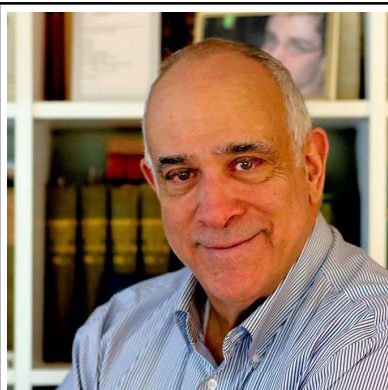


Chess Journalist of the Year: Pete Tamburro

Interviewed by Mark Capron

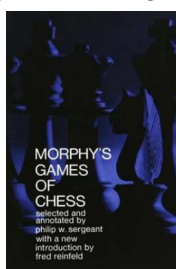
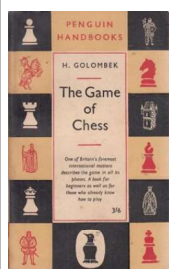


Hello Pete. First off, congratulations on winning the Chess Journalist of America's most prestigious award of 2023, *Chess Journalist of the Year*. Well deserved.

Thank you!

Your history with the royal game goes back quite a way. Where did your story with chess actually begin? Who taught you to play?

My dad and my Uncle Bob taught me after I took an interest in their playing. I was seven years old. My uncle gave me Golombek's [The Game of Chess](#) and I read it cover to cover, over and over again. He later gave me [Morphy's game collection](#)



by Sergeant. We lived in an area that still had farms, so all I had were a couple of friends and my dad. It took me five years to beat him. I didn't play in a chess tournament until high school. My first rated tournament was in 1964 at age 17. Times have changed.

This is the second time you have been named Chess Journalist of the Year, the last time being in 2006. How does 2023 compare to 2006?

The first time always has special meaning. Not only that, but it was a vote of the CJA membership. 2023 was very gratifying because I did so many different things, and in many of them I was helping other journalists out or recruiting a young person to write for us or driving 1300 miles to Florida to support the chess park that players created in West Palm Beach. I even was interviewed by two TV stations. When I looked at how much work I and Josip Asik and Dusan Kronic and Jimmy Adams and Vlad Vuksan put into [American Chess Magazine](#) and the contributions of all our writers, it made me feel that what we dreamed of seven years ago has come to fruition, and people recognize it as a spectacular magazine. Still when I showed the magazine to someone (for the umpteenth time), I got this response: "Oh, my God, THIS is a chess magazine!?" That's the real reward.

What was the one thing you were most proud of in 2023 that you feel led to the award?

This past year was the busiest and most diverse year I've ever had in chess. In my nomination, my editor, Josip Asik, noted all the stuff: "*What is unique this year is that his record in this past year shows not only achievement, but a diversity in all aspects of chess journalism: openings columnist, puzzle columnist, book producer, award winner, Facebook page editor, chess research helper to fellow journalists and even taping to be interviewed for a documentary, interviewer for our magazine, historical writer, editorialist, humorist, game annotator, public relations person to promote local community chess culture and continually finding young stars of chess to bring them into the field of chess journalism. Finally, his contributions to the production of our magazine are critically important. You would be hard pressed to find someone with this variety of accomplishments in a single year and his*

youthful energy." I'm not so confident about the youthful energy part, though. 76 is not the new 66.

The CJA has been around 50 years now. Are you surprised we survived this long?

Quite frankly, yes. We've been very fortunate to have people step up when needed. Too often there have been damn few people willing to contribute to the success of the organization. Whether it's been a Helen Warren way back when or a Joshua Milton Anderson today, it's been pure luck that such people have existed to keep us going. We've had great support staff heroes, too, like Randy Hough, John Hillery, Mark Capron or J. Franklin Campbell, to name a few. **Thanks! Those are some high-class folks you're lumping me in with.**



Helen Warren on left. Joshua Anderson standing behind Pete at the US Open 2023 Awards meeting.

What have been the biggest CJA accomplishments?

Without question, the CJA awards program. Everyone from grandmasters to amateurs and even non-chess players have entered and won awards. There is little or no money in doing journalism, so some bragging rights make you feel good, because you've created something, and other people have appreciated it. Edward Winter, whose historical skills have been peerless, is very grouchy about the CJA. He just doesn't get the good it does. Also, we've kept a decent record, albeit incomplete, of the last 50 years of chess reporting in the US. And, if you have ever read the old journals back to '73 as I have, you notice that there are a lot of "how to" articles that are worthy of a booklet online. We can even add some more "how to" pieces as well.

Yes, when I was making my decision to take over editorship of the magazine, I was thinking about many of those how-to articles that used to be in the magazine. I wanted to keep that going, but just haven't found any takers on writing that type of article.

I've been thinking about writing one on how to do interviews. Just bug me every now and then!

What have you most liked doing within the CJA?

I have a love/hate relationship with my past president and chief judge experiences. I loved getting entries from all over the country to see what people were doing. I hated having my living room and dining room floors and furniture covered with piles of papers and categories. Getting people to judge, or worse, be chief judge, was frustrating. Happily, enough people came through most of the time. Joshua has been outstanding in getting people to judge. I met so many great people from all over the nation. I have to mention my Jerry Hanken story. Back then chess politics got very personal. I received a story from someone who related a tale as true—about Jerry. I made an off-hand joking reference to it. One night, I got a phone call—Jerry! He was not a happy camper. He explained in detail what really happened. I profusely apologized.



He invited me to dinner in Philly at the next World Open. We met and became great friends. We were on opposite sides of the political spectrum, but he would stay at my house when on the East Coast and we

would sit at my chess table and go over old games or play five minute and, of course, talk Shakespeare, whom we both loved, but he was a real expert, and I learned a lot. We often get so wrapped up in all the chess hub-bub that we forget the social aspect of the game. Involvement in the CJA gave me that aspect of chess I truly value.

What have been the most unexpected changes?

Three things: computers, computers, computers. With the internet, publishing programs, Chessbase and the rest, there has been an explosion of people writing and publishing. Still, after these recent years, we're still dealing with what it all means.

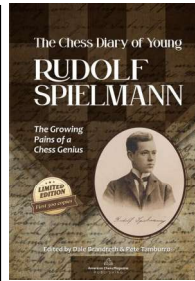
Who were some of your favorite people to work with?

My all-time favorite is, of course, my late, dear friend, Glenn Petersen. He got me into the whole journalism gig when he showed up at my home while I was in graduate school and said he had an idea for a chess newspaper. You can read the whole story in *ACM #23*. Quite literally everything I've written, edited, published—everything—is due to him. He was a visionary and a much underappreciated one at that. I also worked well with Steve Doyle in our joint, and award-winning newspaper column. He is one of the most amazing people that chess in the US has had in the last 50 years. I loved Helen Warren. At a US Open once, out of the blue, she nominated me for CJA vice-president, which started the whole CJA involvement. Speaking of favorite quotes, she once cracked me up when she wrote to her correspondence chess members who would write in and complain about every damn thing. She wrote something like this about the whiny complaints: "I feel like telling you all to get a life, but then I realize this is your life."

