

The Chess Journalist

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CHESS JOURNALISTS OF AMERICA



Ronnie James Dio said “We are just a picture, we're an image caught in time.” Here David Llada creates his own picture caught in time. See the interview inside to learn more about his photography and the man behind the camera.

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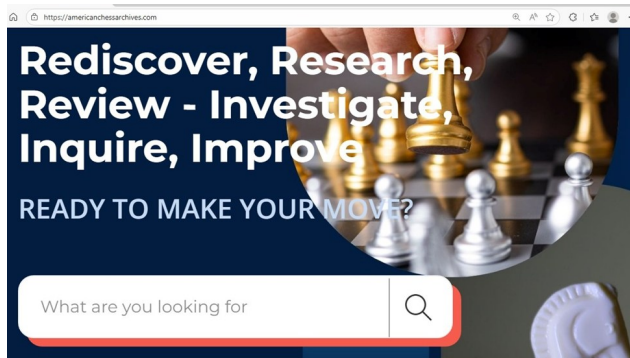
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The Chess Journalists of America seeks to encourage chess journalists, writers, editors, and publishers to exchange information and ideas for their mutual benefit, to promote the highest standards of ethics in chess journalism, to represent United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

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Hello From the Editor

It's always exciting to me when I finish the issue with a bit of time to spare, so don't be surprised if this hits your mailbox a few days before you expect it.

Tell one...tell all! It is that time of year where you should be thinking of what entries to make for the Annual Awards. Remember items published between June 1, 2025—May 31, 2026, are within range. Categories for this year are listed in the call found on page four.

Usually we put one person in the "Limelight", but this issue is a two for one. Both Ilan Rubin (owner of Elk & Ruby Publishing House) and David Llada (photographer extraordinaire) agreed to the interviews during the same time frame. Don't worry I have a person lined up for next issue already! In any case both interviews are very interesting and tell fabulous stories.

GM Jan Timman passed away in February after a long illness. What a chess legacy GM Timman leaves behind. I try to capture some of the highlights in an obituary found on page eight.

There is a new website for selling chess books and stamps (ad on page 24). We also continue to work on the American Chess Archives project.

The semi-annual zoom meeting must have caught some off-guard as the attendance was very light. We decided in the future a reminder email a day or two in advance would be good policy.

We have included reviews from two new book reviewers: Cindy Wister and Kenneth Calitri. I hope they will continue sending in more reviews as they both wrote very nice pieces.

For myself, I had planned on reviewing several books, but I ended up spending almost three months reading John Hilbert's new book on George H. Mackenzie. What a great book! I still have a year of so of work ahead of me to get through all the games as there are nearly 1,300 in the book. LOL.

We have many great books lined up to be reviewed, so the next couple issues will feature them.

Chris Martinez G returns with the column *Resurfaced*. I hope you are enjoying these as much as I am.

This issue we are fortunate to be able to reprint an article by Henrik Malm Lindberg (author of the book *FIDE President Folke Rogard: The Lawyer Who Organized Modern Chess in the Shadow of the Cold War* reviewed in issue 160, January 2025).

Dennis Wasson returns with more "Passing Clouds."

Awani Kumar made a tour playing off of the fact that this is issue 165. By the way, if I count right, this is my 18th issue as editor!

The "Queens' Corner" returns with an interview of Katie Kormanik author of *Adventures of a Chess Girl*. Samika Nettem and Joshua Anderson handled the interview very nicely.

Where has Rachel Schechter been you ask? She has been writing a book. It is out now and available for purchase. See page 38 for more info on *The Gifts of Rabbi Oleksandr*.

The London 1922 article was added when I realized I had to either cut two pages or add two pages (I try to keep the magazine to a multiple of four so if people want to make it into a book it works easy). I found out enough about the tournament and happenings surrounding it that I could have easily added several more pages. Hopefully it will whet your appetite and you dig in for yourself. I know I plan to look into it some more.

Thanks to Rex Gray and Joshua Anderson for their excellent proofreading and suggestions.



I was messing with some AI and it came up with the picture below describing me based on some basic inputs. Not too bad. Fun!

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 July 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

If you can overthink the worst why can't you overthink the best? —Brooke Smith

Call for Chess Journalists of America Award Entries

The Chess Journalists of America (CJA) calls for nominations for the annual Chess Journalists of America awards. The CJA Awards recognize all aspects of chess journalism, print and online. The Chess Journalists of America honor the best chess articles, columns, photojournalism, online writing, and social media within their respective categories. Recognized annually by their peers, the public, and members of CJA, the prestigious awards showcase American works published in English between June 1, 2025, and May 31, 2026.

CJA is a nonprofit organization dedicated to promoting the study and knowledge of chess as a journalistic and scholarly endeavor. Membership is open to everyone at an annual membership fee of \$10. The organization will acknowledge award winners by giving them a printable online certificate. CJA's annual awards are open to anyone. There is an entry fee of \$15 for the first entry, which includes membership or renewal to CJA, and an \$8 fee for each subsequent entry (unless otherwise noted). State organizations may enter **three** entries in the Cramer Awards for free. You can find additional award details online at chessjournalism.org. Interested parties can also contact CJA Chief Judge Joshua Anderson at joshuamiltonanderson@gmail.com. Please use the QR code below to go directly to our entry page. Entries must be made by **June 28th, 2026**. The CJA will announce award winners first at the annual meeting during the U.S. Open, followed by a complete listing on the CJA website.

2025 AWARDS

TOP THREE CATEGORIES

(Open to print or online)

Chess Journalist of the Year

Best Story of the Year

Best Column

BEST CHESS BOOK

Best Book—Instruction

Best Book—Other

Best Self-Published Book

BEST VISUAL ARTS

Best Photojournalism Article

Best Single Chess Photo

Best Art

Best Single Chess Magazine Cover

Best Cartoon

BEST MULTIMEDIA PRESENTATION

Category made to encourage content creators to continue being creative in how they combine media, but also allow our judges to not have to compare video with text with sound, etc.

BEST PRINT ARTICLES

(Open only to publications)

Best Regular Newspaper Column

Best Single Article of Local Interest

Best Feature Article

Best Interview

Best Tournament Report—National/International

Best Tournament Report—State/Local

Best Club Newsletter

Best Instructive Lesson

Best Review

Best Analysis

Best Historical Article

Best Humorous Contribution

Best Personal Narrative

BEST ONLINE AND SOCIAL MEDIA NEWS AND FEATURES

Best Interview

Best Feature Article

Best Podcast

Best Single Podcast Episode

Best Tournament Report—National/International

Best Tournament Report—State/Local

Best Club Newsletter

Best Instruction Lesson

Best Analysis

Best Humorous Contribution

Best Historical Article

Best Personal Narrative

Best Overall Chess Website

Best Small Organization Website (500 or less, states in Cramer Awards)

Best Online Blog

Best Paid Blog (Substack)

Best Educational Lesson

Best Online Review

Best Non-Instructional Chess Video

Best Twitter Feed

Best Weekly Video Program

Best Documentary

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

JUNIOR

(Under 21 at the time of writing)

Best Print Article by a Junior

Best Online Article by a Junior

Best Personal Narrative by a Junior

Best Online Website by a Junior

CRAMER AWARDS

Best State Championship Report

Best State Tournament Coverage

Best Scholastic Coverage in State (may be multiple articles)

Best Overall State Website

Best State Magazine/Newsletter—Print

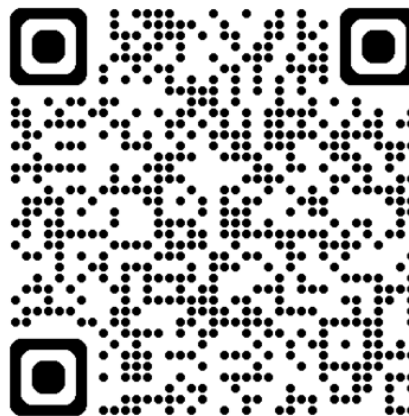
Best State Magazine/Newsletter—Online

Best Personal Narrative

Best Photograph

Best State Magazine Photo

Best State Facebook Page

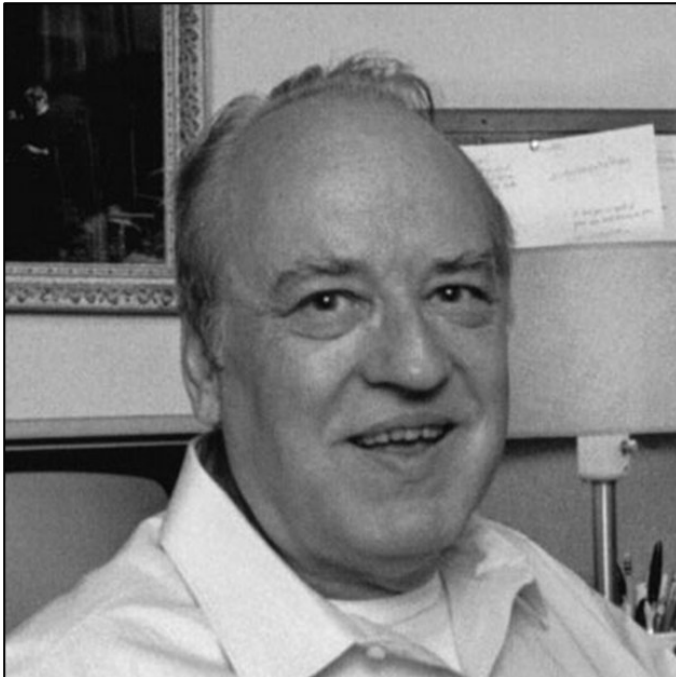


An Update on the Jeremy Gaige Archive

by Jon Edwards (32nd World Correspondence Chess Champion)

CJA members are well aware that the organization has begun an effort to scan and thereby preserve all American chess periodicals. We know this effort represents a daunting task that may span generations to reach any semblance of completeness. Still, the effort is worthwhile for many reasons, and we are proud to be undertaking the effort.

One of the first major efforts was the acquisition, scanning and preservation of the Jeremy Gaige chess archive.



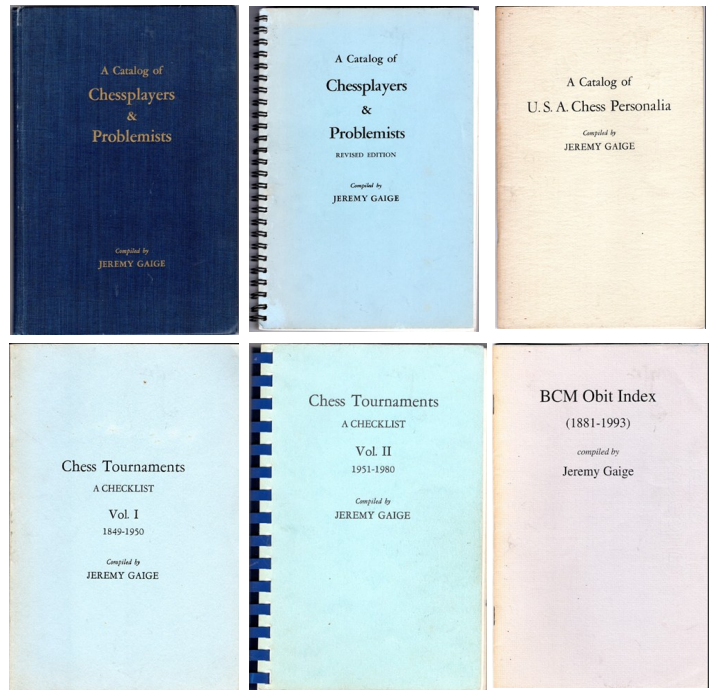
Prior to his death, Gaige gifted two cartons (containing 15 research binders) to well-known Chess Game Preservationist, Andy Ansel.

Many years after Gaige's death, the remainder of Gaige's archive, nine cartons of binders, were forwarded from Gaige's daughter via Fred Wilson to Jon Edwards, the 32nd World Correspondence Champion. Of some relevance here, Jon has a PhD in History from Michigan State University.

Jon began scanning the monographs within the archive. He placed the scans in a Google Drive archive and then offered the scans to CJA, which is proud to share the fruit of this labor freely on its web site.

Pictured are just a handful of Gaige's published monographs, most of which he self-published. Most of the letter-quality monographs in the archive contain Gaige's hand-

written comments, additions, and corrections. The archives also contain voluminous records and photocopies from which he derived the publications.



In just the past two months, Ansel and Edwards met in New York City where Jon took possession of the 15 binders that Andy originally obtained from Gaige. Those binders represent key data from the 1920s and 1930s that had been missing from the cartons that Edwards obtained from Fred Wilson.

Edwards has completed an inventory of the content of Gaige's binders that you can view here: [INVENTORY](#)





For the first time since Gaige's death, the bulk of his archive has been preserved in a single location. Andy Ansel recalls that one or two binders were donated to the Cleveland Public Library, and we will soon reach out to them in an effort to determine which binder or binders were donated there. Jon Edwards continues to scan and share the data from the binders. It is painstaking work because Gaige used glue that no longer functions to paste crosstables onto pages in the binders. Edwards will soon acquire and use a special cradle scanner that may ease the scanning work.

Here is a list of the monographs contained in the archive as well as the revision dates recorded by Gaige.

<i>Australian Chess Personalia</i>	1987
<i>Austrian Chess Personalia</i>	1984
<i>Baltic Chess Personalia</i>	1987
<i>Belgian Chess Personalia</i>	1988
<i>Bulgarian Chess Personalia</i>	1987
<i>Canadian Chess Personalia</i>	1989
<i>Chess Obituaries in the London Times</i>	1989
<i>Correspondence Chess Personalia</i>	
<i>(Alphabetically by country)</i>	1988
<i>Czech Chess Personalia</i>	1986
<i>Correspondence Chess Players</i>	1988
<i>Danish Chess Personalia</i>	1988
<i>French Chess Personalia</i>	1988
<i>German Chess Personalia</i>	1986, 1992
<i>Hungarian Chess Personalia</i>	1984
<i>Italian Chess Personalia</i>	1987
<i>Netherlands Chess Personalia</i>	1990
<i>New England Chess Personalia</i>	
<i>New Zealand Chess Personalia</i>	1987
<i>Polish Chess Personalia</i>	1986
<i>Scottish Chess Personalia</i>	1981, 1988
<i>Scottish Tournaments and Crosstables</i>	1994
<i>Swedish Chess Personalia</i>	1989
<i>URS Chess Personalia</i>	1989
<i>USA Chess Personalia</i>	1980, 1991, 1993
<i>USA Chess Composers</i>	1987
<i>USA ICCF Personalia</i>	1995
<i>USSR Chess Personalia</i>	1982
<i>includes USSR Female Chess Personalia</i>	
<i>Yugoslavia Chess Personalia</i>	1986

Gaige intended to update his crosstable research through

to the 1980s, but illness overtook his efforts in or around 1995. As Gaige had put it, he needed three lifetimes to complete the work. Gaige's word processing files and his printing shop were, sadly, not preserved. The pages in the archive are all that remains of Gaige's lifelong efforts.

Gaige continued to work on the data, well past known publication dates. Unable to attract publishers for most of his efforts, he privately circulated updated manuscripts to chess historians and to those who helped him. He was active in these endeavors until 1995. McFarland's 2005 paperback reprint of *Chess Personalia* did not include the numerous revisions that Gaige had made.

When the scanning work is completed, Edwards will donate Gaige's binders to the Cleveland Public Library where Gaige's collection will rest in peace, giving his archive the immortality it deserves.

Perhaps the most interesting aspects of preservation work are the details of the acquisition stories. The Edwards acquisition from Fred Wilson was relatively straight forward, save that sincere thanks are due to Fred and to Jonathan Crumiller, who accompanied Jon Edwards on his run into New York City and helped to move the very heavy cartons!

By contrast, Andy Ansel's acquisition story is memorable and reproduced below.

My Personal Recollections of Jeremy Gaige

by Andy Ansel

I met with Jeremy Gaige twice in the last few months of his life. I caution the reader that this is a sad story of the end of a life that was dedicated to chess.

In mid-2010 there were discussions between several serious chess historians about saving Gaige's chess work. There were concerns that if something happened to him all his life's work would be lost. It was rumored that he had a much-updated version of *Chess Personalia* that had never been published. By default, I was nominated to be the point person to contact Gaige. My family was heading down to Philadelphia for a summer visit, so I initiated contact. Just calling Gaige was a little bit of a mystery.

When I placed the call, a woman (his wife) would answer briefly, grill me and then tell me to call back and let the phone ring at least three times.

After following these directions, I was able to directly speak with Jeremy.

We arranged to meet on Sunday, which I anxiously looked forward to.

After viewing some exhibits at the Franklin Institute, I walked over to Gaige's house. He lived in a very nice, but older part of Philadelphia. The brownstone-like structure had been divided into apartments, and he lived on the first floor. I followed him to his study which also appeared to be where he slept and lived. The room had bookshelves that were filled with chess books (including quite a few reference items) as well as other non-chess books. There was a very old Apple computer along with many file cabinets.

We then started talking, which at first was a little awkward, as he grilled me on the purpose of my visit and what I wanted. It seemed like he had forgotten the lengthy phone discussion we had had a week earlier. After explaining my interest in chess history, and the KWA (Ken Whyld Association) (and offering him membership), the conversation became much more interesting. He clearly expected to die in the near future and seemed anxious to save some of his research material. I started asking about how and why he became interested in chess and chess history, and I could see a glimmer in his eyes and some happiness. He was a writer and researcher by profession, and he felt chess had not been exposed to such a thorough routine. The more he started contacting people and doing research and seeing how little of the history was preserved, he realized how important such a task was.

Gaige collected material through correspondence and had files and files of paper with articles, Xeroxes and more stuffed into these cabinets. He had his own printing press down in his basement (which I was unable to see) where he printed various publications including his Tournament Crosstable volumes. After about 45 minutes, the conversation took a strange turn as he started asking me to take some binders with me. Since I had walked to his house, I had no packing material or way to carry them, so he found some boxes and ordered me to pack stuff up as he called a cab to pick me up. A very abrupt and strange ending to an interesting visit.

As I was going through the binders, which took about two full, long shelves in his office (I could only take about 1/4 of them, because I had hardly any packing material) he was instructing me on the best ones to take. Then his wife walked in the room. The first words out of her mouth were demanding what I was taking and how much I was paying for them! After explaining the limited monetary worth and also that if anything were published, Gaige would get 100% of any profits, she calmed down a little. Then the two of them bickered about money and how she threw away his stuff, how she never let him do what he wanted. I was saved when the cab showed up and I was able to take about 15 binders and fit them into the trunk. As I was leaving, Gaige slipped me a very old computer disk and a cassette.

My second meeting with Gaige occurred this January and was perhaps a little stranger, if that is possible. Having determined that the cassette was just a music cassette (of Peter, Paul and Mary) and that the Apple disk was blank, I was hoping to save more of these unpublished manuscripts or gather more binders. While down in Philadelphia for a chess tournament this past January, I decided to give him a call. His wife answered as usual and then I asked to speak to Jeremy, she told me to call back. After calling back and asking to visit, his wife interrupted and accused me of being rude to her and told me not to come over—after which Gaige promptly invited me over. I came more prepared this time as I drove and had stocked my car with packing materials. However, my visit was much less successful as all we looked at was his computer trying to print out files. At one point he wanted me to look through the files (which had no organization) while he napped. Finally, after seeing how slowly data was being printed out, I decided to cut the visit short. He never offered any conversation or any more notebooks, so the visit really was disappointing.

Gaige would pass away within days of my last visit. It was very sad to see how he lived at the end of his life. His contributions to the chess world rank among the highest and all historians enjoy the fruits of his labor through his publications. Unfortunately, much of his life-long work will be lost as his files were not to be found and I am quite sure his wife will throw out his remaining documents. It is a shame that much could not be preserved, but I am glad that I got to meet Jeremy Gaige and talk chess with him for a little while.

Here is some further reading on Gaige and his archive:

<https://www.chesshistory.com/winter/extra/gaige.html>

<https://en.chessbase.com/post/edward-winter-s-chess-explorations-60->

<https://www.uschess.org/index.php/Obituaries/Jeremy-Gaige.html>

<https://worldchesshof.org/hof-inductee/jeremy-gaige>

<https://www.kwabc.org/en/jeremy-gaige.html>

<http://www.chessdryad.com/articles/ephemera/gaige.pdf>

GM Jan Timman Leaves an Amazing Legacy Behind

by Mark Capron



Dutch GM Jan Timman passed away on February 18, 2026, at the age of 74 after being seriously ill for quite some time. Timman rose to international prominence during an era when chess was dominated by the Soviet Union. He was universally thought to be the strongest non-Soviet player and was therefore referred to as the “Best of the West”. Through creative, deep strategic idea chess he reached number two in the world on the 1982 rating list just behind World Champion Anatoly Karpov.

Timman was born in Amsterdam on December 14, 1951 to Reinier Timman (a mathematics professor) and his wife Anneke. When Anneke was a schoolgirl, she was a mathematics student of former world champion Max Euwe according to Genna Sosonko in his book *The World Champions I Knew*. Timman earned the title of International Grandmaster in 1974. Timman embodied the free-spirited 1960s and 70s with his long hair and hippie-like attitude. He chose to live as a chess professional, traveling from tournament to tournament playing the game he loved. Timman always played with an artistic approach to the game.

