗b1 ♞b8 26.♗a3 ♞a8 27.♖ab1
♖b8 28.♞d2 f3 29.♞c1 ♗g5



30.♗xb5?!-+ This capture doesn't work. 30.g3 is White's best bet. 30...♖xb5 31.♞b2 ♖hb8 32.g4 ♖xb4 33.cxb4 ♗e7
34.♞a3 ♗c8 35.♖a1 ♞f7 36.♞a5 ♗e4 37.♞d8 ♗xc5 38.dxc5
♞e7 39.♞a5 ♖b5 40.♞a3 ♞f7 0-1

Dubin and Schiller played the Carlsbad Variation in the QGD, but when Dubin captured in the center, Schiller saw his chance to attack. He attempted a sacrificial line that didn't work, but Dubin couldn't make the most of the opportunity. Schiller collected the full point on move 33.

Dubin, Aaron - Schiller, Eric Andrew (2220) [D36]

Midwest Masters-B Chicago (5), 1984 [Irons, Robert]
1.d4 d5 2.c4 e6 3.♗c3 ♗f6 4.♗g5 ♗e7 5.cxd5 exd5 6.e3 c6
7.♞c2 ♗bd7 8.♗d3 0-0 9.♗ge2 ♖e8 10.h3 ♗f8 11.g4 ♞a5
12.♗g3 c5 13.dxc5? ♖d4 14.exd4 ♗xc5+ 15.♞f1 ♗xd4 16.♗b5
♗d7 17.♗d2 ♞b6 18.♗xd4 ♞xd4 19.♗c3 ♞f4 20.♞c1 ♞d6
21.♞d2 ♖ad8 22.♖d1 ♞c6 23.♖g1?!-+ 23.♞g1 23...♗xg4±
23...♞f3+ 24.hxg4 ♗xg4 25.♗e2 ♗h3+ 26.♞e1 ♗g6 27.♞c2
♖d6 28.♗b4?= 28.♖d2 h5 29.♞d1+- 28...♞xc2 29.♗xc2 ♖de6
30.♖d2 ♗f4 31.♗d1 ♗g2+ 32.♞f1?-+ 32.♖xg2 ♗xg2 33.♗b3=
32...♗h4+ 33.♖g2 ♗xg2+ 0-1

Unger played the Geller Gambit against Van Meter's Slav Defense, and Lester wasn't quite up to the task. He resigned on the 16th move.

Unger, Thomas - Van Meter, Lester [D31]

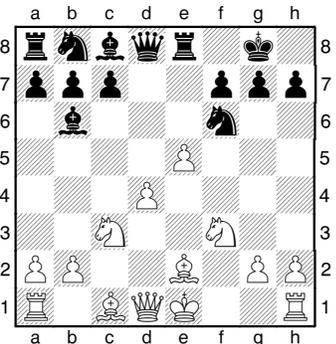
Midwest Masters-B Chicago (5), 1984 [Irons, Robert]
1.d4 d5 2.c4 c6 3.♗f3 ♗f6 4.♗c3 dxc4 5.e4 b5 6.e5 ♗d5 7.a4
e6 8.axb5 ♗b4 9.♗d2 ♗xc3 10.bxc3 cxb5 11.♗g5 ♞e7 12.♞h5
♞f8?± Unnecessary and risky. 12...♗b7= seems obvious.
13.♗e2 a5 14.0-0 ♖a7?!+- This creates a back rank issue

for Black, as well as leaving the minor pieces undefended. 14...h6 15.♗e4 ♗b7± is the best option available. 15.♖f1
♗d7 16.♗xc4 1-0

Giles and Bereolos argued the King's Gambit Declined, with Bereolos losing the argument after two bad moves at the end of the opening.

Giles, Morris - Bereolos, Peter [C30]

Midwest Masters-B Chicago (5), 1984 [Irons, Robert]
1.e4 e5 2.f4 ♗c5 3.♗f3 d6 4.c3 ♗f6 5.d4 exd4 6.cxd4 ♗b6
7.♗c3 0-0 8.♗e2 ♖e8 9.e5 dxе5 10.fxe5



10...♗d5?!± 10...♗c6 11.exf6 ♗g4 12.♞f1 ♞xf6 13.♗d5 ♞g6
14.♗xb6± 11.♗g5 ♞d7?!+- 11...f6 12.exf6 ♗xf6± 12.♞b3 c6
13.0-0 ♗c7 14.♞h1 ♗e6 15.♖ad1 h6 16.♗h4 ♗d8 17.d5 ♗c5
18.♞c4 ♗xh4 19.♗xh4 ♞e7 20.d6 b5 21.♗xb5 cxb5 22.♞xb5
♞xe5 23.♗c4 ♖f8 24.♗g6 a6 25.♞a5 ♗c6 26.♞c7 ♞e8
27.♗xf8 ♗e5 28.♞xc5 ♗xc4 29.♗g6 fxg6 30.♞xc4+ ♗e6
31.♞c7 1-0



John Tomas, Marvin Dandridge.

Other Round 5 Games:

Lief, Adam - Ellis, James S [A37]

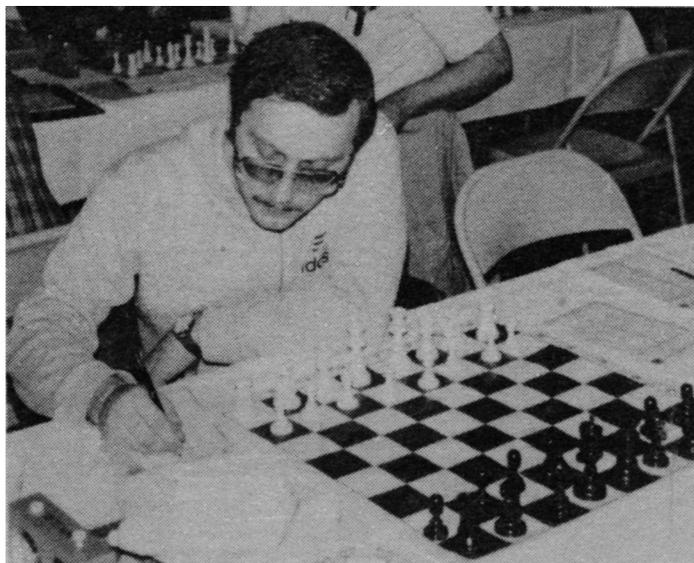
Midwest Masters-B Chicago (5), 1984
1.♗f3 c5 2.g3 ♗c6 3.♗g2 g6 4.0-0 ♗g7 5.c4 e6 6.♗c3 ♗ge7
7.d3 0-0 8.a3 b6 9.♗d2 d5 10.♖b1 ♗b7 11.b4 dxc4 12.dxc4
cxh4 13.axb4 ♖c8 14.c5 bxc5 15.bxc5 ♗a5 16.♗a4 ♗c6

17.ϩb2 ϩb7 18.ϩd3 ♠e4 19.♠b4 ♠c6 20.♖b1 ♠xf3 21.♠xf3
 ϩxc5 22.♠d1 ϩd5 23.ϩxc5 ♠xc5 24.♠e3 ♠a5 25.♖b3 ♠e8
 26.♠b5 a6 27.♠xa5 ♖xa5 28.♠xd5 exd5 29.♠xd5 ♖a1+
 30.♠d1 ♖e5 31.♖c4 ♖f6 32.♠d7 ♖f5 33.♠a7 a5 34.♖a4 ♠b8
 35.♠xa5 ♖b1+ 36.♖g2 h5 37.♖a2 ♖e4+ 38.♖h3 ♖g4+
 39.♖g2 ♖e4+
 1/2-1/2

Karklins,Erik - Dandridge,Marvin [B15]

Midwest Masters-B Chicago (5), 1984

1.e4 c6 2.d4 d5 3.ϩc3 dxe4 4.ϩxe4 ϩf6 5.ϩxf6+ exf6 6.♠e2
 ♠d6 7.♠f3 0-0 8.ϩe2 ♠f5 9.0-0 ♠e8 10.c4 ♠e4 11.♠xe4
 ♠xe4 12.♠e3 ϩd7 13.ϩc3 ♠e8 14.♖f3 ♠c8 15.♠ad1 a6 16.c5
 ♠b8 17.b4 ♖e7 18.♠b1 ♖e6 19.g3 ♖c4 20.♠b3 ♠cd8 21.♠c1
 ϩf8 22.ϩa4 ♖e6 23.♖g2 f5 24.ϩb6 f4 25.d5 cxd5 26.♠xf4
 ♠xf4 27.♖xf4 ϩg6 28.♖d4 ♖e4+ 29.♖xe4 dxe4 30.ϩc4 ϩe5
 31.ϩd6 ϩd3 32.♠xd3 exd3 33.ϩxe8 ♠xe8 34.♠d1 ♠d8 35.♖f3
 a5 36.a3 axb4 37.axb4 ♠d4 38.b5 ♖f8 39.♖e3 ♠c4
 1/2-1/2



Leonid Kaushansky

Kaushansky,Leonid (2355) - Brooks,Michael A (2330)

[B92] Midwest Masters-B Chicago (5), 1984

1.e4 c5 2.ϩf3 d6 3.d4 cxd4 4.ϩxd4 ϩf6 5.ϩc3 a6 6.a4 e5
 7.ϩb3 ♠e6 8.♠e2 ♠e7 9.0-0 0-0 10.a5 ϩbd7
 1/2-1/2

Kuroda,Paul - Odendahl,Steven M (2380) [A10] Midwest
 Masters-B Chicago (5), 1984

1.c4 g6 2.ϩc3 ♠g7 3.g3 d6 4.♠g2 ϩc6 5.♠b1 f5 6.d3 ϩf6 7.e3
 0-0 8.ϩge2 ♖h8 9.0-0 ϩe5 10.b3 ϩf7 11.d4 e5 12.dxe5 dxe5
 13.♠a3 ♠e8 14.♖xd8 ♠xd8 15.♠fd1 c6 16.♠xd8+ ϩxd8
 17.♠d1 ϩe6 18.ϩa4 ♖g8 19.♠b2 e4 20.h3 b5 21.cxb5 cxb5
 22.ϩac3 b4 23.ϩa4 ♠a6 24.ϩf4 ϩxf4 25.gxf4 ♠b5 26.♠f1
 ♠xf1 27.♖xf1 ♠c8 28.♠d2 ♠c7 29.♠e5 ♠d7 30.♠c2 ϩd5
 31.♠c8+ ♖f7 32.ϩc5 ♠e7 33.♠d8 ♠xe5 34.♠xd5 ♠f6 35.♖g2
 ♠c7 36.ϩa6 ♠b7 37.f3 exf3+ 38.♖xf3 ♠e7 39.♠a5 ♠d6
 40.ϩc5 ♠xc5 41.♠xc5 ♖e6 42.h4 ♠b6
 1/2-1/2

Eckert,Doug D - Myers,Hugh Edward [D02]

Midwest Masters-B Chicago (5), 1984

1.d4 d5 2.ϩf3 ϩc6 3.♠f4 ♠g4 4.e3 f6 5.♠b5 ♖d7 6.c4 e6
 7.cxd5 exd5 8.ϩbd2 ♠d6 9.♠xc6 ♖xc6 10.♠c1 ♖a6 11.♠xd6
 ♖xd6 12.♖a4+ ♖d7 13.♖b3 c6 14.0-0 ϩe7 15.e4 ♠xf3
 16.♖xf3 dxe4 17.ϩxe4 b6 18.♖h5+ ♖f8 19.♠fd1 ♠d8 20.h3
 ♖d5 21.♖e2 ♖f7 22.ϩc3 ♖d7 23.♖c4+ ♖e6 24.♖a6 ♖d7
 25.♖c4+ ♖e6 26.♖d3 ♖f5 27.♖c4+ ♖e6
 1/2-1/2

Tomas,John - Finegold,Benjamin [D35]

Midwest Masters-B Chicago (5), 1984

1.c4 e6 2.d4 d5 3.ϩc3 ϩf6 4.♠g5 ♠e7 5.e3 ϩbd7 6.cxd5 exd5
 7.♠d3 0-0 8.♖c2 ♠e8 9.ϩf3 ϩf8 10.0-0 h6 11.♠xf6 ♠xf6
 12.b4
 1/2-1/2

Martinovsky,Eugene Simeon (2230) - Lindsay,Fred P

(2225) [D22] Midwest Masters-B Chicago (5), 1984

1.d4 d5 2.c4 dxc4 3.ϩf3 ϩf6 4.e3 ♠g4 5.♠xc4 e6 6.h3 ♠h5
 7.ϩc3 a6 8.g4 ♠g6 9.ϩe5 ϩbd7 10.ϩxg6 hxg6 11.♠f1
 1/2-1/2

Rose,John - Savage,Allan George [B01]

Midwest Masters-B Chicago (5), 1984

1.e4 ϩc6 2.ϩf3 d5 3.exd5 ♖xd5 4.ϩc3 ♖a5 5.d4 ♠g4 6.♠b5
 e6 7.♖d3 ♠xf3 8.♖xf3 ϩge7 9.0-0 0-0 10.♖xf7 ϩxd4
 11.♠c4 ♖f5 12.♖xf5 exf5
 1/2-1/2



Steve Szpisjak, Alan Savage, Fred Lindsey, Ben Finegold,
 Angelo Sandrin, Eric Schiller.



Tom Moore, Sergey Berchenko, Todd Miller, Ed Frumkin.



Mitchel Weiss, Ed Frumkin, Spectator, Dave Sprenkle.



*Fore: Tom Unger, John Tomas, Marvin Dandridge, Erik Karklins.
Back: Ken Wallach, Doug Eckert, Billy Colias.*

Scores at the end of round 5:

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

As with the first MMI, the success of the second was due in part to the efforts of TD Walter Browne, Fred Gruenberg, and Helen Warren. Illinois chess has much to be grateful for to those three people.

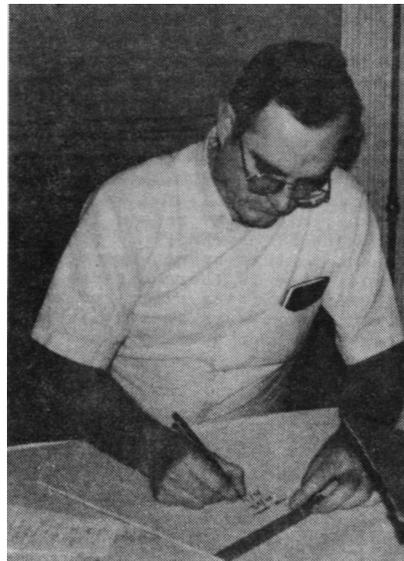
The International House served the players well enough that it served as the site for the fourth MMI in 1985; that tournament was even bigger and with a higher average rating. But that is a story for another time.



Organizer Helen Warren



Organizer Fred Gruenberg



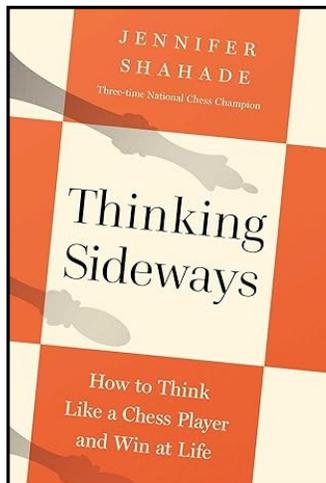
TD: Walter Browne

Thinking Sideways: How to Think Like a Chess Player and Win at Life

by Jennifer Shahade

published by Pegasus Books

Reviewed by Rex Gray



Since the days that Benjamin Franklin explained his use of Pro and Con lists and described thirteen virtues that he strove to acquire and manifest in his life, America has been pre-eminent in the world for self-help advice.