You have been the senior editor of *American Chess Magazine* since its inception. Can you tell us what your part was in the original idea and launch? What do your current duties involve?

In *ACM #24* we celebrated our 5th year of existence and told the story. Shorter version: Josip was the then new editor of *British Chess Magazine* and got complaints my column didn't appear in his first production. He called me on Skype. We talked. He loved what was going on in American chess and wanted to have a magazine that would celebrate that. That was my chance to give something wonderful back to chess, so I agreed on the condition that I don't receive a salary. I am thinking of asking for a raise to \$1 a year, so I can deduct my expenses! Back in 2016 we did it. I recruited some great writers, proofread, edited, interviewed, wrote historical articles, did puzzle pages, responded to correspondence, reviewed submissions, proofread for the second time, wrote an editorial, talked with various companies around the US, handled any problems that came up for our readers, managed the Facebook site, where we have a lot of fun with the puzzle contest, proofread for the third time, made calls to the other editors at six or seven in the morning....that sort of thing.

You have written many books over the years. In 2023 you were co-editor of *The Chess Diary of Young Rudolf Spielmann* with Dale Brandreth. What drew you to this pro-



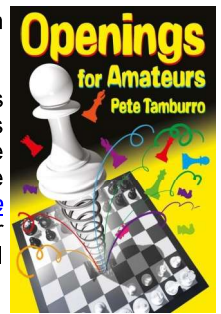
ject? What were some of the obstacles that came up during the writing process and how did you overcome them?

That took me three pages to explain in the foreword and two more for us to explain in the introduction. Buy the book and read the epic tale of how it took 50 years to get done.

I do have the book, it's wonderful, and I would recommend it. Our readers will need to get a copy to understand some of the obstacles and how you overcame them then.

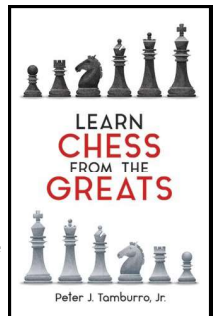
Which of your books has done the best in the marketplace?

Openings for Amateurs is the star. It was even translated and published in Italy. Its reception has been great. However, that little collection of syndicated columns I had done for the USCF called *Learn Chess from the Greats* back in 2000 was reprinted by Dover in recent years. They didn't even tell me! I found it by accident.



I hope you found out on accident when you opened your mail and found a royalties check!

Actually, no! Dover just gave me a one-time payment! It was my first chess book. A tip for prospective authors. If a publisher does that, just negotiate some arrangement for second printings or simply taking over publishing rights after "x" years. Happily, Mongoose gives me royalties for my work and even helped sell the book to an Italian publisher for my *Openings for Amateurs* series.



Writing books can involve lots of research. Do you do the research in your own chess library or do you go to someplace else, for example Cleveland? What is your overall Chess library like?

Tons of opening books because I write about openings. Lots of crucial reference works, which ends up helping others as well, the bound magazine runs I mention elsewhere here, game collections, player game collections, teaching books, endgame books, middle game books, my miniature games books (I love them!) and books reflecting how to enjoy chess in literature. One unusual group of items is my set of *Illustrated London News* bound volumes which have Staunton's very first columns, all his columns on Morphy, the London 1851 tournament as well as the 1883 tournament. What's funny is that when chess players from GM to amateur walk into my living room and see floor to ceiling books they go looking for chess books and there are none! I love

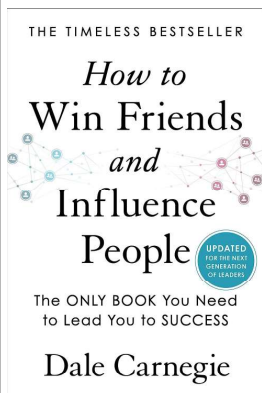


it when my books on those shelves attract a few of those chess people. Jerry Hanken combined the joy when he found Staunton's Shakespeare volumes on a shelf. And Ruth Haring went looking and leaped for joy when she found a favorite author of hers. We talked for hours about him.

Ruth and I.

Those magazine runs sound terrific. I am a bibliophile as well. I have books everywhere my wife puts up with and some places she doesn't. She got me a kindle so when we travel, I don't have one suitcase for clothes and one for the books. Who are a couple of your favorite non-chess authors?

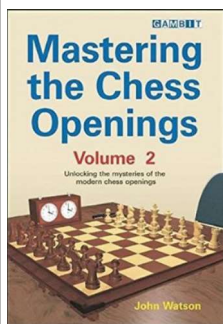
Too many to mention! I am a largely non-fiction guy. 19th century Spanish poets (Becquer, Espronceda, Machado) are favorites as are several American poets like Langston Hughes and E.E. Cummings, who issued only 77 copies of a signed limited edition which graces my book shelf. I love Mark Twain and Ralph Waldo Emerson. In economics, Milton Friedman is my favorite and in politics the one who also taught me how to write was William F. Buckley, Jr. My non-chess runs that are key are H.L. Mencken's bound volumes of *American Mercury* from 1924 to 1933. It's the best magazine ever—with no photos! I also have several rare



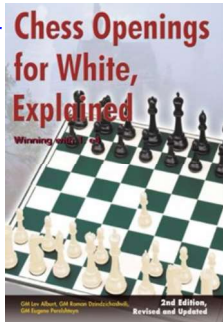
runs of 19th century historical magazines. I have books from every century going back to 1493. When I bought that book, I realized something about book collecting. There were 500 years of people who owned it before I did. So, I didn't really own it. I was just the next caretaker who paid for the privilege of taking care of it. When my students, who knew of my love of books, always asked me what one book would I recommend to them to read, my answer was always the same: [How to Win Friends and Influence People](#) by Dale Carnegie. Kids need to read it.

You have been a prolific writer for several world class magazines including *British Chess Magazine*, *Chess Life*, *Chess Life for Kids* and of course *American Chess Magazine*. What has been your top few articles over the years and why?

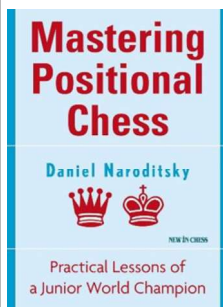
For *BCM*, which I've now been doing for nine years, my favorite columns are ones that just hit on all cylinders. I've already made two books with them. They EXPLAIN things, and it's very practical advice. My best stuff for *Chess Life* were some book reviews.



