Rank & File

The magazine of the Southern California Chess Federation

August-September-October 2013 Volume XXXVII, No. 3 $4.50

Cy & Jack
Team Sevillano Takes Master Junior Simul
GM Gareev Blindfolded at Chess Palace!
IM Sarkar First at Western Pacific Open
WGM Abrahamyan at the U.S. Women's Championship
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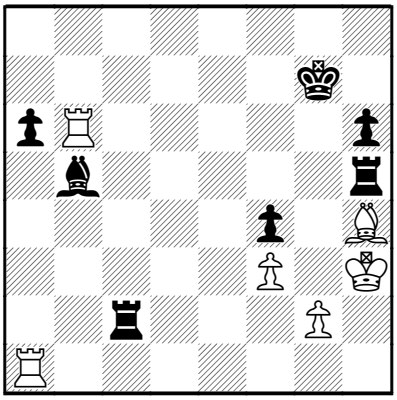
IM Matikozyan Tops 27th Metro GM
IM Peters Takes 34th Lina Grumette Classic
Kretchetov, Landaw Qualify in SCCF Candidates
IMs Ronchetti and Matikozyan Tie at 53rd PSW
Third Metropolitan Chess Camp

IM Matikozyan Hangs On, Captures 4th SCCF Title! GM Khachiyan is 2nd

Inside Moves

A ***tactical warm-up*** might be a good way to start reading. Begin with an easy one, and then work up to the tougher ones. But watch out for No. 9, the really hard one. No. 8 is a bit tricky, too. Even if you are a beginner and can't solve them, just playing through the solutions on page 18 will open up your tactical vision. - Ed.



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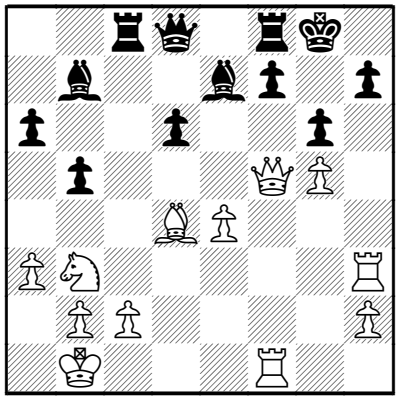

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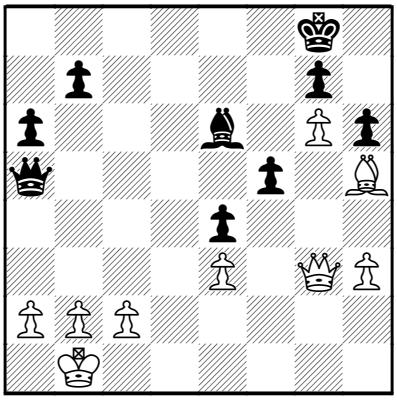

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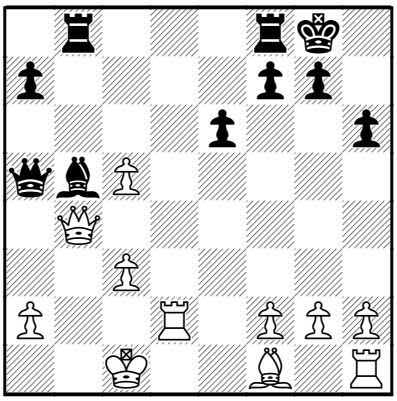

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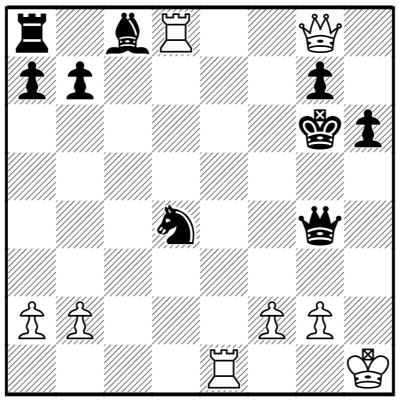

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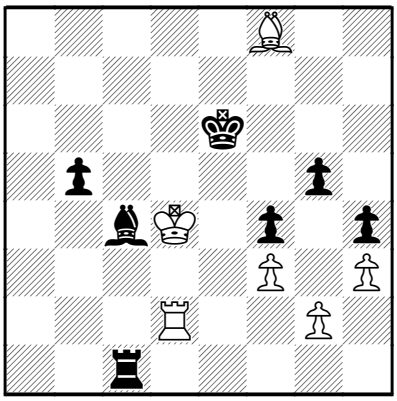