Positive Thinking, Brainstorming, Psycho-Cybernetics, Atomic Habits, Lateral Thinking and

hundreds more concepts have been advanced through the decades. Now comes *Thinking Sideways* by Ms. Shahade.

Ms. Shahade has selected ideas that have become popular in the last ten to twenty years and she has included ideas from nearly fifty years ago. Her Notes section details the sources she used, so that interested readers may consult them directly.

Ms. Shahade provides a framework for her style of thinking via seven chapters: Decision Trees, Time Management, Memory, Pattern Recognition, Ambition, Know Your Strengths, Taking Risks. Each one reprises ideas that have become most useful in the last few years.

The book is marketed by highlighting Ms. Shahade's notoriety as a chess and poker champion, and many of her anecdotes come from those endeavors, but the games themselves are not particularly relevant. Rather, the personalities or thinkers in the chess and poker worlds are exemplars for sideways thinking.

The argument for, and the utility of her sideways thinking, lies in the stories she tells.

For example, under Time Management she describes how Tim Urban, founder of the *Wait But Why?* website, uses a chess clock to increase mind-

fulness on tasks being performed. Tasks that require deep attention are timed with one side of the chess clock and mundane tasks are timed with the other clock. This ensures that important tasks receive undivided attention, and necessary, lesser tasks receive their own time slots.

In the chapter on Memory, Ms. Shahade describes how Maria Konnikova, an author and poker professional, uses handwriting when learning anything new, because research implies that the physical effort provides mental hooks which enhance memory. This chapter also includes stories illustrating the importance of the memory technique known as spaced repetition.

The author includes autobiographical scenes that show how her thinking mindset works as she experiments with the useful ideas she has discovered. Along the way she chronicles her encounters with chess cheating, the Me Too movement, the hot hand in games, chess coaching, artificial intelligence and many other topics.

People of all ages will find this book interesting, but the primary audience may be young people, because the young naturally seek out novel ways of thinking as they navigate life's possibilities. Ms. Shahade gives focus to young girls, women and trans-gender persons, so they are main characters in some of her stories.

The inventiveness and creativity displayed in Ms. Shahade's anecdotes are inspirational, but not a guarantee of her thinking method. In other words, the success of her techniques remains unquantifiable. But this is true of all self-help advice. The best a reader can hope for is inspiration to see or try anew. At the least, a reader can be entertained by the unexpected idea: "I never would have thought of that!" Ms. Shahade would reply, "Yes, you can."



Chess Clocks: Agents of Terror

by Eric Vigil

I am a seasoned chess tourist. I have played chess in many countries and always seek out chess adventures whenever I vacation.

Have you ever flown to a major chess tournament with a chess clock? I have, and it has caused me in the words of Sir Topham Hatt of Thomas the Tank Engine fame, "Confusion and Delay." First when traveling with a small carry-on, going through the TSA line can be troublesome. My backpack gets put through the fancy-dancy x-ray machine, and low and behold they stop me and take out the clock to investigate. I say that it is a chess clock, can't you see the board and pieces around it? To no avail, the TSA agent pulls out the nitrite test strips to see if explosive residue is on the clock. It also raises the odds for a full body pat down.

Second is putting the clock in your checked luggage. This option causes less delay, however, do not (and I repeat) do not show up for your flight late! At the end of my flight when I arrive at my hotel and open my suitcase, it has been opened and repacked by TSA Agents with a lovely note "your bag has been selected for manual inspection." I would say 90% of my chess travels I get this note. Heck one time my unfolded clothes magically became folded. Now that is some good TSA service. But it takes time to go through your luggage (let alone fold the clothes!), and if you arrive at the airport just in time to make your flight, the delay getting your bags inspected behind the scenes...you will make your flight, but your bags will NOT. That can be quite problematic if you are on the last flight of the day and your bags don't get there until the next morning.

Third and the most time consuming in my opinion is traveling across international borders with chess equipment. My recent experiences setting up tournaments in Belize and Mexico were way too exciting. I set out from our cruise ship to set up a tournament on the beach at Harvest Caye, Belize. I had two suitcases of clocks, boards, pieces, laptop, printer and extension cord. Ship security held me up for about 30 minutes going through my stuff and me explaining I just want to play chess on the beach. They were mostly worried that I was going to "jump ship" because of the suitcases, recently some passenger had left the ship without telling authorities and Norwegian Cruise Line was charged a \$12,000 fine. But then on my return to the ship I was inspected by

a different group of security staff. They stopped me and forbade me from bringing the extension cord onto the ship. I rather cheekily pointed out that the extension cord had been given to me by group services and that the extension cord was in fact theirs to begin with.

My entry into Cozumel Mexico was much worse. It started with me traveling off the ship to have a chess tournament at the Aqui + Ahora Coffeehouse with Ajedrez Cozumel. I had my suitcases packed with chess gear again, and I assumed that after Belize the security staff would simply let me through as they knew that I was just carrying chess gear. I assumed wrong, I was stopped by ships security and was escorted into the crew area in the ship. In this room was Mexican Border and Customs Officials, Mexican Soldiers, crew members that were disembarking in Cozumel and some of the ships officers assisting the crew members. I had to wait for about an hour as the border agents went through the crew members luggage and assessed visa fees. The cost of a 6-month visa was \$60 and one crew member only had a \$100 bill to which the border agent said they only accept cash and they had no change. I intervened and broke the c note for the crew member. Finally, it was my turn to have my luggage inspected. I swore up and down that I was going to run a chess tournament. I showed flyers from the event. One of the border officials even said he had a child who played chess with that club. They seemed more interested in the cost of the equipment, they looked online and found the DGT North American costs about \$100 each and I had 15 of them. I also had a laser printer which I pointed out was over ten years old and very difficult to find cartridges for, and that I couldn't even sell it in the United States. I pulled the clocks out of the box and pointed to all the fingerprints on them and that they were used. We agreed upon a depreciated price of \$600 and the 19% tax being \$114. They gave me a receipt and said if I ever returned to Mexico and ran a chess tournament I would not have to pay the tariff again.

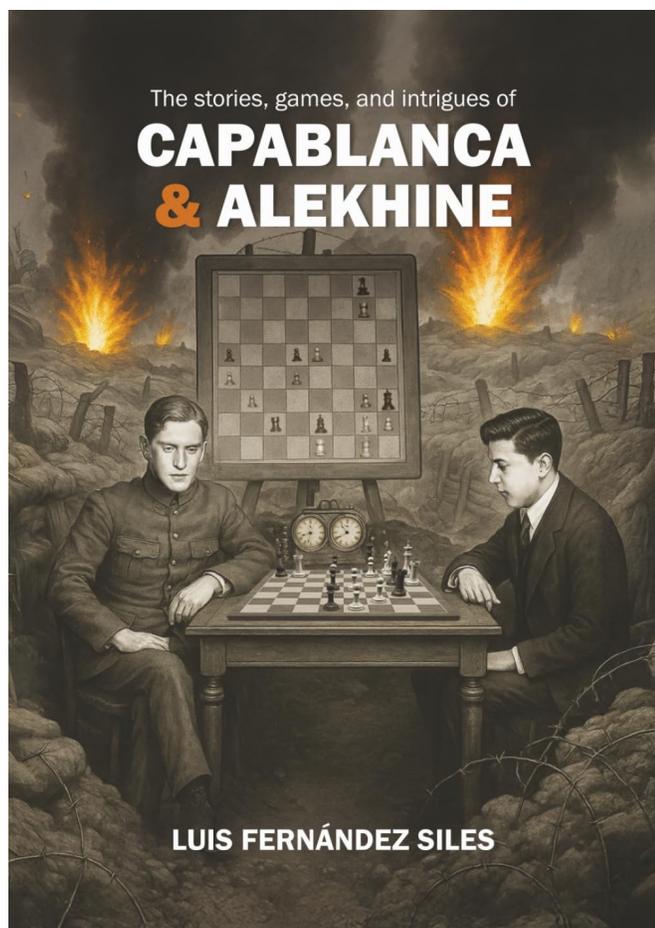
SO there you go, you have been warned! Chess Clocks are agents of Terror.

The Stories, Games, and Intrigues of Capablanca and Alekhine

by Luis Fernández Siles

Reviewed by Mark Capron

When author Luis Fernández Siles sent me his new book, *The Stories, Games, and Intrigues of Capablanca and Alekhine*, I had no idea it was a potential all-time classic! Despite the beautiful cover, at first the book didn't grab me as I thought it was a bit superficial. However, after a chapter or two I found the details and I was all in. The self-published book is destined for great things.



Siles has written a compelling historical account of Capablanca and Alekhine's encounters on and off the chessboard. The book is organized mostly in chronological order, taking the reader through the major tournaments, the world championship matches, and the historical turning points on and off the board. Siles ably annotates the 85 featured games. The games include head-to-head games; the protagonists versus other contemporary players; and a few games of contemporary versus contemporary for historical context.

A few highlights in the narrative that Siles provides:

In the beginning the two players seemed to get along fine,

but after their world championship match the relationship went downhill. The two first met over the board in 1913 at the Savorin Gold Cup (an Exhibition) in St. Petersburg. Alekhine was Capablanca's guide during the Cuban's visit. Alekhine lost to Capablanca in both games they played. Capablanca was playing three players simultaneously according to the rules, so it shows how much stronger he was over Alekhine at that time.

In 1914 the two met in a real tournament in St. Petersburg. Capablanca once again defeated Alekhine. This time three games to none. This lit a fire under Alekhine, and he started to prepare for a future world championship match versus Capablanca. However, Lasker was the champion at this time. Capablanca hadn't even sat on the throne yet.

Alekhine had decided he would not play in any tournaments that Capablanca was playing in until he felt like he was strong enough to beat him. For example, at Mannheim, Germany Alekhine didn't agree to play until after Capablanca had said he wouldn't play. This was also something Alekhine did to Capablanca quite a bit later on after winning the world championship title.

War broke out during the Mannheim tournament in 1914. Alekhine and others were detained by the Germans. While being held they were treated very badly. Eventually Alekhine was set free to go back home to Russia.

In 1918, in Odessa (Russian Revolution), Alekhine was arrested and sentenced to death by the Cheka. Luckily a Ukrainian chess player, Yakov Vilner, who worked in the military tribunal, was able to speak to Prime Minister Rakovsky and free Alekhine. It seems Alekhine had a knack for being in the wrong place at the wrong time... Mannheim, Odessa, Munich, Salzburg, Krakow and Prague!

Due to World War I and unsuccessful negotiations, it took until 1921 for Capablanca to play Lasker for the world championship. Challenges to Lasker had been made as early as 1911, but Lasker's conditions were unacceptable. The author teases us here, because we do not know what these unacceptable conditions were. Eventually an agreement was reached and Capablanca won the match 9-5 without a single loss in the 14 games.

In contrast, the author describes the 1922 London Rules in much more detail. The London Rules became the gold standard for world championship challenges. They included: play six days a week; each player received three rest

days; a prize fund of \$10,000 (quite steep, that would be just under \$193,000 in today's money); and the winner was the first to win six games draws not counting. It wasn't until 1927 that someone was able to generate the monetary support needed to challenge Capablanca.

In 1927, Alekhine found monetary backers and got his wish and played Capablanca for the world championship following the London Rules. The author's discussion of the players' preparation was quite interesting as he delves into the psychological interplay and personal dynamics between the two. Alekhine won the first game in the match (his first win ever versus Capablanca). The match went on for 34 games before Alekhine won his sixth game. The final score was 6-3 and 25 draws. The relationship between the two was still amicable up to this point.

Things started to change in the relationship when Alekhine started to avoid playing Capablanca by asking for very high appearance fees in events he knew Capablanca might attend. Basically, using secondary tactics instead of outright telling the organizers no. Furthermore, Alekhine changed the London Rules for his matches versus Bogoljubow and Euwe, but continuously refused when Capablanca wanted a rematch. As can be imagined the relationship became very sour at this point.

Alekhine never gave Capablanca that rematch he so desperately wanted. They only competed against each other in the 1936 Nottingham tournament (Capablanca won their game) and the 1938 AVRO tournament (Alekhine won one game and the other was a draw) after this.

Alekhine successfully defended the title versus Bogoljubow 15.5-9.5 (11 wins to 5 wins with 9 draws) in 1929. Alekhine had agreed to changes to the London Rules for this match: the number of games was limited to 30, a minimum of six wins required to claim the title and the prize fund was reduced to \$6,000 all of which went to Alekhine no matter the result!

In 1934 Alekhine once again played Bogoljubow for the world championship. Alekhine won handily (8 wins to 3 and 15 draws). Nothing was said about the conditions of this match in the book.

In 1935 Alekhine put the world championship title on the line versus Max Euwe. Alekhine didn't think there was much to worry about, but he was wrong. Euwe won the match 9 wins to 8 with 13 draws. The author spends quite a while discussing the many theories as to why Alekhine lost. The reader will need to draw their own conclusions. Again, the conditions were different than the London Rules further antagonizing Capablanca.

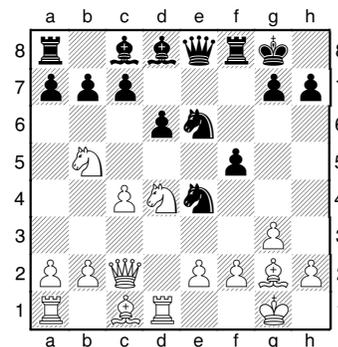
In 1937 Alekhine was granted a rematch versus Max Euwe and makes the most of it winning 15.5 to 9.5 (10 wins, 4

losses and 11 draws). London Rules once again slightly modified.

In the last part of the book the author covers the death of each player including the mystery surrounding Alekhine's passing. I will leave this to the reader.

The game annotations in the book are excellent. Siles avoids reliance on engine evaluations, preferring explanatory prose to convey the strategic themes. This makes the games readable without overwhelming readers with deep theoretical analysis. A typical example of this can be found in the game **Capablanca - Alekhine**, Nottingham, 8-11-1936.

This position was reached after White's 16. ♖fd4



White has achieved a slight advantage. Black will need to be precise to complete development and there are several factors tipping the balance slightly in White's favor:

1.- It is unclear whether Black can launch a serious kingside attack. That would be the main strategic justification for having the pawn on f5. If the attack does not succeed, the pawn will be better placed on f7. With the pawn on f5, Black's kingside is weaker, the e6-square is compromised, and the a2-g8 diagonal becomes more vulnerable—especially for as long as the king remains on g8. In the long term the f5-pawn rather than one on f7 may also lead to weakness along the seventh rank.

2.- The d5-square is what I like to call a "relative weakness." A square is usually considered weak when none of our pawns can control it, meaning an enemy piece on that square cannot be driven away. In this case, if White places a piece on d5, Black can expel it with the c6 advance—but doing so would create new weaknesses, notably a backward pawn on d6.

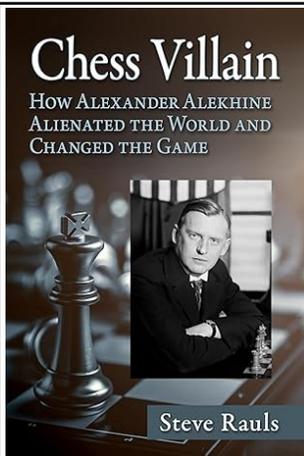
*****Continued on page 48*****

Chess Villain: How Alexander Alekhine Alienated the World and Changed the Game

by Steve Rauls

published by McFarland & Company, Inc., Publishers

Reviewed by Akshaj Bodla



Alexander Alekhine was a genius on the chessboard, but a storm everywhere else. Alekhine traveled nations and survived wars. He didn't just play the game, he reshaped it and became one of history's most controversial champions. *Chess Villain* by Steve Rauls is a biography of Alexander Alekhine that goes beyond just chess. It tells the story of his rise as a brilliant player, his major tournament victories, and the personal

conflicts that surrounded him. The book also focuses on how World War II affected both his career and his reputation, including his time in prison, and his political controversies.