I reviewed John Watson's book in 2007 by interviewing him in detail about the book, [Mastering the Chess Openings, Volume 2](#). One master wrote me saying it was the best review he ever read. I did one on Lev Albur's great book on [Chess Openings for White Explained](#) that went for 3 or 4 pages, because I went through every opening and just asked questions a reader might ask that weren't answered in the book. It wasn't a criticism. Just questions. Much later, Lev came up to me in the US Team bookstore and started asking me my advice on what they might do in the next edition. One time I



was assigned to write a review of the very young at the time Daniel Naroditsky's book, [Mastering Positional Chess](#). Quite a few people were skeptical that he really wrote it saying he probably had an adult do most of it. So, I got permission to talk to him over the phone. I taught AP students, so I knew what some of those kids could do. After five minutes I knew he was the real deal AND he agreed to photograph his notebook that he based his book on and we printed some pages in the review! That ended those ru-

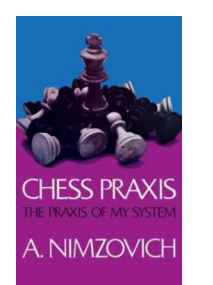
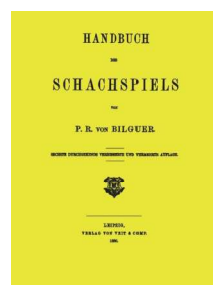
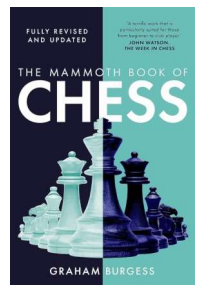
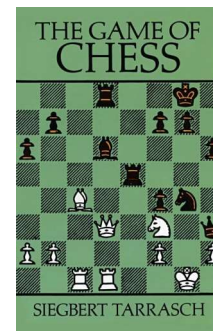
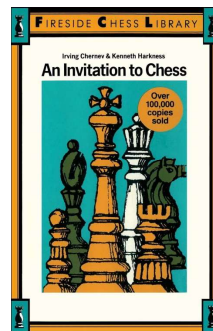
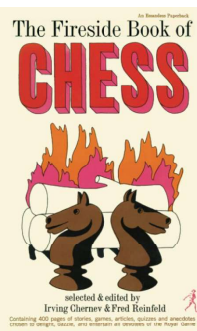


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mors. In *Chess Life for Kids*, I did 64 separate items and enjoyed them all. For *American Chess Magazine*, it would have to be our special Marshall/Marshall Chess Club issue. My idea and I got to write the early history of the club. I had several memorable interviews. My favorite was the one with Nathan Resika—an opera singer and master. It was Nathan's superb answers and relating chess and music that made it the best of that type of topic. When I submitted the award-winning Saidy interview by someone else for a CJA award, I knew it would win and did, but I didn't care. I loved what Nathan had to say. The last thing would be the editorial I wrote about the Niemann affair (ACM#29). It was something that needed to be said.

Do you have a favorite chess book someone else wrote? If so, what is it?

Hard to have just one. I have a sentimental feeling toward the only three books on chess in my high school library: [The Fireside Book of Chess](#) by Chernev and Reinfeld, [An Invitation to Chess](#) by Chernev and Harkness and [The Game of Chess](#) by Tarrasch. They lit up my chess interest. Today, I would hope libraries have the [Mammoth Book of Chess](#) by Graham Burgess. Once I got going into chess books, I went nuts over Schlechter's [Handbuch des Schachspiels](#), Marshall's autobiographical games collection, all sorts of great tournament and match books, Keres' three volumes, Botvinnik's, Smyslov's and, most recently, Judit Polgar's three volume masterpiece that surpasses all of them. And then there's the periodical collections I developed runs in. I sold off my *Wiener Schachzeitung* run (Marco years), and *L'Echiquier* from the 20s and 30s, but I still have a bound *Chess Life* run, a bound *Chess Review* run, an *American Chess Quarterly* run, Purdy's *Chess World* magazine run, a bound Kagan's *Neueste Schachnachrichten* run from the 20s, a *Chess Amateur* run from 1906 to 1929 and my two favorites: *American Chess Bulletin* from 1906 till it closed in the 1960s, and my all-time favorite, *British Chess Magazine* from the beginning to today. Having bound magazine runs allows you to be a better historian and journalist. There are a lot of people out there just putting out crap online with no knowledge of what has been written before on whatever they're writing.



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

I ran across [Chess Praxis](#) by Nimzovich before I read [My System](#), and that was a great help. Along the way, I bought the Purdy run of *Chess World* magazine. How he could teach! A huge help.

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

Yeah, all of those!

Do you have any future book plans?

My third, and final, *Openings for Amateurs* book is in editing right now. It is called *Openings for Amateurs—Theory vs. Practice*. I'm also doing a booklet for ACM.

Do you have a favorite opening? Ending?

Openings: The Sicilian Wing Gambit. I beat a computer in the US Open with it during the same round one of its clones was beating an IM. I beat my first expert with it when I was rated 1400. I had a master tell me he didn't play the Sicilian against me, because he didn't want to see what I had up my sleeve! It's still fun to play in 5-minute online, but I moved on to my modern favorite, the 3. ♖xd4 Sicilian, which I introduced on the ICC (Internet Chess Club) lecture series. I was deluged with people from all over the world who were beating much higher rated players with it. Of course, time and neural networks have caught up with these openings, but the point of my books is that equality doesn't mean drawn as long as you understand what your opening is about.

When Chess Digest used to give out free book bonuses depending on how much you spent, I got a book on the Sicilian Wing Gambit. I never ended up playing that opening though. Instead, I got stuck on the Smith-Morra Gambit for quite a while.

Do you have a favorite game anyone played?

For positional play, it would have to be the draw between Janowski and Lasker in their match. I annotated it in *Openings For Amateurs—Next Steps*. I was fascinated by Lasker's demonstration of his opening choices being part of a superb defensive plan into the middle game. And Janowski was playing really well in his attack!

Excerpt from *Openings For Amateurs—Next Steps* pages 164-8 reprinted with permission of the author.

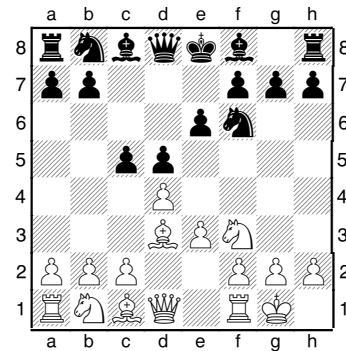
The world championship certainly adds to the fun of opening theory, and just recently it also added some interest in the resurrection of another old line – the Zukertort Attack. Karjakin used the All-Purpose Defense against Carlsen's Z-Attack, and it was hard not to feel we were going back in time. So, we are going to go back in time!