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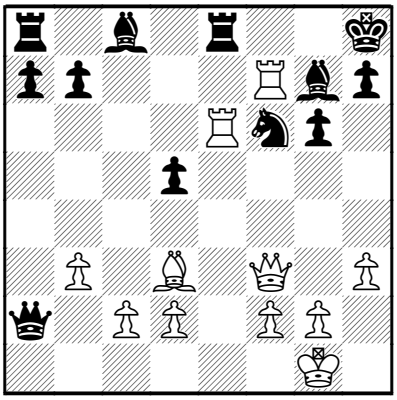

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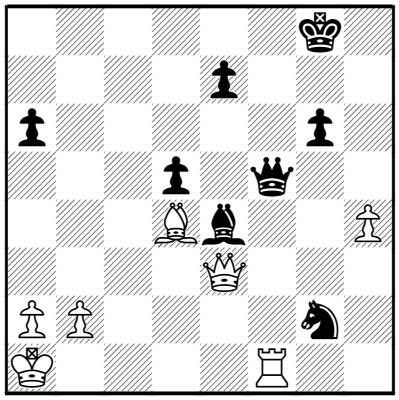

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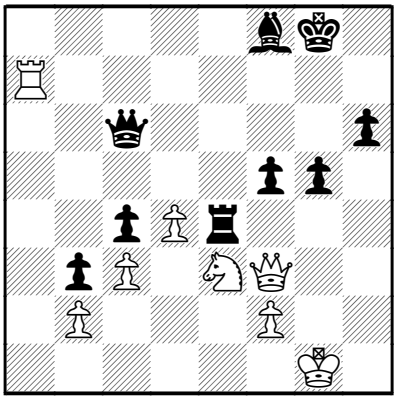

9. Black to Play

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Back Cover: Outside Shots!
They are often from inside games.

View back issues of *Rank & File* at ***www.scchess.com.***

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Other photos:
th: Tim Hanks
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kp: Kele Perkins
cr: Chris Roberts
js: Jay Stallings
jy: Jerry Yee

Cy & Jack

By IM Jack Peters and IM Cyrus Lakdawala

Cy's game is from his new book *The Scandinavian: Move by Move*, which was released last month. He gets into a lot of trouble with his King and Queen this time, but does wind up on the winning side. Take a look at the diagram of the wild position and the discussions after White's 11th move.

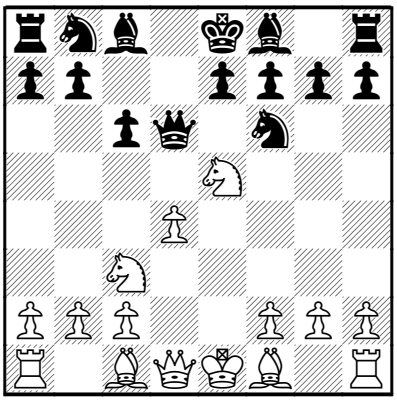
In the second game, Jack goes for the attack against a player who's been a difficult opponent in the past. After a few moves, the complication are in his favor, and he keeps his opponent busy enough so that he does not manage to develop all the Queenside pieces or get his King out of the center. -Ed.

Nikolay Arutyunov (2205) -
Cyrus Lakdawala (2495)
[B01] Scandinavian Defense
Gambito #578 G/40 +5 (4)
San Diego 15.09.2012

1.e4 d5 2.exd5 Qxd5

Jack: I do not trust this opening. I place it in the category of defenses that should give White more than the normal slight advantage.

3.Nc3 Qd6 4.Nf3 Nf6 5.d4 c6 6.Ne5



Cy: We arrive at Black's most critical position in the entire book. If we manage to effectively neutralize this exceedingly dangerous line, then the rest of the book will seem easy by comparison.

Question: Doesn't White's last move violate a principle stating: Avoid moving the same piece more than once in the opening?

Answer: It does, but it also happens to be White's most effective line versus the ...Qd6 Scandinavian. Also, remember we violated the same principle by moving our Queen twice (in fact, in moving our Queen at all!), so White feels fully justified in following suit.

6...Nbd7

Cy: We logically challenge White's advanced outpost.