Some of the tournaments Timman won along his life journey: Hastings in 1973–74 (tied with Mikhail Tal, Gennady Kuzmin, and László Szabó); Sombor in 1974 (with Boris Gulko); Netanya in 1975; Reykjavík in 1976 (with Fridrik Olafsson); Amsterdam IBM and Nikšić in 1978; Bled/Portorož in 1979; Amsterdam IBM, Wijk aan Zee and Las Palmas in 1981; Mar del Plata in 1982; Bugojno and Sarajevo in 1984; Wijk aan Zee in 1985; Linares in 1988; Euwe Memorial and the 1989 World Cup tournament in 1989. He won the Dutch Championship nine times between the years of 1974–1996. Timman represented his country at 13 Chess Olympiads - winning Individual Gold in 1976.

A special highlight was in the 2nd Immopar Rapid Tournament in 1991, a knock-out format event, he defeated Gata Kamsky 1½–½, Anatoly Karpov 2–0, Viswanathan Anand 1½–½, and finally Garry Kasparov 1½–½. His performance was equivalent to an Elo rating of 2950. (Source: Wikipedia). Many years later Timman was interviewed by IM Tibor Károlyi. Károlyi asked: “Did you prepare especially for that event or you just went there and played? Did you prepare some lines for the event?” Timman responded: “When I won the Immopar in 91 I did not do any prepare for that. I just played.” Károlyi continued: “In general did you have some lines for rapid events, which you did not want to use in regular games?” Timman: “No, I just played

my own repertoire.” From the book *Legendary Chess Careers Jan Timman* by Tibor Károlyi, Chess Evolution, 2015.

Timman, Jan H (2630) - Kasparov, Garry (2770) [E88]

Paris Immopar rapid Paris (4), 1991

1.d4 ♖f6 2.c4 g6 3.♗c3 ♘g7 4.e4 d6 5.f3 0–0 6.♙e3 c6 7.♙d3 e5 8.d5 cxd5 9.cxd5 ♗h5 10.♗ge2 f5 11.exf5 gxf5 12.0–0 ♗d7 13.♙c1 ♗c5 14.♙c4 a6 15.b4 ♗d7 16.a4 ♗e8 17.♗h1 ♗df6 18.b5 ♗g6 19.♙d3 e4 20.♙c2 ♙d7 21.bxa6 bxa6 22.♙b1 ♙ae8 23.♗d2 ♗h8 24.♙b6 ♙g8 25.♙g1 ♗f7 26.♙xa6 f4 27.♙d4 ♗g3+ 28.♗xg3 fxg3 29.♗f4 gxh2 30.♙f1 exf3 31.♗xf3 ♙ef8 32.♙xd6 ♙g4 33.♙xf6 ♙xf3 34.♙xf7 ♙xg2+ 35.♗xh2 1–0

When asked what his favorite game was from the tournament Timman said the two Karpov games:

Karpov, Anatoly (2730) - Timman, Jan H (2630) [E15]

Paris Immopar rapid Paris (2), 1991

1.d4 ♖f6 2.c4 e6 3.♗f3 b6 4.g3 ♙a6 5.♗a4 ♙b7 6.♙g2 c5 7.dxc5 bxc5 8.0–0 ♙e7 9.♗c3 0–0 10.♙d1 ♗b6 11.♗c2 ♗c6 12.♙f4 ♙ac8 13.♗a4 ♗a5 14.b3 ♙fd8 15.a3 d6 16.♙d2 ♗c7 17.♙c3 ♙d7 18.♙ac1 ♗d8 19.♗g5 ♙xg2 20.♗xg2 ♗c6+ 21.♗g1 e5 22.♙a1 h6 23.♗f3 ♗e6 24.b4 ♗d4 25.♙xd4 cxd4 26.♗b3 ♙dc7 27.♗b2 ♗e4 28.♗a4 ♗b7 29.♙c2 ♙f6 30.♙dc1 ♗c5 31.♗xc5 dxc5 32.♙b1 e4 33.♗e1 cxb4 34.axb4 ♗c6 35.c5 ♗b5 36.♗d5 ♙e8 37.♙a2 ♙d7 38.♗b3 d3 39.exd3 exd3 40.♙d2 ♙g5 41.f4 ♙f6 42.♗xd3 ♙e3 43.♙bd1 ♙d4 44.♗f1 ♙xc5 45.♗g2 ♙b6 46.h4 ♗c6+ 47.♗h3 ♗f3 48.♙g2 ♙exd3 0–1

Timman, Jan H (2630) - Karpov, Anatoly (2730) [E15]

Paris Immopar rapid Paris (2), 1991

1.d4 ♖f6 2.c4 e6 3.♗f3 b6 4.g3 ♙a6 5.♗bd2 ♙b7 6.♙g2 d5 7.cxd5 exd5 8.0–0 ♙e7 9.♗a4+ ♗d7 10.♗c2 0–0 11.♗e5 ♗c8 12.b3 c5 13.♙b2 ♗a6 14.♙ac1 ♗b4 15.♗b1 ♗e6 16.♙fe1 ♙ac8 17.e3 cxd4 18.exd4 ♙xc1 19.♙xc1 ♙c8 20.a3 ♙xc1+ 21.♗xc1 ♗c6 22.b4 h6 23.♗c2 ♗c8 24.♗d3 ♙f8 25.♗f1 ♗d8 26.♗e3 ♗e6 27.h4 ♗e8 28.♙f3 ♗c7 29.♗c2 ♗b5 30.♗b3 ♗e6 31.♗d3 ♙d6 32.a4 ♗c7 33.♗c5 bxc5 34.bxc5 ♙xg3 35.fxg3 ♙c6 36.♙c1 ♗d7 37.♗b8+ ♗h7 38.♗xa7 ♙xa4 39.♗g2 ♙c6 40.♙f4 ♗b5 41.♗xd7 ♗xd7 42.♙e3 g5 43.hxg5 hxg5 44.♗e1 f5 45.♗c2 ♗c3 46.♙xg5 ♗e4 47.♙f4 ♙b5 48.♗e3 ♗ef6 49.♗xf5 ♙d3 50.♗e7 ♙c4 51.c6 ♗b6 52.c7 ♙a6 53.♙e5 ♗e4 54.♙g4 ♗h6 55.c8♗ 1–0

In 1985 Timman won the Taxco Interzonal to qualify for the Candidates Matches for the first time. He ended up losing to Artur Yusupov in the first round. His next attempt saw him win the 1987 Tilburg Interzonal. Timman then faced and won against Valery Salov, Lajos Portisch, and Jonathan Speelman. His run ended against Anatoly Karpov in the finale. In 1993 he reached the final round, having defeated Robert Hübner, Viktor Korchnoi, and Artur

Yusupov, but lost to Nigel Short. When Kasparov and Short decided to play outside the auspices of FIDE, Timman became eligible to compete against Karpov for the 1993 FIDE world title. Even though he lost by a score of 12.5-8.5 this was Timman's pinnacle as a player.

Karpov, Anatoly (2760) - Timman, Jan H (2620) [E15]

FIDE-Wch NED/INA (2), 1993

1.d4 ♖f6 2.c4 e6 3.♗f3 b6 4.g3 ♖a6 5.b3 ♖b4+ 6.♖d2 ♖e7 7.♖g2 c6 8.♖c3 d5 9.♗e5 ♗f7 10.♗x7 ♗x7 11.♗d2 0-0 12.0-0 ♖c8 13.e4 b5 14.♖e1 dxe4 15.c5 f5 16.f3 b4 17.♖xb4 ♗e5 18.♖c3 ♗d3 19.fxe4 ♗xe1 20.♗xe1 e5 21.♗f3 exd4 22.♖xd4 fxe4 23.♗xe4 ♖f6 24.♖e1 ♖e8 25.♖xf6 ♖xe4 26.♖xd8 ♖xe1+ 27.♗xe1 ♖xd8 28.♖xc6 ♖d1 29.♗f2 ♖d2+ 30.♗f3 ♖xa2 31.h4 ♗f8 32.♗f4 ♗e7 33.♗f3 ♖f2 34.h5 ♖e2 35.♗e3 ♖xf3 36.♖xf3 ♖b2 37.♖d5 ♖c2 38.♗d4 ♖h2 39.g4 ♖h3 40.♗e5 ♖e3+ 41.♗f4 ♖c3 42.c6 ♗d6 43.♖g8 h6 44.♗f5 ♖xc6 45.♗g6 ♗e5+ 46.♗xg7 ♗f4 0-1

Karpov, Anatoly (2760) - Timman, Jan H (2620) [A33]

FIDE-Wch NED/INA (20), 1993

1.♗f3 c5 2.c4 ♗c6 3.♗c3 ♗f6 4.d4 cxd4 5.♗xd4 e6 6.a3 ♗xd4 7.♗xd4 b6 8.♖f4 ♖c5 9.♗d2 0-0 10.♖d1 ♖b7 11.♖d6 ♖xd6 12.♗xd6 ♖c8 13.e3 ♖e8 14.f3 ♖c6 15.♗d4 ♖a6 16.♗e4 ♗xe4 17.♗xe4 ♗c7 18.♖d3 g6 19.b3 d5 20.cxd5 ♖xd3 21.♗xd3 exd5 22.♗f2 ♖c3 23.♗xd5 ♖cxe3 24.♖d2 ♗e7 25.♗g3 ♖xb3 26.a4 ♖b4 27.♖d4 ♖xd4 28.♗xd4 ♗g5+ 29.♗h3 ♖e2 30.♖g1 ♗h5+ 31.♗g3 ♗g5+ 32.♗h3 ♖d2 33.♗c3 ♖a2 34.♗d4 h6 35.♗c4 ♗h5+ 36.♗g3 ♗e5+ 37.♗h3 ♖d2 38.♗h4 ♗f5+ 39.♗g3 g5 40.♗xh6 ♗f4+ 0-1

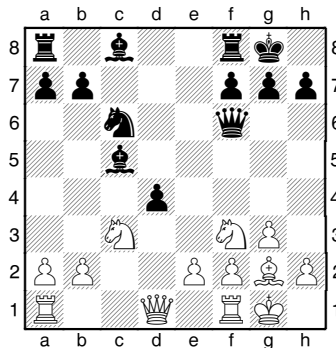
As when Robert Hübner passed, I reminisced about receiving the *Informator* in the mail when I was young and immediately looking at the crosstables in the back to see how the players fared. I did this countless times for Timman as well.

According to Timman his best novelty was in the Tarrasch: 12.♗d5!

Timman, Jan H (2590) - Ivkov, Borislav (2510) [D34]

Geneva (5), 1977

1.d4 d5 2.c4 e6 3.♗c3 c5 4.cxd5 exd5 5.♗f3 ♗c6 6.g3 ♗f6 7.♖g2 ♖e7 8.0-0 0-0 9.dxc5 ♖xc5 10.♖g5 d4 11.♖xf6 ♗xf6

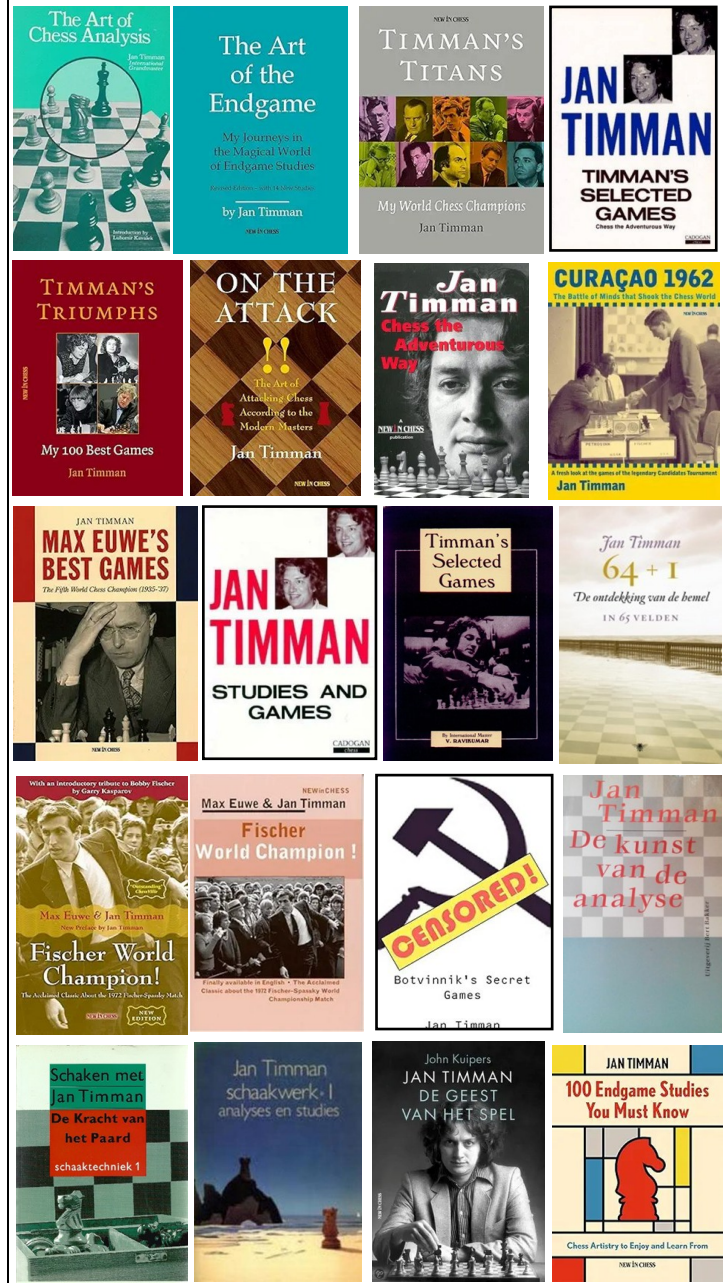


12.♗d5 (normally played was 12.♗e4. This novelty has been repeated well over 800 times now.) ♗d8 13.♗d2 ♖e8

14.♖c1 ♖d6 15.♗b3 ♖e5 16.♗c5 ♖b8 17.♗a4 ♖d6 18.♖f1 ♖xc5 19.♖xc5 ♗d6 20.b4 ♖d7 21.♗f4 a6 22.♖d5 ♗e7 23.a3 ♖ed8 24.♗c2 ♖e8 25.♗d2 ♖xd5 26.♗xd5 ♗e5 27.e4 dxe3 28.♖xe3 ♗d4 29.♗e1 ♖d7 30.♗f4 ♗f6 31.♗d2 ♖e6 32.♗e1 ♗f8 33.♗xe6+ ♗g8 34.♗c5 ♗f8 35.♖e8+ 1-0

Sometimes the pen is mightier than the sword and this was true of Timman. Even though he was quite the competitor, he was as much so or more of an influence as an author and editor. His contributions to chess journalism and his role as editor of *New In Chess* magazine further strengthened his impact on the game.

Some of his books:



I am sure I have missed a few, especially the non-English books. These books and his analyses have deepened chess knowledge around the world and, no doubt, will continue to inspire countless others.

A testimonial: "And beyond the board, there was another dimension of Timman that I deeply appreciated. His book *Timman's Titans* is, in my opinion, one of the finest modern chess works. In it, he did not simply annotate games. He brought the great champions of the past to life. Through his reflections on players like Mikhail Botvinnik, Mikhail Tal and Korchnoi, you feel a dialogue across generations. It is a journey through chess history written by someone who truly understood its soul." – Arthur Kogan, *In Memory of Jan Timman*, internet.

For me, his *The Art of Analysis*, Curaçao 1962, and *Timman's Titans* have been the most influential. I really enjoyed his *Max Euwe's Best Games*, as well. The analysis is so clear.

Besides game analysis, Timman was a composer of chess studies. I've not ventured into these, but, as others have attested, his work is magnificent.

New In Chess is one of if not the premier chess magazine in the world. Timman was the editor for most of its history. This is another way he enhanced world chess culture, in addition to his own playing and composing.

In 2025, he was inducted into the World Chess Hall of Fame in Saint Louis, honoring a lifetime devoted to the game.

Jan Timman's legacy will forever remain a part of chess history. What better chess ambassador could there be?

Timman, Jan H (2585) - Karpov, Anatoly (2725) [D35]

Bugojno Bugojno (5), 03.03.1978

1.c4 e6 2.ϳc3 d5 3.d4 ϳe7 4.cxd5 exd5 5.ϳf4 ϳf6 6.e3 0-0 7.ϳc2 c6 8.ϳd3 ϳe8 9.ϳf3 ϳbd7 10.0-0-0 ϳf8 11.h3 ϳe6 12.ϳb1 ϳc8 13.ϳg5 b5 14.ϳe5 h6 15.ϳxe6 ϳxe6 16.g4 ϳd7 17.h4 b4 18.ϳe2 ϳxh4 19.f4 c5 20.ϳa6 ϳe7 21.ϳxc8 ϳxc8 22.ϳg3 f6 23.ϳxh6 ϳef8 24.ϳh3 c4 25.ϳf5 fxe5 26.fxe5 ϳc6 27.ϳdh1 ϳg6 28.ϳd6 ϳdf8 29.ϳxe8 ϳxe8 30.ϳh5 ϳc6 31.ϳf5 a5 32.e6 ϳxe6 33.ϳxd5 a4 34.ϳc1 c3 35.bxc3 bxc3 36.ϳxc3 ϳxd5 37.ϳxd5 ϳe6 38.ϳc2 ϳf7 39.ϳa5 ϳg5 40.ϳc6 ϳe4 41.ϳxa4 ϳf6 42.ϳa7 ϳd5 43.ϳxg6 ϳxg6 44.e4 ϳb4+ 45.ϳb3 ϳf8 46.ϳb7 1-0

Karpov, Anatoly (2725) - Timman, Jan H (2600) [B64]

Buenos Aires Buenos Aires, 1980

1.e4 c5 2.ϳf3 d6 3.d4 cxd4 4.ϳxd4 ϳf6 5.ϳc3 ϳc6 6.ϳg5 e6 7.ϳd2 ϳe7 8.0-0-0 0-0 9.f4 h6 10.ϳh4 ϳd7 11.ϳf3 ϳa5 12.ϳe1 ϳfd8 13.e5 dxe5 14.fxe5 ϳh7 15.ϳxe7 ϳxe7 16.ϳd3 ϳc6 17.ϳf1 ϳf8 18.ϳh4 ϳd5 19.ϳf2 ϳe8 20.ϳxd5 ϳxd5 21.ϳb1 ϳxe5 22.ϳf3 ϳd5 23.g4 ϳc5 24.ϳe2 ϳad8 25.ϳd2 ϳb5 26.ϳxb5 ϳxb5 27.c4 ϳa6 28.ϳxf7 ϳxd2 29.ϳxf8+ ϳxf8 30.ϳxd2 ϳxd2 31.ϳxd2 ϳxc4 32.ϳd8+ ϳf7 33.ϳd7+ ϳf6 34.ϳd8+ ϳg6 35.h3 ϳe4+ 36.ϳc1 ϳc6+ 37.ϳb1 ϳd5 38.ϳe8+ ϳg5 39.ϳe7+ ϳf4 40.a3 ϳd1+ 41.ϳa2 ϳd5+ 42.ϳa1 ϳh1+ 43.ϳa2 ϳd5+ 44.ϳa1 g5 45.ϳf6+ ϳg3 46.ϳxh6 b6 47.ϳh7 ϳd4 48.ϳh6 ϳd1+ 49.ϳa2 ϳd5+ 50.ϳa1 a5 51.ϳh7 ϳd4 52.ϳh6 ϳd1+ 53.ϳa2 ϳd5+ 54.ϳa1 b5 55.h4 gxh4 56.g5 b4 57.axb4 axb4 58.b3 ϳe5+ 59.ϳa2 ϳe2+ 60.ϳb1 ϳe3 0-1

Seirawan, Yasser (2570) - Timman, Jan H (2640) [A36]

Candidates Tournament Montpellier Montpellier (12), 10.1985

1.c4 g6 2.ϳc3 c5 3.g3 ϳg7 4.ϳg2 ϳc6 5.a3 a6 6.ϳb1 ϳb8 7.ϳa4 d6 8.b4 ϳf5 9.ϳxc6+ bxc6 10.ϳxc6+ ϳd7 11.ϳxa6 ϳxc3 12.dxc3 ϳf6 13.ϳf3 ϳa8 14.ϳb7 ϳb8 15.ϳa6 0-0 16.ϳh6 ϳa8 17.ϳb7 ϳb8 18.ϳa6 ϳe8 19.0-0 ϳa8 20.ϳb7 ϳb8 21.ϳa7 ϳa8 22.ϳb7 ϳf5 23.ϳa1 ϳe4 24.ϳb5 ϳc8 25.bxc5 ϳh3 26.ϳe3 ϳeb8 27.c6 ϳxb5 28.cxb5 ϳg4 29.ϳfb1 ϳxf3 30.exf3 ϳxh2 0-1

Timman, Jan H (2630) - Korchnoj, Viktor (2610) [C63]