It's 1910, the time of the world championship match between Janowski and Lasker, where Lasker essays the same defense as Karjakin. In his theoretical survey in *BCM*, GM Čolović made a comment that just leapt out at me: "The Zukertort appeals to club players because it is usually played like this: 8.Ne5 followed by f2-f4, Nd2-f3 and an attack on the kingside. If Black knows what he is doing though, there will be no attack and it is safe to presume that Karjakin would know what to do."

Absolutely correct in every way! However, although Karjakin might know what to do, I would venture to wager that precious few amateurs would know, using the All-Purpose Defense that C.J.S. Purdy popularized years ago, what the middlegame plan was beyond the opening. This game is thematic, hard-fought, and well-played. Club players would be well advised to study this world championship fight from over a hundred years ago.

Game 39
Janowski – Emanuel Lasker
World Chp (2), Berlin 1910
Zukertort Attack D05

1.d4 d5 2.♟f3 ♟f6 3.e3 e6 4.♞d3 c5 5.0-0

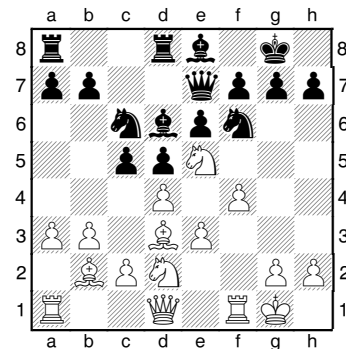


While many Colle-oriented players immediately play 5.c3 to keep the bishop on the b1-h7 diagonal, Janowski gives the ...c5-c4 threat a "never you mind" and goes about his development – and with some good reason.

5...♟c6

Lasker is not ready to have the game opened with 5...c4 6.♞e2 b5 7.♞e5 (7.b3 ♞b7 8.a4 a6 9.axb5 axb5 10.♞xa8 ♞xa8 11.♞e5 ♟c6 12.f4 ♞e7) 7...♞d6 8.b3 ♟c7 9.a4! ♞xe5 10.dxe5 ♟xe5 11.c3 bxa4 12.bxc4 0-0 13.cxd5 exd5 14.♟xa4 because Janowski will then have the two bishops and plenty of scope for them.

6.b3 ♞d6 7.♞b2 0-0 8.♟bd2 ♟e7 9.♞e5 ♞d8 10.a3 ♞d7 11.f4 ♞e8

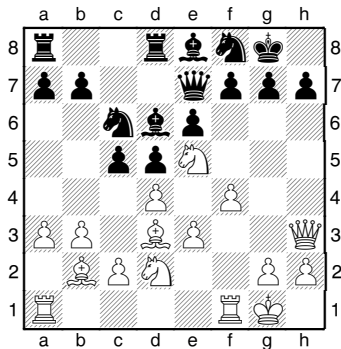


Commenting at the time in *BCM*, Leopold Hoffer wrote, "The defense runs on well-known lines, and is minutely timed by Lasker. The ...♞d8 was intended to make room later on for ...♟f8; the queen's bishop is brought to the rescue, to eventually fortify the King's position at g6." There you have it! Hoffer answers the unasked question. Amateurs who know the All-Purpose Defense setup often just stop here without any idea how to prepare the next steps for the middlegame. Lasker has a plan from his first opening moves: ...♞d7-e8-g6 in coordination with ...♟f6-d7-f8 and ...f7-f6 with exchanges on g6. It's logical. White's d3-bishop is formidable if not challenged, and yet how many times do you see an ...h7-h6 or ...g7-g6 move as a "defense"? Watch how this plan is implemented!

12.♟f3 ♟d7 13.♟h3

Hoffer felt that the knight exchange first with 13.♟xc6 bxc6 14.♟h3 f5 15.♟f3 was better, to follow up with ♟f3-e5, ♟h1, and g2-g4, a typical Stonewall Attack plan. However, that assumes Black will remain static and wait for all this when, by 15...cxd4 16.♞xd4 c5 17.♞b2 ♞ac8 18.♞e5 c4, it is Black who has the initiative. Now Lasker plays a move that prepares his move 15.

13...♟f8



Black continues with his defensive plan.

14. ♖df3

White might try to keep the bishop's diagonal open with 14. ♖xc6 bxc6 15. dxc5 ♗xc5 16. b4 ♗b6, but Black could play 14... ♗xc6 15. dxc5 ♗xc5 16. b4 ♗d6 followed by 17... ♗ac8, when he has counterplay along the c-file and can put the bishop back on e8 to continue with his original plan.

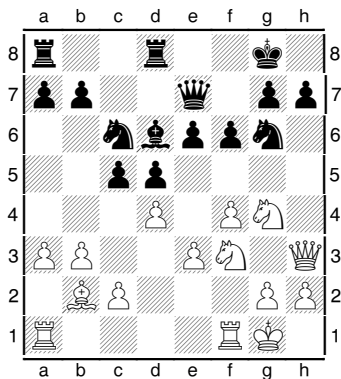
14... f6

Allowing the fruition of Lasker's plan to get the bishop to g6. It's important to note that Lasker planned out where he wanted his pieces placed and then found the means to put them there!

15. ♖g4

BCM quotes Lasker: "The pawn blocks the line of the white B and opens that of the black one. The attack on the knight is only incidental [! -PT]. If White leaves the knight, Black proceeds on his way [i.e., on the queenside -PT], threatening to capture it at an appropriate moment, probably very late. If now, for instance, 15. ♖g5 h6; 15. ♖h4 a6 16. g4 b5. It is doubtful whether White could have forced matters on the K's side, whereas there is no doubt as to the rapidity of the advance of Black upon the other wing."

15... ♗g6 16. ♗xg6 ♖xg6



An instructive position. White has five men overprotecting e5. Black has five men in support of the pawn push to e5. Black's counterplay in the center keeps White's kingside attacking ideas at bay. It was not a coincidence that Lasker played his ... ♗e7 on move 8 for the push to e5. He knew this position could arise in concert with his ... ♗e8-g6 idea, which by playing ... f7-f6 for the bishop's deployment also supports ... e6-e5. This is such a fine example of an opening plan carrying over into the middlegame.

17. dxc5 ♗xc5 18. ♖d4

Threatening ♖xe6.

18... f5

Lasker points out that the knight could not be captured, as White would recapture with the pawn, leaving the e6-pawn backward, and then notes that Janowski forces an exchange to keep the queen's bishop's diagonal open.

19. ♖xc6 bxc6 20. ♖e5

According to Lasker, the coming pawn sacrifice is forced, as 20. ♖f2 would have been too passive.