Question: What is the idea behind 6.Ne5?

Answer: White has a choice of three plans, each of which we examine in detail in this and the following two chapters: Plan A, this chapter: Harass Black's Queen.

7.Nc4

Cy: Plan B, Chapter Three: Prepare a Bishop's discovery on Black's Queen with 7.Bf4; Plan C, Chapter Four: Back up the Knight with the f-pawn. 7.f4.

7...Qc7 8.Qf3

Cy: *Question*: What is the point of White's last move?

Answer: Multipurpose:

1. White prepares the tempo gaining Bf4 next.

2. White clears the pathway for Queenside castling.

Sidelines:

a) 8.g3 Nb6 9.Bf4 Qd8 10.Ne5 It is in White's best interests to avoid swaps. 10...g6 11.Qd2 Nfd5 12.Nxd5?! dropping a pawn. *(However, 12.Bg2 Nxf4 13.Qxf4 f6 14.Nd3 Qd6 also looks perfectly fine for Black, who just bagged the Bishop pair.)* 12...Qxd5 13.f3 *(13.Rg1 f6! wins the d-pawn.)* 13...f6! 14.c4 Qg8! cleverly retaining a bead on White's c-pawn. 15.Ng4 Nxc4 16.Bxc4 Qxc4 White's hoped-for compensation fell short. Van Eijk-Ekstroem, Budva 2009.

b) 8.Bg5 b5! 9.Nd2 Bb7 10.Bd3 e6 11.Qe2 a6! Preparing the freeing break ...c5. 12.a4 Strikovic-Milanovic, Vrnjacka Banja 2010. Now Black, undeterred, should play 12...c5! anyway, with dynamic equality.

c) 8.d5 White hopes to open the game, but one important point to note: White does NOT lead in development at this stage. 8...g6 Ivanchuk simply ignores White's provocation and proceeds to develop. 9.Qd4 Bg7 10.Bf4 *(10.d6 Qd8 fails to bother Black either.)* 10...Qd8 11.dxc6 bxc6 12.0–0–0 0–0 with approximately even chances in the sharp battle ahead. Black's weakened c6-pawn is compensated by the open b-file. Dominguez Perez-Ivanchuk, Wijk aan Zee 2010.

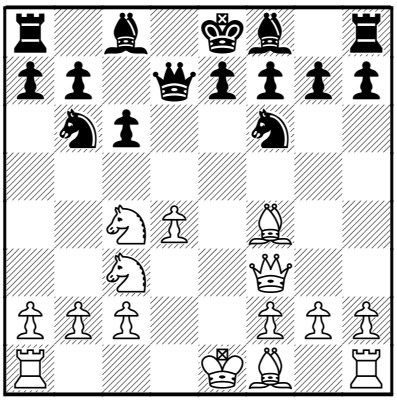
d) 8.Be2 g6 *(This is okay, but much more to the point is 8...b5! 9.Ne3 b4 10.Na4 e6 with equality. Black completes development, then plays ...Bb7 and ...c5 at some stage.)* 9.h4!? h5 10.g3 Bg7 *(10...Nb6!, preventing d5 tricks from White, looks more accurate.)* 11.Bf4 Qd8 12.d5 0–0!? *(Houdini claims 12...cxd5! 13.Nxd5 0–0 14.Nc7 e5 is quite playable for Black.)* 13.dxc6 bxc6 14.0–0 Ba6 15.Re1 Qc8 16.Bf1 Bxc4 *(Houdini likes 16...Nd5)* 17.Bxc4 Nb6 18.Bf1 Nfd5 19.Nxd5 Nxd5 20.Bc1 Rd8 21.Qf3 Bf6 White's Bishop pair gave him a slight edge. Aldama-Lakdawala, San Diego rapid 2012.

8...Nb6 9.Bf4

Jack: This is exactly what I have prepared against 3...Qd6. I think White must have a small advantage.

Cy: In the final game of the chapter we look at 9.Ne5.

9...Qd7!



Cy: In my opinion, an improvement over 9...Qd8 10.Be5 Bg4 11.Qg3 h5!? 12.f3 *(**Jack**: Not 12.Ne3?? because Black traps the Queen by 12... h4 13.Qf4 g5! 14.Qxg5 Rh5! 15.Qf4 Bh6–+; but both 12.h3 and 12.h4 are reasonable.)* 12...Be6 13.Ne3 Nbd5 14.Ncxd5 Nxd5 15.Nxd5 Qxd5 16.Bd3 f6!? 17.Bb8 h4 18.Qc7 Kf7 19.Qxb7 c5. Oddly enough, White can't hang on to his extra pawn and Houdini assesses at even, Grischuk-Tiviakov, Sochi 2006.