Candidates qf2 Brussels (3), 1991

1.e4 e5 2.ϳf3 ϳc6 3.ϳb5 f5 4.ϳc3 fxe4 5.ϳxe4 ϳf6 6.ϳe2 d5 7.ϳxf6+ gxf6 8.d4 ϳg7 9.dxe5 0-0 10.e6 ϳe8 11.0-0 ϳxe6 12.ϳd3 ϳd6 13.ϳe3 a6 14.ϳxc6 ϳxc6 15.ϳd4 ϳd7 16.ϳxe6 ϳxe6 17.ϳad1 ϳad8 18.ϳd4 ϳd6 19.c3 a5 20.h3 b6 21.ϳe3 c5 22.ϳfe1 ϳe7 23.ϳe2 ϳe6 24.ϳb5 ϳd6 25.ϳed2 ϳd8 26.b4 axb4 27.cxb4 d4 28.bxc5 bxc5 29.ϳxc5 ϳd5 30.ϳc4 ϳa5 31.ϳxd4 ϳxa2 32.ϳd8+ ϳf7 33.ϳxa2 ϳxa2 34.ϳc5 ϳb7 35.ϳe1 ϳg6 36.ϳd3+ f5 37.ϳg3+ ϳf7 38.ϳf3 1-0

Carlsen, Magnus (2484) - Timman, Jan H (2578) [B46]

Reykjavik op 21st Reykjavik (2), 08.03.2004

1.e4 c5 2.ϳf3 ϳc6 3.d4 cxd4 4.ϳxd4 e6 5.ϳc3 a6 6.g3 ϳg6 7.ϳb3 d6 8.ϳg2 ϳd7 9.0-0 ϳc8 10.a4 ϳe7 11.ϳe2 0-0 12.ϳe3 ϳa5 13.ϳxa5 ϳxa5 14.ϳd2 ϳc7 15.ϳe2 ϳf6 16.c3 ϳd8 17.f4 ϳb8 18.g4 b5 19.g5 ϳe7 20.a5 d5 21.f5 dxe4 22.f6 ϳc5 23.ϳh1 ϳc6 24.ϳc1 ϳxe3 25.ϳxe3 ϳd3 26.ϳg1 ϳd6 27.ϳf4 ϳf3 28.ϳad1 ϳc4 29.ϳc5 ϳxa5 30.ϳh5 ϳb7 31.ϳa7 g6 32.ϳg3 ϳxf1+ 33.ϳxf1 a5 34.ϳg3 ϳd8 35.ϳxd8+ ϳxd8 36.ϳxe4 ϳxe4+ 37.ϳxe4 ϳd5 38.ϳg1 h6 39.ϳa8+ ϳd8 40.ϳxd5 exd5 41.ϳd6 hxg5 42.ϳxb5 ϳc6 43.ϳf2 ϳe5 44.ϳg3 a4 45.ϳc7 ϳc4 46.ϳxd5 ϳxb2 47.ϳb4 ϳh7 48.ϳf3 ϳh6 49.ϳe4 g4 50.ϳd5 a3 51.ϳd6 g5 0-1

Timman, Jan H (2578) - Short, Nigel D (2707) [C03]

Trans Europa Schach Express Potsdam (5.3), 13.10.2012

1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5 3.ϳd2 h6 4.ϳg3 ϳf6 5.e5 ϳfd7 6.c3 c5 7.ϳd3 ϳc6 8.0-0 g5 9.h3 h5 10.ϳe1 g4 11.hxg4 hxg4 12.ϳh2 cxd4 13.cxd4 g3 14.fxg3 ϳxd4 15.ϳdf3 ϳc5 16.ϳe3 ϳxf3+ 17.gxf3 ϳxe3+ 18.ϳxe3 ϳb6 19.ϳd2 ϳxe5 20.ϳg2 ϳc6 21.ϳg4 ϳd4 22.ϳc1 ϳd7 23.ϳf2 ϳg7 24.ϳee1 ϳd8 25.ϳb5 f5 26.ϳxc6 fxg4 27.ϳxd7 ϳxd7 28.fxg4 ϳaf8 29.ϳe2 ϳh6 30.ϳb5+ ϳd8 31.ϳc5 ϳf7 32.ϳc8+ ϳe7 33.ϳc7+ ϳd6 34.ϳd8+ ϳd7 35.ϳxd7+ ϳxd7 36.ϳf8+ 1-0

You will be missed.

"Half the variations which are calculated in a tournament game turn out to be completely superfluous. Unfortunately, no one knows in advance which half."
—Jan Timman

In the *Limelight*: Ilan Rubin

Interview by Mark Capron



Playing at a tournament in Kent, July 2025, photo taken by the event TD and my friend Satish Gaekwad.

Ilan Rubin is the owner of [Elk and Ruby Publishing House](#). Ilan was nice enough to take time out from his busy publishing schedule to do this interview. His story is quite fascinating.

Please tell us a little bit about yourself and your family.

I was born in Glasgow, Scotland, in 1971. We moved to Canterbury in the south of England when I was four. My brother Gareth, now a novelist, was born shortly after. Many years later my sister was born from my father's second marriage. She works for the police in a civilian role. I was at high school in Canterbury, where I first started learning French and Russian. I then took a degree in French and Russian at Trinity College, University of Cambridge. After graduation I stayed there for another year, taking an MPhil in History, with a thesis on the Russian revolution. My supervisor was Orlando Figes, who was on the cusp of publishing his famous book *A People's Tragedy*. I left university in 1996, got a job working in a private company that traded with Russia, then another one, then wound up in Moscow, Russia, in 1998. There I met my future wife, a Russian, and we had two children, a boy who will be 23 by the time you read this and a girl who is now nearly 16.

When did you begin playing chess? And who taught you?

I think I was six. Apparently, my parents taught me (I remember them very occasionally playing chess against each other), though I have no recollection of that process. I soon joined Canterbury Junior Chess Club, which was run by volunteers, above all Dr. John Dore, a Kent University lecturer in Physics. Dr. Dore was a colleague of my Dad, who lectured in law at the same university and eventually became a professor of Law there. Funnily enough, I am now back at Canterbury Junior Chess Club where I help look after the kids. John, now in his 80s, has long retired, but Dr. Owen Lyne, who has been my friend since we were five, runs the club. My daughter attends the club too.



Kent Under 11 team, 1983. I'm at the back in the right-hand corner. Future GM Matthew Sadler with the long hair is standing in front of me.

What are a few of your chess playing highlights?

I played in junior tournaments in Kent and played for Kent junior teams. The future Grandmaster Matthew Sadler was my local contemporary (I am two years older). When I was 14 and he was 12 I beat him in a rapid-play tourney. But he beat me on the other four or five occasions that we played.

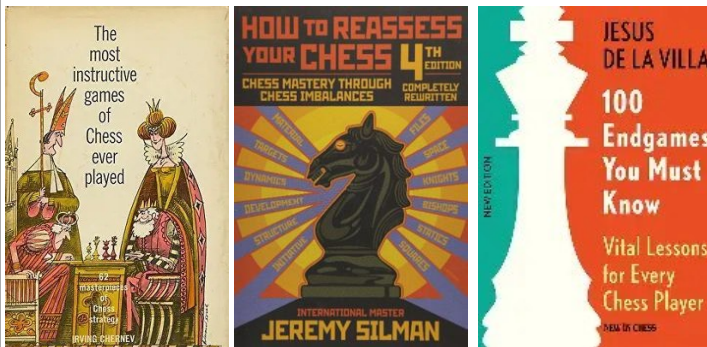
I captained my school, Simon Langton Boys Grammar, to become Kent champions in my final two years.

Then while I was at Cambridge University I played in a 'pint-a-point' tournament, a six-round five minute per player Swiss (we had not yet adopted increments, I think it was in 1993). I had scored 2/5, meaning that I had also drunk at least two pints of beer – as the points won on the board didn't count unless you consumed a commensurate amount of beer – and because of the smallish number of players I found myself paired in the final round against none other than Peter Wells, then an IM and soon after a GM. He was on 5/5, meaning he probably didn't know what day it was anymore. I remember I had two queens on the board and I flagged him. My victory was witnessed by his girlfriend at the time, future WIM Natasha Regan. So, my greatest achievements were witnessed – and felt – by both *Game Changer* authors, Sadler and Regan...

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

I remember my first few. The one that I studied the most in childhood was probably Irving Chernev's *The Most Instructive Games of Chess Ever Played*. But I didn't have that much talent for the game and the sort of book that these

days really helps people, like Silman's *How to Reassess Your Chess*, didn't exist in those days, or if it did then I didn't know about it. It was the same with endgames; I bought all of Averbakh's endgame books and would doze off after trying to read the first page. Today's instruction books, like Jesus de la Villa's endgame books, are far



more accessible, as they explain in words what you are actually trying to do. I gave up playing chess more or less altogether for about 30 years from the mid-1990s, yet today at the age of 54 I'm sure I play much better than I did as a junior, because the instruction books are massively better. I love the game today far more than I did as a junior, having gotten back to playing competitively a few years ago. You read the books and you get motivated because you understand and learn things, rather than getting demoralized because you feel like the author is talking to you as though you're already a GM, which is what I felt when trying to work with Averbakh's books.

What are some of your favorite chess books?

From early childhood I was really interested in history, politics, and the Soviet Union. My favorite chess books were Ray Keene's books on the Karpov-Korchnoi, Kasparov-Korchnoi and Kasparov-Karpov matches. Much more for the historical narrative than for the game commentary. Kotov's book *Think Like a Grandmaster* helped a bit, in terms of planning, candidate moves, calculation and reducing blunders. But it's a controversial book and it would be pointless to read now when today's books are so much better.



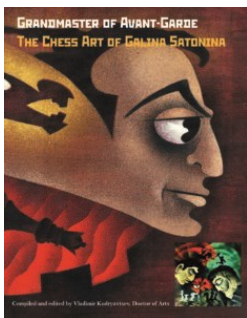
I think many of our generation grew up with these books. As I've mentioned the Korchnoi-Karpov book is one of my favorites.



With former world champion Anatoly Karpov, Moscow, 2008.

What led you to start Elk and Ruby Publishing House in 2017?

In 2001, after living in Moscow for three years, I joined an investment boutique that was later merged into Deutsche Bank. I had been studying for a distance-learning MBA since 2000, and I also passed the CFA level 1 exam at my first attempt in 2005. I worked at Deutsche Bank until 2014, when some idiot in the Kremlin decided it would be fun to annex Crimea, launch a war in the Donbas and shoot down a civilian aeroplane. The subsequent sanctions killed off investment banking in Russia. Until then I had been working in mergers and acquisitions in the financial services sector (mostly foreign banks and insurance companies buying Russian banks and insurance companies) and it was a lucrative business. We call it "the good ol' days". The compensation matched bankers' earnings anywhere in the world, and the tax rate was just 13%. No that's not a typo. Thirteen percent. Life was good. I then worked one more year in M&A, at Ernst and Young, also in Moscow, but by then it was clear that the market was dead. Nobody was investing in Russia anymore (which was totally sensible as we now know) and suddenly compensation was terribly low. I gave up and went back to working as a linguist, which I had done in my first three years in Russia. One day I answered an advert for a translator of chess books from Russian to English, with a requirement that only native English speakers were needed. I called the number and found myself talking to Murad Amannazarov, the owner of Russian Chess House, which is probably today the biggest chess book publisher in the world, at least outside China (I have no knowledge of the Chinese chess publishing world). So, I translated a few books for him and then figured out that I could also publish books myself, using print-on-demand technology. One thing led to another and here I am. Murad and I remain good friends and work together on some projects. For example, the book I published on the paintings of Galina



Satonina is the translation of a book that he originally commissioned in Russian.

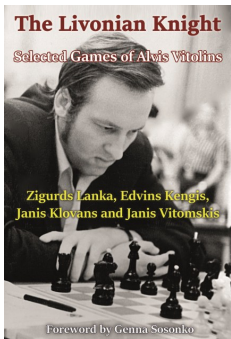
Is chess publishing your main occupation or do you do anything else for a living?

At first it began as a hobby, but in the last few years it has evolved into a full-time job. Work as a “Russian linguist” has pretty much dried up, mostly due to the war in Ukraine, but also due to AI’s now very strong translation and editing capabilities.

We moved back to England – and back to Canterbury, near my parents – shortly after the invasion of Ukraine in 2022. The day the invasion happened was the worst day of my life. I realized that the world had changed forever. Russia changed overnight from a country where you could more or less say anything to a country where you could more or less say nothing. Despite living there for 24 years, speaking the language fluently and obtaining citizenship, I stopped saying anything at all, even in supermarkets. I would no longer ask the shop staff where to find food items I needed. The anti-Western, including anti-British propaganda, was brutal. People got brainwashed quickly. I saw it in my in-laws, even in some ex-banking colleagues. The current prime minister, Mikhail Mishustin, worked for the same boutique that I did for a while, though our paths never crossed. The current number two at the Russian Central Bank, Alexei Zobotkin, was somebody I worked with closely for several years. I can’t explain it, somebody sane and smart and with a totally “pro-western” outlook oiling the cogs of war.

Is this your dream job?

Kind of, yeah. Living the dream, working in my hobby. It doesn’t make megabucks, but we’re pretty comfortable. In the “good ol’ days”, when I worked in banking, my wife and I built up quite the property portfolio in Russia. After the war ends, we’ll liquidate it, I guess. That makes the job much easier. I wouldn’t recommend somebody to publish chess books without such a ‘cushion’. It’s too risky financially.



But honestly, as long as the war continues, I don’t get much pleasure out of anything. Let me tell you: I published the book [The Livonian Knight: Selected Games of Alvis Vitolins](#). One of the co-authors was Grandmaster Zigurds Lanka. Well, Zigurds had a stepson, a medic in Kyiv, the son of Zigurds’s Ukrainian wife, Nina (a former Olympic

gymnast), who lives with him in Latvia. Her son, a medic, was killed on the frontlines in the first year of the war. Or take Sergei Tkachenko, my Ukrainian author from Odesa. Sergei’s son is a career officer, who has been fighting against the Russian invaders since 2014. Recently he got horrible blast injuries and was hospitalized for many months. He has suffered a personality change as a result. It’s become very hard on Sergei, who has been living with his wife as virtual refugees with their daughter’s family in Germany.



With my friend FM Janis Grasis at the grave of IM Alvis Vitolins, photo taken by my friend Visvaldis Gercans, Segulda, Latvia, March 2022.

Elk and Ruby’s web site says that you have published about 90 books. Do you have something special in store for the 100th book?

I have now surpassed 100 (and updated my web site!). My old boss at Deutsche Bank, Dan Jacobowitz, would always say: “You are only as good as your next deal”. So let’s say “You’re only as good as your next book”.

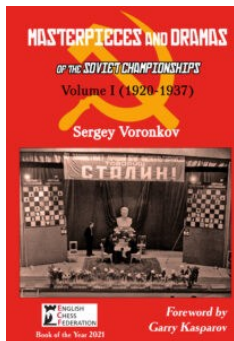
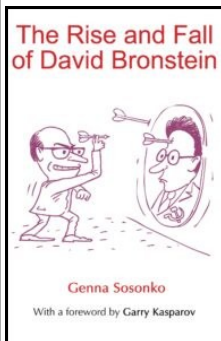
Do you ever need to spend time at places like the Hague library? What other fun places have you visited to do research for a book?

I have a clear division of responsibility with my authors, and that includes all historical research being conducted

by them, not me. I'm here to help, and I have the right background for that, of course, but if I were to get involved in the historical research side of things then I would never have time to edit the books, and so nothing would get published. I am making one exception this year—I will travel to Cleveland to research Bloodgood (see page 16).

Who is your favorite player and what makes them special to you?

Garry Kasparov. He was the rebel who took on a system and won, against all the odds, while playing aggressive Sicilians and King's Indians to boot. He was willing to speak his mind in so many areas. He was one of the first anti-Putin dissidents, pointing out crimes which western governments and investors spent years denying. I named my son after him. I was a guest of his late mother a couple of times in Moscow. She was charmed by the fact that I'd named my son Garry. It was a dream come true to collaborate with Kasparov on some of my books – he wrote the forewords to Genna Sosonko's [The Rise and Fall of David Bronstein](#) and Sergey Voronkov's [Masterpieces and Dramas of the Soviet Championships: Volume I \(1920-1937\)](#), and he was a guest analyst in Doran Rogozenco's [Eight Good Men: The 2020-2021 Candidates Tournament](#).



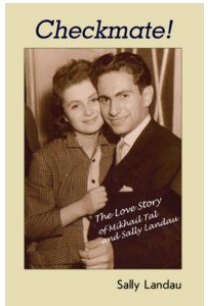
With my author and friend GM Genna Sosonko, chess journalists Evgeny Surov and Eteri Kublashvili, FIDE VP Mahir Mammedov and a friend, Tbilisi 2017.

Where do you do most of your work and is there anything special about the location?

I work from home in my apartment in Canterbury. In some ways, Elk and Ruby is just me and a desk. In Russia I have a five-story mansion in the countryside, but I haven't been there in four years. There I have an entire floor that is basically my study. But I don't need it. To quote Murray Head's fantastic song *One Night in Bangkok* from the musical *Chess* – "I get my kicks above the waistline". My pleasure is all in my head, not from the size of my residence.

Which of your books has turned out to be your favorite and why?

So many to choose from. So many incredible stories. Genna Sosonko's *The Rise and Fall of David Bronstein*, Sally Landau's [Checkmate! The Love Story of Mikhail Tal and Sally Landau](#), and Sergey Voronkov's *Masterpieces and Dramas of the Soviet Championships* series. You think these are "chess books", but they're so much more. They're real history, political, social and individual. Broken dreams, tragedy, the struggle of the little man or woman to live their own lives faced with some of the world's most powerful forces.



At Mikhail Tal's grave, 2018, photo taken by Alexei Shirov.

Which of your books have the best sales and any thoughts as to why they have done so well?

My absolute best sellers have been Sergey Voronkov's *Masterpieces and Dramas of the Soviet Championships* volumes. When I first contracted for them, I knew that they were good, but I had no particular expectations. Chess history books normally don't sell that well. To some extent, I just wanted to be a dog in the manger – to publish them to prevent my competitors from enjoying that pleasure! But there have been fantastic reviews, as there should have been, and of course the first volume won the English Chess Federation Book of the Year prize, which certainly helps. I plan to publish this series in Spanish this year as well and the second volume in Spanish is already in the shops.



With my author and friend WGM Maria Manakova at Rochester, England, June 2025.



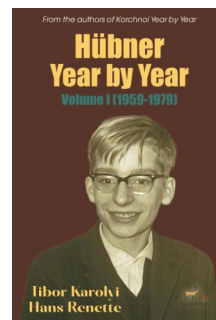
With GM Peter Heine Nielsen and my daughter Alina in Canterbury, 2024.

You have been working on improving your knowledge of other languages. Which languages are you fluent in and which ones are you currently working in?

After chess, my other hobby is learning languages, that's true. I'm a huge fan of Duolingo. I have been using it to improve my Polish, which I learned a bit at university but hardly used since. I'm now on level 19, taking it slow. We speak Russian at home, so no need to practice that language in the app. I use it to practice my French, currently level 76, but my real level is much higher, I just don't use the Jump function much. I've been learning Spanish, German and Scottish Gaelic all from scratch, now at levels 25, 21 and 11, respectively. And I completed its limited Ukrainian course over a year ago, so now I practice Ukrainian by reading news articles. I try to study all languages a bit each day, one hour in total, as well as spending an hour on chess improvement, above all endgames.

When I went to University, I signed up for a class in German. My reason was so I could read German chess books. Did this desire (for more languages) come from chess or just an inherent want for more knowledge?

Definitely nothing to do with chess. Just languages for languages' sake. My next plan is to learn some Anglo-Saxon, at least to be able to read *Beowulf* in the original, but currently there aren't enough hours in the day. Here I am writing my answers to your questions at 3am because it's the only time I have...



You recently published a book about the late Robert Hübner. As a linguist do you have any comments about Hübner's mastery of multiple languages?

There are some people who spend every waking hour trying to better themselves. It's a rare phenomenon to have such motivation, but clearly he had it.

Learning languages is a somewhat mechanical exercise to an extent, just like learning the piano, or endgames, or pawn structures or whatever. You get out of it what you put in.



With the Polgar sisters at Batumi Dolphinarium, Sep 2018, taken by David Llada, a good friend of mine.



With GM Alexei Shirov (2nd left), Vladimirs Dedkovs, grandson of the great Latvian player Vladimirs Petrovs (3rd from left), FM Janis Grasis (4th from right) and friends, Riga, March 2022.

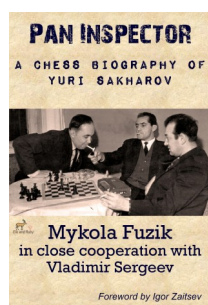
Anything potential authors should know before sending you an enquiry?

Firstly, I have a huge pipeline already. I have enough books at various stages of production, plus my own ideas and authors with ideas, to last me for years to come. So, I only take on new projects if they are really special. Well, if your name is Magnus Carlsen or Garry Kasparov, I might squeeze you in...

Secondly, I'm only interested in absolutely original material. If it's an opening or endgame book, then only if there is a real gap in the market. Another book on the French Winawer or rook endings is just not for me... And if you fancy yourself as an amateur historian, then the work had better be entirely original. Secondary history books are not for Elk and Ruby, they don't fit our brand.