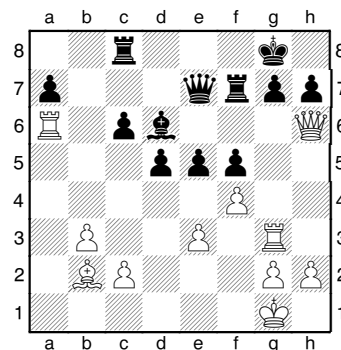
20... ♖xe5 21. ♗xe5 ♗xa3 22. ♗f3 ♗d6 23. ♗b2 ♗f8

Another possibility was 23... c5 24. g4 e5!. Black's theme of the freeing ... e6-e5 advance is still around on move 24.

24. ♗a6 ♗ac8 25. ♗g3 ♗f7 26. ♖h6

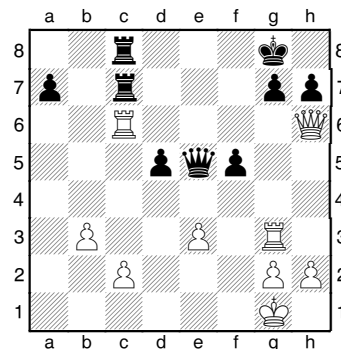
The threat is 27. ♗xg7! ♗xg7 28. ♗xg7+ ♖xg7 29. ♖xe6+. Lasker says his next move is forced – which it is, but it's a great forced move to make!

26... e5!



And here we are, seeing an ... e6-e5 push that we will also see in Games 40 and 41. Lasker makes defending look easy and logical. He must also see that he's giving a pawn back, but he has a reason for it.

27. fx e5 ♗xe5 28. ♗xe5 ♖xe5 29. ♗xc6 ♗fc7



And here it is! He maintains the defense of g7 and now counters along the c-file, all at the same time! Komodo gives Black a bit more with 29... ♗xc6 30. ♖xc6 g6 31. ♖c8+ ♖g7 32. ♗f3 ♗c7 33. ♖a6 h5.

30. ♖f6!

Janowski, who has displayed great energy in this game, comes up with a "pretty coup" (Lasker).

30... ♖xf6 31. ♗xf6 ♗xc2

The game is drawn.

32. ♗xf5 ♗d2 33. h4 ♗e8 34. h5 ♗d3 35. ♖f2 ♗f8 36. ♗g3 ♗xf5 37. ♗xf5 d4 38. exd4 ♗xd4 39. ♗b5 ♗d2+ 40. ♖f3 ♖f7 41. ♖e4 g6 42. g4 gxh5 43. ♗xh5 ♖g6 44. ♗b5 ♗d6 45. ♗a5 ♗b6 1/2-1/2

This encounter did not make either player's best games collections or any anthologies of brilliant chess. However, both players did play very thematic and accurate chess that teaches us a great deal. For those of you who would like to rely on the All-Purpose Defense, this game is a model for Black right into the middlegame. For those who find the Zukertort Attack of interest, it offers very valuable ideas to put into use, just in case you're not playing a Lasker in your next tournament game. You might also want to check out Hartston – Kosten, British Chp 1982.

My favorite attacking game is Tartakower's Dutch Defense at Teplitz-Schonau in 1922. He demolished Maroczy with as deep—and logical—a sacrificial line as you will ever see. Unfortunately, the brilliancy prize committee wouldn't believe he saw it all.

Maroczy,Geza - Tartakower,Savielly [A85]

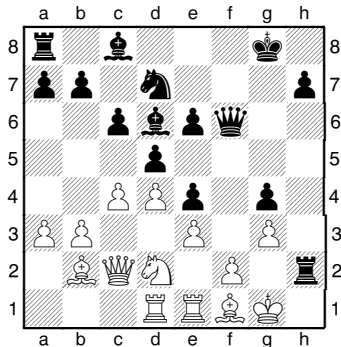
Teplitz-Schonau, 1922
[Pete Tamburro]

I love this game! Tartakower's conception is brilliant. The judges (mentioned below) were a bit pissy about it, but then they weren't creative geniuses. It reminds me of the time I asked Kavalek about his incredible game as Black against Gufeld at the Student Olympiad in 1962. My question was how much of it did he calculate and how much was intuition or positional judgment. He could have said he figured it all out ahead of time, but he told me that it was a combination of both calculation and positional judgment. Did Tartakower calculate it to the nth degree—probably not, but that same kind of positional judgment told him he had a winner in his 17th move. If you play the Dutch or teach the Dutch, this is one of those games teachers and students should study.

1.d4 e6 2.c4 f5 3.♖c3 ♖f6 4.a3 ♗e7 5.e3 0-0 6.♗d3 d5 7.♗f3 c6 8.0-0 ♖e4 9.♖c2 ♗d6 10.b3 ♗d7 11.♗b2

Tartakower: "Full of confidence in the scientific basis of his play, White treats the game from a purely positional point of view, whereas Black regards the given position as a vast problem: Mate in 25 moves!

11...♗f6 12.♗fe1 ♗h6 13.g3 ♖f6 14.♗f1 g5 15.♗ad1 g4 16.♗xe4 fxe4 17.♗d2 ♗xh2!!



18.♖xh2

OK, try it yourself. The next move is easy. Can you work out the follow-ups for Black after that. You know you're going to gobble up the king side pawns and you have to play e5 at some point to get the bishop on c8 a diagonal, thus, in turn getting the queen rook off the bench and into the game. The trick of it is not so much Black's moves, but White's moves for defense. That is arduous. There have been many commentaries on this game giving alternatives for White. The mental training here is invaluable. Looking at your chess engine won't help you develop the working brain cells necessary to become a better analyst over the board.

"If one casts a glance over the board, it will be observed that, at the moment, the white king has as its only real defense the bishop on f1, whereas all the other pieces are mere units or even simple spectators; but that, on the other hand, the entire black queen's wing is in an embryonic state of development. The question that presents itself to Black is therefore the following: "Prepare or pillage?"

After Black's 17th, he has: "This sacrifice of a major piece without immediate, striking consequences exacted the most elaborate calculation. Positively, Black has to foresee if he would succeed in carrying out certain essential quiet moves (...♗f6--h5--g3 as well as ...♗d7) before the adversary can throw his rescue troops into the fight. Negatively, Black had to work out that a slow and methodical reinforcement of his attack (by 17...♗f6 and

then ...♗d7,...♗g6,...♗f8) would also allow his opponent to consolidate, e.g., 17...♗f8 18.♗g2 ♗d7 19.♗f1 ♗g6 20.♗c3 a5 21.♖d2, and White is trying to displace the center of gravity of the struggle in the direction of the queen's wing."