Question: I don't see the logic of playing your Queen to d7, where she blocks the c8-Bishop. What is the idea?

Answer: Black suddenly produces a second threat besides ...Qxd4 with his last move. Black also would like to play ....Qg4!

Question: What is the benefit of ...Qg4?

Answer: As you will see how the game unfolds, Black either forces Queens off the board - beneficial since it is White who holds space and attacking chances - or forces the win of material.

10.0–0–0

Cy: *Question*: Doesn't White get tremendous compensation after 10.Ne5 Qxd4 11.Rd1?

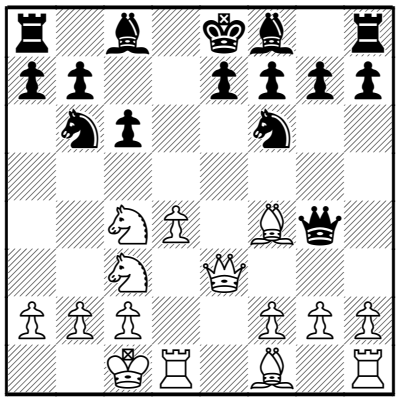
Answer: My opponent said this was his actual intention but thought better of it when he examined the line 11...Qb4 12.Rd8+?? *(12.Bc1 is uninspiring but probably White's best move.)* 12...Kxd8 13.Nxf7+ Ke8 14.Nxh8 but then realized White is completely busted. His h8-Knight eventually falls.

Jack: I like Houdini's suggestion of 10.Nxb6 axb6 11.0–0–0, when White threatens to blast open the center with d4-d5. If 11...Qg4 White can retain the Queens by 12.Qe3±.

10...Qg4

Cy: Forcing Queens off the board.

11.Qe3!?



Cy: *Exercise (critical decision)*: Hey, I said "forcing Queens off the board!"

What? I had just studied this line the day before and I was 100% certain this move was not mentioned by any database or comp.

A challenge hangs in the air. White's last move, a theoretical novelty in the position, isn't as much an alteration as a radical, paradigm shift. He insists on retaining Queens on the board despite the ...Nd5 threat.

But is 11...Nfd5 or 11...Nbd5 actually a threat? White intends to respond with 12.Nd6+.

Work out the ramifications. Should Black go for it or make a defensive move, negating the Nd6+ threat?

I don't think White gets much in the endgame line 11.Qxg4 Bxg4 12.f3 Be6. A draw was agreed here for tournament purposes in Baker-Lakdawala, San Diego rapid, 2012. If the players continued, you can expect something like this: 13.Nxb6 axb6 14.Bc7 b5 15.d5 Bd7 16.a3 e6, and Houdini assesses at even, Pavasovic-Sedlak, Nova Gorica 2009.

Jack: Maybe White has a tiny edge, but not enough to scare Black. Your idea of 9...Qd7 spoils White's hopes for a lively middlegame. It looks like I'll have to revise my preparation!

Answer: It's one thing to inadvertently do something crazy; it's quite another to do something crazy willfully!

White's last move, although adventurous, is also dubious and the complications favor Black, who should indeed, take up the challenge.

White's last move strikes one as missing yin and an overdose of yang! His insatiable appetite for war possibly gets the better of his good judgment. Sometimes we lie to ourselves and then expend all our energy working to convert the lie into the truth! In this instance, I got the feeling that White did just that.

Yet he nearly managed to turn a rather shady "attack" into a terrifyingly close facsimile of the real thing by sheer force of will. But in this instance, his demands are just too onerous for reality to fulfill, even if he gets very real practical chances for his decision.

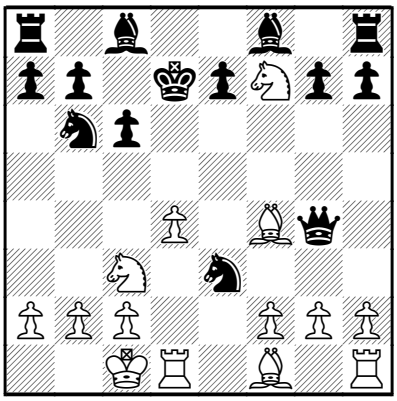
11...Nfd5!