If you could provide one piece of advice to help others improve their writing, what would it be?

Make sure you use ChessBase for all chess notation. Writers often don't do that at first, and I have to point out to them the inevitable typos in their notation in the manuscript, because they entered the variations by hand. Just don't.



What new projects are you currently working on and when might we see them?

Lots on the way. Yuri Sakharov (which should be published by the time you are reading this), Sir George Thomas, Jacques Mieses, Lev Polugaevsky, Claude F. Bloodgood III, as well as 2nd and sometimes 3rd and 4th volumes of ongoing series on Alekhine, Capablanca, Hubner...

I am really excited about those!!

What would your dream project be to do?

Magnus's autobiography, of course. He knows how to find me

Thank you. Anything you would like to add for our readers?

Support the little man, not the big corporation or the monopolist. If you want to buy my books consider buying them from my website, rather than from Amazon. My books are usually cheaper on my website anyway.

A few more pictures:

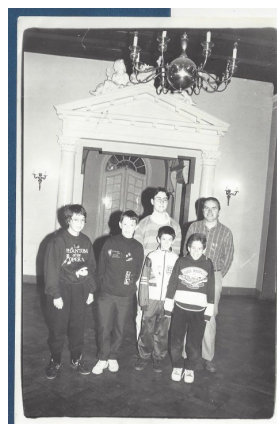


With my friend and author GM Dorian Rogozenco in Moscow at a Georgian restaurant, March 2018.



With Levon Aronian, Erevan, 2019. (above left)

With FM Luis Fernández Siles taken in June 2025 at his home near Granada, Spain. (above right)



With former FIDE Finance Director David Jarrett, future IM Richard Bates and other English juniors, Riga, 1990.



Resurfaced: El mundo del ajedrez entre avisos

(The Chess World Between Advertisements)

by Chris Martinez G

In my previous articles, I explored the games and voices found within a collection of Argentine chess magazines from the 1950s including annotated battles, the players, and the tone of a chess culture shaped through print. I also came to understand the methods used at the time to communicate across continents, and the role chess played in a world still finding its footing after World War II.

This time, however, my attention shifted elsewhere, while still holding onto that same sense of curiosity. Not to the games, but to the margins of the pages.

I began deliberately reading and paying closer attention to the advertisements. I found myself lingering on them longer than the games themselves.

These small sections, often overlooked, were not visually striking. They lacked the bold layouts and design flourishes seen in major publications of the time, particularly those coming out of cities like New York. Yet even the typography reflects its era: a mix of formal serif text for readability and bold display lettering for emphasis, giving the pages a quiet authority that feels both editorial and institutional.

These advertisements were part of the larger structure of the magazine extensions into the immediate world beyond the printed page. They are, in a sense, capsules of their time, offering glimpses into the surrounding environment, both near and far.

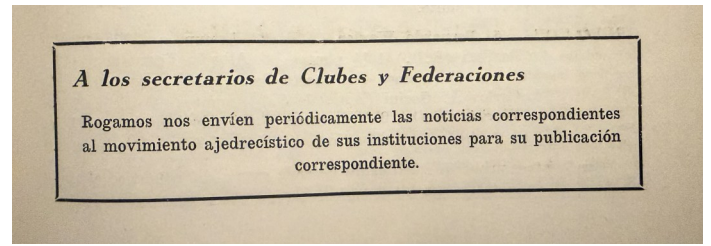
What I found there was something unexpected: “*algo inesperado*”. While the articles told the story of how chess was played, the advertisements revealed something deeper: how the chess world functioned, and how society moved alongside it.

Advertisements serve a simple purpose: to offer a service, to announce an event, to propose something for the reader’s attention. But as I moved through these pages, I began to see something more. These fragments of print begin to echo forward in time. One day, perhaps, our own publications will be read in the same way by future readers, or even machines trying to understand what it meant to live, to think, and to participate in the world of chess during our time.

In that sense, this exercise becomes more than observation. It becomes a way of looking back and, at the same time, a way of being seen.

The Magazine as a Living Network

One advertisement, directed at the secretaries of clubs and federations, invited them to send bulletins, updates, and notable correspondence about chess activity in their institutions. It was not simply a request; it was a call to participate.



The language itself is telling. The word “*Rogamos*” appears to be a term that can be translated as “we beg” or “we urge.” There is a sense of dependence in that phrasing, a recognition that the magazine relied on its readers for information. It was not operating from a position of instant access, but from one of collective contribution.

In that sense, the advertisement reveals something larger. It was not just asking for updates; it was building a system, an early form of what we might now think of as a regional database of chess activity. Clubs from cities like Mar del Plata, Mendoza, and across Argentina were being invited to contribute to a shared record of the game.

In that moment, the role of the magazine becomes clear. It was not simply reporting on chess. It was actively constructing a network.

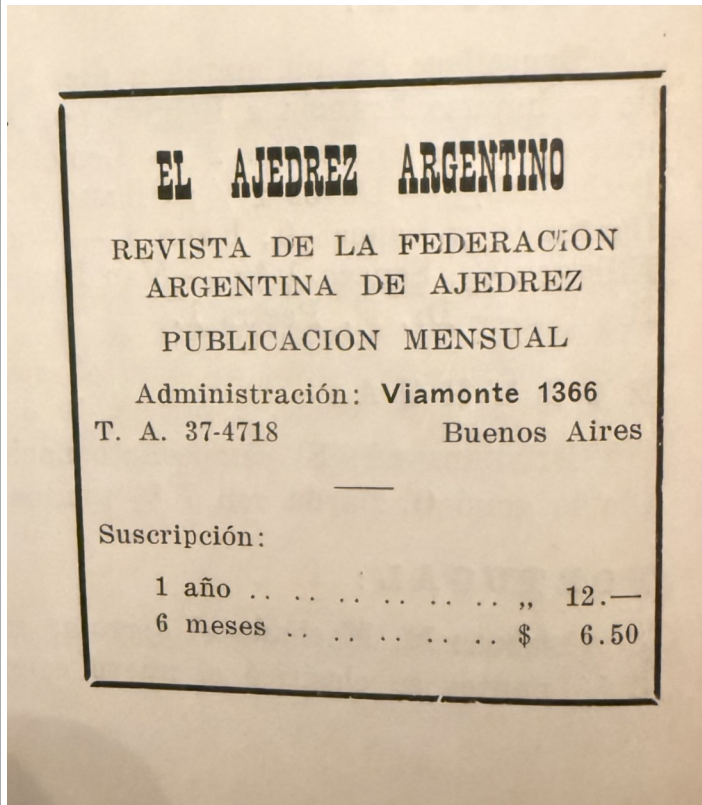
In the absence of instant communication, the magazine itself became the connective tissue of the chess world, a central hub where information was gathered, curated, and redistributed. Today, platforms like Chess.com or social media allow information to travel instantly. But in that earlier era, communication required intention. It required effort. It required participation.

The Subscription as Commitment

Another advertisement brought that idea into sharper focus — the magazine’s own subscription notice.

Printed plainly, it listed the cost at 12 pesos for a full year, or 6.50 for six months, along with an address at 1366 Viamonte Street in Buenos Aires and a telephone number. Out of curiosity, I searched for the address. To my sur-

prise, it now points to the Asociación del Fútbol Argentino, another institution deeply embedded in Argentine culture.



There is something striking about that discovery. Decades later, I find myself standing, at least digitally, at the same address once tied to this chess publication, now associated with a different passion. It is a quiet reminder that while the game of chess remains, the spaces it once occupied can shift, evolve, and be repurposed over time.

The notice also indicates that the magazine was published monthly, a reminder that print was the primary engine of communication throughout much of the 20th century. What appears at first to be a routine detail begins to take on greater meaning when viewed in context.

This was not simply a product. It was a commitment.

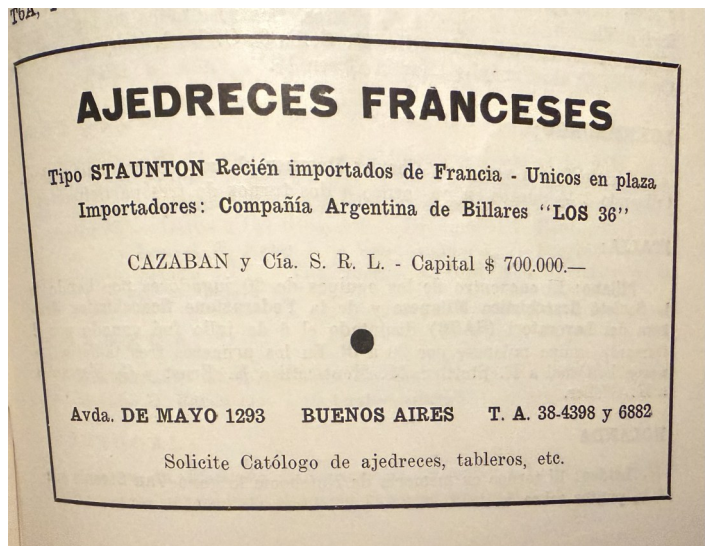
Subscribing meant choosing to stay connected, to receive games, news, and ideas not instantly, but patiently, one issue at a time. While exact currency conversions are difficult due to Argentina's evolving monetary history, what matters more is the intention behind the purchase. This was not convenient. It was participation in a shared chess culture.

The Marketplace of Chess

A different advertisement shifts the perspective once again, this time toward the marketplace.

An offering of French-style, Staunton chess pieces, recent-

ly imported and distributed by an Argentine company operating under the name "Los 36," speaks to the global nature of chess even in the mid-20th century. The advertisement includes a physical address, telephone numbers, and an invitation to request a catalog of chessboards, sets, and tables.



This was chess as commerce.

These advertisements reveal a world in which acquiring proper equipment was part of the journey. The mention of imported sets hints at prestige, influence, and perhaps even aspiration. Long before plastic pieces became widely accessible, and decades before modern technologies made production easier and more affordable, wooden chess sets carried a different kind of weight.

They were objects of craftsmanship. Often hand-carved, they reflected not only function, but care and intention. To own such a set was not merely to play the game, it was to participate in its culture. The Staunton design, already widely recognized, helped standardize the look of competitive play across countries, while still allowing for regional variation and identity.

In that sense, owning a well-crafted set was more than a practical decision. It was a statement about how one approached the game, and how one saw themselves within the chess world.

Order and Structure

Even the smallest advertisement carried weight.

*****Continued on Page 33 *****

*In the **Limelight**: David Llada*

Interview by Mark Capron



David Llada, photographer

Hello Mr. Llada, Please tell us a bit about yourself. Where did you grow up? Who taught you the game of chess?

I grew up in a very small, rural town in the north of Spain, in a beautiful region called Asturias. No one around me played chess, and my first contact with the game, which I remember vividly, was seeing a picture of the 1985 Kasparov-Karpov World Championship that I came across in a newspaper.

A few weeks later, probably not by coincidence, a teacher at school taught us how the pieces move. But that was it. From there, I had to learn everything by myself, and I started teaching others at an early age. By the time I was 13, I was already teaching chess to other kids!

How often do you get to play in tournaments, or do you mostly play online?

I don't really play that much, and I haven't played an official competitive game since the last century.

I don't have a very competitive nature, and I don't enjoy the stress that comes with playing a serious game of chess. There is already enough stress in daily life.

My pleasure comes from going through the games of grandmasters in books and videos. That's what I enjoy the most. Even analyzing an opening is, for me, a much more

gratifying activity than playing games. Nowadays, I only play online, since these days I work for www.chessclub.com, the good old ICC.

Your photographs can be found in almost any chess magazine, and you have become a household name in that field. How did you get started in photography? Do you mostly travel on your dime or do tournaments/federations pay to have you at their event?

I was a chess journalist and teacher for several years, and then I went into business and walked away from the game. But I missed chess events, the atmosphere, and my many friends. I visited a couple of tournaments as a spectator, and it felt awkward, like being a tourist. So, I decided to start bringing a camera with me and at least add something, to contribute in some way to the events.

Then I realized there was a demand for good photography at chess events. We had fantastic pictures from the 60s, the 70s, and the 80s, but somehow the quality declined after that, maybe because cameras became more accessible and suddenly everyone was a photographer. I found motivation in that, applied myself to it, and became a fairly decent photographer. I like to think I inspired others to follow and also set the bar for what should be the minimum quality. As I often say, chess cannot simply have photographers who are as good as those in other sports. We need to strive to have better photographers than other sports, because that would help close the gap in popularity.

Even though photography has always been a hobby for me, or a side hustle, I can't complain about the conditions I receive. Tournaments have realized the impact that professional photography has on how their events are perceived, and how happy it makes participants to get a great shot as a memory of the event. So even if I can only do four or five events per year, I receive dozens of proposals, with very reasonable professional fees. I take that as a sign of how chess has professionalized.

What are some of the largest changes in photo technology you have been through?

I am old enough to have experienced both worlds, analog and digital photography, and I think that makes me appreciate both. Digital cameras have come a long way, of course. When I first developed a serious interest in photography, around 2009, I acquired a Nikon D3. Released a couple of years earlier, it was the first full-frame (FX format) camera, with 12 megapixels packed into a professional DSLR body. I loved that machine.

In 2025, I got my third Nikon camera, its newest flagship, the Z9. While I still shoot in Manual mode, this is the first camera smart enough that I trust it with autofocus and exposure.

Did you find having to learn computer tools difficult/different from learning film or have you always been a digital photographer? The move to video/AI, does that take some of the joy from perfectly timed photo? Do you have a studio or office where you develop film, if you do that?

I have never developed film by myself. When it comes to editing, you can say I was born already in the digital era. I do enjoy the process of editing the pictures, even though it is time consuming – I usually spend twice as much time editing as shooting.

What is the most famous event you have photographed? Who would you say was the most famous person you have photographed? Which World Champions have you been able to photograph?

Well, I haven't done much photography outside of chess, but in our sport I have photographed basically everyone who has mattered over the past 25 years. I even have a couple of photos of Boris Spassky, with whom I spent some really nice moments. Karpov, Kasparov, Magnus, Ding, Gukesh... It has been quite a journey to document almost two decades of chess history.



Baku Olympiad, Round 8, NORWAY Magnus Carlsen, 2016-09-10.

Do you get to know your subjects very often or is it just “the picture?”

I try to talk to them afterwards, or I learn about them when I look them up later, once the event is over. Bear in mind that years before I took an interest in photography, I was a journalist, a writer. Curiosity runs in my blood. I was already a storyteller before I acquired the ability to take portraits good enough to illustrate my articles.



Paris, Grand Chess Tour, Garry Kasparov b&w, 2017-06-20.

How do you capture the picture at just the right moment. Do you pick a board and just watch and wait or how do you determine that you're going to see something at board X, so you just start taking pictures?

I often joke that what makes my job very easy is the fact that my subjects don't move. And what makes my job very difficult is... the fact that my subjects don't move! It is harder to get a decent shot from a static activity like chess, but I still consider it very photogenic.

Henri Cartier-Bresson used to say that every scene experiences its 'decisive moment,' and that you only need to be patient. The decisive moment will reveal itself to you.

Sometimes I notice that a player has an interesting background and looks tense, as if he has just made a mistake, or his opponent has. When those two elements are there, I am happy to find a spot and wait patiently, for as long as needed. In general, like most introverts, I am good at reading people. I can sense when someone is about to do

something, like looking their opponent in the eye. I can often anticipate who is about to do something interesting.

We see very often from you these great photos of the intense concentration exhibited by elite players. Everyone has the “thousand-yard stare”. One photo of Kasparov looked Darth Vader-like. Do you take any photos of defeat or triumph? Do you look for end-of-game moments?

Oh yes, definitely. There is no point in taking photos of the games in the first couple of hours, when they are blitzing out the opening moves. The good stuff comes when the game is about to be decided, when there is time pressure, or when someone has just accepted defeat.



Singapore, Boris Gelfand, 2024-11-25.



Singapore, Boris Gelfand, 2024-11-25.

I want to switch to a bit of a more serious topic for a minute: I think I saw recently you were dealing with someone using your photos without permission. How often do you find others have used your pictures without permission? What have you done about it?

In the age of social media, this happens on a daily basis. I mostly complain to raise awareness.

No one would copy a text written by someone else and post it on their website, in a magazine, or on social media while omitting who the real author is. However, for some reason, many people find it acceptable to do exactly that with photographs. And while anyone can write an article from home, to take a photograph you need to have been there. You need to invest thousands of dollars in gear and cover travel expenses to get those shots. One would therefore expect photographers to receive at least the same respect as writers, if not more. But that is not the case.

As I said, I mostly complain out of corporatism. There are, however, people who act like predators, out of a mix of arrogance, ignorance, and disregard for the rules. With those, I am willing to take things a bit further and sue if necessary, as I have already done on some occasions.

Ok, back to more fun questions. What inspires you?

Curiosity is my driving force, so I would say that nothing inspires me more than learning or discovering new questions that stimulate my curiosity. I think that also shows in my photography work. I often take a photo and wonder: what must this person be thinking? Or feeling?

Do you have a favorite quote?

"Don't take life so seriously. It is not like you are going to get out alive"

That is a great quote, I love it!

Who are some of the other photographers or artists that you look up to?

I am a big fan of my good friend [Lennart Ootes](#), who is very creative, and multitalented. I always say he always sees things in a scene that I don't.

Any non-chess pictures you're particularly proud of? Or have a good story behind them?

I don't usually do travel photography, but I have a picture of the Taj Mahal and a few of New York City that fill me with pride. Apart from that, both my daughters do ballet, and I act as a photographer at their annual function – I got some very decent photos of ballerinas.

Glancing through your Facebook page ([David Llada Chess & Photography](#)) I pulled a few photos to discuss. The first two show intense concentration.



Astana, Round 4, Anita Gara, HUNGARY, 2019-03-08.



Delhi Open for the disabled, 2019-01-11

The next two looked like they were staged.



Llada, promocion, 2017-06-14.



David Llada, SELFIE DOBLE Crop, 2017-07-14.

The last three look like they were captured at very opportune times.



Istanbul Olympiad, closing ceremony, Vasyl Ivanchuk, 2012-09-10.



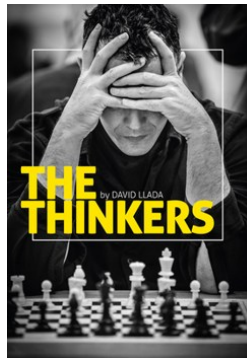
© David Llada

Bay Area International, Abhimanyu Mishra, USA, 2019-01-01



Baku Olympiad, Round 1 JORDAN Alshaeb Razan, 2016-08-31

I like all three categories. Which do you find most satisfying and why? Also the shadow picture (first picture in article) is very interesting. How was it created? In multiple steps?



The shadow picture was created in my garage. The renowned chess coach and publisher Jacob Aagaard was visiting me the next day, and I wanted to portray him, so I prepared this setup and tested it myself. There was one strobe lighting me and a second one projecting the King's shadow behind me. It was a bit tricky, but I managed to get what I wanted, and this "test" picture turned out to be good enough to use in promotional materials for my book [The Thinkers](#).



With Ivanchuk promoting The Thinkers.

Thoughts and advice for young photographers?

Photograph whatever you love, and do it exclusively to please yourself, not thinking about getting published, having an audience, or getting likes and shares. Once you become good at something, even something as niche as chess, you will find your audience.

What do you want your legacy to be?

Many people say that a photo I took of them is the best photo they have, the only one ever taken by a professional, with the exception, perhaps, of their wedding. I think that's very nice, being able to give so many people a memory to treasure. That somehow makes you part of their lives.

Thank you!

All photos reproduced in this interview were with permission from David Llada.



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 is the publication date, not when the event happened. Hopefully, others would want to do some research on these people/events from the past.

03/15/1910:

Chess players in Edgewater, a suburb of Chicago, have formed a club. At present they meet at each other's houses on Thursday evenings, but will have a regular meeting place when the membership is sufficiently large.

A tournament with over thirty entrants is in progress at the Chicago University club, where the chess loving members now have an elegant chess room in their magnificent new clubhouse.

A thriving chess club has been organized in Houston, Tex. with club rooms in the YMCA building. They expect to play a match by wire with El Paso in the near future. Visiting players will find a cordial welcome awaiting them.

After much correspondence the matches between the Mercantile and Franklin clubs of Philadelphia have been finally arranged. The first match is scheduled to be played at the Franklin rooms on Saturday March 19. The second match will probably be played at the Mercantile Library early in April.

In the finals of the New York state meet, Capablanca and Jaffee emerged with equal scores. A short match was arranged to break the tie, and the first game resulted in a draw. Capablanca, however, won the net two in fine style, and now holds the state championship.

The sixteenth annual meeting of the Minnesota chess association was held in Minneapolis Feb 22, and the following officers were elected: Pres - C.E. Lennan, Minneapolis; VP - H.H. Luce, Owatonna; Sec: A.D. Sturley, St. Paul; Treas: I.A. Herrick, Minneapolis. The following scores were made in the championship tournament: W.E. Hill first 4-0, E.P. Elliott, H.A. Hageman, F.A. Huxmann, and F.M. Stacy 3-1. In the minor tourney H.H. Luce of Owatonna won first prize with 3 wins. R.M. Brockman of St Paul was second, and 3rd-5th prizes were divided by T.H. Eggen, J.H. Clark, I.G. Ringstrom, J. Nelson, G.S. Davis, and W.S. Rhame, all of Minneapolis.