Rauls' intention in writing this book is to inform readers about the lesser-known side of Alexander Alekhine's life. The book does not contain Alekhine's games on purpose (with exception of one game). We all know that he was a reputable chess world champion, but how many of us know about the historical conflicts he had to face, and the experiences that molded his legacy? The book begins with his early years, highlighting when and where he was born, his relationships, his education, and how he found his passion for chess. For example, Rauls states that Alekhine went into Law School, and during his education he became interested in chess. Once he found his interest in chess, he couldn't stop playing. He practiced and practiced. Alekhine found his way through the prestigious avenues of chess to become World Champion. It is said that during his formative years "Alekhine even got the honor of losing a game to Tarrasch," (Rauls 10), showing his fierce determination to play at a higher level.

Rauls highlights how Alekhine emerged as a professional chess player. Alekhine eventually had to serve in the war. Before and after the war he ended up in many political conflicts. Rauls describes the famous chess players Alekhine encountered on his journey, such as Tarrasch, Marsh, Lasker, and Capablanca. Rauls shows how Alekhine increased his playing level to be competitive with the great masters by learning from his mistakes, and eventually using their own tactics against them. For example, his chess career began by playing gambling chess in small

cafes. But once chess became a recognized sport, Alekhine started playing more fiercely, and got invitations to major tournaments that shaped his career as a World Champion.

What might seem like a life devoted solely to chess was far from simple. As war engulfed Europe, Alekhine was forced to travel between countries, facing constant danger in order to continue to play the game he so loved. His life became entangled in political conflicts, and misunderstandings eventually led to his imprisonment. But sooner or later he had to face the war himself. Rauls then highlights Alekhine's position in war as a medic to the injured, serving with the Red Cross.

The physical look of the book's cover is beautiful, with colors of black and navy blue. I really liked the quality portrait of Alekhine on the inset. The king, that is on the cover page, represents how Alekhine took over the game of chess, like a "king". More illustrations, or pictures could have been included, to provide readers with a break from text and a better understanding of events. For example, if a few pictures of World War II were added, readers would better understand what was happening and the massive amount of destruction during that time.

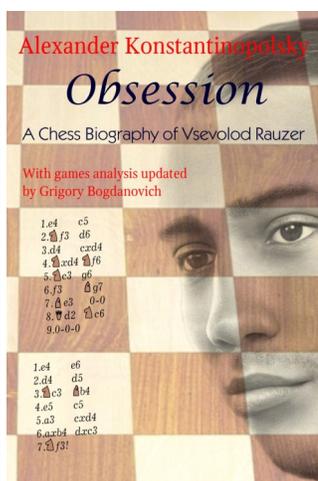
Chess Villain by Steve Rauls is a wonderful book for players interested in historical events, and chess in general. Before reading and analyzing this book, I thought, like anyone else, "Oh, Alekhine is just a grandmaster and world champion," but after reading it, I understood how he got his legendary status and the unique political conflicts he went through to get there. An invaluable quote from this book describes the perseverance Alekhine needed to get to the top level of play, "On his way to the top, Alekhine dodged artillery on World II battlefields, narrowly escaped a Bolshevik firing squad, and negotiated with Nazis to escape occupied Paris." This taught me to be more persevering in life, as working towards a specific goal, and having the drive to learn, will lead to success in that field, just like Alekhine. The book shows that Alekhine's story was shaped not only by brilliance on the chessboard but also by the turbulent times in which he lived. *Chess Villain* is an excellent resource for anyone interested in the history of chess, offering a look at Alekhine's life by highlighting both his brilliance on the board and the controversies that formed him as a person.

Obsession: A Chess Biography of Vsevolod Rauzer

by Alexander Konstantinopolsky and Grigory Bogdanovich

published by Elk & Ruby

Reviewed by Jon R Edwards, 32nd World Correspondence Chess Champion



Alexander Konstantinopolsky never completed this book about his close friend. The book was completed by his son Mark and published in Russian in 2022. The English version appeared in 2023 from the publisher Elk and Ruby. The delay permitted IM Grigory Bogdanovich to add modern chess engine analysis, and two additional sections about Alexander Konstantinopolsky were added by Mark.

Amidst this challenging environment, Rauzer obtained national recognition with his endgame analysis, occasional composition, and then by winning the Ukrainian Championship in 1927, and becoming a master at just 21 years old. By then, his go-to book was Tarrasch's *Die Modern Schachpartie* which just had been translated into Russian. By 1931, he played in the 7th Soviet Championship. A shared 8th place was impressive for the young master, but he began to reassess his commitment to opening with the d-pawn. That is fortunate for the chess community, because he began to unleash a set of novelties that still dominate opening play today.

One example from the book had an impact on my play some years later. Kindly indulge me.

1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5 3.♗c3 ♘b4 4.e5 c5 5.a3 cxd4 6.axb4 dxc3 had a poor reputation for white in the aftermath of Lasker-Maroczy (New York, 1924) which continued 7.bxc3 ♜c7.

Lasker, Emanuel - Maroczy, Geza [C18]
New York 1924

1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5 3.♗c3 ♘b4 4.e5 c5 5.a3 cxd4 6.axb4 dxc3 7.bxc3 ♜c7 8.♗f3 ♗e7 9.♗d3 ♗g6 10.0-0 ♗d7 11.♞e1 ♜xc3 12.♗d2 ♜c7 13.♜e2 0-0 14.♜e3 ♗b6 15.♜g5 ♗c4 16.♗c3 h6 17.♜g4 ♗e7 18.♜h5 ♗d7 19.g4 ♘b5 20.g5 g6 21.♜xh6 ♗b6 22.♞a3 ♗xd3 23.cxd3 ♗f5 24.♜h3 ♜e7 25.♜g4 ♜g7 26.♞e1 ♞fc8 27.h4 ♗a4 28.♗d2 b5 29.♞3a2 ♞h8 30.♜g2 ♞ac8 31.♞h1 ♜c7 32.♗d4 ♜d7 33.♗xf5+ exf5 34.♜d4 ♜e6 35.♜xa7 d4 36.♞a1 ♜xe5 37.♞ae1 ♜d5+ 38.♜g3 ♞he8 39.h5 gxh5 40.♞xe8 ♞xe8 41.♞xh5 ♗c3 42.♜b6 ♗e2+ 43.♜h2 ♜e6 44.♜xb5 ♜d6+ 45.♜g2 ♗f4+ 46.♗xf4 ♜xf4 47.♜xe8 ♜g4+ 48.♜f1 ♜xh5 49.♜e5+ ♜g8 50.♜xf5 1-0

In a game against Alatortsev (Leningrad, 1933), Rauzer improved with 7.Nf3! and obtained a quick and impressive win:

Rauzer, Vsevolod - Alatortsev, Vladimir [C18]
URS-ch08 Final Leningrad 1933

1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5 3.♗c3 ♘b4 4.e5 c5 5.a3 cxd4 6.axb4 dxc3 7.♗f3 ♜c7 8.♜d4 ♗e7 9.♗d3 ♗d7 10.0-0 ♗c6 11.♜xc3 ♜b6 12.b5 d4 13.♜e1 ♗e7 14.♜e4 ♗g6 15.♞e1 0-0 16.b4 ♞d8 17.♗b2 f5 18.exf6 ♗xf6 19.♗xd4 ♜c7 20.♜e3 ♗d5 21.♜g5 ♗xb4 22.♗xg6 hxg6 23.b6 ♜d7 24.♞xa7 ♗xc2 25.♞d1 ♞b8 26.♞d2 ♜e8 27.♗e5 1-0

Without realizing it at the time, I was in debt to Rauzer in 1990 with this quick win some 57 years after the introduction of his novelty:

It is a rare book, and certainly a very rare chess book, that forces considerable self-reflection. Vsevolod Rauzer honed his chess in Kiev during the 1920s. Conditions were challenging, and yet chess players, as always, found a way to play. Volunteers acted as chess clocks, “clubs” were held in players’ apartments, books were precious and so passed along collectively from player to player, and chess columns were scarce.

Rauzer’s love of chess surpassed all other life considerations. He lived with his mother whose flat became the chess club for a time, operating until the wee hours when his mother, from behind a curtain, implored the players to go home and “stop the thumping.”

Rauzer worked only occasionally, bored by conventional employment. He seemed content to devote his time to chess, often turning up hungry at major tournaments. His first influential book was a well-worn and barely readable copy of Dufresne’s handbook, *Guide to the Study of Chess*. He hand-copied the chess columns that passed his way.



Edwards, Jon - Waldrep, Carl [C17] APCT 1990

1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5 3.♖c3 ♗b4 4.e5 c5 5.a3 cxd4 6.axb4 dxc3
 7.♗f3 ♘c7 8.♘d4 cxb2 9.♗xb2 ♗c6 10.♘c3 ♘b6 11.b5 ♗ce7
 12.♗a3 a5 13.♗c5 ♘d8 14.b6 a4 15.♗d4 ♗d7 16.♗b5 ♗f8
 17.♘b4 ♗h6 18.♗d3 g6 19.♗a3 ♗hf5 20.♗c7 ♗c8 21.♗xf5
 gx f5 22.♘h4 h6 23.♘f6 ♗h7 24.♗g3 1-0

By 1934, Rauzer had moved to Leningrad and eked out a slightly better existence through chess coaching, in which he excelled. His chess research remained fanatical, "I just cannot make myself work on the theory of the game for more than 16 hours a day. My head cannot endure more."

Our lives may be safer and more affluent, but we all also have our own chess obsession. I know that I am not the only retiree devoting my days to the game. Readers will find themselves in the book, which is the reason that I shall come back to these pages from time to time. The translation is excellent, the writing is engaging, the chess is of very high quality, and I cannot help but feel a deeper appreciation for chess and life having read it.

Many will have different reasons for engaging with the book. In addition to the life and times of Rauzer, there are 77 well-annotated selected games, translated articles about his theoretical contributions from his friends and colleagues, and a notable tribute by Botvinnik, who recognized Rauzer as one of the founders of the Russian chess school.

So very sadly, Rauzer's chess skills had diminished by the end of the 1930s and he perished during the Siege of Leningrad. He was one of the few Soviet chess greats who did not survive the war.

We live today in challenging times, for most of us much less challenging than what Rauzer faced daily. Despite his environment, I think that it is fair to say that Rauzer left behind a rich legacy that mightily contributed to our chess heritage and continues to enrich our chess lives today. It is regretful and a blot on our collective humanity that the challenges in Ukraine are today more challenging than ever, far surpassing what chess can hope to cure.

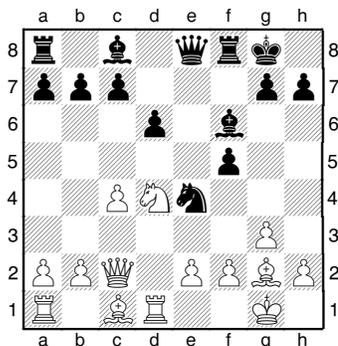


*****Continued from page 45*****

All that said, it is worth noting that while these strategic ideas are helpful, they must always be verified by concrete lines. Stockfish, better than anyone at that task, evaluates the position as giving White a slight edge.

16...♗xd4 17.♗xd4 ♗f6

We have reached a position that could well serve as a practical exercise in a chess strategy lesson. How should White play?



There are a few times where a move or line is specifically called out and then the full explanation of why is missing. This is the exception and not the rule though.

The book has an elegant hardcover with well-bound, thick, high-quality paper. The book contains many photos that enhance the narrative. Not a big deal, but I would prefer the game headers to have the opening name or ECO code. Having the game number in the game header would help in using the game index. This is an English translation from the original Spanish and was done quite well. According to the acknowledgements, Siles' wife, Esther Alcedo Fuentes, did the layout. She did a very nice job. The diagrams and fonts were chosen well.

The Stories, Games, and Intrigues of Capablanca and Alekhine is a compelling and attractive work that successfully bridges the gap between chess biography, historical narrative, and game collection that makes it both informative and enjoyable. It is an excellent contribution to the mass of literature devoted to Alekhine and Capablanca. With its combination of storytelling, annotated play, and personal detail, the book deserves a place in the collection of every chess player. The book is highly recommended.

Chess Family Belavenets

by Ludmila Belavenets, Sergey Yanovsky, and Vladimir Barsky

Reviewed by Mark Capron

Chess Family Belavenets

Ludmila Belavenets,
Sergey Yanovsky and
Vladimir Barsky



Foreword by Yuri Averbakh



The Elk & Ruby book, *Chess Family Belavenets*, combines dual biography, family chronicle, and instructional material. The Belavenets have one of the most respected family legacies in Soviet and Russian chess. The book gives us a glimpse into the hard Russian life surrounding World War II, and we see how chess was a big part of Russian culture.

Ludmila's father, Sergei Belavenets, had died in the war when she was only one year old. She begins her story describing how she was evacuated as a three-year-old (like so many other chess players, including Boris Spassky), when WWII got too close to home. The family took off for Gorkovskaya Oblast and specifically the town of Myachkovo. She remembers how cold it was. So cold that snow accumulated inside next to the bed. She basically never left her bed all winter. In the spring when she was taken out of bed and put on the floor she had forgotten how to walk! The family just laughed it off and she quickly re-learned. Eventually the family made it back to Moscow where the weather was much "nicer".

The book includes more biographical information like the above with chess instruction and annotated games from both Sergei Belavenets (1910–1942) and Ludmila Belavenets (1940–2021). I found the biography chapters to be very interesting. Sergei was the Russian champion in 1934 and was the Moscow City co-champion in 1932 and 1938. Ludmila was the winner of the USSR women's championship in 1975.

The majority of the book is dedicated to Sergei's chess instruction along with games played by himself and Ludmila. I found the lessons to be excellent and learned several things. One example that stood out to me was the discussion about envisioning the setup and how important that is in the endgame. Based on Sergei's teachings and the longevity of Ludmila's career, the Belavenets were excellent teachers. Ludmila was famous for her ability to find an approach uniquely suited to each pupil. Some of her more famous students were Andrey Sokolov, Alexander Morozevich and Grigory Oparin.

Sergei's games (31) pit him against contemporary masters like Flohr, Keres, Kotov, Levenfish, Lilienthal, Rauzer, and Veresov. Ludmila's games (22) show her strength as well. Most of Ludmila's games were in the correspondence chess arena.

In the late 1970s, Ludmila switched from over-the-board chess to correspondence chess. This is where she excelled. Ludmila writes, "I ...simply liked correspondence chess. The demonstration board I used ... is still hanging on my wall. I could set up some problematic position on it, which deprived me of eating and sleeping. We had no computers, we could only use our heads." When Ludmila's husband, Gennadi, would make the bed many times he would find a pawn in the sheets as Ludmila would fall asleep with the chess set she was analyzing her correspondence games on. Gennadi would say "Why the hell am I sleeping with a pawn? I'd hoped for a queen!" Ludmila won the Ladies World Correspondence Championship in 1992.

Another humorous story was when Grigory Sanakoev, world correspondence chess champion, came to visit. Gennadi loved it when Grigory showed some of the positions from his correspondence games. A few times the strong amateur player Gennadi said "What if we play this move?" Grigory would freeze, and the next morning, he grumbled, "Gennadi should mind his own business! I didn't sleep for three hours afterwards, trying to refute this nonsense!" Being a correspondence chess player myself, I remember the sleepless times trying to figure out the best move. The games just become a part of you.