18...♖xf2+ 19.♖h1! ♗f6! 20.♗e2 ♖xg3 21.♖b1 ♖h5 22.♖d2 ♗d7 23.♗f2 ♖h4+ 24.♖g1 ♗g3! 25.♗c3 ♗xf2+ 26.♖xf2 g3 27.♖g2 ♗f8 28.♗e1 ♖xf1+! 29.♖xf1 e5 30.♖g1 ♗g4 31.♗xg3 ♖xg3 32.♗e1 ♗f5 33.♖f2 ♖g5 34.dxe5 ♗f3+ 35.♖f1 ♗g3+

Tartakower: "The judges awarded this game the third brilliancy prize, although the majority of them declared in peremptory fashion that such sacrifices are incalculable in all their ramifications in advance and that, in consequence, they deserve no encouragement." They would have just been apoplectic over Tal. BTW Tartakower's two volume book of games is available in paperback in algebraic by Russell Enterprises. Hannon has done a great service to chess by making old DN books available in algebraic.

0-1

Do you have a favorite game you have played?

In American Chess Magazine we asked the readers—and the editors!—to annotate their favorite game. Mine was from a club match and the win allowed us (Toms River CC) to have an upset draw against the powerful Westfield CC. "Naturally," I played the King's Gambit!

Tamburro,Pete - Boczar,Al [C35]

Toms River-Westfield Match Westfield NJ, 1975
[Pete Tamburro]

This is definitely my favorite game because of the finish and the circumstances. I had been club champion of the Toms River CC a few years earlier, but ha moved up to northern New Jersey for a teaching position and marriage. I played in the Westfield CC, which was a powerhouse back then. Somehow a match was arranged with the TRCC, the definite underdog. I was asked to play for the TRCC, and was happy to do so. Our team ended up "upsetting" Westfield by tying them 7.5-7.5. This game was one of our key points scored. I knew I had to beat Al, was was a strong, solid player. I always do well against strong solid players because I play very sharp openings against them, to which they generally do not play sharply in return. That gives me time, and that's all I need.

1.e4 e5 2.f4

Perfect! I had written a series in *Atlantic Chess News* on the King's Gambit (Hanstein line). Al probably read it, and decided not to play into that, so he went with the Modern Cunningham, which had a good reputation back then.

2...exf4 3.♗f3 ♗e7 4.♗c4

Neither 4.d4 nor 4.♗c3 appealed to be. I would rather have my king at f1 than e2. Sorry, Steinitz!]

4...♗f6

It's pretty equal after 4...♗h4+ 5.♖f1 ♗e7 6.d4 ♗f6 7.e5 ♖e4 8.♗d5 ♗g5 9.♗xf4, but it wasn't Black's style of play. Not only that, but several sources back then gave an exclamation mark to the text move.

5.e5

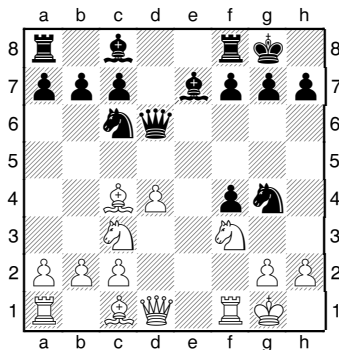
Cravenly going for the pawn is not how you play gambits, and it's also embarrassing tactically, after 5.d3 d5 6.exd5 ♖xd5 7.♗xd5 ♖xd5 8.♗xf4 g5!

5...♗g4

There is equal (but not drawn!) play after 5...♖e4 6.♗d5 ♗g5 7.d4 ♖e6 8.♗xe6 fxe6 9...♗xf4 0-0 10.♖d2

6.0-0 d5 7.exd6 Keep the lines open!

7...♙xd6! 8.d4 ♘c6 9.♘c3 0-0



OK, we're both castled, and I have my eye on a kingside attack. I had seen some books give ♘e2, which did not make sense. The move played not only attacks the f-pawn, but deals with ...♘e3 in proper fashion.

10.♘d5! ♘e3

I had also seen a line with Black defending f4 with a pawn, but that makes for a breezy castled position which I would welcome: 10...g5 11.h3 ♘h6 12.h4 ♘e6 13.♘xe7+ ♘xe7 14.♘xe6 fxe6 15.♘xg5 ± as Black's three weak kingside pawns will make the difference.

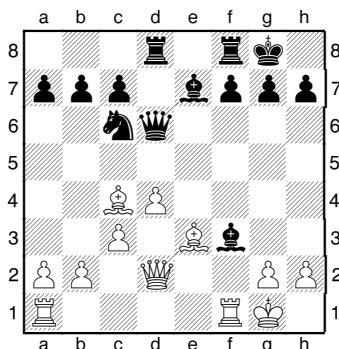
11.♘xe3 fxe3 12.♘xe3

Now, I'm a happy camper! A half-open file to attack along, Black with no piece in front of his castled position, and Plan B, the queenside pawn majority if we get to the endgame.

12...♘g4!?

12...♘e6 13.♘xe6 ♙xe6 14.♘f4 ♙d7 and now either 15.d5 or 15.c3 with perhaps Plan B looming.

13.♙d2 ♙ad8 14.c3 ♘xf3



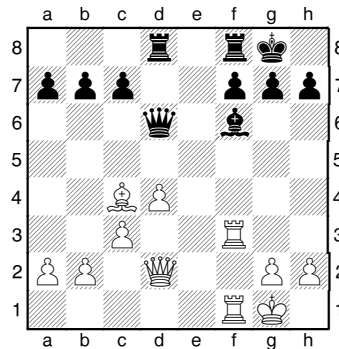
He was expecting the rook to recapture whereupon he would play ♘e5. What's absolutely crazy was that two masters in Buenos Aires in 2001(!) played our game right up through 14.c3. In C. Perez-Pietronave 2280—S. Slipak 2472, Black played 14...♙g6 and lost as well!

15.♘f4 Zwischenzug!

15...♘e5 16.♘xe5 ♙xe5 17.♙xf3 ♙d6

He got the exchanges he wanted to lessen the pressure, but he really didn't.]

18.♙af1 ♘f6



He didn't have anything better. The first thing I looked at was ♙xf6, but something concrete to follow it up with was required. I looked for a couple of minutes, found it, and then got up to clear my head. My master friend, Steve Pozarek, playing for Westfield, looked at my face and gave me one of those, "You're going to take the bishop aren't you?" looks. I nodded and he smiled. He saw me staring intently at the bishop. I took a short stroll to play it in my head and went back and took the bishop. It's funny how I've always been lured by sacrifices for attacks. At that time, I didn't try to find a more positional approach as an alternative, which would have been an easier win. However, I did have a lot of fun back then! The better I got in later years, the more chess became work. That's one reason I turned to writing about chess.

19.♙xf6

The more prosaic way of winning was 19.♘d3 ♙fe8 20.♘c2 ♙a6 21.♙f4 ♘d6 22.♙f5 g6 23.♙c5 ♙c6 24.♘d3 ♙xc5 25.♘xa6 ♙f5 26.♙xf5 gxf5 27.♘xb7 ♙b8 28.♘d5 ♙xb2 29.♙xf5 ♙g7 30.♘b3, but the sacrifice was too tempting to pass up.