04/01/1910:

H. Voight defeated W.P. Shipley in the tie match for last year's championship of the Franklin Chess Club of Philadelphia by 2 to 1 and 1 draw.

In the handicap tourney of the Republican Chess club of New Orleans, recently brought to a close, the veteran, John A. Gailbreath made the excellent score of twelve won, none lost, and one drawn, and obtained the first prize. Second prize was won by E.F. Vix, with the score of 12-1-0, while James McConnell scored third prize with the score of 11-2-0.

Five of the six players who will be pitted against Oxford and Cambridge in the next intercollegiate cable chess match have been definitely selected by the alumni committee in charge. The players are as follows: N.T. Whitaker and W.H. Hughes, U of Pennsylvania; J.R. Chandler, Yale; L.W. Stephens, Princeton, and L. Tolins, Cornell. The sixth member of the team will be decided upon a match between G. Burgess and C.E. Jefferson, both of Yale. The Americans have suggested April 2 as the date for the match.



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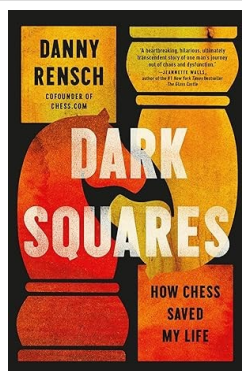
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Dark Squares: How Chess Saved My Life

by Danny Rensch

Reviewed by Cindy Wister



When my son was 5 years old, I stumbled upon a useful little set called Story Time Chess, which is how we learned to play together. When a chess club was offered at school, a teacher was kind enough to show him a few ideas and even play with him on ChessKid.com.

Before I knew it, he was beating me. He's now 9—coincidentally, the same age as Danny Rensch, Chief Chess Officer of Chess.com, when he first discovered chess. Our dining room is littered with

boards and chess puzzle books. Every device in our house has Chess.com installed. To say we have gone down the chess rabbit hole feels like an understatement.

Yet, as I pored through Danny's memoir, *Dark Squares: How Chess Saved My Life*, the book enlightened me about how very little of the chess world's surface we have scratched. As a mother, first, and chess player (secondarily and poorly), I was fascinated by *Dark Squares* for its gritty and humorous recounting of Danny's life, as well as its insights into the history and current world of chess.

Danny's story reads like a binge-worthy Netflix show. At 9, he watched *Finding Bobby Fischer*. He became obsessed with chess, and it turned out he was quite good at it. Through his gift, he went on to win his first state chess title at age 13, later becoming an International Master, and shaping Chess.com into the 250 million global user community it is today. What I did not know was that the success everyone celebrated and lauded masked a series of internal crises, dysfunctional relationships and physical detriment.

From the beginning of the book, we know this life is not just fun and games. In fact, despite the idyllic picture of young Danny running shirtless and barefoot through the dirt roads and streams of Tonto National Park, we are also aware that this is not just any bucolic village. Rather, this a controlled and isolated community—home of the Church of Immortal Consciousness (the "Collective"), a cult. Many of the members, including Danny's parents, were lost souls, looking for answers and perhaps a little too blind to the "guidance" they received.

Followers of the Collective were taught that finding and fulfilling your "purpose" was the greatest achievement. In Danny's case, that purpose was chess, according to Steven Kamp, one of the leaders of the Collective and himself, a chess aficionado. Being a chess prodigy gave Danny pride, purpose, and privileges to be so favored by the head of his church, the most powerful man in his life. But his special gift became his chain, a means through which the Collective would control him. Danny, after all, was just a child, about 10 when he started playing tournaments. Not even a teen, he began receiving the constant message that his worth was directly tied to his talent at a game.



Genius, at least according to Thomas Edison, is only one percent talent and still 99% hard work. Danny's memoir takes us on a gut-wrenching journey of how much work and secret suffering his life with chess involved. How a perceived lack of performance resulted in being taken away from his mother as a child, so he could focus on his "purpose". How successful

performance meant he needed a real (albeit often drunk and probably equally dysfunctional) professional coach with whom he would spend endless hours a day. And how he would eventually begin to self-medicate with alcohol, cigarettes, and pills to deal with his emotional turmoil (and later severe, chronic ear damage) while chasing the next trophy and title.

Chess eventually became Danny's only means of income, since he dropped out of traditional schooling under Steven Kamp's thumb. He eventually pivoted from playing to teaching chess in person and subsequently online. Perhaps his deeply ingrained view that chess was his "purpose" ideally prepared him when he met Erik Allebest and Jay Severson, the founders of Chess.com. Danny's enduring love for the game and determination to reshape the chess world helped create one of the greatest websites of our time—at least in my humble, selfish opinion. The platform has disrupted a 1000-year-old game and community in a way that has broadened chess's appeal and made it much more accessible for the everyday person, including my own family.

I remember the first time my son set a trap that I unwittingly fell for, leading me to be checkmated a few moves later. I can still see his eyes alight with joy. And I wondered, could my child become a great chess player? Could he be a prodigy?

I suppose this question is asked by many parents. Dance moms. Sideline moms. Wondering (or wishing) that our child will show some remarkable talent that stuns us all.

The thing is (and this is my favorite passage of the book), "Chess is f*ing hard. You lose a lot, and you continually fail in the process of getting better. If you can't embrace that aspect of the game, you will never be able to maintain your love of the game."

So, could my son be the next Hikaru or Gukesh? Probably not. Or at least not yet. And that's ok. Because my son—win or lose—still loves the game.

[Dark Squares: How Chess Saved My Life](#) by Danny Rensch published by PublicAffairs is available for purchase at Amazon.com in hardcover, Kindle and audiobook.

And So Chess Turned Into a Battleground of the Cold War



by Henrik Malm Lindberg

First appeared in [Axess Magasin](#) reprinted with permission from the author

The Swede Folke Rogard led world chess during the years when relations between East and West were at their coldest. How much did he play along with the Soviet chess Nomenklatura?



Folke Rogard at work during the FIDE congress in Moscow in 1956.
Private photo Margareta Bowin collection

For a few decades from the late 1940s to the early 1970s, Stockholm was the center of world chess, and the World Chess Federation (FIDE) was led by the Swede Folke Rogard. During the same period, the Cold War raged between East and West, and chess became the perfect symbol of that struggle, illustrated countless times. This checkered game offered an excellent stage with two antagonists battling one another through intricate strategies, mirroring the Cold War's contests—political, economic, and military.

The new Soviet regime systematically used chess as a propaganda tool and, during the Cold War, as part of its

campaign against the West. The basic requirement was to have champions who could loyally assert themselves on the board and demonstrate the superiority of socialism. For a long time, however, Soviet players mostly stayed at home and refused to participate in Olympiads and other major tournaments in the West. As long as the leadership was not fully convinced that the Soviet Union would demonstrate its superiority, it was reluctant to grant exit permits.

Shortly after the end of World War II, the former chess superpower, the United States, was to play against the other great victor of the war, the Soviet Union, as part of strengthening cooperation between the countries. The American stars were confident after having won the Chess Olympiad four times in a row during the 1930s. The shock was enormous when the young Soviet players not only won but virtually pulverized the American team 15.5–4.5. For the next two decades, the only serious competition for the Soviets would come from their own satellite states—until a certain Bobby Fischer stepped onto the scene.



Reshevsky makes a move against Smyslov at the Roosevelt Hotel in New York on June 24, 1954. Onlookers are Igor Bondarevsky, Harold M. Phillips, Alexander Bisno, and Dmitry Postnikov.
—TT NYHETSBYRÅN/SvD

In brief, that was the context when the tall and impeccably tailored lawyer Folke Rogard took the helm. He was born at the turn of the century into Stockholm's elite circles, in a family where his formidable mother, Lilly Rosengrén, was one of the capital's most successful businesswomen in the

1910s and 1920s. At the FIDE Congress in Paris in 1949, shortly after the Berlin Blockade and the coup in Czechoslovakia, Rogard took over the chairman's gavel from his predecessor, the Dutchman Alexander Rueb. He was the obvious candidate and was entrusted with advancing chess's international interests and expanding its domain—that is, recruiting new member countries and building a chess infrastructure. As FIDE president he had ample opportunity to use his legal skills, not least mediation and the ability to craft agreements so that both parties felt somewhat like winners.

Rogard was no novice in such matters. On October 18, 1940, *Aftonbladet* reported that the lawyer had been “seen paying a visit to the Russian legation” located at Villagatan 17. The purpose, in the midst of a world war, was—with the help of Ambassador Alexandra Kollontai—to arrange a match between Stockholm and Moscow to strengthen chess exchange. In the spring of 1942, he was invited to a congress in Salzburg at the 17th-century Mirabell Palace where the European Chess Federation was to be constituted. That creation was a way for Nazi Germany to strengthen its grip on chess and the chess federations of German-occupied Europe, and Rogard was present to defend Swedish interests.

Rogard did certainly not become FIDE president due of his involvement with the Nazi-led European Chess Federation, but because he had made an enormous organizational effort and had partly financed, largely out of his own pocket, the Interzonal Tournament in Saltsjöbaden in the summer of 1948. The event was the first of its kind after World War II. Previously, FIDE had played only a minor role in the world championship, but at the congress in The Hague in 1947 the organization had established a plan to create a system of qualifying tournaments in which many more players could get a chance to compete for the title. Both East and West were, in principle, in favor of a system in which the world champion would be crowned after a challenger had been produced through fair qualification. The problem was that the two sides had very different views of what was fair, partly because the Soviet Union possessed overwhelming superiority in potential championship candidates compared with the West.

The Soviet Union not only had sporting ambitions but also wanted to use chess as a propaganda tool. This has been shown, among others, by the historian Olov Wenell, who wrote the dissertation *The Soviet Union and Swedish Friendship Societies 1945–1958*. We know that the Soviet side had ambitions to expand exchanges with Sweden in various ways. At the beginning of 1946, the Soviet ambassador Ilia Chernyshev pressed Moscow for a party leadership decision to establish cultural and sporting exchanges with Sweden in order to counter expanding American and British activity in this area. Foreign Minister Molotov was warned that passivity on the ideological front could risk

Sweden developing into “a commercial vassal” of the Western powers and drifting into the wrong camp.

When the second half of the World Championship tournament was played in Moscow in April–May 1948, Folke Rogard represented the World Chess Federation as vice president. He had been invited to Moscow by VOKS (the All-Union Society for Cultural Relations with Foreign Countries), an invitation conveyed via the embassy in Stockholm. After his twelve-day stay he testified to the great interest in chess in the Soviet Union. Both in the Swedish daily press and in the propaganda publication *News from the Soviet Union*, issued by the Soviet embassy and also covering the activities of the Swedish-Soviet Friendship Society, Rogard described in glowing terms the elevated status of chess, the excellent arrangements during the championship, and the generous support chess received: *... the game of chess...enjoys the unreserved support and interest of the authorities as well as of the general public. Indeed, reality exceeded my expectations...*

The Interzonal Tournament in Saltsjöbaden in July–August 1948 became the next important building block in FIDE's and Rogard's efforts to organize international chess. It also marked the start of an extremely active period of major championship events in Sweden. Our neutrality made it easier for both sides to include their players. When FIDE tried to hold a tournament within the Eastern Bloc, such as the Candidates Tournament in Budapest in 1950, it ended with all players from Western countries staying away. The American Samuel Reshevsky was eager to participate, for the right fee, and was qualified. But the Cold War intervened. Shortly before the tournament, the United States imposed an absolute travel ban for Americans to Hungary. The Hungarian government had arrested an ITT businessman, Robert Voegler, and a people's court had sentenced the American to fifteen years in prison for espionage. Rogard appealed to the embassy in Stockholm and to the State Department in Washington in his attempts to get Reshevsky to Budapest. In the end he even offered himself and his organization, FIDE, as guarantors that nothing would happen to the chess master during the competition. But to no avail. The American star never received permission.

Ten years later the roles were reversed. East German Wolfgang Uhlmann had qualified to play in a world championship qualifying event. The problem was that the tournament was to be held in Berg en Dal in the Netherlands—a NATO country—and East Germany was not recognized as a state, which made it difficult for East Germans to obtain entry permits. Uhlmann nevertheless tried to travel despite lacking a *Temporary Travel Document*. Rogard again did everything he could. Through his contacts in both Germany and the Netherlands, as well as in the Swedish Foreign Ministry, he attempted to facilitate Uhlmann's entry. Ironically, he was at that point in Leipzig East Germany, where the Chess Olympiad was being played.

After landing at Amsterdam's Schiphol Airport at half past one in the afternoon on November 18, 1960, several heavily armed military police were waiting for the young East German and took him into custody pending further orders. Rogard intensified his efforts even further to have Uhlmann admitted, or at least allowed to play his games—perhaps from the transit hall at Schiphol, or from a boat (!) positioned just outside Dutch territorial waters. Uhlmann himself seemed remarkably unfazed by the drama and smiled for wide-eyed journalists with cameras at the ready. Most likely the East Germans—with Moscow behind them—wanted to score political points by showing that a smiling young chess player was not allowed to play; that is, Uhlmann was the pawn sacrificed to win a foreign-policy advantage and cast the Western side in a bad light.



The East German GM, Wolfgang Uhlmann, was stuck at the Shipol airport and not let into the Netherlands. In the background van Steenis is watching, November 18, 1960.

National Archief/Fotocollectie Anefo/Henk Lindeboom.

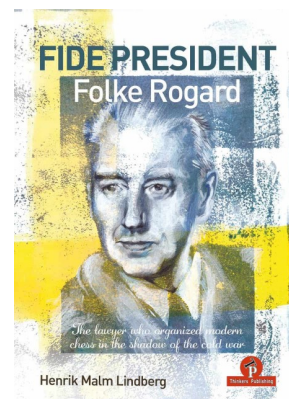
There are countless examples of how chess and politics were intertwined during these years of confrontation between East and West. One interesting occasion occurred at the FIDE Congress in Copenhagen in the summer of 1950, Rogard's first as president. The congress concluded with a peace resolution read aloud by the Swede, proposing that the world's nations, regardless of disagreements, should work to safeguard peace. The resolution should be seen in light of the Soviet Union's purposeful actions at that time. There is a parallel here to the Stockholm Appeal launched in March 1950 at a conference in Stockholm by the World Peace Council, calling for disarmament and peace efforts. But the World Peace Council and the Stockholm Appeal were not apolitical initiatives; they were directed from Moscow, and the communist parties in the

Western world were tasked with advancing the peace issue as a battering ram to serve Moscow's interests.

Important elements of the previously announced Soviet propaganda offensive toward Sweden were the so-called friendship weeks. The new Swedish ambassador, Konstantin Rodionov, initially contacted VOKS chairman Denisov in Moscow in May 1951, and eventually Foreign Minister Molotov himself was approached, who presumably gave his approval for a "chess delegation" to be sent from the Soviet Union to the friendship week. When a Soviet cultural delegation then visited Sweden for a week in September 1951, it was described as an "arrangement to strengthen friendship and cultural exchange between Sweden and the Soviet Union." The world championship candidate and later world champion Vasily Smyslov attended and gave a number of simultaneous exhibitions, to Rogard's great delight. The friendship association was enthusiastic about having established cooperation with the Swedish Chess Federation and reported great interest in Smyslov's visit among local clubs.

The question arises whether Rogard knew that chess was being used so extensively for foreign-policy purposes, primarily but not exclusively by the Eastern Bloc. His mantra was always that chess and politics did not belong together and should not be linked. Anyone content with reading the public accolades conveyed in newspapers, official reports, and press conferences might be misled into believing that Rogard always accommodated the Soviet chess nomenclature. But the picture that emerges from the documentation left by the "chess lawyer," as he was sometimes called in the press of the time, is different.

Folke Rogard knew how to speak plainly—when it suited his and FIDE's purposes. As he became more established as president, he could from time to time resist pressure from Moscow and rebuke political functionaries within the chess establishment, sometimes by referring to rules and regulations that he himself had drafted or helped formulate. The lawyer in Folke Rogard could not be held back.



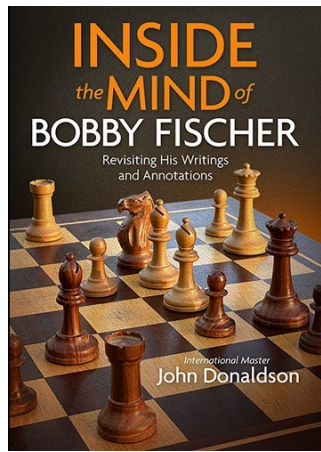
Henrik Malm Lindberg is an economic historian and author of the biography [FIDE President Folke Rogard: The Lawyer Who Organized Modern Chess in the Shadow of the Cold War](#).



Inside the Mind of Bobby Fischer

by IM John Donaldson

Reviewed by Kenneth Calitri



When *Inside the Mind of Bobby Fischer* was released, I dutifully purchased a copy. IM John Donaldson, who is a GM without the title, is a man of many talents, among them being a prolific author. His previous books on Akiba Rubinstein, a wonderful two volume work, and his massive tome *Bobby Fischer and his World* sit on my bookshelves and are considered master's pieces.

Please pardon my play on words here, but an artist friend once explained to me what the word masterpiece really meant, since it is a somewhat overused word implying a painting is one of the GOAT (Greatest Of All Time), to use what has become another overused word! In the old world, 'masterpiece' simply meant a painting was created by the hand of a painter of such quality that it was considered a master's piece. *Inside the Mind of Bobby Fischer* is another master's piece.

As I said, I dutifully purchased a copy for my collection, thumbed through it for twenty minutes or so and put it in the bookcase. Interesting book I thought, but the importance of the book had not registered with me yet. After accepting the task of reviewing the book, I read it from cover to cover. What a treat. What a book. What an effort based on the premise of looking at Bobby's complete writings and providing additional color commentary to them adding newly found kernels of interest, historical context, player profiles, intrinsic detail, and critical analysis. The book contains 113 games looked at in this extraordinary way.

Many only remember the elderly, grey-bearded and mentally diminished Bobby Fischer who, with his Brooklyn accent, once candidly admitted, "I don't look so good anymore." It is easy to make less of him given the antisemitic, anti-US ravings and Morphy-like disappearance from chess. It is more important to remember what a colossal chess player and what a vibrant human being he once was, along with his eccentricities, which made him both interesting and mysterious.

Bobby, besides being a brilliant analyst and annotator, was also a good writer, and, in my honest opinion, an underrated one. Some will say he had help and rightly so to some extent. Larry Evans, for sure, was an asset to Bobby, but

there are many world champions who had help. Karpov had Henley, among others. Kasparov had Plisetsky. Euwe had Van der Meiden and Kramer. Bronstein had Vainstein. Many writers have assistants and editors, etc. This helps hone their efforts.

Bobby had a unique ability, like Karpov, to simply, lucidly, and with clarity annotate chess games, which appeal to and are understandable by players at all levels. Like Lasker, whose chess had a dash of poison in it, Fischer's writing had a dash more humor and colorful recollection than Karpov (and other writers for that matter).

Gata Kamsky once described a chess game as a clash between two intellectual, music conductors directing their armies against each other. *Inside the Mind of Bobby Fischer* is not a clash of conductors, but a collaboration between Fischer and Donaldson. For each game annotated by Bobby, we are treated to Donaldson providing relevant publishing details, historical context, sporting significance, player background, observations/interpretations about Fischer. Weaved through each game are Donaldson's analytical explanations, corrections and assumptions about Fischer's play or comments.

These 113 games come alive. The great thing about Fischer's writing; he writes as one would naturally speak the words. This is the mark of a truly great writer. In each game you can hear that vibrant genius with his Brooklyn accent sharing his wit, wisdom, knowledge, and love for the game. This love for the game is equally joined by Donaldson's deft touch, insight, and contribution to Fischeriana. Buy this book.

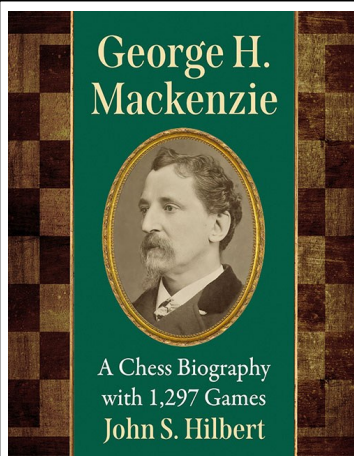
[*Inside the Mind of Bobby Fischer*](#) can be purchased from the publisher Silman-James Press.

No, his mind is not for rent
To any god or government
Always hopeful, yet discontent
He knows changes aren't permanent
But change is...
—Neil Peart

George H. Mackenzie, A Chess Biography with 1,297 Games

by John S. Hilbert

Reviewed by Mark Capron



Imagine the nicest gentlemen you have ever met. They are very charismatic and have manners to spare. Their upbringing makes them friends with everyone they meet. This describes George Henry Mackenzie.

Author John S. Hilbert is known for his meticulous research, and this monstrous (684 page) book is no exception. It is a treasure

trove of information. Mackenzie has long been one of my favorite players of the 1800s. Besides covering every detail that could be found about Mackenzie, Hilbert briefly covers all the contemporary chess events, figures, and players. I especially liked that the research was so deep, going as far as the names of the steamliner ships Mackenzie took when traveling and the short biographies of each opponent prior to their games with Mackenzie.