I did find the Russian penchant for switching from first name, to nickname, to formal name, and to last name throughout the text to be frustrating. For example, we had Father, Serezha, Sergei, Serezha Belavenets, and Sergei Belavenets all used at various points, some close together, making it somewhat difficult to follow at times.

Chess Family Belavenets is a very enjoyable book. The book contributes to the understanding of how people grew up in Russia and how chess was so intertwined into the society. The teachings were extremely good. The games and analysis were excellent. I recommend this book to chess historians, players seeking fresh ways of thinking, and anyone interested in classic chess games including correspondence.



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, others would want to do some research on these persons/events from the past.

02/15/1910:

In Chicago, O. Chajes completely turned the tables on L. Uedemann in his return match, winning by the score of 5 to 1.

On February 12 the annual dinner of the Rice Chess Club, New York, took place at the Cafe Boulevard.

A rather unique tournament is being held in Toronto. Eight ladies are playing for the woman champion of Toronto.

Arrangements have been made between Kenneth S. Howard, of Rochester and George H. Thornton of Buffalo, for a match in May for the championship of western New York.

At the close of the meet of the Kansas Chess Association at Topeka Maj. A.M. Harvey of Topeka and O. C. Brett of Humbolt played a match of 5 games. Score: Harvey 3, Brett 2.

The Rochester Club desires to secure the cooperation of other clubs throughout the state (outside of New York) in raising \$100 to provide for a State Championship Cup, to be competed for by clubs outside of New York and Brooklyn. The Rochester Club will undertake to raise one-half of that amount if other cities in the state are willing to contribute.

Mrs. Charles P. Frey died at her home in Newark, NJ. She acquired the title of US champion in the first woman's tournament, held in 1906 at the Women's Chess Club in New York.

The annual tournament of the Pennsylvania State Chess Association will be held Feb 22, in the rooms of the Franklin Chess Club, Betz Building, Philadelphia. Prizes: First state championship gold medal, \$20, second \$10, third \$6, fourth \$4. Entrance Fee \$1.

A chess and checker club was organized in the Newark, OYMCA on Jan 17, which promises to arouse interest in the two games. While checkers now claim the larger number of players, there is sufficient chess talent in Newark to make a good strong club, and thereby improve the play of its members.

B. H. Lutton chess champion of Western Pennsylvania has been challenged by H. L. Dolde to play a match for the title. It has been many years since any chess player in that section has mustered sufficient courage to play a match with the 'wizard' Lutton, who has held the title for almost 20 years. The challenger is one of the youthful coterie of players, barely half of the age of Lutton, who have recently been making high scores in the local tournaments. Mr. Dolde is also well known as the editor of the chess column in the Pittsburg Leader.

03/01/1910

We learn with regret that B.H. Lutton present champion of western Pennsylvania, has declined the challenge of H.L. Dolde chess editor of the Pittsburg Leader. It appears that Mr. Lutton is ill and Mr. Dolde very kindly withdrew his challenge.

With the cooperation of the wireless telegraph clubs of the University of Pennsylvania and Princeton College, a novelty in chess has been arranged in the form of a match between the chess clubs of the two colleges. The date of the match has been set for March 5th.

The longest chess tournament on record was concluded in New York Jan 29, when Gaston G. Netter won the last game of a thousand-game match, begun in April 1902, from Emile Stehli. Netter is a Frenchman and Stehli a Swiss. They have played at the same table in a downtown hotel nearly every afternoon for the past ten years.

Instead of cabling his acceptance to the Hamburg chess congress committee, as requested, F. J. Marshall has written that without a fixed guarantee he cannot afford to undertake the journey.

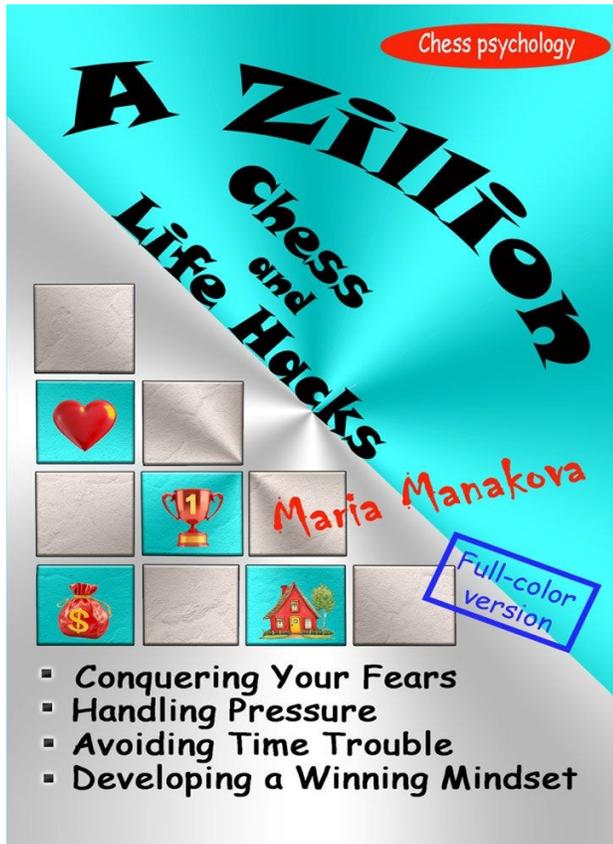


A Zillion Chess and Life Hacks

by Maria Manakova

Reviewed by Samika Nettem

In *A Zillion Chess and Life Hacks* by Maria Manakova, published by Elk and Ruby in 2024, the author gives you a variety of chess tips through real-life examples. Manakova's goal is to give readers a psychological understanding of how to view a game and how to feel about certain positions. She specifically explains how the mindset you have in your head can affect the way you make decisions during a match.



The book is kind of repetitive, and some of the examples she uses make me wander away from actual chess. Her choice of words and expressions is sometimes strange, like when she said, "You cannot stop thinking about a white monkey, but you can start thinking about a giraffe" (95). Another example was, "Your relationship with a chess goddess is not simple, just like with any other woman" (63).

In spite of her interesting word choices, there were many things that I enjoyed about the book. One of these things was Manakova's simple, yet effective advice that is sure to help chess players in any

stressful situation. This book was thoroughly enjoyable with many insightful jokes that opened my view to how chess relates to everyday life. This book, through a plethora of hacks, taught me how to control emotions during a game and how to navigate the struggles of getting into time trouble.

To highlight some of these hacks, I will demonstrate how I utilized them in a recent tournament I played.

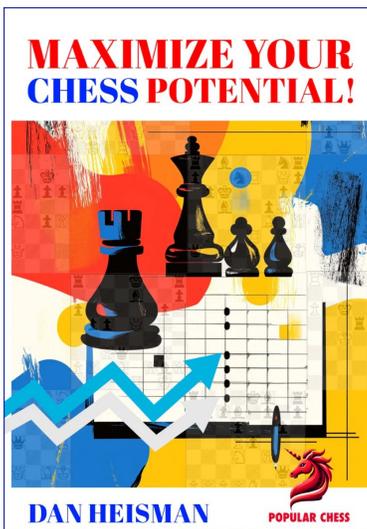
One topic that Manakova covered was Chess Practicality. In round 2 of my tournament, my opponent blundered a bishop early in the game, so I quickly simplified everything to a winning endgame for me. Reserved Continuation was practiced in round 4 as I thought for 40 minutes on if I should follow-up with a safe or aggressive plan. Manakova discussed how many people see ghosts (thinking you see a tactic or specific line for your opponent or yourself, but it really isn't there), which causes them to play passively. This happened to me in my 5th game as I saw a ghost and played a passive move instead of pushing a pawn to be more active in the game. Taking Risks was another major point discussed by the author. My last round opponent offered me a draw, but I took a risk by declining with 2 minutes left on my clock, as I really wanted to win and get money. Unfortunately, I still ended up drawing the game. Manakova's hacks, that she unfolded throughout the book, were proven to be useful as I played some nice games of chess and tied for 3rd place in the end!

Overall, I really liked the book. Despite the repetition and unusual word choices, Manakova shares many insights into the mental aspect of chess that can't be found in other books. I definitely recommend this book to any chess player who struggles with confidence, time pressure, or controlling their emotions during a chess game. The book is very entertaining with relatable examples that will keep anyone reading this book engaged. With a strong balance between information and humor, this book is beneficial for everyone.

Maximize Your Chess Potential!

by Dan Heisman

Reviewed by Pranav Srinivasula



Maximize Your Chess Potential! by Dan Heisman is a practical, experience-driven guide to help club players improve at chess by focusing on the how and why of proper study and play. Dan Heisman has been teaching chess for over 50 years, full-time since 1996, and this extensive coaching experience shapes every chapter of the book. The book includes many lessons from Heisman's Twitter column, *Chess Tips of the*

Day, which has produced over 4000 tips since 2009. Heisman includes around 200 key tips, including instructive stories and annotated positions that expand on the initial tweet. The book has 304 pages (Amazon says 368, but that is wrong), and the design of the book doesn't allow it to feel like a lot of pages at all. Splitting the tips into individual sections and categories makes the book feel more like multiple short stories than one long book. Heisman covers many topics in these tips that can help players of all strengths, including general study habits, thought processes during a game, psychology and mindset, tactics and safety, positional concepts and strategy, and openings and endgames.

Heisman approaches this book by being broader as opposed to highly theoretical. Rather than spending pages on obscure opening theory or engine lines, he emphasizes how to think about chess. This includes how to structure your thought process during games, how to overcome psychological barriers like fear of losing material or time pressure, and how to identify and fix repeating tactical and strategic mistakes. His tips often focus on real-life patterns, such as when a position is good to attack in or when an idea is strategically sound. Throughout the book, diagrams illustrate instructive positions that reinforce the text. These positions highlight common mistakes and better alternatives, guiding the reader through the logic behind good decisions. He also characterizes his top ten tips as such. One such tip is "If you see a good move, look for a better one.", saying that many players move too quickly after spotting the first reasonable idea. These also make the book more interactive. Though, as I said, it is not structured like a typical chess book. Many of the tips connect in

order, though you can certainly go out of order. The book does not cover opening lines in much detail, but it does outline general opening principles.

One of the book's strengths is its blend of general improvement principles and practical examples. For instance, instead of merely telling readers to "think about safety," Heisman provides specific examples of positions and decision-making processes that illustrate what a careful evaluation looks like. This helps players understand and apply ideas. *Maximize Your Chess Potential!* does not rely heavily on engine analysis either; instead, it recognizes that factors like psychology, habits, and consistency are as crucial as analysis and theory. A potential weakness of the book is that it includes tips for all levels. This might confuse some lower rated players as some tips are more geared towards higher rating groups. Another possible drawback as mentioned previously is that the author does not cover specific openings and opening lines, however I don't believe this was ever an intention when the book was written.

Physically, the book is available in multiple formats, including paperback and hardcover, making it accessible for both traditional readers and those who prefer sturdier editions. The book is also available online as an ebook through Forward Chess and on kindle from Amazon. It is a 2025 publication by Popular Chess. The paperback version is very sturdy, does not bend easily, and feels very smooth. The notation and diagrams are very clear and easy to understand. Overall, *Maximize Your Chess Potential!* is a good book for those looking to improve at chess, focusing less on theory and more on factors like psychology, time pressure, tactics, and ideas, which are helpful for all players.

Solutions to the Exercises in *Death of a Variation*, page 16

- 1
1. $\text{E}3\text{f}3!$ $\text{E}3\text{f}3$ 2. $\text{W}3\text{f}3$ with a strong pawn on d6 and a massive attack on Black's uncastled king.
- 2
1. $\text{E}3\text{f}3!$ White must add more fuel to keep the fire alive.
 $\text{E}3\text{f}3+$ 2. $\text{W}3\text{f}3$ $\text{Q}e8$ 3. $\text{R}3\text{c}5$ with a dangerous attack for the rook.
- 3
1. $\text{R}3\text{f}7+$! $\text{Q}3\text{f}7$ 2. $\text{W}h5+$! $\text{Q}g7$ 3. $\text{E}3\text{f}4$ $\text{E}f6$ 4. $\text{W}g5+$ $\text{Q}f7$ 5. $\text{E}d5$ with a winning attack.



Queens' Corner

Illustrated by Tony Sullivan

Meet Chess Champion Jessica Lauser...

Fierce, Feisty, Formidable, On & Off the Chessboard.

Interviewed By Rachel Schechter and Mark Capron

Pictures from Jessica



Playing chess is hard enough when you can see *the board clearly*. Jessica Lauser—*LAWser*—is inspiring, because, although visually impaired since soon after birth, she has pursued and succeeded at the Royal Game, winning numerous national championships, and competing abroad since 2022. We spoke with Jessica at length while preparing for this interview and found her funny, daring, tenacious, illuminating, and above all, a true champion. We hope you do, too.

Even though you've struggled with blindness resulting from Retinopathy of Prematurity, you managed to discover chess when you were young. How? Who taught or encouraged you?

I first played the Game of Kings (and Queens) when I was seven years old and in the second grade. What intrigued me was that a kid could beat a grown-up at chess (unlike every other game or sport I'd heard of at the time), making it different from everything else. This quality greatly appealed to me, given my limitations: severe vision loss, exertion-induced asthma, and issues balancing, any one of which ruled out other activities, altogether. As a result, I played board games, mostly: Parchesi, Monopoly and Risk, so chess became a natural progression from what I was already able to do. I learned some of the basic rules from an elementary school principal, who taught a handful of kids at lunch or after class, but I didn't switch to playing only chess until the age of 12.

Would you like to share some information about your family?

No one in my family plays chess—I'm the only one—but, growing up, I matched wits with my slightly older brother and my dad. They weren't that interested in chess, so it became MY game. My mom once crocheted a board and pieces for me, using a special yarn, for my 14th birthday which also had a chessboard cake topped with my first set of plastic Lowe chessmen resembling people. As an interesting aside: since I didn't learn to play on standard chess equipment, it took some adjusting to using it, at first. I later found an identical set to the original on eBay, years after it was lost during a move, but, buying it again, took me back to many hours spent learning and practicing chess as a teen.

Please tell us about your first competition.

In 1992 having beaten all my classmates and teachers at a new school for junior high, I started playing some unrated quads at my local public library. I then tried my hand at a couple small, rated tournaments in '93 and '94. Formal competition was a whole other arena, of course, so I found myself promptly discouraged when I couldn't win as many games as usual.

After bombing out of one of my first tournaments, accordingly, I just wanted to go home. My parents, however, decided to make last-minute plans which weren't uncommon. It being the 1990s, this was long before constant Internet access, there was much less Wi-Fi or streaming services. There were no tablets or smartphones for kids to play on while their parents left them in the car to go browse through a store. This meant spending what could be hours riding around in the car with nothing to do but sit quietly or read a book if one was available, which didn't particularly appeal to me. On this occasion, my parents suddenly said we had to stop at Serramonte Center—the local mall—presumably to get a work outfit for mom, or something like that. Next thing I knew, not only were we kids actually going in, but we were at the movie theater. I still didn't feel like going in, even though this was an unheard-of treat, but they wouldn't tell me which movie we were going to see: "You're with *US*." came the reply. We found our seats and waited for the matinee to begin.

When the title appeared on-screen (I don't remember if I could see to read it) I did feel better. The movie was *Searching for Bobby Fischer*. (Chess not being my parents' thing, this was a big deal.)

Thinking back, it was my parents' way of telling me it was ok that I had lost, and that my skill would improve over time. I just needed to keep practicing, which of course I've done, ever since, even if I couldn't afford a formal coach. Nevertheless, I still remember some of these early, formative chess experiences.