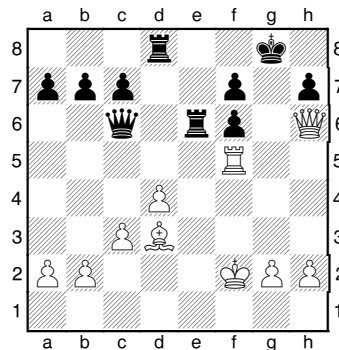
19...gxf6 20.♙f5!!

My favorite move of the game because I had to see that to take the bishop. The queen is shut out because he can't play f6–f5.

20...♙fe8

Ironically, he could have played the queen to c6 earlier rather than later and that would keep him in the game. Now, if 20...♙c6 21.♘d3 ♙fe8 22.♙h6 ♙e6 23.♙f3 (23.♙g5+ fxg5 24.♘h7+ ♙h8 25.♘g6+ ♙g8 26.♘h7+ ♙h8=) 23...♙e1+ 24.♘f1 ♘d5 25.♙xf6 ♙e6 26.♙f4 and White has sufficient compensation for the exchange.

21.♙h6 ♙e1+ 22.♙f2 ♙c6 23.♘d3 ♙e6



And now I got to do something I never had an opportunity to do: I announced a mate in 5! I thought he saw it coming, too, but he didn't. In fact, after I gave the moves, he made me play it out to mate, and I did.

23...♙e6 24.♙f3+–

24.♙g5+ fxg5 25.♘h7+ ♙h8 26.♘g6+ ♙g8 27.♙h7+ ♙f8 28.♙xf7 mate 1–0

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

The biggest lesson of chess is that there are consequences for your decisions, not only in chess, but in life. Thus, you have to come up with a reliable thinking process to make sure they are the right decisions. When I coached high school and college basketball, we used to scout our opponents to see what defenses made them uncomfortable. I had learned a lot from chess in terms of making your opponent uncomfortable and taking them out of their game.

Students I have had tend to do before thinking or understanding the issue. I always like to remind them to "sit on their hands" first. Understand before action. Very much the adage - Stop, Think, Act.

This has been my mantra (sit on your hands) as well. A bit more time upfront gets it right most of the time and ends up saving time and painful corrections later on.

I love quotes, do you have a favorite quote?

Hermann Helms once asked Lasker, age 69, when he was visiting the US, "Doctor, do you ever intend to retire?" Lasker, with a smile on his face, replied, "No; at any rate not until I have succeeded in gaining a competence from Chess."

What will your chess legacy be?

My fondest wish for a legacy is that someday my grandchildren will pick up my books and *American Chess Magazine* and be able to appreciate and love the game that Pop-Pop did.

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

You're welcome. Yes, I have some parting words. All chess journalists should encourage the work of our colleagues. Our true mission is not to win awards. The awards are great fun, but as I recently wrote one editor, one should remember what Emerson in *Self-Reliance* had to say. Here is the whole quote: *The roses under my window make no reference to former roses or better ones; they are what they are; they exist with God today. There is no time to them.* There is simply the rose; it is perfect in every moment of its existence." Whatever your journalistic creation, create your rose, revel in your work and know you have done your best. And, I would continue the analogy: encourage other flowers to grow as well because our true mission is to promote chess and to let other people know what's out there in the world of chess journalism.

Postscript:

While retrieving photos for this interview, I forgot two very important articles—from 1975. They started my writing for *Chess Life* for 40 years. Burt Hochberg called me to ask permission to reprint my *Theory of Szen* article (K+3 pawns vs. K+3 pawns) from *Atlantic Chess News*. He wanted to make USCF members aware of this interesting new publication. Then Ed Edmondson

asked me to be writer/photographer/chaperone for a group of high school students going to Scandinavia. Jeff Kastner was my chaperone partner.



Burt Hochberg

I ended up writing "*Innocents (?) Abroad*" in the November *Chess Life*. What a group: Ken Regan, Lewis Cohen, Ken Potts, Ron Henley, Mark Diesen, Michael Rhode, Jon Tisdall, John Fedorowicz, Jake Meskin and Erik Moskow. The photo with Fed and Mike so many years later in NYC reminded me of it. Some became friends over the years, and at Kimberly Doo McVay's party this summer, Jon Tisdall came from Europe to visit and I saw him for the first time since '75! And, hey, I even tied for first in the amateur section of the Scandinavian Open while the rest played in the master section.



Michael Rhode, Pete Tamburro and John Fedorowicz.

Below the group that went to the Scandinavian Open. Used with permission of US Chess



I forgot one really great interview—with Frank Brady (Left). We met at a NY deli. It was published in *The Chess Journalist* in 2000.

Did I mention interviewing Tal, Karpov and Kasparov as favorite articles?

No, you didn't mention. I bet Tal was a riot. Karpov was always so serious it seemed and Kasparov always outspoken.