George Mackenzie was born in the Scottish Highlands on March 24, 1837, the fourth of four sons. His father (John Mackenzie) died three days after his first birthday. His mother was Anne Douglas.

Mackenzie went to school in Aberdeen. Later he was sent south to Southampton to attend high school. He briefly attended Marischal College.

In 1856, he became an ensign in the 60th Rifles (The King's Royal Rifle Corps). In 1858, he was promoted to Lieutenant.

Around 17 or 18 he began to study chess. He decided to move to London in 1861 where he could improve his game. There, players such as Staunton, Buckle, Lowe, Williams, Harrwitz, Falkbeer, Biden, Bird, and Barnes filled Simpson's Divan (a hot spot for chess).

Mackenzie sold his commission at the end of 1861 to, it seems, live off chess. Quite a brave decision.

Shortly thereafter Mackenzie won the 1862 London Handicap tournament, defeating Adolf Anderssen along the way. Mackenzie had been given the odds of pawn and move against Anderssen.

In mid-1863, he decided to sail to America. The reason is

unknown but could be due to a family quarrel about supporting his twice-widowed mother. At the time, Scottish law said a son must support the mother if she is widowed. One son had died and one was in Australia, so was out of jurisdiction. George headed to America, so he was also out of jurisdiction. That left brother Thomas to support her. This didn't work out so well and the mother ended up suing Thomas.

The author provides a detailed discussion about Mackenzie's attempt to join the Federal Army in America. It was an interesting discussion in that it gave a glimpse into how things worked back at the time. Hint: lots of confusion, games and misinformation. The bottom line was after being charged with desertion and spending a brief time in jail, Mackenzie and the military parted amicably.

Throughout the story no strong source of income was ever reported for Mackenzie. He wrote several chess columns over his lifetime that must have provided some income. Over time he wrote for the *New York Albion*; *Turf, Field and Farm*; *Brooklyn Union*; *Oestliche Post*; *Globe-Democrat*; *The Illustrated Sporting and Dramatic Journal*; *New York Tribune*; and *New York Sonntag's Journal*.

Another source of income, potentially his main source, was money earned by playing chess games (10¢ a game). Although gambling was frowned upon at the time, he could frame it as paying for his time or lessons. It was a tough time to make a living at chess due to this fine line of gambling or not gambling. Samuel Loyd and Dr. CC Moore even attacked the idea of gambling in chess in print. In addition, they wrote about the distinction between professional and amateur, degrading the professional all along. Mackenzie was considered a professional chess player. His affable personality got him through most sticky situations.

Mackenzie also worked in almost all the chess clubs in New York during the course of his time living there. Cafe' Europa, Cafe International, New York Chess Club, Brooklyn Chess Club, and the Manhattan Chess Club.

Lastly, Mackenzie was paid to do simultaneous exhibitions (simuls). The author lists over 150 of Mackenzie's simuls with a discussion about most, if not all, of them.

In 1866, Mackenzie played a match in New York against Gustavus C. Reichhelm from Philadelphia. Mackenzie won 5—0 with one draw. The match was billed as the National Championship, because Paul Morphy had refused to play

anyone. Then some of the Philadelphians wanted a rematch, because they thought their guy was ill or one of several other excuses. The rematch was granted in May 1867 in Philadelphia and Mackenzie won 7—0 with two draws. Mackenzie would be considered the Champion of the United States during most of his life in America.

One of the more humorous parts of the book was the author's discussion of a baseball game held on July 25, 1873, featuring a team of New York chess players captained by Mackenzie versus a team of chess players from Brooklyn captained by Theodore M. Brown. It was all in fun, and the reporting was very funny. For example, the box score showed Brown's team winning 40—30 with Brown's team having 62 errors and Mackenzie's team having 114 errors!

Mackenzie won both the Second and Third American Chess Congresses. He did not play in the Fourth American Chess Congress.

Not being familiar with the history of the Fifth American Chess Congress, the story was a highlight for me. In the Fifth American Congress, Mackenzie fell behind, then made a remarkable comeback going 5.5—0.5 at the end to tie for first with James Grundy, both scoring 13.5—4.5. A playoff commenced and Mackenzie won 2—0. However, one of the fallouts from the tournament was Mackenzie giving up his column in *Turf, Field and Farm*.

Mackenzie traveled to Europe in 1878 to play in the Paris International tournament. It was interesting to see how his skill compared to the best players in Europe. He placed fourth (tied with Bird) behind Zukertort and Winawer followed by Blackburne. He defeated the first two in their individual games. He also had this nice gem versus Mason.

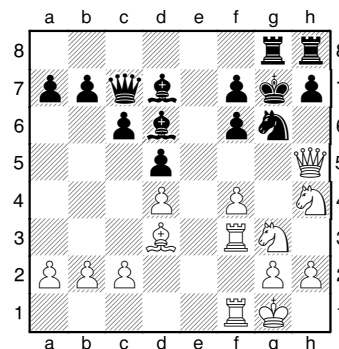
Note: Mackenzie called his exciting games "gems".

Mackenzie, George H - Mason, James [C01]

Paris Paris (9.1), 15.07.1878

1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5 3.♗c3 ♗f6 4.exd5 Simplifying. More usually there is no such exchange here, the idea being to leave the pawn at e6; partly preventing Black's queen bishop from taking any early active interest in the game. (Mason) 4...exd5 5.♗f3 ♗d6 6.♗d3 0-0 7.0-0 ♗c6 Or 7...c6, a safer move. Black risks in allowing his kingside pawns to be broken as follows. The pawn doubled cannot be easily undoubled, his d-pawn requires attention, and the attack upon his king is so sharp that use of the file opened seems quite problematic. (Mason) 8.♗g5 ♗e7 In the second game between Blackburne and Zukertort, in the seventh round (published in the *Turf* last week) Mr. Blackburne made this move in a precisely similar position. In his notes to that game, Steinitz points out the course of play which White must adopt, to win—the same as that taken by Capt. Mackenzie here. (*Turf, Field and Farm*) 9.♗xf6 gxf6 10.♗h4 All this is in accordance with our recommendations in the

comments on the game between Zukertort and Blackburne. (Steinitz) 10...♗g7 10...♗g6 is much to be preferred. (TFF); We believe that Black's best resource under the circumstances would have been 10. ...♗g6, followed by ...f5 on the adversary answering ♗h6. It was less dangerous to fight with a pawn behind than to face the tremendous attack which White is now preparing. (Steinitz) 11.♗h5 ♗h8 12.f4 c6 Preparatory to using the knight. Of course, White would not fall into the trap 12.♗xd5 ♗xd5 13.♗xd5? ♗xh2+, etc. —not if he saw it, certainly. (Mason) 13.♗f3 ♗g6 14.♗af1 ♗c7 15.♗e2 ♗d7 16.♗g3 ♗ag8



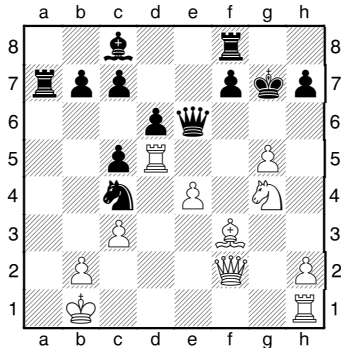
Thinking to escape with king, but too late—only leading up to an extraordinarily brilliant finish. And anything like this would be bad: 16...♗xf4 17.♗xf4! ♗xf4 18.♗hf5+ ♗xf5 19.♗xf5+ ♗g8 20.♗h6 ♗e6 21.♗f4 and mate in a move or two, with knight or queen. All the rest is forced. (Mason) 17.♗h6+ Mr. Steinitz in his letters to the London *Field*, says of this game: "The termination was so brilliant that it marks the game as one of the finest that ever occurred in any great contest." (TFF); A most ingenious and brilliant sacrifice. It would have been offered in any case, even if Black on the last move had played ...Rhe8; the only difference would have been that Black would not have been compelled to take it. (Steinitz) By sacrificing his queen, White compels Black's king to journey into the enemy camp, where of course he can expect no mercy. We shall later see that this kind of play—drawing the king by force into the zone of the hostile army—has almost acquired the status of a typical device. The combination in the present game, however, was one of the first to be based on this idea. (Romanovsky) 17...♗xh6 18.♗hf5+ ♗xf5 19.♗xf5+ ♗h5 20.g4+ This pawn sacrifice is not obligatory. White could also have mated in three moves with 20.♗h3+, and now 20. ... ♗g4 21.♗h6 mate or 20. ... ♗h4 21.♗h4+ ♗g6 22.♗h6 mate. (Romanovsky) 20...♗xg4 21.♗g3+ ♗h5 22.♗e2# 1-0

As can be seen, the annotations in the book are from contemporary sources. On occasion the author has added his own comments to improve the understanding.

Mackenzie traveled to Europe for various tournaments and while there he played a few matches. One match, in partic-

ular, was three games versus Blackburne. Mackenzie won 2—1. Mackenzie, always on the lookout for sacrifices and brilliant flourishes, found a queen sacrifice in game one of the match.

Blackburne, Joseph Henry - Mackenzie, George Henry
[C45] London m1 London (1), 25.09.1882



29... ♖xd5 The Captain always looked out for such rare opportunities of effecting a brilliant stroke and he hardly ever missed it when the chance was offered. 30.exd5 ♜f5+ 31.♖c2 ♜a1+ Most beautiful play. Black now forces mate. 32.♗xa1 ♜xc2 0—1

After his excellent play in Vienna 1882, it was remarked that “he (Mackenzie) confirmed with his ... excellent showing that despite living far from the chess centers of Europe, he was strong enough to be considered among the top seven or eight players in the world. This was an astounding accomplishment for a player who so rarely faced serious competition in the United States, then a relative chess desert compared to England and Europe in general. How strong he might have become, had he been disciplined with study and sought the strongest competition he could on a regular basis, especially earlier in life, will never be known.”

Mackenzie won the Fifth German Chess Federation Congress held in Frankfurt in 1887. He finished 15—5 ahead of Blackburne in second and Miksa Weiss in third.

Before Mackenzie even made it back to America the papers reported him as the Champion of the World. Obviously, Steinitz objected due to his own win over Zukertort in 1886, thus claiming the title for himself. Mackenzie never denounced the title nor did he claim it. Steinitz was so angry he challenged Mackenzie to a match with odds. The press jumped on this as insulting to Mackenzie. Mackenzie never directly accepted or declined the match. He did, however, taunt Steinitz by saying “Permit me to reply by asking a question in return. Shortly before the Paris Tournament of 1878 you stated in one of your Chess columns

that, in your opinion, the winner of the first prize would be entitled to consider himself as champion pro tem. What has occurred since then to cause you to alter your opinion?” Steinitz responded by saying Mackenzie left out an essential point: “provided that I had not met him before in a serious encounter and defeated him.” Later Mackenzie wrote “The ‘all important qualification’ to which you refer therein, seems to me to be of no special importance, for, after Dr. Zukertort won the first prize in the London Chess Congress of 1883, you promptly challenged him, notwithstanding the fact, that some years previously, you had defeated him in a match. Such being the case I see no necessity for issuing any such challenge as you suggest...”

Shortly thereafter, a Boston paper printed an offhand remark that “Mr. Mackenzie states that he positively will not accept Herr Steinitz’s challenge.” It is unclear if Mackenzie actually said this or not, but it ended the controversy.

As time went on more poking fun at Steinitz was had when Eugene Delmar wrote:

“By the latest cable news from the International Tournament at Bradford, we learn that Mr. Gunsberg has taken the first prize, and hence is entitled to claim for himself the championship of the world ... We presume that the next thing in order will be a challenge from Steinitz to the winner offering to give him 9 games out of 10, in a match for a million dollars a side.”

Many papers continued to call Mackenzie world champion for quite some time.

Another favorite saying by Mackenzie was “a plunge of despair”, describing a desperate move. I will probably add this to my arsenal of annotations. It will describe a good many of my own moves!?

Mackenzie spent the last several years of his life travelling around to various chess clubs. Two of his favorite places were Cuba and New Orleans. In early 1889, Mackenzie got sick. It was first thought to be a case of typhoid fever, but as time went on it was determined to be tuberculosis. No cure was available at the time. On April 14, 1891, Mackenzie passed away in his hotel room while in bed.

For a book this length, I was amazed that I only found one error (“December” should have said “January” page 291). Nice job by the author and proofreaders! My only complaint is not on the author, but on the publisher, McFarland. The book can only be purchased as softcover. For a book of this size and weight, the softcover gets beaten up in the mail system when being delivered (mine had some minor damage and unfortunately, I wasn’t able to get it replaced) and takes even greater damage from the wear and tear of reading it. A hardcover would have eliminated most, if not all of these inconveniences.

I spent an enjoyable several months reading the book and playing through many games. As I mentioned previously, Mackenzie has been one of my favorite players of the 1800s and this book definitely cemented that in. I learned many new things I didn't know about Mackenzie. Hilbert delivers an excellent story of Mackenzie's life, weaving it into the games. I would love to have included more games here, because they were so fun and so much can be learned from them, but discretion is the better part of valor, and I'll just call out four more games that you should check out: games 252, 397, 450, and 902. I especially liked how the author compiled the contemporary analysis into one resource. Games that didn't fit directly into the text went into an Appendix. There were also appendices that listed his match results and simul results. Another important appendix contained many obituaries for Mackenzie. An index of opponents, an index of openings, an index of games at odds, and a general index round out the book. If you love chess biographies or just biographies, you'll love this book. If you like history of the game this is your book. If you want to learn from yesterday's champions, again this book is for you. There is so much to digest with this book. Take the plunge and get this fantastic book. Five stars out of Five stars!

Available from the publisher McFarland & Company, Inc. here:

[George H. Mackenzie, A Chess Biography with 1,197 Games](#)

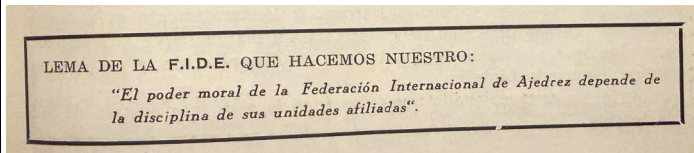
It was on sale when I last looked!

Frederick Perrin at one point stated, "Mackenzie, in games of importance, is hard to beat."

*****Continued from Page 18*****

A modest box at the bottom of the page displays the motto of FIDE:

"The strength of the International Chess Federation depends on the discipline of its affiliated units."



Simple in design, yet powerful in meaning, it reflects the underlying structure that supports the global chess community. Beneath the creativity of the game lies organization, discipline, and shared standards elements that connect players across countries and continents.

In that small space, FIDE asserts its presence not loudly, but with quiet authority. As the governing body of international chess and the steward of the World Championship, it reminds the reader that the game, wherever it is played, belongs to something larger.

What is most striking is how understated that presence feels. At a time when chess was still largely local, analog, and rooted in craftsmanship, this small advertisement signals a global system already in motion, federations working together, standards being established, a structure taking shape in plain sight.

Today, chess exists in a vastly expanded world of sponsorships, streaming platforms, global audiences, and instant communication. Yet even in that earlier moment, the foundation was already there.

The authority of chess was not built overnight, instead it was printed, line by line, across pages like these.

Así se construyó el ajedrez.

London 1922 by Mark Capron

On page 43 there is an article entitled London 1922. These are a few books for further reading on this exciting tournament.

The Book of the London International Chess Congress 1922. W.H, Watts. Printing Craft Ltd, London, 1923. Reprinted by Dover in 1968.

London 1922. Geza Maróczy. Russell Enterprises, Inc. 2010.

International Chess Congress, London 1922. David Regis. Harding Simpole Ltd. 2001.



Queens' Corner

Illustrated by Tony Sullivan

Meet Chess Champion Katie Kormanik

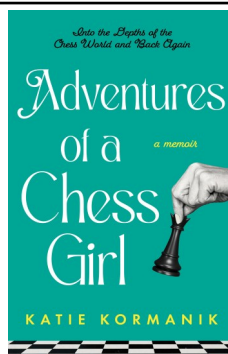
**Interviewed By Samika Nettem and
Joshua Anderson**
Pictures from Katie



Adventures of a Chess Girl is a memoir that follows Katie Kormanik's journey in the competitive chess world. After learning how to play from her father, Katie became passionate about chess and quickly rose through the ranks. After years of playing, Katie took a break from competitive chess until she returned to play at the Pan American Championships in 2009. Despite having tough games, Katie learned that chess wasn't about win-

ning, which sparked her love for the game again. As she found this alternative path, Katie began a new journey and discovered who she really was. From gaining 400 rating points in six months to an interesting romance with her International Master boyfriend, Katie experienced success and personal challenges that shaped her growth as a person and player.

Katie Kormanik does a great job of writing a story that is so personal and meaningful. She made this book out of journal entries she wrote throughout her life, ensuring that the book is very authentic and shows her raw emotions. Besides this, Kormanik creates a narrative that makes this book so exciting to read. The experiences she describes, from playing on the chessboard to even just hanging out with players after the rounds, really capture the reader's attention to find out what happens next on Katie's journey.



Whether you play chess or not, I would highly recommend this book to any girl who loves a good journey.

SN: My first question is, how did you first get into chess?

KK: Well, it is in one chapter of the book, but my dad taught me when I was four. I don't remember learning chess. I recall the first time I saw a chessboard; he took it down from a shelf and showed me the pieces and how to arrange them. I was four, but I don't remember learning how the pieces move or anything like that. Just before I knew it, I was playing.

SN: So, was it just really natural to you and ever since you learned chess, you started playing?

KK: Who knows? There was obviously a learning curve. Who doesn't go through a learning curve when you're first learning chess? I just don't remember that, since it was so long ago. I was definitely playing games by age five, and I beat my mom at age five. Then, I beat my dad at age seven, or something like that. But yeah, I think it's kind of like learning a language. You don't remember learning it, or you just learned it naturally. I believe I was young enough for that to happen, but improving at chess is another matter. A lot of that happened when I was in my 20s, and I got back into chess again after having taken a brief break in high school.

SN: Yeah, of course. I think one thing that really stood out to me is that you made your book a lot out of the journaling you did, and I thought that was really cool. Do you want to talk about that and how that kind of made the story that you wrote?

KK: Yeah, I think the journaling was instrumental to being able to write this book, because I wouldn't have remembered all the little details, like what exactly people said to me, what I said to them, or the sequence of events. I heavily referenced my journal when writing this book. I remember the first draft that I wrote was terrible because I basically copied and pasted my journal entries. Then, I tried to connect them with some narrative prose, but that did not make it an excellent story. I rewrote the entire thing, but I still heavily referenced the journal entries to make sure I was reflecting everything accurately. For me, journaling has always been a very therapeutic activity, and just a way to get your emotions out somewhere. I highly recommend journaling to anyone, but I have less time now. Nowadays, I write maybe one journal entry a month, but it's five pages long because I'm catching up on it. But yeah, I've always loved journaling.

SN: Since journaling allows you to get all your thoughts and feelings out, do you feel like it really helped you remember what happened in your past?

KK: Yeah. I definitely wouldn't remember half the things if I hadn't written them down. Every once in a while, I just read through old journalist phrases and reflect on my past. I'm kind of a nostalgic person, but it's nice to take a trip down memory lane every once in a while. Journaling definitely helps with that.

SN: You mentioned how your first draft of your book wasn't the best. Did that discourage you, or did it just encourage you to keep on writing a better draft?

KK: Yeah, definitely the latter. When I was writing this book, I did it for two reasons. One was that I really felt compelled to share this chapter of my life with the world, because I think it was such a unique and fun chapter. Sure, lots of people played chess, but for me, that was just a very formative time in my life that really shaped who I am today. That is why I wanted to share that. The second reason I wrote it was to become a better writer, as I knew nothing about long-form writing and it was something I had never done before. I majored in math in college. I've always been a very math-oriented person, not really a writing-oriented person. The world of publishing was totally foreign to me, so I wanted to do something that was outside my comfort zone and learn along the way. To answer your question, when I wrote the first draft, I learned it was terrible. I hired a developmental editor to review it and provide critical feedback. He wrote a 50-page critique letter, besides commenting on my entire manuscript. I learned a lot from that, and I knew that in order to write a good book; I needed to rewrite the entire thing. It was less about feeling discouraged and more like, this is where I'm at in this journey and this is what I got to do next to grow.

SN: Of course. Another thing that you mentioned in your book was that chess was always a refuge, like your safe space to just play. Do you still feel that way today?

KK: Yeah, I do. I feel really comfortable in a chess environment with other people, just playing chess. It's a fun, stimulating environment to be in, and just being immersed in a game is so fun. I'm so happy that I know how to play chess, even if I'm not as good as I would have wanted to be. Just the act of playing chess is so fun for me. It was less about winning and losing for me, and more about just enjoying where the story is going.



Katie with GM Hikaru Nakamura at the U.S. Open in 2010.

SN: Yeah, totally. You said that you started playing chess when you were really young. When you started playing tournaments, were there way more boys playing than girls?

KK: Yeah, it was all boys. There were some girls, but it was mostly boys.