Cy: The correct Knight, as we shall later see. The Knight eyes e3 and f4 with a glint of greedy admiration.

After 11...Nbd5?! 12.Nd6+ Kd7 13.Nxf7 Nxe3 14.fxe3 Black lacks the resource 14...Qe6? since White responds with the devastating 15.Bc4! with a powerful attack and more than enough compensation for the missing Queen.

The c4-square is this game's United Nations, a body to which both warring countries passionately plead their arguments and virtues with unabashed theatrics.

12.Nd6+ Kd7 13.Nxf7 Nxe3



14.fxe3!

Cy: Wow. Methinks he doth sacrificeth too much, yet this move may be White's best practical chance.

Byronic stuff. It was Oscar Wilde who once wrote: *"Moderation is a fatal thing. Nothing succeeds like excess."*

Dr. Frankenstein is just sick and tired of those stupid, finger wagging "One-dare-not-tamper-with-the-forces-of-nature!" lectures. So he defies his critics, gathering together all the necessary parts to fashion a living, breathing whole.

Question: Shouldn't White just be resigning?

Answer: Don't dismiss White's practical chances. His attack may be unsound but only if Black is a comp!

We shouldn't allow ourselves to be ruled by the spirit of mercantilism in this case. If we tally up the numbers dispassionately, like a bored census taker, then yes, Black, up a Queen for a piece, is winning as you say.

But just look at Black's position, a nightmarish, pulsing patchwork of misery, akin to strewn wounded littering the battlefield, with the ones who are conscious all pitifully crying for help. Such a position is not going to be so easy to navigate, especially in a G/40, with the clock running down and taking its toll.

I am actually sympathetic to his decision due to a mitigating factor: My friend Nikolay plays to his personal strength. My opponent has come close to beating me several times when he managed to complicate the game. He lost every time when we landed in dull, strategic positions and endings--even when on an equal footing.

As the game goes, White continues his policy of unrelenting harassment, the way one of those irritating telemarketers calls you, hawking his unwanted wares by reading his tiresome pitch off a laminated card from some other state.

After 14.Ne5+ Ke8 15.Nxg4?? Nxd1 Black is up a full Rook in the ending.

14...Qe6 15.Ng5!?

Cy: White's Knight, skipping and twirling in time, like a well choreographed ballerina, gestures my Queen to take a seat. Her invisible yet potent exertions influence the color of the game, all from the shadows.

In a grandiose gesture of compassion, the Knight bestows clemency to my helpless h8-Rook, if only to impress upon him just how fortunate he really is.

The position veers distinctly in the direction of bedlam, with both sides desperately scrambling to get a bearing on the essential requirements.

White's psycho alternatives:

a) 15.Nxh8 Qg8 16.d5 Ke8 17.dxc6 bxc6 White's wayward h8-Knight is trapped and I just don't believe in White's fictional compensation.

b) 15.d5 During the game I was terrified by this move and had the feeling I was going to be on the wrong end of an Evergreen Partie or a Game of the Century. 15...Qxf7 16.dxc6+ I considered three lines here and did find in my analysis the correct

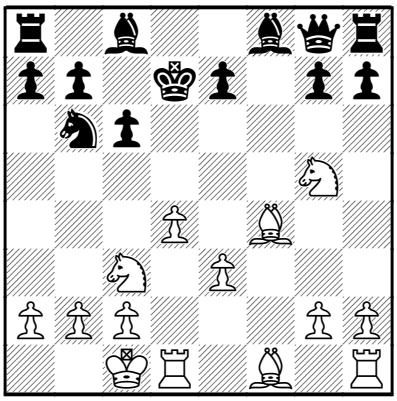
b1) 16...Ke6! Foot by foot, inch by inch, the climber gains altitude, displacing rocks and pebbles, which dislodge and bounce away down the mountain into the yawning chasm below. **Jack**: This does look convincing for Black.

b2) 16...Ke8?? 17.cxb7 and if Black recaptures with 17...Bxb7? 18.Bb5+ Nd7 19.Bxd7+ Kd8 20.Be6+ wins.