In a CNN interview, you revealed how you fought against discrimination, utilizing chess to 'silence the bullies.' You also mentioned that competition was your 'equalizer'. Please expand.

As any former grade school student who wore glasses can attest, classmates can be ruthless when it comes to taunts of, "Four-eyes," and the like, often using cruel barbs to tease and otherwise ridicule their peers, for such a minor difference in appearance. This was ironic, of course, considering the fact most adults wind up needing glasses, sooner or later, anyway. My experience was no different, but I quickly began using chess to silence the worst of my bullies. Since there happened to be chessboards and sets sitting at the back of the classroom, in 7th grade, I decided I would fight their taunts with pieces. Every chance I got, I challenged anyone who would play. Pretty soon I was beating all my classmates so I moved on to challenge my teachers, including the principal. Winning all the time, of course, didn't make life any easier with my peers, but they did leave me alone, since looking or feeling dumb was the best revenge. Silencing them was also a nice change, one I'd fought hard to achieve. I knew then I'd always have to fight hard for respect in Life, but I learned to fight over the board, which sure beat taking unprovoked abuse. What's more, tournament chess has provided me an Equalizer: a means of finding some semblance of Equality among my fellow human beings, even though I cannot see like they do. (This, of course, is in addition to a nobler kind found only at the foot of the Cross.)

As an adult, you earned a BA in History from San Francisco State University. Did you enjoy living in California? How long were you there? What was your History focus?

Yes, I completed a degree in History at SF State, which was a fairly good experience overall. Though looking back, the best part was the chess I got to play. (I used to draw crowds to the quad or student union, while taking on all-comers, at the same time, which was fun.) My coursework was interesting too, but financial instability (and eventually a 7-hour-a-day commute, for my final year of school) made things harder, but I remained determined to graduate, nonetheless. Living in California was fine, if expensive, so I eventually moved out-of-state. Having limited resources is par for the course, when living with lifelong, severe vision-loss. As a result, it took me longer than most students to finish my degrees—ten years and eight years, respectively—but a large percent of visually impaired people don't attain higher education, much less viable careers, so I guess this was ok. I wasn't attending for most of that time, of course; rather, I would start and stop classes, repeatedly, due to a variety of outside factors, primarily financial. I needed to work, instead of studying, to pay my basic expenses, which, even scholarships didn't largely cover. Because of my eyes, I routinely lack steady jobs, and/or face diffi-

culty getting and keeping reliable employment at better pay-rates. While being under strict wage-limits doesn't help. As such, I'm always having to avoid losing the Disability benefits I receive and the associated health coverage, too, by reducing weekly hours, if need be.

After graduating in 2016 I eventually left California in 2018, after not finding a solid enough job to support myself there. I've lived in a few other states since including Kentucky, Virginia and finally Missouri, where I've resided for the past six years. Regarding my History major, I did a primary emphasis in Modern European History: 1500 to Present, and dual secondary emphases U.S. and World History, all under one degree and major. (At least one of these three areas had to be U.S., of course, being a History degree from a U.S. school.)

Then you studied at the University of Alaska in Anchorage. Why did you choose Alaska and why Russian? Were you able to study any Russian chess books? If so, which had the most impact?

My idea was to learn a foreign language as a basis for a career in interpretation or translation: utilizing my keen hearing and agile mind. A career not dependent on my limited sight out of only one eye, which could also fail, but I haven't had the opportunity (money or a specific program to attend), to progress any further. Relocating to Missouri in late 2019 was partly to pursue a Master's in Russian at the University of Missouri (Mizzou). Their graduate school dropped my chosen program while I was domiciling for in-state tuition to afford it. My plans were summarily dashed.

Competing abroad since 2022 in various Spanish-speaking countries has prompted me to dust off the knowledge I gained in high school instead. I've used far more Spanish in recent years than Russian. As a result, I've considered earning a Spanish degree, but it all comes down to money I don't have. As for foreign language chess books, not so much, but I've been glad to have gained many good experiences interacting with blind or visually impaired champion counterparts from different countries in Central and South America.

Did you compete while earning your degrees?

But of course. My studies were long and arduous, so competing while in college lifted my self-confidence along the way. I suppose those tournaments also provided useful experience for continued competition, ever since, considering I've played 481 USCF-rated tournaments, so far, and several FIDE-rated events abroad, including many online.



You are the current U.S. Blind Champion. How many of these titles have you won? Key experiences?

I've won the U.S. Blind Championship—now called the U.S. Blind Open—seven times so far: in 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021 by default, 2022, 2024 and 2025. (I took second in 2017 and third in 2023, but have never placed lower than third, which was due to outside stresses at the time.)

As for key experiences, making history is always that. Becoming U.S. Blind Champion, for the first time in 2018, made me also the first—and so far only woman to ever do so. Having repeated this feat, six times since, has been a bonus. That first victory, however, was no cakewalk; I had to beat a 2100 player to pull it off, but thankfully I did. Other years have been challenging too, like 2022. I played hot on the heels from competing abroad, when that event was suddenly back on, despite being said to have been canceled immediately prior. Perhaps better key experiences, though, have occurred in various championships I've played abroad, than in ones held stateside. This is probably because I've won medals and trophies representing the United States as opposed to being just another player there. Though certainly nice, far more important has been getting to see just how much other stuff goes into chess than mere moves. (For instance, I've won games I was losing when an opponent touched the wrong piece, compelling a losing exchange or similar blunder or losing games I was thinking I would probably win: part of competing.)

You're also the only female (grappling with a disability) who has achieved such outstanding levels of expertise and victory. Wikipedia cites you have played in over 400 USCF-rated tournaments, being ranked on at least six US Top Player lists (which include fully-sighted females). And then some... Jessica, where does your strength come from?

Any success I achieve in Life I must attribute to the grace and mercy of Almighty God, who's always provided me my portion, as it were. Of course, it's taken dedication and hard work on my part, as well, but this has all been using my God-given mind. The USCF recently updated its Member Services Area, so I'm afraid I'm still getting used to it, but from what I can tell I've played 481 USCF-rated tournaments. Hold national rankings on 19 Top Player lists—no list exists for the visually impaired—nine of which I'm ranked in the Top 10, all of which are among fully-sighted competitors. (I'd say that's not bad for someone the doctors said would be a vegetable: their words, not mine.)

What would you say to other disabled chess players to inspire them to overcome whatever difficulties they're battling?

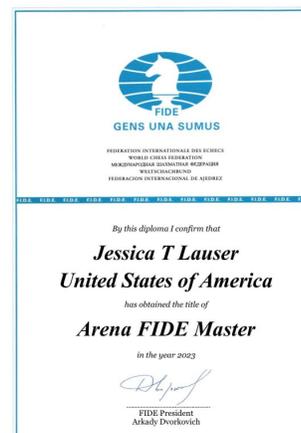
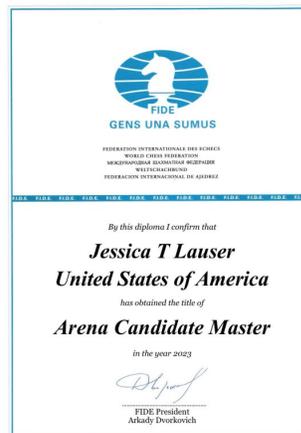
I'd tell them that half the battle is showing up, though sometimes it might be the whole thing, as was the case for me in 2021 when no one else appeared for the U.S. Blind Championship. I retained my champion standing by default. I'm sure this was another first, especially at a national tournament. What also helps is realizing that it's not what happens to you that matters, but how you deal with it, instead. A key example of this arose for me, last summer, when I won a WCM FIDE direct title while playing for the U.S. in Honduras. The chief arbiter of the 2025 Pan-American Amateur Championship directed this tournament under certain conditions that enabled me to win my direct WCM, provided I achieved certain results or better. I achieved the required results: finishing

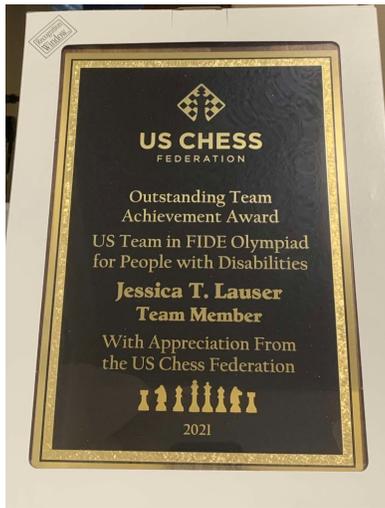
among the Top 3 Women in the U2000 category, like he told me was the goal. He had also explained how I could win that title before I arranged to take part, which I still don't understand. Throughout the event, for instance, he kept telling me how close I was to attaining this goal, before later certifying my success: proving I had, indeed, secured the title in question, by earning Women's 3rd for U2000. All I needed, after, were six more Elo for FIDE to confer my direct WCM. Naturally I played other major championships to specifically go after those points. I just needed to make 1800 FIDE once again, which was the required rating level.

Achieved by early September, I asked the USCF to petition FIDE to confer my direct WCM, only to hit a wall, a very big one at that. Come to find out, FIDE had changed the standards by which players could earn direct titles in Honduras (or any applicable championship, for that matter). This wasn't reflected in event advertising or any of the arbiter's guidance, beforehand: only the Top Woman, overall, would win a title, instead, not the Top 3. This was infuriating to say the least. To make matters worse, this arbiter had actually given me a title result PDF after the event. Sadly, though certainly a nice achievement and one to be proud of, it turned out I hadn't accomplished a thing, rendering my title result worthless. This simply meant I'll have to try again. The problem is, I have no more money with which to do so, and no coach to improve my chances of success. While it may be unfair to have them basically move the finish line, after I crossed it, perhaps I could win something better, but at this point, who knows? If there's one thing every person with a disability knows well, it's that Life isn't fair, though I still say people ought to be even if they often aren't. Then again, as Winston Churchill once said, "Success is not final, failure is not fatal: it is courage to continue that counts." a quote I try, and often fail, to exemplify. While I don't have any further championships planned at this time, I did win my hotel stay at the next Pan-American Amateur Championship later this year. Maybe I'll win it this time.

Shifting gears a bit, please enlighten us as to your online chess activities.

I mostly play online games on Chess.com, Lichess and the FOA or FIDE Online Arena where I earned the officially recognized online FIDE titles of ACM (Arena Candidate Master) and AFM (Arena FIDE Master), back in 2019/2020 though my awards say 2023. When I play in FIDE tournaments, for instance, the letters AFM—the higher of the two titles—routinely appear before my name. Though nice to have an online title, this isn't always help-





ful I'm afraid. It got me targeted. In fact, during the 1st FIDE Online Olympiad for People with Disabilities, held in late-2020 every opposing team we faced switched their lineups, last-minute, because of my title, giving me the hardest possible opponent, every round. This likely helped the other members of Team USA, but this fact didn't stop at least one teammate—the youngest taking part—from publicly suggesting to the others that I be summarily replaced for, "losing too much." Being

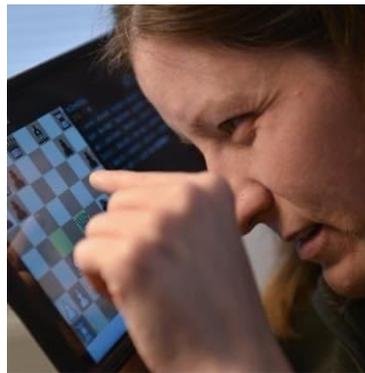
the only woman to qualify to join our national team this was beyond ironic. (Had I not agreed to play, our country would have been ineligible to participate, since every Olympiad team had to include at least one woman who would play every round, regardless of what beating might ensue.) It was simply a shame they were unable to grasp the sacrifice I was making to enable *them* to play. Likewise, as the only visually impaired member, this essentially meant I was on my own. As a result, I can't really say how I feel about team events. A nicer, more useful experience, was winning outright an online Blitz the following year. Being the only low-vision player who signed up, yet beating some 55 other players to the top—a few of them titled—all of whom had full sight was much better. More recently, but just as vindicating, was playing a casual OTB Blitz in El Salvador back in November. While traveling back from Colombia I managed to become the only player in attendance to defeat a local FM, who turned out to be their #3 player, nationwide. *Take that, Eagle-eyes!*



First National Blitz Championship of El Salvador: Women's Bronze

When playing online, please describe your computer set up and how it works for you. How do you move the pieces? Does having clerical experience make you quicker on the keyboard/mouse when playing games?

Years ago when my functional sight was slightly better I often used a laptop or desktop computer to play online. For the past dozen or so years further decreases in my already-limited vision have made doing so impossible. As a result, I've had to switch to



more mobile options. Using either a larger iPhone or better yet, an iPad or Android tablet is how I compete online now. The benefit of such devices, of course, is that I don't need to waste time looking for my mouse pointer each and every move. I can simply move the pieces by touching the screen, since my finger *is* the mouse. I've since played many USCF, a few CFC, and

some FIDE events online, which I plan to continue doing. As for work experience furthering my use of related technology, perhaps, though most of the jobs in question were entirely paper-based, so I wasn't using computers at work. Even so, I typed many-a-paper while earning my degrees, and have previously dabbled in IT, so I'm sure a general familiarity with current technology comes in handy when competing online.

How do you prepare for a tournament—online or in person?

It's probably not the best thing to admit, being a relatively seasoned competitor, but I love warming up with Bullet and Blitz as much as the next avid player. I also watch videos on openings and strategies by different masters online, but for as much study as one can put in, competing is still basically an exam. There's always a certain level of anxiety associated with it, not unlike a daunting subject. So, relaxing throughout is important.

When you travel to chess events, are there others who regularly travel with you? Do they act as seconds or just travel partners?

On all but a few occasions, out of the *hundreds* of tournaments I've played, I traveled alone to compete though this wasn't my intention per se. Having won the right to play disabled and blind Olympiads and other international championships abroad, it would be nice to be able to participate in these more often, and preferably not by myself. There just aren't many other players who qualify, like me, who also can afford to attend. An exception would be Marilyn Bland (who's totally blind), but she's mostly traveled separately to join me for five IBCA (International Braille Chess Association) championships we've both played in, representing the United States, which I've done since 2022. Having perhaps more overall tournament experience than her, I try to show Marilyn some interesting games to help her win. I'm sure she's taught me a thing or two, as well, particularly about never quitting, even when it's tough. In a way, I suppose we've been like seconds to each other, though we've only played individual tournaments, so far. Thanks to my limited resources, these don't often allow me to bring anyone else along, but as every chess player knows, positions change, so perhaps I'll be financially better off in the future. Meanwhile, I've at least been able to make a few acquaintances from competing abroad, particularly my Salvadoran counterpart, a fun-loving competitor named Jonatan Rivas. He is their reigning blind national champion, like what I am for the U.S. (He and I sometimes joke about different tournaments we've played, and help each other with English/Spanish basically for fun.)

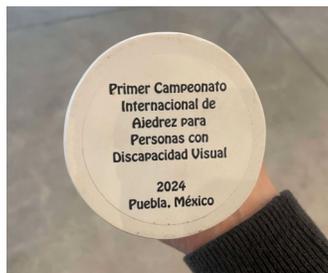
Your intercontinental events include the past four International Braille Chess Association Pan American Championships in-a-row, as well as the IBCA Women's World Championship in 2024. Any highlights from these events?