SN: Did you ever feel out of place because of that, or did that just encourage you more to keep playing?

KK: I think it didn't do either and it was just what it was. I was pretty shy as a kid, so no matter what gender I was around, I was shy. When I went to chess tournaments, I wasn't very social, and I don't think it was because they were boys and I was a girl. It was just because I was a shy kid. The nice thing about chess is that you sit and you're just focused on the board. I think that's why I took to chess, because it's less about socializing. It's about playing the game. I think the fact that I was one of the only girls didn't affect me at all. I grew to become used to being around a lot of boys. Even today, I work with pretty much all men at my tech company. I majored in math, and I was often the only woman in my math classes. In a way, it's kind of great that I loved chess. It was a male-dominated game, but I just got really used to being around guys.

SN: Yeah. You mentioned you work at a tech company, so what does your day-to-day life look like now?

KK: Yeah, I work from home remotely. I have meetings every once in a while. In the meetings, I discuss the next steps to take for the projects that I'm working on. I decide who will do what and by when. In between meetings, I'll work on the things I'm assigned to do. It's really chill and I like it. I am learning strategy for technicians in semiconductor equipment manufacturing. I could go into it a lot more, but my day to day is basically meetings, here and there. Then, there is strategizing, thinking, and typing.

SN: That's nice. In your book, I really enjoyed reading about the adventures you had like playing at the Pan American Championships. What is one of your favorite memories that you still remember to this day?

KK: Going out to the club after the Pan Ams with some of those grandmasters and international masters was memorable. Also, the guy who eventually became my boyfriend got roofied. That is scary, and people should know there are bad people who will put roofies in your drink. It was definitely a lesson that you should never put your drink down at a club, unless your eye is on it the whole time. Mad-Eye Moody from Harry Potter always drinks from his own glass, which is an excellent idea. Another good memory is just getting together with all the chess players after the last round. We would drink and hang out together as young adults. We had a lot of fun doing that in the bars late at night after chess tournaments.



Pan-Am 2009

SN: That's really cool. You mentioned how you used to hang out with grandmasters and international masters. Did they teach you anything about the game, or did you just get along with them?

KK: I think both. My boyfriend was an international master, so he taught me a lot. I didn't really learn as much from my

friends. You learn by osmosis, or you see them playing and you study their game. Sometimes, they'll be like, "Why didn't you move Bishop d4", and you get confused. Then, you are forced to think about the game. Just being around them was an intellectual challenge, or just leveled my chess in its own way. I had direct teaching from my boyfriend at the time and that helped a lot.

SN: That's good to hear. I play chess too and I was just wondering if you had one piece of advice that you would give any chess player or girl, what would it be?

KK: My advice for girls is to beat the boys. Be as good as you can, because I really do also think it matters in an environment where it's mostly boys. I feel like boys will say mean things if you are not as good as them. I mean, they might do it in a playful way, but boys are more likely to just kind of have no filter.

SN: Yeah. Sometimes, they'll just be teasing, and I don't take it badly.

KK: Yeah. They might just say, you're not good. I think girls can be more catty. They will kind of cold-shoulder you, but boys will just directly tell you you're not good, or he's better than you. I was one of the top players when I was 12, and I think I was one of the top 50 girls under age 13 in the US. I always won, and pretty much every year, I won first place for my grade at the Utah State Chess Championship. Because I was beating the boys, they couldn't say things like that to me. I think that really helped me become comfortable being around boys because I had that confidence. For girls, especially since there aren't as many girls playing chess, you've got to be good and beat the boys. Study chess, play chess, and just try your best. I really don't like when certain boys and even men think boys are just better at chess than girls. It's really such a flawed argument to say that all the top chess players are boys. It's just because I think around only 13% of USCF-rated players are girls. Don't quote me on that, but it's something small like that. We just need more girls to play, and I don't want girls to not feel confident that they can beat the boys. Girls usually feel less confident than boys, and in chess or anything you do, you need confidence to keep trying and playing.

SN: Yeah, thank you so much for sharing. Those are all the questions I had. Do you have anything to add, Joshua?

JA: I have a couple of questions that are more from the publishing side and from the improvement side. You mentioned you journaled regularly as a teenager, which I suspect is true for many people. Did you journal your chess improvement, or did you journal your feelings and emotions?

KK: It was very much the latter.

JA: Okay, because I was curious if you did it step by step, like how you got to 1000 and how you got to 1300, and so on. If you had journaled your chess experiences, it could have made a nice second book or a chess book with puzzles.

KK: I remember what I did and how chess was integrated into my life, but I didn't really write about it. It was learning about my feelings and emotions and experiences, but some of that does give insights into my chess. I would talk about how I invited this guy to play chess with me on ICC, and I remember I never played a lot of chess. I would talk about my chess lesson with my teacher at the time. I had lessons for a few years, but it doesn't go into detail with analysis.



Katie at the U.S. Open in 2010.

JA: Okay. I was also curious about when you had the book published. When I saw the book cover, I thought that this would be perfect for Samika because she is 13, but you said you might not want to do that. Then, we talked to her mom, and everything was fine, but I was curious about how you published the book. You didn't go to any of the chess publishing houses like Elk and Ruby, right? You went to the publishing house that does girl stories?

KK: No, I actually self-published my book.

JA: Oh, okay. Yeah, whoever did your layout and your cover did a nice job.

KK: Yeah, that is one thing I paid for in writing this book. I paid for a developmental editor to give me high-level feedback as I developed scripts. I paid a proofreader to fix all the little commas and stuff. My grammar was good, but I didn't know where commas and em dashes go. I needed little cover art, so they created the art for a paperback version and the art cover version. Those are the three things I paid for, and then everything else I did myself. I rewrote the whole thing with the high-level feedback of the developmental editor. Then, the proofreader polished it.

JA: They did a good job. I knew it wasn't one of the chess publishing houses, but I didn't know where it was from. I was also curious if you had a lot of 13, 14, and 15-year-olds in your feedback who ended up buying your book because I thought your book would have been perfect for Samika.

KK: Not that I know of. I can't tell the ages or anything. I don't know if parents have bought it for their kids, but parents can do whatever they want. I'm a parent and I have a one and three-year-old, but I think it depends on the kid. As a kid, I saw R-rated movies at age four. That was just how my parents were. I just don't want people to get the wrong idea, but there's no rating when you publish a book. I would rate it PG-13.

SN: Yeah, I would say it is PG 13.

KK: Yeah, maybe it's fine for a 13-year-old. I don't want to be the one to recommend it, and then the parent gets mad at me. That's why I just say it's for adults, and it's in the Adult Nonfiction sections whenever I have to indicate a category. There's just a few rather scandalous references, but my friends have told me it's nothing bad. I don't want to speak for everyone, because some people might think it's terrible.

JA: Yeah. I went through it after you kindly sent it to me, and there's definitely references to things that are racy, but there's no actual text really racy. I wasn't exactly sure what to do, so I talked with Samika's mom, and it worked out. I thought it was an interesting read. I graduated in 1996, so I remember the Pan Ams from 92 to 96. They didn't really have as much money coming in then, right?

KK: I didn't do any GM teams. Almost nobody was a title player.

JA: You kind of came along in that first wave of title players, and now all the top schools have full GM teams. It's interesting how that evolved over the years.

KK: Yeah. I think a lot of colleges are offering scholarships to these GM's. I'm from abroad, so it's cool that chess is becoming like a thing that colleges care about. Also, to the general public with Queen's Gambit and more people playing on chess.com.



Katie at the National Open in 2010.

JA: That's all the questions I had. Is there anything else we haven't covered that you would like to talk about?

KK: I don't know if this is super interesting, but to end on a positive chess note, I'm so happy that I know how to play chess. It was such a big part of my early childhood, and I think it'll be a huge part of my life. I could imagine a great day being just sitting down for a long chess game with one of my kids or a friend. I think chess will always be a big part of my life. It was a huge part of my life when I was a kid, but I still love it now. I'm focused on my own kids and work right now, so I don't have as much time for chess. I still see chess being a huge part of me when I get older.

JA: You said you have a three-and one-year-old. Are you planning on teaching them soon? Are you planning on them playing in tournaments?

KK: Yes, I'm already teaching them to my three-year-old. Unfortunately, he's a stubborn little guy. I think he sees how excited I am about chess, so he says he doesn't want to play, just to be rebellious. He knows all the pieces, and he knows how to set up the board. I've tried to teach him how a knight moves, but he still doesn't get it. He's not excited about chess yet, and it might just be because he's rebellious. My one-year-old, who will be two in July, is really interested in chess. She wants all the pieces, and I tell her where to put each piece to set up the board. She loves putting the piece on the right square, and she knows the names of the pieces. She may be my little chess buddy, but I just really want at least one of my kids to enjoy chess so that I can play with them.

JA: Excellent. That sounds like a good approach. Well, thank you very much for meeting with us.

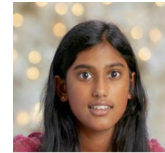
KK: Yeah, thank you. Thank you for the opportunity. I really appreciate you reading my book and talking with me. I'm super grateful. Thank you.

Katie's book can be purchased at Amazon here:

[Adventures of a Chess Girl: Into the Depths of the Chess World and Back Again](#)

It can be purchased as softcover, hardcover, and electronic formats.

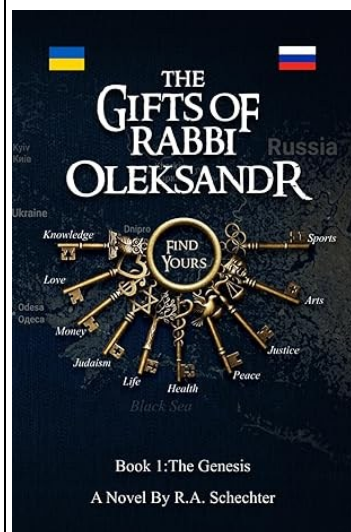
Samika Nettem



Joshua Anderson



Rachel Schechter, who has written many of the *Queens' Corner* articles, has published a book. [The Gifts of Rabbi Oleksandr, Book 1: The Genesis](#) is available at bookstores now in softcover, hardcover, and electronic formats.



Knight and Leaper Tours on 165 Cell Board

Awani Kumar, Lucknow, India

The Chess Journalist has come out with its 165th issue and let us celebrate it with some interesting knight and leaper (fairy chess pieces) tours on 11x15 and 3x5x11 (= 165) cell board. Figure 1 and Figure 2 are knight tours with multiples of 11 and 15 respectively arranged in a line. The move segments are alternately on its two sides up to 121 and 139 respectively. Readers are urged to improve upon them. Figure 3 has the square numbers $1^2, 2^2, 3^2, \dots, 12^2$, namely, 1, 4, 9, ..., 144 arranged in wazir {0, 1} path along the middle column. Figure 4 is a diagonally symmetric knight tour. It starts at top left corner, ends at bottom right corner and sum of move numbers diagonally opposite from the centre of the board is 166. Although knight is the oldest leaper and knight tour is almost as old as the game of chess itself – the earliest documented solution is around 840 AD – but it is not the only leaper. Human ingenuity and creativity has come out with myriad leapers and the author plans to look into the possibility of fairy chess pieces tours such as zebra {2, 3}, giraffe {1, 4}, antelope {3, 4}, fiveleaper {0, 5} + {3, 4}, corsair {2, 5} and flamingo {1, 6} tours on 11x15 board. Jelliss [1] has described fairy chess pieces tours with historical notes.

1	30	7	24	3	32	11	34	21	16	13
8	25	2	31	10	45	22	15	12	35	20
29	6	9	46	23	4	33	42	19	14	17
26	47	28	5	54	67	44	65	62	41	36
51	70	53	68	91	94	55	38	43	18	63
48	27	50	93	76	89	66	61	64	37	40
71	52	69	90	95	92	77	56	39	60	85
148	49	136	75	134	97	88	59	84	57	80
137	72	149	96	145	122	99	78	81	86	83
150	147	74	135	98	133	110	87	58	79	158
73	138	151	146	123	144	121	100	159	82	105
128	115	124	139	120	111	132	109	104	157	160
125	118	127	152	131	140	143	164	101	106	103
114	129	116	119	112	163	154	141	108	161	156
117	126	113	130	153	142	165	162	155	102	107

Fig. 1. Knight tour with multiples of 11 in a line

1	34	11	40	3	66	9	126	5	154	7
36	41	2	65	10	39	4	155	8	125	128
33	12	35	38	71	94	67	144	127	6	153
42	37	72	93	64	143	146	95	156	129	124
13	32	63	70	97	68	101	142	145	152	133
62	43	92	73	102	147	96	157	132	123	130
31	14	103	98	69	158	141	100	121	134	151
44	61	74	91	104	99	148	159	140	131	122
15	30	45	60	75	90	105	120	135	150	165
46	59	76	89	78	53	82	149	160	139	136
29	16	79	52	83	86	119	106	137	164	161
58	47	88	77	118	81	54	85	162	107	138
17	28	51	80	87	84	117	114	23	110	163
48	57	26	19	50	55	24	21	112	115	108
27	18	49	56	25	20	113	116	109	22	111

Fig. 2. Knight tour with multiples of 15 in a line

69	40	11	42	3	28	5	18	7	30	53
12	43	68	27	10	1	8	29	52	19	22
39	70	41	2	15	4	17	6	21	54	31
44	13	72	67	26	9	34	51	56	23	20
71	38	45	14	35	16	57	24	59	32	55
46	73	66	37	48	25	50	33	88	85	60
103	106	47	78	65	36	63	58	61	90	87
74	77	102	105	80	49	82	89	86	93	84
107	104	79	76	101	64	133	62	83	96	91
152	75	108	129	132	81	158	99	92	135	94
109	146	151	122	157	100	131	134	95	160	97
150	153	128	145	130	121	164	159	98	141	136
127	110	147	156	123	144	119	142	139	116	161
154	149	112	125	120	165	114	163	118	137	140
111	126	155	148	113	124	143	138	115	162	117

Fig. 3. Knight tour with square numbers in wazir path

1	24	153	44	3	26	151	46	5	28	149
154	43	2	25	152	45	4	27	150	47	6
23	132	113	100	95	130	111	76	97	148	29
114	155	42	131	112	99	96	129	110	7	48
133	22	101	104	41	94	77	98	75	30	147
156	115	40	59	102	105	84	109	128	49	8
21	134	103	80	93	78	87	74	85	146	31
116	157	58	39	60	83	106	127	108	9	50
135	20	81	92	79	88	73	86	63	32	145
158	117	38	57	82	61	64	107	126	51	10
19	136	91	68	89	72	125	62	65	144	33
118	159	56	37	70	67	54	35	124	11	52
137	18	69	90	55	36	71	66	53	34	143
160	119	16	139	162	121	14	141	164	123	12
17	138	161	120	15	140	163	122	13	142	165

Fig. 4. Diagonally symmetric knight tour

Figure 5 to Figure 9 show moves of giraffe {1, 4}, antelope {3, 4}, fiveleaper {0, 5} + {3, 4}, flamingo {1, 6} and corsair {2, 5} respectively. Readers are aware of zebra moves; Kumar [2] has looked into zebra tour on square board. Figure 10 and Figure 12 are diagonal tours of zebra, giraffe and fiveleaper respectively on 11x15 board. Tour start at top left corner and ends at bottom right corner. Readers are urged to look for the diagonally symmetric tours of zebra, giraffe and fiveleaper.

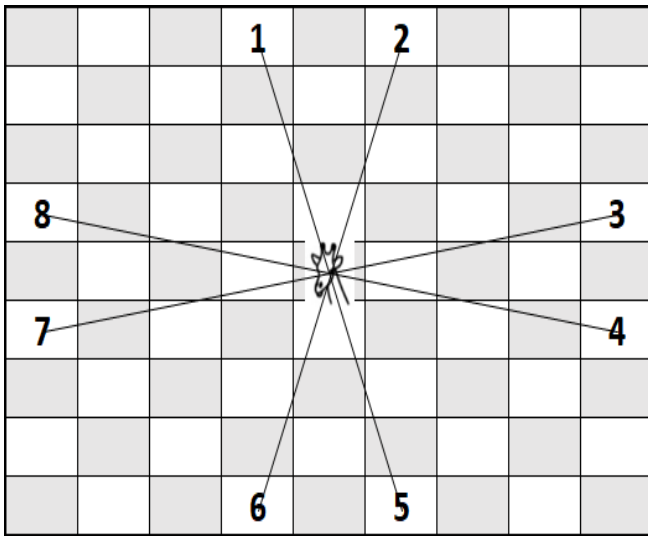


Fig. 5. Giraffe {1, 4} moves

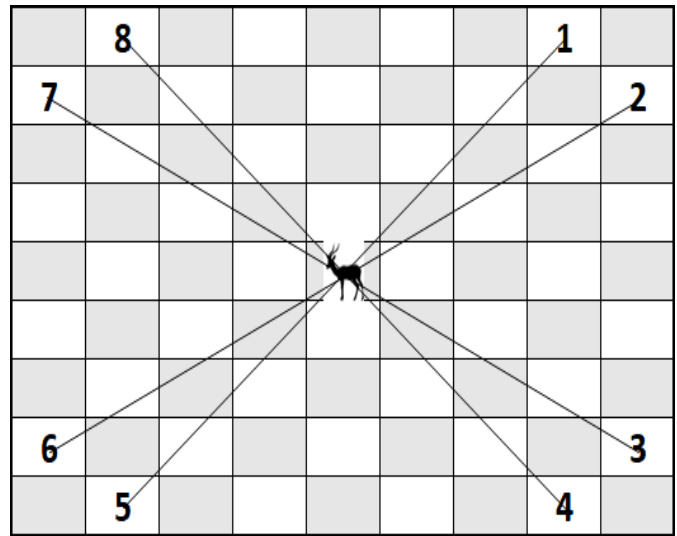


Fig. 6. Antelope {3, 4} moves

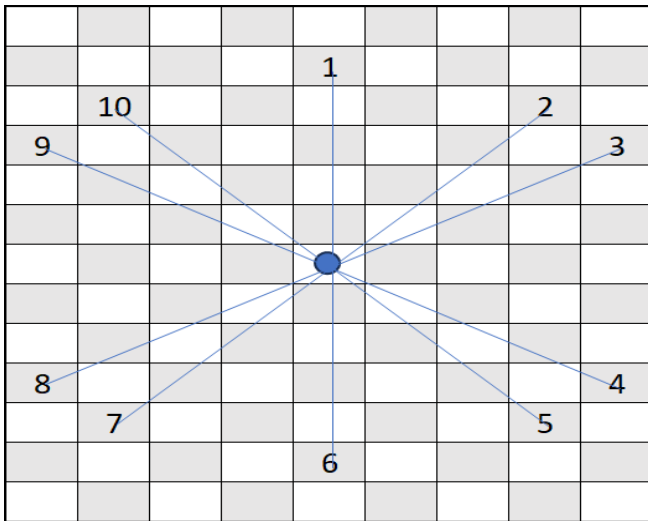


Fig. 7. Fiveleaper {0, 5} + {3, 4} moves

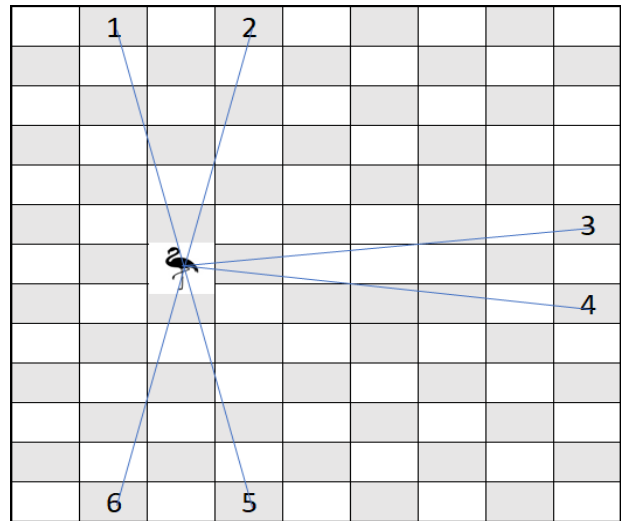


Fig. 8. Flamingo {1, 6} moves

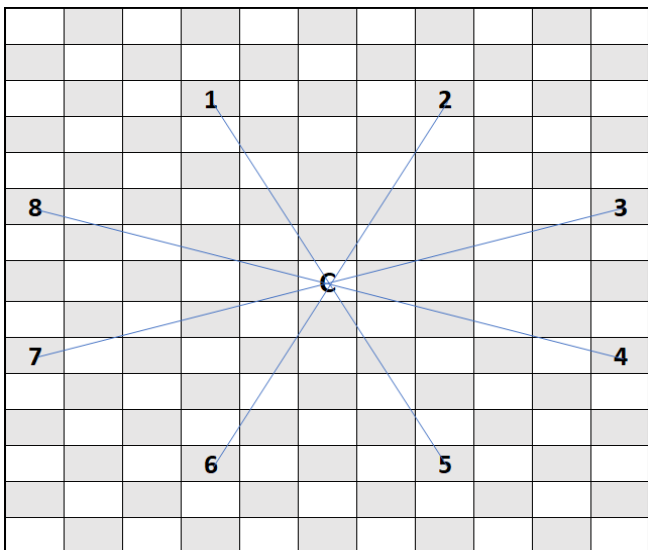


Fig. 9. Corsair {2, 5} moves

1	108	137	76	99	66	41	24	135	74	97
110	93	28	139	112	95	26	133	30	157	72
77	100	67	40	107	136	75	98	65	42	23
138	113	2	109	92	29	158	73	96	25	134
39	140	111	94	27	52	121	156	71	132	31
68	91	78	101	124	89	106	43	22	159	64
3	144	51	114	103	70	131	162	45	122	155
146	125	38	141	120	79	160	53	32	105	12
115	102	69	90	143	44	123	88	63	130	21
50	119	4	145	126	163	104	13	154	161	46
37	142	147	116	85	56	129	80	11	54	33
58	127	18	149	118	35	82	9	20	87	62
5	84	49	16	151	60	7	164	47	14	153
148	117	36	57	128	19	86	55	34	81	10
17	150	59	6	83	48	15	152	61	8	165

Fig. 10. Diagonal tour of zebra

1	54	85	66	139	122	135	46	81	56	83
138	113	136	45	2	55	84	65	148	121	134
3	14	151	64	125	106	133	44	73	162	153
124	107	26	43	72	13	152	87	126	105	24
53	12	67	86	123	140	25	80	47	82	57
114	137	112	75	16	95	62	149	116	147	120
15	4	63	150	115	132	111	74	161	154	163
108	29	42	27	160	71	90	127	88	23	104
159	52	11	68	141	30	101	48	79	58	93
142	31	76	17	96	61	94	117	146	119	100
5	36	7	34	131	110	99	40	97	164	155
130	109	28	41	50	91	70	89	128	103	22
51	158	69	10	129	102	21	78	49	92	59
32	143	18	77	38	157	60	9	118	145	20
37	6	35	8	33	144	19	98	39	156	165

Fig. 11. Diagonal tour of giraffe

1	50	21	46	71	84	75	20	99	48	157
52	55	160	59	120	73	54	133	60	23	148
135	162	151	8	57	62	25	150	7	78	93
70	83	142	109	100	49	158	141	110	85	76
45	72	155	2	51	22	47	156	121	74	19
58	119	26	53	134	161	94	147	98	63	132
9	56	159	136	163	38	77	92	61	24	149
108	31	152	69	82	105	32	101	6	79	140
3	116	143	44	97	154	27	18	111	86	95
114	41	88	123	118	29	16	131	122	37	146
137	66	35	10	125	14	129	164	39	64	91
68	81	104	107	12	127	80	139	106	33	102
43	30	153	4	115	42	87	96	5	28	17
124	117	144	113	40	65	36	145	112	15	130
11	126	89	138	67	34	103	90	13	128	165

Fig. 12. Diagonal tour of fiveleaper

Antelope, flamingo and corsair have long move lengths of Ö25, Ö37 and Ö29 respectively and couldn't tour the whole board. Their longest path covers 137, 161 and 156 cells respectively and is shown in Figure 13 to Figure 15. Readers are urged to look for longer paths. However, a combination of antelope and flamingo moves gives a diagonal tour as shown in Figure 16.