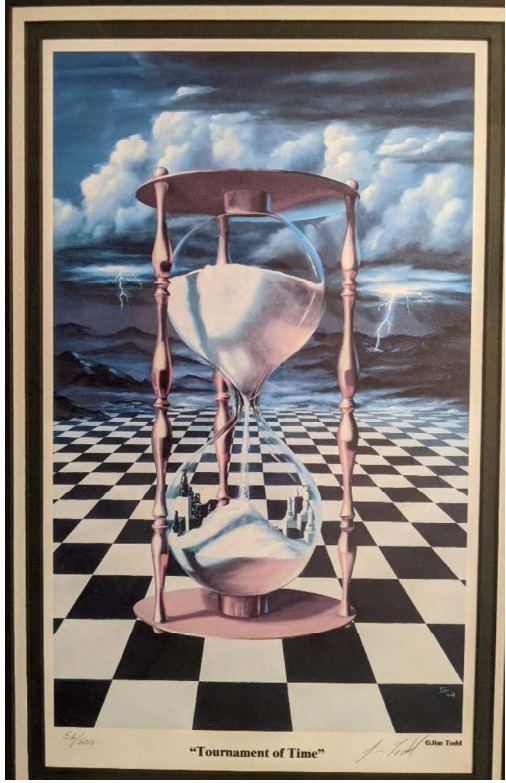
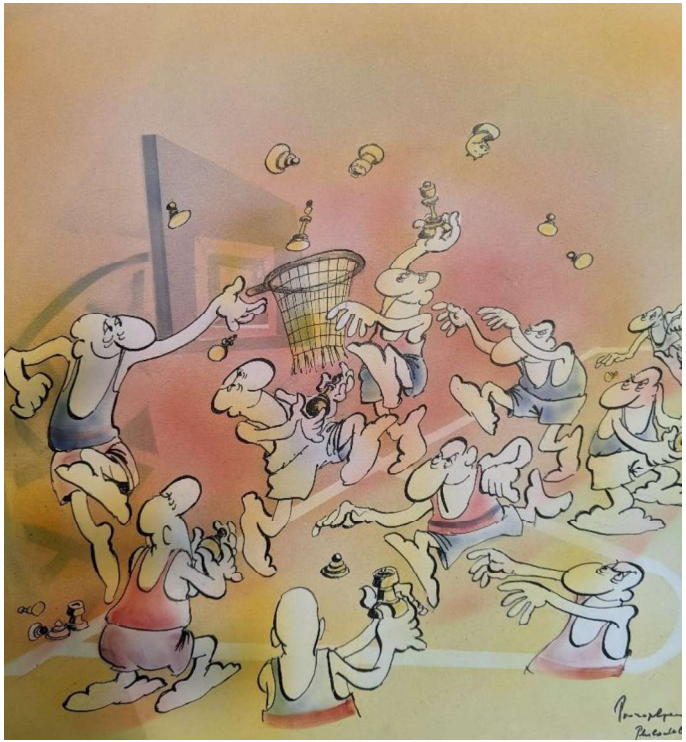
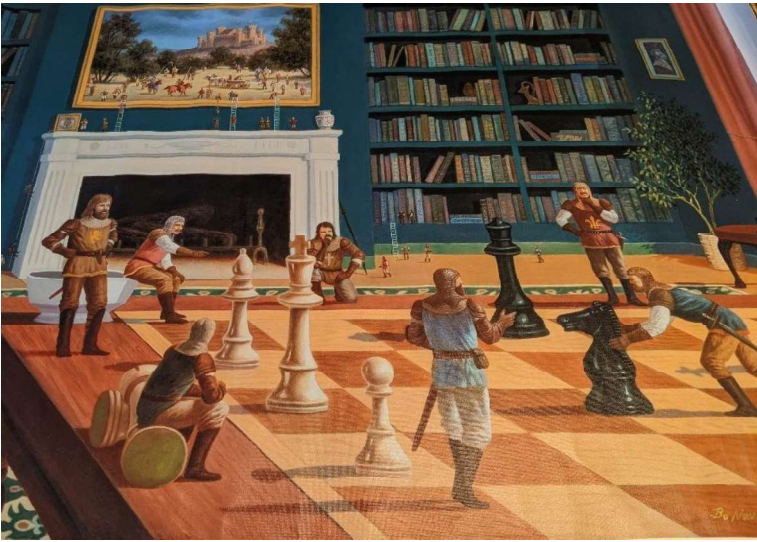
Of my three interviews with world champions, Tal's was the best. Even Andy Soltis quoted it in the *New York Post*. I had asked Tal about a comparison of his match with Botvinnik and modern world championship matches. He replied that back then "we were all amateurs." One funny moment: I asked him where he was living then. He responded with "Ramadan." Now, geography is considered a necessary bit of knowledge for history teachers, but I had no idea where that was. Then, it dawned on me: The Ramada Inn! Karpov was in a talkative mood that night in New Jersey at a simul. Kasparov spent all his time talking about FIDE, as he was running for president.



Up to this point Pete has won 31 CJA Awards in 14 categories.

List of Pete's CJA Awards

- 1995 Won Best Regular Newspaper Column Syndicated Column for the USCF [Ira Lee Riddle]
- 1995 HM Best Historical Article "For the Love of the Game" [Ira Lee Riddle, Pr.]
- 1996 HM Best Historical Article "Olympic Moments" [Jim Eade, Pr.]
- 1997 Won Best Human Interest Story "Barry Spiro, RIP" [Bob Holliman, CJ]
- 1997 HM Best Mag. Tourn. Report "Interplay US Championship" [Bob Holliman, CJ]
- 1999 HM Best Instruction "For Mails Only" [PJT, Pr.]
- 2000 Won Best Interview "Interview with Frank Brady" [PJT, Pr.]
- 2000 Won Best Human Interest "An Interview with Frank Brady" [PJT, Pr.]
- 2001 Best Chess Magazine (Under 1000 circulation) Honorable Mention, Atlantic Chess News with Matt Tamburro as Technical Editor.
- 2002 Won Best Regular Newspaper Co. of Local Interest "Sunday Star-Ledger" [PJT, Pr.]
- 2006 Won Best Analysis "Attacking Strategies in the Ruy Lopez" [Jerry Hanken, Pr., Randy Hough S.T.]
- 2006 Won Chess Journalist of the Year [Jerry Hanken, Pr., Randy Hough, S.T]
- 2006 Won Best Review "The Day Kasparov Quit & Other Chess Interviews" [Hanken, Hough]
- 2007 Won Best Chess Column, Any Media, "Chess Lessons in Chess Life for Kids" [JH, RH]
- 2007 HM Best Review "Make Life Miserable for Black" CL Oct [JH, RH]
- 2008 Won Best Review "Watson: The Sequel" CL Nov [Jonathan Hilton, CJ, RH]
- 2009 HM Best Chess Column CLKids "My Favorite K & P Endings for Students" [Hilton,CJ, RH]
- 2010 Won Best Hist. Article "Botvinnik the Invincible" CL [GM A. Kosteniuk, Pr., Ramon Hernandez,CJ]
- 2010 Won Best Review "Botvinnik the Invincible" CL [GM A. K., Ramon Antonio Hernandez, CJ]
- 2011 HM Best Review "Youth Breeds Experience" CL June '10, "Youth Breeds Experience" [J.M. A.,CJ.]
- 2016 HM Best Analysis "Openings for Amateurs-and GMs" Mar2016 CL [JoshuaMiltonAnderson,CJ]
- 2018 Won Best Interview "25 Questions for Carol Meyer" ACM# [GM A.K., Pr., JMA, CJ]
- 2018 HM Best Interview "25 Questions for GM Lev Albur" [JMA, CJ]
- 2022 Won Best Personal Narrative "A Remembrance: GlennArnePetersen ACM#23" [JMA, CJ]
- 2022 HM Best Interview "A Star-Spangled Opera and Chess Succes " ACM#25 [JMA, CJ]
- 2022 Special Achievement Award "Marshall Tribute Issue #22" [JMA, CJ]
- 2022 Special Achievement Award "Fifth Anniversary, ACM #24" [JMA, CJ]
- 2022 HM Best Historical Article "How it All Began: Marshall CC 1915-1944"ACM#22 [JMA, CJ]
- 2023 Won Chess Journalist of the Year [JMA, CJ]
- 2023 Won Best Interview "25 Questions for Bruce Pandolfini" ACM#28 [JMA, CJ]
- 2023 HM Best Humorous Contribution "Unfortunate Chess Quotes" ACM#30 [JMA]



Representative artwork in Pete's collection. By the way if you really like something, contact him and he might be willing to sell, as he was saying he wanted to downsize a bit. I am partial to the top and bottom left.