I've played four consecutive IBCA Pan-American Championships to date, winning the following standings in each: Women's Silver and 4th Overall in Mexico City in 2022; Women's Gold and 4th Overall in Guatemala City in 2023; Women's Gold and Overall Silver in Salinas, Ecuador in 2024, and Women's Silver and 4th Overall in Madrid-Cundinamarca, Colombia (near Bogota) in



10th IBCA Pan-American Championship: Women's Silver, 4th Overall

2025. I also placed 5th in the IBCA Women's World Championship in Bangalore, India in 2024, but this was not too long after surviving a sudden bout with Melanoma earlier that year. Perhaps as a result, I was all-the-more motivated to continue competing abroad, which I did throughout 2025. Winning Women's Bronze in the 1st National Blitz Championship of El Salvador (being a foreigner, in order to win permission from their Federation president—a FIDE Expert—to enter the tournament I played him three games of blitz, I defeated him in all three games. I was treated as something of a guest after this). Likewise, I took Women's 3rd U2000 in the 2025 Pan-American Amateur Championship, in San Pedro Sula, Honduras in June. 1st (for the 7th time) in the 2025 U.S. Blind Open in Chicago in July. Technically tied for 1st/2nd in the 11th Central American Blind Championship, in Managua, Nicaragua, in August (it didn't really count since I'm not a citizen of a central American country). Becoming the Top Low Vision player in all three time controls: Classical, Rapid and Blitz, at the 1st International Chess Festival. ITT Atahualpa, in Quito, Ecuador, immediately following the event in Nicaragua, and finally bringing home the aforementioned silver I won near Bogota in October. (I don't have any sponsors, so I'm broke now, but at least I *played*.)



Of the several championships you've won, do you have a favorite?

It's hard to say which event has been my favorite, but there are experiences I've had along the way, I find particularly amusing...



While competing in Salinas, Ecuador, in 2024, I happened to overhear a couple of the organizers expressing surprise, albeit in Spanish, that the same player had managed to win not one but two separate distinctions there: both the Overall Silver and Women's Gold. As it turned out, only a woman could accomplish this. I smiled to myself happy and amused to be the one who'd done just that. Otherwise, there have been many interesting and/or funny occurrences to cite—an immortal

grillo (cricket) in Puebla, Mexico, comes to mind. The thing chirped all night from behind the toilet tank in our bathroom, and it wouldn't stop, so my roommates and I joked about how someone could shoot it with a *pistola*, so we could finally get some sleep. Even using the bathroom wasn't enough to silence it, apparently, hence us dubbing it, *El Immortal*. And chirp it did, until pretty much all the players relocated, mid-event, to a better hotel down the street.

Perhaps funnier was the time, 22+ years ago now over Christmas 2003, when my parents, older brother and I, traveled to Hawaii during which I got an opportunity to play chess I didn't expect. Namely, one evening while accompanying my parents, who were going out for coffee, we came across some casual players seated at a picnic table nearby the coffee stand and outside a local dive shop. Casual aficionados at best, based on what I could tell of their game, they mentioned an informal tournament set to be held there the following day which I didn't expect to be able to attend, so I knew better than to ask. Upon returning from getting their coffee, as my parents and I started walking away, I suddenly heard my mom say, "She's going to come back here and kick all your butts..." (my paraphrase). This was startling, to say the least, since it wasn't typical of her. I hadn't heard the guy she was talking to, but he'd apparently made a nasty remark about me being a girl, therefore, probably not a good chess player anyway. This in turn had prompted her reply. My mom then informed me, privately, that if I *didn't* return there to compete on the following day and beat "every last one" of those jerks I would be *swimming* home. Especially telling, of course, were the blank stares I can only assume I received when the next day found me showing up there, to do just that. After first asking the guy running the tournament about notation and time controls. (They had no idea what I was talking about, so I happily whipped out my personal set, taking my place at an available table, practically chomping at the bit, as the games began.) I soon settled into the same routine I'd used many-a-time before on the hustlers I'd wrecked on the streets of San Francisco (it being essentially the same kind of place). Thankfully, I managed to succeed, winning all of \$25 (before being summarily banned by the store owner, who didn't like a random mainlander swooping in on him and his buddies, like that). Their \$25? I used it to bring burgers back to the hotel for my brother and me. *Mission Accomplished*.

You're internationally rated 1770 (Classical), 1762 (Rapid) and 1807 (Blitz), as an Arena FIDE Master. Are you still on a quest for the Blind World Championship?

Though I tried to win the 12th IBCA Women's World Championship, in India in 2024, the timing was difficult. Several months

prior, I'd faced a sudden bout with melanoma requiring urgent surgery. Part of keeping tabs on any possible recurrence meant undergoing routine follow-ups, every few months after, one of which I'd had just before traveling. Though I'd achieved a reasonable performance in the first half of the tournament and was poised to finish well, or even place, I received a troubling call from my dermatologist, right in the middle of the event, citing abnormal test results that could mean more cancer. This, of course, disrupted my concentration completely, especially knowing that a relative of mine: the only other would-be chess player among us, sadly, died young when I was little from the very same disease. This made winning more games virtually impossible. I'd never even tanned or smoked—unless you count opponents—so my mind was simply elsewhere. Thankfully, only an excisional biopsy (a smaller surgery not requiring wide margins like the previous one had) was needed upon my return from overseas. I waited until after a subsequent championship abroad, to avoid competing in pain, or during recovery to have the biopsy completed. While no surgery is pleasant or easy, so far so good: there have been no recurrences yet, but the possibility always remains. Nevertheless, I'd certainly like another crack at the next IBCA Women's World Championship, but I may also qualify for other FIDE events besides, including an IBCA Team Olympiad in Greece, a Continental Women's Championship in Peru, or some others in the Western Hemisphere that are as-yet-unconfirmed. I'm guessing time will tell which one or ones I play, but getting a formal coach is probably a more crucial, if I hope to ever secure my WCM direct title, at earnest.

What can US Chess do to improve your physical playing conditions?

To *US Chess* I'm just a small fry: an avid enthusiast making minor history as a blind champion. I understand this—I really *do*—but I appreciate Federation efforts, in recent months, nonetheless, to investigate much of what I've achieved in recent years (as I've detailed here), for which I've received little-to-no recognition from USCF officials. I can't say this isn't understandable, however, since the U.S. Blind division is, after all, the smallest of any in which U.S. players compete. Even so, I'd be lying if I said I weren't at least considering changing national affiliations should the opportunity present itself someday. One such notion I have includes playing for El Salvador, instead, where I imagine joining or leading a blind national team of theirs to an IBCA Olympiad or even a World Championship. (That's another thing the U.S. has never done, and isn't likely to do, any time soon, but one cool thing about switching my flag to El Salvador would be getting to bring along their national champion and my friend, Jonatan, who's never gotten to take part in an IBCA world event, overseas, which would be nice.)

Which chess players do you most admire?

Concerning players I admire, I'd have to say the underdogs, and perhaps ones who use wild, swashbuckling gambits like I do. While such moves aren't always *sound*, they make for one heck-of-a-show (not to mention garnering the sharpest profanities when used in games online, hence having to deactivate in-game chat, if you favor gambits). Winning in blazing fashion seems to bring out a few nutcases, too, and flare more than a few tempers. I don't tolerate bullying, of course, so these victories are all-the-sweeter, especially when one's moves force opponents into blundering, which sometimes ticks them off. (I got one such creep

nuked for his outrageous abuse, but unfortunately, there will always be more.)

On a personal note, are you still working and living in Missouri?

For the time being, yes: I'm still living in Missouri, but, with the recent upheaval affecting Federal employees nationwide, I'm currently in the process of finding another, possibly also Federal, job. Meanwhile, though my apartment lease firmly roots me here, the rising costs of living have me seriously considering relocating—possibly even abroad, maybe even El Salvador—where I might be able to use my language skills to find more fulfilling work where I could compete more internationally as well.



And please, indulge us, what's your favorite tea?

Ah, fond memories...

I spent many an hour in my mid-to-late 20s drinking delicious Thai teas—they're a bit like rocket fuel—and playing hours of lively Blitz at Silicon Valley's famous *Santana Row*. It's an upscale shopping area in San Jose, replete with bookstores, restaurants, a movie theatre, and most importantly, an outstanding chess scene. Some people played all day and late into the night. A giant, inlaid chessboard with life-sized pieces and tables arranged in a special pedestrian area, surrounded by local cafes, live music, artisanal food, and scores of eager, talented opponents (largely retirees) made for great fun shared by colorful folks. It was just my kind of place where being a chess player was not just acceptable, but ideal.

Among the most memorable was one regular, named Anatoly, who'd often insist with his thick, Eastern European accent how *his* had been the winning position after I'd thoroughly demolished him. I can still see his wine glass firm, yet twirling, in his hand as his eyes danced and twinkled through his wizened, smiling face. A real character he was.

One thing I've noticed about the many places I've played over the years is how chess certainly connects disparate minds, even those who can't speak each other's language. It's amazing. After seeing a short chess film on Netflix called *Street Games* about players on San Francisco's Market Street, I was astounded to recognize a few players I'd beaten there, including one guy who called himself *Hector the Collector*. Among other Mechanics' Institute Chess Club regulars these were the type of players who

don't bother chasing ratings, but always loved to play, like me. Parks, cafés, coffee shops, libraries, hotels, university and college campuses, private homes—even that dive shop in Hawaii—you name it I've played just about every major type of opponent, in every major type of tournament, both at home and abroad. Even street hustlers; I never took their money, of course, but they invariably asked me to leave, since they couldn't beat me very much.

All told, I love chess. Thanks for the interview; I hope it's been entertaining.

Readers... Don't be fooled by Jessica Lauser's gutsy, determined demeanor. She's every bit a chess queen and champion true. Rising above challenges is an integral part of living—and Life is *full* of them—so play on, win or lose, but never stop trying, even if it is *all over again*.

Postscript:

Jessica sent a nice six-page picture collage of her past accomplishments that we will show some of below. Jessica plays lots of chess online and otb, the list of titled players she has defeated is very impressive:

***Titled Players I've Beaten: NM Guilherme Abreu NM Jonathan Baker NM Ted Belanoff NM Andres Castaneda NM Leandro Custodio NM Joao Octavio Benevides Demasi NM Niels Bostrom NM Daniel Paiva de Olivera NM Troy Daly NM Randal Ferguson NM Liam Fuller NM Priyansh Garg NM Felix Guo NM Ryan Hamley NM Conrad Ho NM Vishnusankar Jonnalagadda NM Jashith Karthi NM Igor Margulis NM Sam Marin NM James Marshall NM Pappu Murthy NM Asish Panda NM Daniele Parrini NM Kranthikumar Parupally NM Enrico Pepino NM Robert Persante NM Chris Personeau NM Vladimir Polyakin (the 14-mover I sent) NM Komal Kishire Pothari NM Paul Powell NM Vincent Rancour NM Michael Romero NM Arshaq Saleem NM Sebastian Suarez WCM Clementia Adeline WCM Lucia Malan Ramos WCM Natalie Wisniowski CM Krish Bhandari CM Andrea Gori CM Juan P. Cerrato Nadal CM Glen Gratz CM Carlos Enrique Hernandez Coto CM Alberto Jorge CM Kendrick Knowles CM Hope Mkhumba CM Felix Rose CM Alejandro Cosoi Scherzer CM Luis Fernando Solís Gabarrete (one of the games I sent) CM Ademola Sorungbe CM Carlos Souza CM Constantin Vogel CM Esan Wiltshire CM Tariq Yue WFM Thalita Cincinato WFM Ednasia Júnior WFM Swati Mohota WFM Toshali Vittanala (OTB Blitz, with back-to-back mates) FM Mohammed Ali Al-Khawaja FM Daniel Arias (OTB Blitz with an attack causing him to flag) FM Dirk Demarcke FM Stefan du Toit FM Alejandro González Vega FM Taibur Rahman FM Adriano Rodrigues FM Joel Salman FM Christiansen Sava FM Grigoriy Skurygin FM Ashwani Tiwari FM Sunil Weeramantry IM Rafael Baltazar (the 95-mover I sent) GM Leonid Yudasin (in 1/0 Bullet) ***Titled Players I've Drawn: NM Luiz Araujo NM John Burke NM Alexey Duilger WIM Ruth Haring (RIP) WIM Anna Stolarczyk (Many-time, prior Blind Women's World Champion)

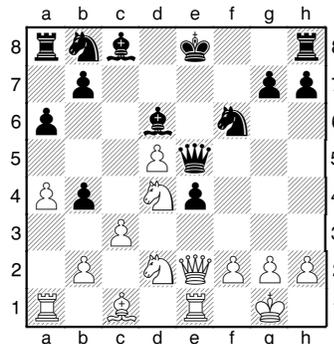
Here are a few of Jessica's games:

The game that won me my direct WCM (until it didn't):

Cruz, Felipe—Lauser, Jessica [C40]

Maricela Toledo Ascencio, Campeonato Centroamericano, 8/23/2025

1.e4 e5 2.♟f3 d5 3.exd5 e4 4.♞b5+ c6 5.♜e2 ♜e7 6.♞d4 cxb5 7.O-O a6 8.a4 b4 9.c3 ♜e5 10.d3 f5 11.dxe4 fxe4 12.♞d2 ♟f6 13.♞e1 ♞d6

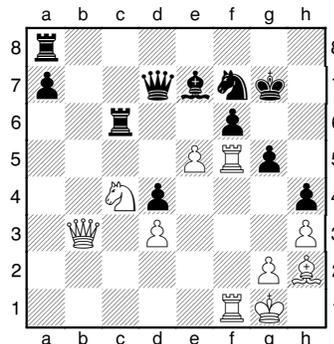


14.♞f3 ♜xd5 15.♞xe4 O-O 16.♞xf6+ ♞xf6 17.♞d4 ♞c6 18.♞xc6 bxc6 19.♞f4 ♞xf4 20.♞ad1 ♜c5 21.cxb4 ♜xb4 22.♜e8+ ♞f8 23.♜xc6 ♞c5 24.♞e8 ♞xf2+ 25.♜h1 ♞b7 26.♜e6+ ♜h8 27.♞dd8 ♞xd8 0-1

Lauser, Jessica (1643)—Caramanna, Stefano August (2120) [B50]

2018 U.S. Blind Championship, Pittsburgh, 10/20/2018

1.e4 c5 2.c3 d6 3.♟f3 (B50 Sicilian Defense: Delayed Alapin Variation, with d6) ♟f6 4.d3 g6 5.♞e2 ♞g7 6.h3 O-O 7.O-O ♞c6 8.♞bd2 ♞h5 9.♞c4 b5 10.♞e3 ♟f4 11.♞d5 ♞xe2+ 12.♜xe2 e6 13.♞e3 d5 14.♞c2 d4 15.♞d2 e5 16.a4 ♞a6 17.axb5 ♞xb5 18.c4 ♞xc4 19.♞a3 ♞b3 20.♞fc1 ♜b6 21.♞e1 ♞fc8 22.f4 exf4 23.♞xf4 ♞e5 24.♟f3 f6 25.♞d2 ♜e6 26.♞ac4 ♞xc4 27.♞xc4 ♟f7 28.♜d2 g5 29.♞g3 h5 30.♞f1 h4 31.♞h2 ♞c6 32.b4 cxb4 33.♜xb4 ♜c8 34.♞f5 ♞f8 35.♜b3 ♜g7 36.♞af1 ♞e7 37.e5 ♜d7



38.exf6+ ♞xf6 39.♞e5 ♞xe5 40.♞xe5 1-0

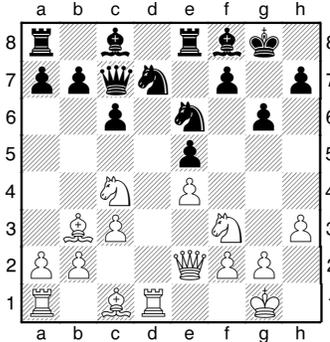
NM Polyakin, Vladimir (1736)—Lauser, Jessica (1834)

[A12]chessclub.com blitz 5m+2, Internet Chess Server

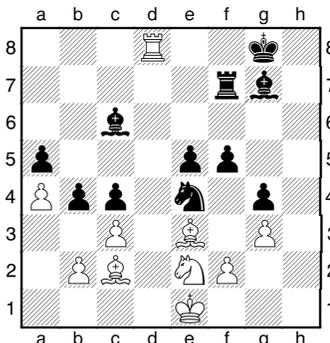
1.♟f3 ♟f6 2.e3 { A05 Zukertort Opening: Quiet System } d5 3.c4 c6 4.b3 ♞f5 5.♞b2 e6 6.♞e2 ♞e7 7.O-O O-O 8.d4 ♞e4 9.♞c3 ♞d7 10.♞d3 ♞df6 11.♜c2 ♜c7 12.♞h4 ♞g4 13.♟f3 ♞g5 14.♞xf5 ♞xf3+ { Black wins. } 0-1

Baltazar1958 (2036)—Shakhmatova (Lauser) (2012) [A46]

Live Chess, Chess.com, 1/7/2023 (Time Control 900+10)
 1.d4 ♖f6 2.♗f3 c6 [A46 Indian Defense: Czech-Indian] 3.e3
 d6 4.♗d3 g6 5.♗bd2 ♖c7 6.c3 ♗bd7 7.e4 e5 8.0-0 ♗g7 9.h3
 ♗f8?! 10.♞e1 ♗e6 11.dxe5 dxe5 12.♗c4 ♗d7 13.♗c2 0-0
 14.♖d6 ♖d8 15.♞d1 ♞e8 16.♗b3 ♗f8 17.♖d2 ♖c7 18.♖e2?