1	-	-	14	121	84	107	80	3	130	25
100	5	-	27	86	31	82	37	102	-	132
7	-	71	134	29	22	35	98	-	104	73
122	-	106	79	2	129	24	13	120	-	108
15	-	83	38	101	4	131	26	85	32	81
28	87	34	99	6	103	72	133	30	-	36
135	128	23	8	115	70	105	74	21	-	97
78	-	-	123	66	119	62	109	-	-	12
39	-	-	16	125	88	33	92	57	-	51
94	69	-	49	20	127	90	41	114	59	18
9	116	61	136	47	54	43	96	67	112	75
124	65	-	77	56	45	52	11	118	63	110
-	126	89	40	93	58	17	50	-	-	91
48	-	-	95	68	113	60	19	-	-	42
137	46	53	10	117	64	111	76	55	44	-

Fig. 13. Antelope {3, 4} path

41	98	43	144	83	120	81	114	79	6	65
20	115	78	7	64	1	40	97	38	143	84
59	96	37	128	85	-	19	136	25	8	63
18	135	26	153	62	151	60	95	36	129	106
33	52	103	92	107	132	109	156	15	70	29
110	157	14	69	30	-	32	51	102	91	122
99	42	145	44	121	82	119	80	113	66	5
118	21	116	77	4	-	2	39	146	45	142
149	58	127	46	141	86	139	24	137	76	9
134	17	154	27	152	61	150	35	94	105	130
53	34	93	104	131	108	133	16	155	28	71
158	111	68	13	72	31	54	101	50	123	90
55	100	49	124	89	-	159	112	67	12	73
160	117	22	11	74	3	56	147	48	125	88
57	148	47	126	87	140	161	138	23	10	75

Fig. 14. Flamingo {1, 6} path


1	-	135	-	117	32	79	148	47	34	5
84	103	18	59	82	151	114	121	22	-	86
69	78	143	46	35	4	29	134	97	118	31
152	115	122	21	-	85	102	19	58	81	150
-	24	51	96	119	70	-	142	105	36	127
136	99	2	57	80	149	116	33	6	147	48
17	60	83	104	113	126	23	52	87	120	71
144	45	68	77	28	49	98	3	30	133	92
123	74	153	110	41	20	55	138	101	14	63
50	95	10	25	130	91	44	37	128	141	106
-	56	137	100	13	64	75	146	109	40	7
90	43	16	61	140	155	112	125	72	53	88
67	76	145	108	39	8	27	132	93	12	65
154	111	124	73	54	89	42	15	62	139	156
9	26	131	94	11	66	129	-	107	38	-

Fig. 15. Corsair {2, 5} path

1	138	77	66	11	102	113	144	79	136	75
140	47	126	17	68	91	142	63	128	53	134
13	64	107	54	133	88	81	46	35	16	71
82	109	34	145	2	137	76	65	106	23	114
67	10	105	24	139	78	135	74	121	112	143
18	69	90	141	14	127	72	9	42	87	62
3	132	27	12	103	108	101	70	49	80	45
146	125	48	83	94	119	92	115	26	129	52
39	6	55	152	51	122	89	160	15	36	73
162	99	110	33	154	43	158	61	22	151	30
97	104	21	4	25	156	59	164	111	120	149
84	19	118	147	38	57	8	95	86	41	116
153	28	131	40	161	100	31	50	123	44	159
32	155	124	163	98	93	150	29	130	157	60
5	56	7	96	85	20	117	148	37	58	165

Fig. 16. Diagonal tour of antelope + flamingo

Tour of knight was confined on conventional (two-dimension) boards till Vandermonde [3], a mathematician, musician and chemist extended it, into a 4x4x4 board in 1771. On a conventional board, knight can have at most 8 possible moves but it can have up to 24 moves in three-dimension board. Readers can visualize three-dimension board, say, 4x4x4 board by stacking 4x4 boards in alphabetical order as shown in Figure 17 with the possible knight moves. Figure 18 is a diagonal knight tour in 3x5x11 board. Jelliss [4] website covers recent developments in knight and leapers tours.

	9			
12		10		
	11			
				D
			7	
	8			C
			3	
				
			4	
6		5		B
			1	
	2			A

139	104	149	102	13	94	97	88	35	92	165	
146	101	14	151	8	49	34	93	164	89	114	
137	22	129	52	123	60	11	68	115	76	83	
144	25	134	55	126	63	32	71	118	79	42	
141	20	17	28	5	58	119	66	161	74	111	C
136	23	128	53	124	61	12	69	116	77	84	
143	26	135	56	127	64	31	72	159	80	41	
140	19	132	27	6	57	120	65	162	73	112	
131	106	15	152	9	50	47	158	37	90	81	
16	153	2	107	46	155	10	109	44	157	38	B
147	100	103	150	7	98	121	96	163	86	113	
138	105	148	99	122	95	48	87	36	91	82	
145	24	3	54	125	62	33	70	117	78	85	
142	21	130	51	4	59	30	67	160	75	40	
1	18	133	154	29	108	45	156	39	110	43	A

Fig. 17. Knight moves in 3-D

Fig. 18. Diagonal tour of knight in 3x5x11 board

Longest paths of various leapers on 11x15 board are summarized in the table below. Readers are urged to improve upon them.

Piece	Knight	Zebra	Giraffe	Flamingo	Corsair	Antelope	Fiveleaper	Leaper
	{1,2}	{2,3}	{1,4}	{1,6}	{2,5}	{3,4}	{3,4} + {0,5}	{3,4} + {1,6}
Longest path	165	165	165	161	156	137	165	165
No. of non-visited cells	0	0	0	4	9	28	0	0

References:

G.P. Jelliss; *Knight's Tour Notes*, Volume 10, Augmented Knight & Leaper Tours, 2019, p. 31 – 48.
A. Kumar; Studies in Tour of Zebra {2, 3} on Square Board, *The Chess Journalist* #163, p.62 - 68, October 2025.
A. T. Vandermonde; Remarques sur les Problemes de Situation, *Memoires de l'Academie des Sciences* 1771.
G.P. Jelliss; Leapers at Large, available at www.mayhematics.com

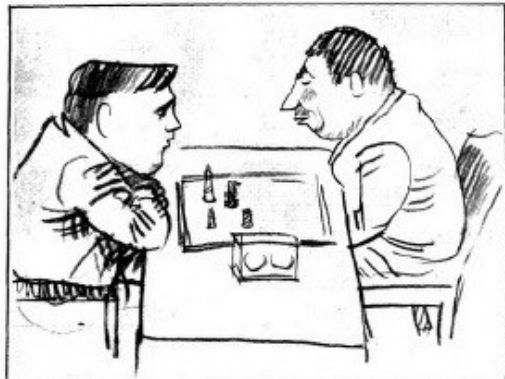
The August 19, 1922 issue of *The Graphic* included several pencil sketched caricatures of the participants in the 15th British International Chess Congress held in Central Hall, Westminster, played from July 31—August 19, 1922. Capablanca won followed by Alekhine and Milan Vidmar. A couple fun anecdotes from the tournament: 'These two rivals [Capablanca and Alekhine] were taken to a variety show by a patron, Mr Ogle, who recalled that Capablanca never took his eyes off the chorus, whilst Alekhine never looked up from his pocket chess set.' —*The Encyclopedia of Chess*. Anne Sunnucks. St. Martin's Press. 1970. p.64.

'During the London International Tournament of 1922, Grandmaster M. Vidmar adjourned his game against Capablanca in a lost position. The time came to resume the game. Convinced that there was no point in continuing the game, Vidmar awaited his opponent with the intention of resigning. Time passed, but Capablanca didn't appear – some unforeseen circumstance had detained him. Looking at his clock Vidmar suddenly realized that his opponent's flag was about to fall. Capablanca was on the point of losing and he, Vidmar, would gain a formal victory. Not hesitating for an instant, the Yugoslav grandmaster rushed up to the board and just had time to resign the game by knocking his king over a moment before the controller would have declared him the winner on time. The British press dubbed Vidmar's action "the most beautiful move ever played in a chess game".' —*From Beginner to Expert in 40 Lessons*. Aleksander Kostyev. p.79.

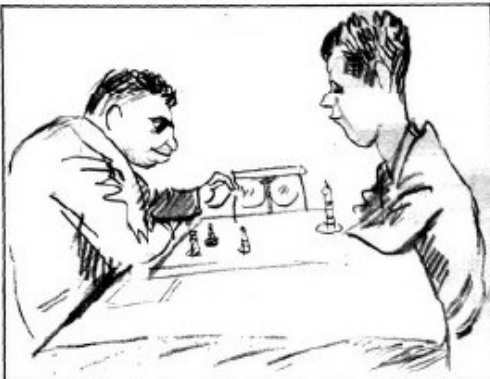
However as Edward Winter points out: An unfortunate fact: the game was never adjourned. —*Chess Notes* 986

LEADING PLAYERS AT THE CHESS TOURNAMENT

AS THEY HAVE BEEN ENVISAGED BY MAJOR



BOGOLJUBOV (LEFT) AND RUBINSTEIN



RICHARD RETI (LEFT) AND CAPABLANCA



V. L. WAHLTUCH



SPECTATORS WATCHING THE PLAY



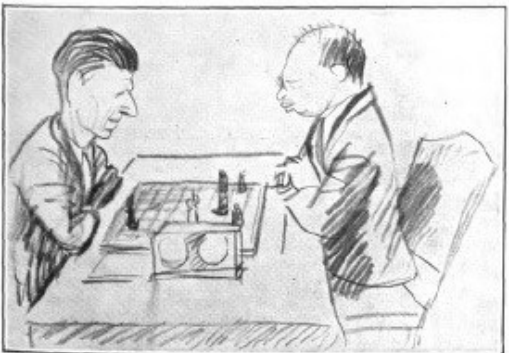
M. EUWE



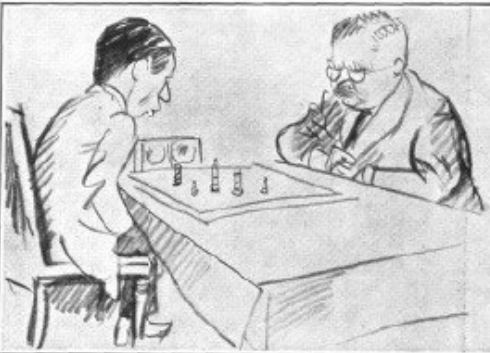
E. SNOSEK-BOROVSKY



J. S. MORRISON



MAROCZY (LEFT) AND TARTAKOWER



MAROTTI (LEFT) AND VIDMAR

While to the man in the street chess may make little or no appeal, there is no mistaking the interest with which enthusiasts everywhere have been following the International Chess Congress which has been in progress at the Central Hall, Westminster, since July 31, and will be brought to a close to-morrow

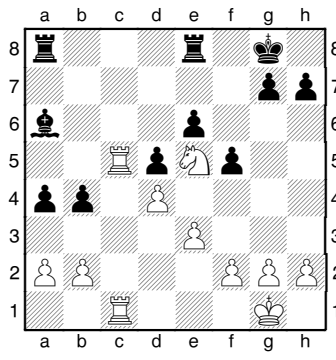
(Saturday). Most of the World's great chess-players have come to London to take part in the Masters' Tournament, the chief event of the gathering, many different nations being represented, and Major, our caricaturist, here gives us lightning impressions of some of the most notable exponents of the game.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	Total
1 Capablanca	x	½	1	½	1	½	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	13
2 Alekhine	½	x	½	1	½	½	½	1	1	1	1	1	½	1	1	1	11½
3 Vidmar	0	½	x	0	1	½	1	½	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	11
4 Rubinstein	½	0	1	x	½	½	1	1	½	0	1	½	1	1	1	1	10½
5 Bogoljubow	0	½	0	½	x	½	1	1	0	1	½	0	1	1	1	1	9
6 Réti	0	½	½	½	½	x	½	½	1	1	1	1	0	1	0	1	8½
7 Tartakower	½	½	0	0	0	½	x	½	1	0	1	1	1	½	1	1	8½
8 Maróczy	½	½	½	0	0	½	½	x	1	½	½	1	½	0	1	1	8
9 Yates	0	0	0	½	1	0	0	0	x	1	1	1	1	1	½	1	8
10 Atkins	0	0	½	1	0	0	1	½	0	x	0	1	½	½	0	1	6
11 Euwe	0	0	0	0	½	½	0	½	0	1	x	0	1	0	1	1	5½
12 Z-Borovsky	0	0	0	½	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	x	1	½	1	0	5
13 Wahlthuch	0	½	0	0	0	1	0	½	0	½	0	0	x	1	1	½	5
14 Morrison	0	0	0	0	0	0	½	1	0	½	1	½	0	x	0	1	4½
15 Watson	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	½	1	0	0	0	1	x	1	4½
16 Marotti	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	½	0	0	1½

Amazingly neither Capablanca nor Alekhine lost a single game in the tournament!

Alekhine, Alexander - Yates, Frederick [D64]
 London London (10), 1922 [G. Maróczy]

1.d4 ♟f6 2.c4 e6 3.♟f3 d5 4.♟c3 ♟e7 5.♟g5 0-0 6.e3 ♟bd7 7.♟c1 c6 8.♟xc2 ♟e8 9.♟d3 dxc4 10.♟xc4 ♟d5 11.♟e4 f5 A weak move, Black now gets a cramped position; better was 11. ... h6. 12.♟xe7 ♟xe7 13.♟ed2 b5 14.♟xd5 cxd5 15.0-0 a5 The game is lost anyhow. 16.♟b3 a4 17.♟c5 This practically forces the exchange of queens and leaves White with a won endgame. 17...♟xc5 18.♟xc5 ♟xc5 19.♟xc5 b4 20.♟fc1 ♟a6 21.♟e5



With the well-posted knight and his rooks in command of the open file White has an easily won game. 21...♟eb8 22.f3 b3 23.a3 h6 24.♟f2 ♟h7 25.h4 ♟f8 26.♟g3 ♟fb8 27.♟c7 ♟b5 28.♟1c5 ♟a6 29.♟5c6 ♟e8 30.♟f4 ♟g8 31.h5 ♟f1 32.g3 ♟a6 33.♟f7 ♟h7 34.♟cc7 ♟g8 35.♟d7 ♟h8 36.♟f6 ♟gf8 37.♟xg7 ♟xf6 38.♟e5 1-0

Capablanca, Jose Raul - Bogoljubow, Efim [C91]
 London London (6), 1922 (Notes from *The Times* as found in Capablanca by Edward Winter, McFarland & Company. 1989. pp. 143—144.

Capablanca wrote about this game in *The Times*, August 8, 1922. I had a very hard struggle yesterday as I had Bogoljubow for an opponent. I opened with a Ruy Lopez,

and soon I had to face a variation with which I was not familiar. It is probably the result of some deep analysis of the last few years by some of the leading players. Under the circumstances, I had to be very careful to avoid falling into some trap, or drifting into a losing position. However, as on Saturday, I played far better than in the first few games. Perhaps it was because I felt that the struggle for the first three prizes began today, and, consequently I had to play up if I wanted to keep in the running. Whatever the reasons may be, the fact is that yesterday's game was a most interesting and complicated one, which kept the spectators on their feet. 1.e4 e5 2.♟f3 ♟c6 3.♟b5 a6 4.♟a4 ♟f6 5.0-0 ♟e7 6.♟e1 b5 7.♟b3 d6 8.c3 0-0 9.d4 exd4 10.cxd4 ♟g4 11.♟e3 ♟a5 12.♟c2 ♟c4 13.♟c1 c5 14.b3 ♟a5 15.♟b2 ♟c6 16.d5 ♟b4 17.♟bd2 ♟xc2 18.♟xc2 After my 18th move the play for position began. 18...♟e8 19.♟d3 h6 20.♟f1 ♟d7 21.h3 ♟h5 22.♟3d2 ♟f6 23.♟xf6 ♟xf6 24.a4 c4 Bogoljubow secured a passed QRP by his 24th move, c4, but on the other hand, I threatened to break through the center, and my opponent had to lose time to prevent it. 25.bxc4 ♟c5 26.♟e3 bxa4 27.f4 I took advantage of it to advance my king's side pawns boldly in order to imprison his bishop. This was accomplished by my 29th move, f5. In my opinion, I had then a won game if I could neutralize somewhat the advantage of my opponent on the queen's side. This, however, was a mighty hard task. Bogoljubow, feeling that he had to attack *à outrance* in order to save the game, made a terrific onslaught with every piece he had available, and finally exchanged queens, while maintaining the upper hand on the queen's side. 27...♟e7 28.g4 ♟g6 29.f5 ♟h7 30.♟g3 ♟e5 31.♟g2 ♟ab8 32.♟ab1 f6 33.♟f3 ♟b2+ 34.♟xb2 ♟xb2+ 35.♟e2 ♟b3 36.♟d4 ♟xe3 37.♟xe3 ♟b8 38.♟c3 ♟f7 39.♟f3 ♟b2 40.♟ge2 ♟g8 41.♟e6 At the adjournment the position was such as to make everybody think that my opponent had the best of the game. I suppose, however, that they did not reckon with my sealed move (the 41st), which was, in my opinion, the very best move of the whole game. Now, as the game will show, a most desperate struggle followed. My opponent rightly refused to accept the pawn I offered, and continued his attack, in order to advance his passed QRP. 41...♟b3 42.c5 dxc5 43.♟xc5 ♟d2+ 44.♟f2 ♟e7 45.♟e1 ♟b1 46.♟d3 a3 47.d6+ The spectators must have thought on several occasions that I was losing, to judge by the remarks I heard after the game, but, meanwhile, I was certain of the goodness of my game, and when I finally checked the attack, I began in my turn to advance a passed QP, which I had obtained in the stress of the fight. It became evident immediately that the offensive was now in my hands, and that I could not be stopped. My opponent struggled valiantly, but it was of no avail. He soon resigned and very gallantly stated that the game had been too hard. 47...♟d8 48.♟d4 ♟b6 49.♟de6+ ♟xc6 50.fxe6 ♟b8 51.e7+ ♟e8 52.♟xa6 While I was glad to win, I felt sorry for my gallant opponent, who has now lost three games in succession, and thus is practically out of the running for one of the first four places. His effort of today deserved a better reward. 1-0