A Mistake. ♗d6 was best. For example 18.♗d6 ♗xd6
 19.♖xd6 ♗dc5 20.♖xc7 ♗xc7 21.♗c2 f6 22.♗e3 ♗e6 23.a4
 c5] 18...b5 19.♗e3 ♗f4 20.♖f1 ♗c5 21.♗c2 a5 22.♗g4 ♗g7
 23.g3 ♗xh3+? [Better is 23...h5 24.gxf4 hxg4 25.♗xe5 gxh3
 26.♖h1 ♗e6 27.f3 c5 28.♖f2 ♗xf4 29.♗xf4] 24.♖xh3 h5
 25.♖g2?? [25.♗fh2] 25...hxg4 26.♗e1 f5?! [Better was 26...♖e7
 27.♗e3 a4 28.f3 ♗e6 29.fxg4 ♗g5 30.♖e2 ♗f6 31.♖g2 ♖g7
 32.♗d3] 27.exf5 gxf5 28.♗d3?! ♗e4?! [inaccuracy. 28...♗xd3
 29.♞xd3 ♗e6 30.♖h2 e4 31.♞d1 a4 32.♗e3 ♗d5 33.♞d2 ♗e5
 34.♖g2] 29.♞e1 c5 30.♗e3?! [(-1.61 → -2.48) 30.♞xe4 was
 best ♗b7 31.♗e1 a4 32.♖h1 ♖f7 33.♗e3 ♗xe4 34.♗xe4 fxe4
 35.♖xe4 ♖c4] 30...♗b7 31.♖h2 c4 32.♗c1 ♖c6 33.a4 b4?!
 [33...♖f7 34.axb5 ♖g6 35.♞d1 ♗d6 36.♗g5 ♖xg5 37.♞xd6
 ♞h8 38.♞d7+ ♖f6 39.♞xb7] 34.♗e2?! [34.cxb4 ♖g6 35.♗b3
 cxb3 36.♗xb3+ ♖f8 37.bxa5 ♖e7 38.♞ac1 ♞ac8 39.♞ed1 ♞h8]
 34...♞ad8?! [(-3.21)] 35.♞ad1?! [35.cxb4 ♖g6 36.♞ad1 axb4
 37.a5 b3 38.♞xd8 ♞xd8 39.a6 ♖xa6 40.♗xe4 ♗xe4] 35...♞d5?
 [This was a Mistake. 35...b3 was much better 36.♗xe4
 ♖xe4 37.♞d2 ♗c6 38.♖f1 ♞xd2 39.♗xd2 ♖d5 40.♞d1 f4
 41.gxf4] 36.♞xd5 ♖xd5 37.♞d1 ♖c6 38.♖f1 ♞f8 39.♖e1 ♗f6?
 [Another mistake. b3 was still best. 39...b3 40.♗xe4 ♖xe4
 41.♗c1 ♖g2 42.♖xg2 ♗xg2 43.♞d7 ♖h7 44.♗g5 ♖g6 45.♗h4]
 40.♖h6?! ♞f7? [A mistake. Now things are equal.] 41.♖g6+
 ♗g7?! 42.♖xc6? [42.♞d8+ was called for.] 42...♗xc6 43.♞d8+?

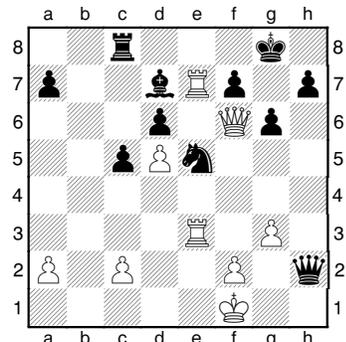


43...♖h7?? [(Another blunder and things are equal again.)
 44.♞c8 ♗d5 45.♗xe4 ♗xe4 46.♞c5? [A mistake. cxb4 was

best. 46.cxb4 axb4 47.♞xc4 ♗f8 48.a5 ♗b7 49.♞c1 ♖g6
 50.♗c5 ♗f3 51.a6 ♗xc5] 46...bxc3? [46...♞d7 47.♞xc4]
 47.bxc3?? [White gives the advantage to Black. ♗xc3 was
 best.] 47...♗d3?? [Giving up the advantage 47...♞d7 48.♗c1
 ♗c2 49.♖e2 ♗xa4 50.♞xa5 ♗c6 51.♖e1 ♗f3 52.♗e2 ♞b7
 53.♗d2 would have been better] 48.♞xa5 f4?! 49.♗d2?! f3
 50.♗c1 ♗c2 51.♞c5?? [A serious blunder. ♗a2 needed to be
 played.] 51...♗xa4?? [Giving it right back. 51...♞d7 52.♞c6 e4
 53.♞xc4 e3 54.fxe3 f2+ 55.♖f1 ♞xd2 56.♞xg4 ♞d1+ 57.♖xf2]
 52.♞xc4 ♗d7?! 53.♞b4 ♗f8 54.♞b7 ♗d6 55.♗d3 ♖g6 56.♞b6
 ♗f6 57.c4 ♗f5 58.c5 ♗xd3 59.cxd6 ♗f5 60.♗b4 ♗d7 61.♗d2
 ♖f5 62.♖e3 ♞h6 63.♗c5 ♞h1 64.♞b8 ♞e1+ 65.♗d2 ♞e2+
 66.♖c3 ♖e6 67.♞d8 ♞e4 68.♗b4 ♞d4 69.♗c5 ♞d5 70.♖c4
 ♞d1 71.♞g8 ♖f7 72.♞g5 ♗e6+ 73.♖b4 ♖f6 74.♞h5 e4
 75.♞h6+ ♖f7 76.♞h7+ ♖g6 77.♞e7 ♖f5 78.♖b5 ♖e5 79.♖c6
 ♖f6 80.♞a7 ♗d5+ 81.♖c7 ♗e6 82.♞a5 ♞c1?? [(+4.53)
 82...♞d5 83.♗b6 ♞d3 84.♗e3 ♞c3+ 85.♞c5 ♞d3 86.♞c6 ♖g6
 87.♞a6 ♖f7 88.♖d8] 83.♖d8?? [(-0.07) And the see-saw
 continues. 83.d7 ♗xd7 84.♖xd7 ♞d1+ 85.♖c6 ♞d3 86.♗e3
 ♖e6 87.♖c5 ♞d5+ 88.♖b4 ♞d6] 83...♞d1 84.♞a4 ♖e5??
 [(+3.39) White now with advantage, better was 84...♗f5
 85.♖c7 ♞c1 86.♖b6 ♞c2 87.♞a7 ♖e5 88.♖c6 ♗e6 89.♞e7 ♖f6
 90.♞e8] 85.♞a5?? [(-2.32) Back and forth!.] 85...♖f6?? [(-0.22)
 Even again.] 86.♞a4 ♞e1?? [(4.62) The tennis match contin-
 ues. 86...♗f5 87.♖c7 ♞c1 88.♖b6 ♞b1+ 89.♖c6 ♞c1 90.♞a6
 ♖e5 91.♞a7 ♖f6] 87.d7 ♞d1 88.♞d4 ♞c1 89.♗e7+ ♖e5
 90.♖e8?? [(-4.81) Turning the advantage upside down. ♗g5
 was best. 90.♗g5 ♞h1 91.♗e3 ♗f5 92.♖c7 ♗xd7 93.♞xd7
 ♞b1 94.♖c6 ♞b4 95.♞g7 ♞b3] 90...♗xd7+ 91.♞xd7 e3
 92.♗d6+ ♖e6 93.♞e7+ ♖xd6 94.♞xe3 ♞c2 95.♞e4?? [(-4.57 ?
 Mate in 12) Checkmate is now unavoidable. ♞d3+ was
 best. 95.♞d3+ ♖e5 96.♞e3+ ♖f5 97.♞a3 ♞xf2 98.♖f7 ♞g2
 99.♞a5+ ♖e4 100.♞a4+ ♖e3] 95...♞e2 [Black wins.] 0-1

Lauser, Jessica (1758)—Suarez, Eduard Davis (1795) [A45]

13th IBCA Pan-American Championship, Madrid-
 Cundinamarca. 10/27/2025 (2) 90+30.
 1.d4 ♖f6 2.e3 g6 3.♗f3 ♗g7 4.b3 c5 5.♗b2 cxd4 6.exd4 O-O
 7.♗bd2 d6 8.♗d3 ♗c6 9.♖e2 ♗b4 10.♗c4 ♗fd5 11.g3 ♗xd3+
 12.♖xd3 ♗f5 13.♖e2 ♗h6 14.h3 ♗c8 15.♗h4 ♗d7 16.♗e3
 ♗c3 17.♖f3 ♖a5 18.O-O ♗xh3 19.♞f1 ♗d7 20.♗c4 ♞xc4
 21.bxc4 ♗a4 22.♖a3 ♗g5 23.♗f3 ♗f6 24.♞ad1 ♗c6 25.♗a1
 ♖f5 26.d5 ♗d7 27.♗d4 ♖h5 28.♞d3 ♞c8 29.♖b4 ♗b6 30.♗c6
 bxc6 31.♗xf6 c5 32.♖c3 exf6 33.♖xf6 ♗xc4 34.♞e7 ♗e5
 35.♞e3 ♖h2+ 36.♖f1

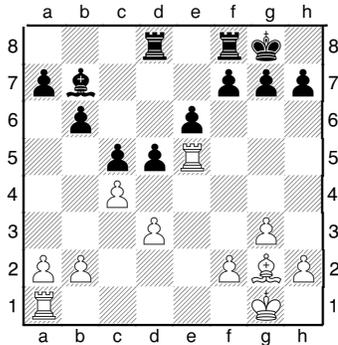


It's always nice when the opponent implodes, like this guy (who lifted my f2-pawn, then opted to resign, when his intended fork wasn't going to work. Touch-move was enforced. The game was played on a DGT board so his lifting of my f-pawn to capture it was, of course, registered. The arbiters for the event were then heard reading to him the official rules from a laptop nearby as things were paused for them to explain how he'd be forced to play ♖xf2 as originally intended. It was especially impactful since he was only a few moves away from a crushing combo. A real heartbreaker, for sure, he went on to win overall 1st, while I became his only loss. I didn't mind winning women's silver, though. That just shows how anything can happen in some of these tournaments and/or games. 1-0

Lauser, Jessica—Monterrey, Henry (1730) [C00]

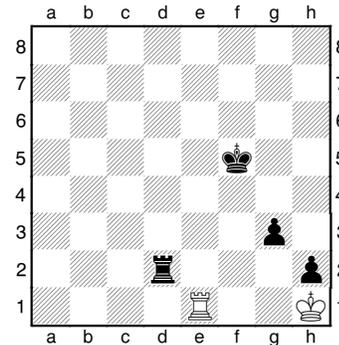
10th IBCA Pan-American Championship, Utopia Meyehualco. 10/28/2022 (6)

1.e4 e6 2.d3 d5 3.♗d2 ♖f6 4.♗gf3 b6 5.e5 ♗fd7 6.g3 c5 7.♗g2 ♗c6 8.♖e2 ♖c7?! (g5 was better.) 9.0-0 ♗dxe5 10.♗e1? (♗xe5) ♗xf3+ 11.♗xf3 ♗e7 12.♗f4 ♗d6 13.♗e5?! 0-0?! (13... ♗xe5 14. ♗xe5 ♖xe5 15. ♖xe5 ♗d7 17. c4 ♗d6 18. f4 f6 19. ♗ee1) 14.c3 ♗xe5 15.♗xe5 ♗xe5 16.♖xe5 ♖xe5 17.♗xe5 ♗b7 18.c4 ♗ad8? ("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." Savielly Tartakower. Rfe8 was the right choice. 18... ♗fe8 19. a3 f6 20. ♗ee1 ♖f7 21. b4 ♗ac8 22. ♗ec1 ♗e7 23. cxd5 exd5 24. ♗c2.) 19.♗ae1?! g6?! 20.h4?! (Better was 20. cxd5 ♗c8 21. a3 ♗d6 22. b4 cxb4 23. axb4 ♗fd8 24. ♗a1 a6 25. dxe6 ♗xe6.) ♗d7 21.cxd5 ♗xd5 22.♗xd5 exd5 23.g4 ♗fd8 24.h5 ♖g7 25.f4 d4 26.f5?? (♖f2 was required.) ♗d5 27.f6+? (Continuing with the wrong plan. fxg6 would have been better.) ♖xf6 28.g5+ ♖g7 29.h6+ ♖f8 30.♖f2?! (More correct is 30. ♗e7 ♗xg5+ 31. ♖f1 ♗h5 32. ♗xa7 ♗e8 33. ♗xe8+ ♖xe8 34. ♗a6 b5 35. ♗b6 c4) ♗xe5 31.♗xe5 ♗e8 32.♗d5 ♖e7 33.♖f3 ♖e6 34.♖e4 f5+ 35.gxf6 ♖xf6+ 36.♖f4 ♗e3 37.♗d7 ♗xd3 38.♗xa7 ♗d2 39.b3?! (39.♗xh7) g5+ 40.♖f3 ♖g6 41.♗a6 ♖xh6 42.♗xb6+ ♖h5 43.a4 g4+ 44.♖f4 ♗f2+ 45.♖g3 ♗f3+ 46.♖g2 d3 47.♗d6 d2 48.♗xd2 ♗xb3 49.♗a2 ♗b6 50.♖g3 ♖g5 51.♗c2?! (51. a5 ♗a6 52. ♗d2 ♗xa5 53. ♗d5+ ♖g6 54. ♖h4 g3 55. ♖xg3 h5 56. ♖f2 ♗a2+.) ♗c6?! (Alternatively 51... ♗b3+ 52. ♖f2 ♗f3+ 53. ♖e2 ♗a3 54. ♗xc5+ ♖h4 55. ♗c1 h5 56. ♗h1+ ♖g5 57. ♗d1) 52.♗c4 h5 53.a5 h4+ 54.♖g2 ♖f5 55.a6?! (55.♖f2) ♗xa6 56.♗xc5+ ♖g6

57.♗c4 ♗a2+ 58.♖g1 ♖g5 59.♗c5+ ♖f6 60.♗c6+ ♖e5 61.♗c1 ♗d2 62.♖f1?! (62.♗c4) g3 63.♗e1+ ♖f4 64.♗e8? (Oops now its mate in 13. 64.♖g1 had to be played.) h3 65.♗f8+ ♖e5 66.♗e8+ ♖f6 67.♗e1 ♖g5 68.♖g1 h2+ 69.♖h1 ♖f5?? (Now it's



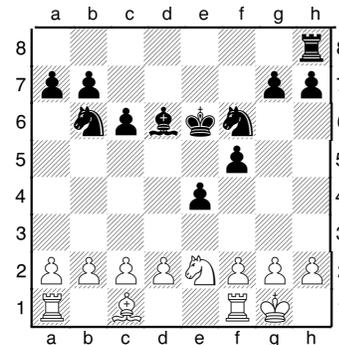
a draw. 69. ... ♗d4 was the right plan.) 70.♗e5+ ♖f4 71.♗e4+ ♖f3 72.♗f4+ ♖e2 73.♗e4+ ♖d1 74.♗e1+ ♖c2 75.♗c1+ ♖d3 76.♗c3+ ♖e4 77.♗e3+ ♖f4 78.♗e4+ ♖g5 79.♗g4+ ♖f6 80.♗xg3 ♖f5 81.♗g2 draw.

Check out this crazy opening!

ZeroChillz (1830)—Shakhmatova (Lauser) (1603) [C40]

chessclub.com blitz 3m+2, Internet Chess Server. 6/24/2024

1.e4 e5 2.♗f3 d5 3.exd5 e4 4.♗g1 ♖xd5 5.♗c3 ♖e5 6.♖e2 f5 7.♖b5+ ♖xb5 8.♗xb5 c6 9.♗c7+ ♖f7 10.♗xa8 ♗d6 11.♗c4+ ♗e6 12.♗xe6+ ♖xe6 13.♗e2 ♗f6 14.0-0 ♗bd7 15.♗b6 ♗xb6



16.b3 ♗g8 17.♗b2 ♗fd7 18.♗d4+ ♖f6 19.♗xc6+ ♖g5 20.♗xa7 ♖h5 21.♗b5 ♗b8 22.d3 g5 23.dxe4 f4 24.♗ad1 g4 25.a4 ♗c5 26.♗d4 ♗bd7 27.♗xc5 ♗xc5 28.♗d5+ ♗g5 29.♗xg5+ ♖xg5 30.f3 g3 31.hxg3 fxg3 32.♗d1 ♗e6 33.♗d5+ ♖f4 34.♖f1 ♗e5 35.♖e2 h5 36.c3 h4 37.♗d4 ♗g5 38.♗f5 h3 39.gxh3 ♗xf3 40.a5 g2 41.♗d1 g1♖ 42.♗xg1 ♗xg1+ 43.♖d3 ♗xh3 44.♗e7 ♗f2+ 45.♖c4 ♗xe4 46.♗d5+ ♖f5 47.b4 ♗d6+ 48.♖c5 ♖e6 49.c4 ♗e4+ 50.♖b5 ♖d6 51.♗b6 ♗c3# 1-0

"Chess demolishes differences. It's a language of different generations."
– Judit Polgar

Previous Accomplishments



**2023 U.S. Blind Open:
3rd Place**



**11th IBCA Pan-American
Championship:
Women's Gold; 4th Overall**



**2024 U.S. Blind Open:
1st Place
(for the 6th time)**



**1st International
Blind Championship:
Top Woman; 4th Overall**



**2018 U.S. Blind
Championship:
1st Place
(first & only woman)**



**12th IBCA Women's
World Championship:
5th Place**



**12th IBCA Pan-American
Championship:
Overall Silver and
Women's Gold**



**1st National
Blitz Championship
of El Salvador:
Women's Bronze**



**2025 Pan-American
Amateur Championship:
3rd Place Woman (U2000)**



**2016 NorCal Women's
State Championship:
3rd Place**



**2016 Sacramento
Chess Club Blitz
Championship:
2nd Place**

**G/5 Championship
Final Standings, July 5, 2016**

#	Name	Rtg	Rd 1	Rd 2	Rd 3	Rd 4	Rd 5	Rd 6	Rd 7	Rd 8	Rd 9	Total
1	Nicholas Karas	2225	W10	D7	D6	W5	D4	W8	W2	W3	W3	7.5
2	Jessica T. Lauer	1662	W7	W6	W9	W4	W8	W5	L1	L3	W10	7.0
3	James Mac Farland	2200	W5	W10	W7	W6	L9	L4	W8	W2	L1	6.0
4	Keith Mc Daniel	1958	W9	L5	D8	L2	D1	W5	W10	W7	W6	6.0
5	Robert D Garcia	1959	L3	W4	W10	W8	L7	L2	L6	L1	W9	4.0
6	John P McCumiskey	1823	D8	L2	D1	L3	W10	L7	W5	W9	L4	4.0
7	Akranzo McCauley	1890	L2	D1	L3	L10	W5	W6	L9	L4	W8	3.5
8	Steven Kelle	1886	D4	W9	D4	L5	L2	L1	L3	W10	L7	3.0
9	Geoffroy S Back	1886	L4	L8	L2	L1	W3	W10	W7	L6	L5	3.0
10	Anuj Patel	1924	L1	L3	L5	W7	L5	L9	L4	L8	L2	1.0



**2017 U.S. Blind
Championship:
2nd Place**



**2018 KY State
Women's Closed
Championship:
1st Place**

**Kentucky Chess Association
2018 State Women's Closed
- Champion -
Jessica Lauer**



**2019 U.S. Blind
Championship:
1st Place
(for the 2nd time)**



**2020 U.S. Blind
Championship:
1st Place
(for the 3rd time)**



**2025 U.S. Blind Open:
1st Place
(for the 7th time)**



**11th Central American
Blind Championship:
Technically Tied for 1st/2nd**



**1st International Chess
Festival ITT Atahualpa:
Top Low Vision Player in
Classical, Rapid & Blitz**



**13th IBCA Pan-American
Championship:
Women's Silver; 4th Overall**





Happy New Year 2026



Awani Kumar, Lucknow, India

Enjoy! Rejoice!! Celebrate!!!

Let us celebrate and commemorate the New Year 2026 with some interesting tours of knight on 20x26 board. Readers of *The Chess Journalist* are well aware of the millennium old ‘Tour of knight’ puzzle. The task is to move a knight over an empty board so that it visits all the cells only once. Figure 1 is a magic tour of knight on 20x26 board. Here all the consecutive numbers from 1 to 520 are at knight’s move and sum of all the move numbers in each row and each column is 5210 and 6773 respectively. It is an open tour and readers are urged to look for more challenging closed (or reentrant) magic tour.

1	518	3	264	255	516	7	512	253	270	11	510	249	506	15	276	245	504	17	278	5210	
260	263	258	517	6	265	254	269	8	511	250	271	12	275	246	505	16	277	244	503	5210	
519	2	261	4	515	256	267	252	513	10	509	248	273	14	507	20	501	242	279	18	5210	
262	259	520	257	266	5	514	9	268	251	272	13	508	247	274	241	280	19	502	243	5210	
233	36	287	486	235	34	285	488	237	30	283	492	239	26	281	496	21	500	223	298	5210	
288	485	234	35	286	487	236	33	284	491	238	29	282	495	240	25	224	297	22	499	5210	
37	232	483	290	39	230	481	292	489	228	31	294	493	226	27	296	497	24	299	222	5210	
484	289	38	231	482	291	40	229	32	293	490	227	28	295	494	225	300	221	498	23	5210	
211	58	309	464	213	480	307	42	215	478	305	44	217	476	303	46	219	474	301	48	5210	
310	463	212	57	308	41	214	479	306	43	216	477	304	45	218	475	302	47	220	473	5210	
59	210	461	312	465	208	55	314	467	206	53	316	469	204	51	318	471	202	49	320	5210	
462	311	60	209	56	313	466	207	54	315	468	205	52	317	470	203	50	319	472	201	5210	
189	460	331	64	191	456	329	66	193	454	327	68	195	452	325	70	197	450	321	72	5210	
332	61	190	457	330	65	192	455	328	67	194	453	326	69	196	451	324	71	200	449	5210	
459	188	63	334	441	186	79	336	443	184	77	338	445	182	75	340	447	198	73	322	5210	
62	333	458	187	80	335	442	185	78	337	444	183	76	339	446	181	74	323	448	199	5210	
423	98	81	440	95	426	87	428	91	432	169	350	173	354	165	356	341	180	163	358	5210	
82	439	424	97	86	435	94	431	88	429	172	353	170	347	176	345	164	357	342	179	5210	
99	422	437	84	425	96	427	90	433	92	349	168	351	174	355	166	177	344	359	162	5210	
438	83	100	421	436	85	434	93	430	89	352	171	348	167	346	175	360	161	178	343	5210	
413	420	111	102	113	120	407	398	389	126	391	136	375	138	147	160	373	362	371	158	5210	
110	101	414	419	408	399	114	119	392	135	388	127	146	381	374	361	148	159	152	363	5210	
415	412	103	112	121	118	397	406	125	390	393	134	137	376	139	380	153	372	157	370	5210	
106	109	418	409	400	403	124	115	396	131	128	387	384	145	382	367	142	149	364	151	5210	
411	416	107	104	117	122	405	402	129	386	133	394	377	140	143	154	379	366	369	156	5210	
108	105	410	417	404	401	116	123	132	395	130	385	144	383	378	141	368	155	150	365	5210	
6773	6773	6773	6773	6773	6773	6773	6773	6773	6773	6773	6773	6773	6773	6773	6773	6773	6773	6773	6773	6773	6773

Fig.1. Semi-magic tour of knight on 20x26 board.

'Figured tour' is a rich field for mathematical art on chessboard. Figure 2a is monogram tour (knight moves delineating letters). Here the consecutive numbers from 1 to 520 are in knight's path and line joining all the square numbers $1^2, 2^2, 3^2, \dots, 22^2$, namely, 1, 4, 9, ..., 484 delineate letters 'H', 'N' and 'Y', the first letters of Happy New Year. Figure 2b has square numbers delineating number 26 (which correlates with the year 2026). Readers may like to compose other letters and numbers related to the New Year 2026.

31	92	113	116	129	94	111	150	109	152	139	162	107	154	175	160	185	156	177	158
114	131	32	93	112	117	136	127	138	149	108	153	140	161	106	155	176	159	184	181
91	30	115	130	135	128	95	110	151	126	141	104	163	174	193	186	183	180	157	178
132	43	134	33	118	45	86	137	148	103	164	167	194	105	198	191	320	187	182	189
29	90	41	44	87	34	119	96	125	166	171	142	173	192	319	326	199	190	179	322
42	133	88	27	40	37	46	85	102	147	168	165	170	195	200	197	364	321	188	329
89	28	3	24	35	26	39	120	97	124	143	172	145	318	325	404	327	330	323	366
6	23	10	1	38	47	36	101	84	121	146	169	402	201	196	363	324	365	328	331
11	2	7	4	25	16	49	98	123	100	289	144	317	362	403	400	405	360	367	398
22	5	12	9	48	79	64	83	288	81	122	225	202	401	442	361	440	399	332	359
13	8	21	62	15	50	17	80	99	290	203	316	489	486	491	484	443	406	397	368
20	61	14	51	18	63	78	65	82	287	224	453	226	483	488	441	492	439	358	333
75	52	19	220	77	66	285	222	291	204	315	496	487	490	485	256	407	444	369	396
60	69	76	67	284	221	230	205	286	223	454	227	452	495	482	445	438	493	334	357
53	74	219	282	231	206	311	292	455	228	517	314	497	450	255	494	257	408	395	370
70	59	68	207	294	283	456	229	310	313	520	451	518	499	258	481	446	437	356	335
73	54	71	218	281	232	293	312	457	516	511	498	449	254	447	422	409	424	371	394
58	217	208	233	470	295	458	309	512	503	506	519	500	259	480	425	436	417	336	355
55	72	57	280	459	308	471	508	505	510	515	502	253	448	421	416	423	410	393	372
216	209	234	299	296	469	460	513	474	507	504	477	260	501	426	479	418	435	354	337
235	56	279	276	273	298	307	472	509	514	475	252	427	478	415	420	411	376	373	392
210	215	274	297	300	277	468	461	306	473	466	261	476	429	384	375	434	419	338	353
241	236	245	278	275	272	301	464	467	462	251	428	385	414	433	412	377	374	391	346
214	211	242	239	246	269	266	305	302	465	262	381	430	383	378	343	348	345	352	339
237	240	213	244	267	248	271	264	463	250	303	386	379	432	413	388	341	350	347	390
212	243	238	247	270	265	268	249	304	263	380	431	382	387	342	349	344	389	340	351

(a)

187	184	69	516	189	510	191	498	495	500	505	236	205	234	213	238	207	220	211	240
70	515	188	185	68	513	494	509	192	497	204	501	214	237	206	219	212	239	208	221
183	186	519	514	517	190	511	496	499	504	193	506	235	218	233	252	249	210	241	244
520	71	182	61	512	67	110	493	508	203	502	215	194	251	248	275	246	243	222	209
181	60	73	518	179	62	177	490	503	492	507	202	217	232	253	250	285	276	245	242
72	75	180	3	6	111	66	109	176	489	216	229	254	195	274	247	278	281	284	223
59	2	5	74	63	178	7	112	491	228	201	272	231	226	255	286	283	224	277	280
14	11	76	1	4	113	108	65	488	175	230	227	288	273	196	225	364	279	282	367
77	58	13	10	79	64	115	8	107	200	271	268	197	256	287	360	439	366	363	358
12	15	78	117	114	9	80	487	174	267	198	485	270	289	440	365	362	359	368	437
57	118	27	16	81	116	173	106	199	486	269	170	257	484	361	404	435	438	357	406
28	17	24	121	26	101	82	263	266	171	258	483	290	169	402	441	408	405	436	369
119	56	29	100	103	122	105	172	259	262	265	168	401	144	409	324	403	434	407	356
18	23	120	25	36	49	102	83	264	167	260	143	482	291	400	145	442	323	370	433
55	30	35	48	99	104	123	166	261	142	327	292	399	470	325	410	413	146	355	322
22	19	54	37	50	125	84	141	328	293	398	481	326	475	412	443	472	371	432	147
31	34	21	52	47	98	165	124	295	332	453	476	469	480	471	474	411	414	321	354
20	53	38	33	126	51	140	85	164	329	294	397	454	461	444	479	372	473	148	431
39	32	127	46	97	86	163	296	333	452	331	466	477	468	455	462	415	430	353	320
128	45	96	303	162	139	310	385	330	465	396	451	460	463	478	445	456	373	346	149
95	40	161	138	87	304	297	334	423	420	449	464	467	418	457	390	429	416	319	352
44	129	302	305	160	309	384	311	386	395	422	419	450	459	446	417	374	347	150	345
41	94	43	88	137	306	335	298	421	424	387	448	393	426	389	458	391	428	351	318
130	91	136	301	134	159	308	383	312	381	394	425	388	447	392	427	348	375	344	151
93	42	89	132	307	336	299	380	157	338	313	378	155	340	315	376	153	342	317	350
90	131	92	135	300	133	158	337	382	379	156	339	314	377	154	341	316	349	152	343

(b)

Fig.2. Figured tours (a) delineating letters 'H', 'N', 'Y' and (b) number '26'.

The author wishes a very **Happy New Year 2026**. May it bring health, wealth and happiness to all. Amen.