b3) 16...Kxc6!? Despite the darkness, Black's King is aware of and sees the whites of a dozen malevolent eyes watching him, waiting. He understands that soon, very soon, they will be upon him. 17.Bb5+ Kc5 Houdini says Black is winning but I would have gotten mated here for certain! The Pink Floyd song from the Animals album comes to mind: "So have a good time as you're going down, all alone, dragged down by the stone." **Jack**: Black shouldn't gamble on this variation. White has too many ways to cause trouble, and he only needs one to succeed.

c) 15.Ne5+! White's most dangerous line. Houdini says everything is under control but I'm not so confident I would have found all the right defensive moves over the board. Analysis runs: 15...Ke8 16.d5 Qg8 The move I had intended. *(Houdini likes the atonal 16...Qf6 which I rejected due to a Ne4 tempo loss.)* 17.dxc6 bxc6 18.Nb5! Nd5 19.Bc4 *(19.e4? a6! wins.)* 19...e6 with a colossal mess, but one which still favors Black--barely! **Jack**: I've seen swindles from worse positions. White's main compensation is psychological - he has nothing to lose by continuing to play, and he might get lucky. On the other hand, Black faces horrifying embarrassment if he fails to win. He could become frustrated by the lack of an "easy" win.

15...Qg8



Cy: Welcome to the Scandinavian, where up is down and down is up!

Question: Why is it that virtually the entirety of your rather sorry, ragtag army congregates along the first rank?

Answer: Well, with the lone exceptions of the edifice jutting out on b6 and my champion of a King on d7! I admit the rest just stand around, and gape like idiots. My Queen sulks into g8, cowering like a beaten dog. Yet she assumes control over f7, e6, d5 and c4 with the proprietary air of a person determined to maintain control over a newly acquired gain.

Black's position would be a nightmare if not for the extra Queen to provide comfort in his time of need!

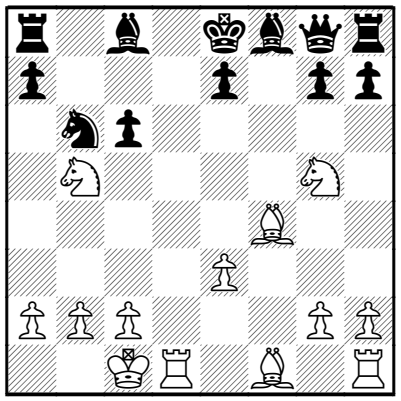
16.d5

Cy: White's endless threats and coercions rise and fall, like waves on a windswept lake.

16...Ke8

Cy: Black's King drifts, a curling iron on the ice, after a bad push. Despite the vast destruction all around him, Black's tattered flag continues to fly, proudly fluttering in the wind.

17.dxc6 bxc6 18.Nb5!?



Cy: *Exercise (critical decision)*: Richard Nixon may have been brought up a Quaker, but this didn't hold him back from bombing Cambodia back to the Stone Age. White's pieces sac themselves into oblivion, falling by the wayside, like raindrops dribbling down a window sill. The arid landscape defies all of White's frantic attempts at cultivation and growth, and his attack creeps inevitably toward dissipation.

But only on condition that we find the correct continuation. Should Black take the offered Knight, or should he calmly decline with a move like 18...Bd7?

Be careful. One of them wins; the other loses.

Answer: Black should accept the gift.

18...cxb5

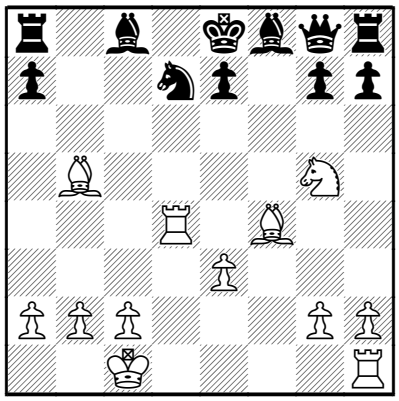
Cy: 18...Bd7?? About 50% of the students I tested in this position chose this losing move! 19.Nc7+ Kd8 20.Nge6+ Kc8 *(20...Qxe6 21.Nxe6+ is hopeless as well.)* 21.Ba6+ Kb8 - An advanced dementia patient's sense of self dies before the body actually dies. They are mourned by loved ones while still alive. Black's King, shorn of support, flops and crumples like a marionette. - 22.Ne8 Mate! White's Knight tells Black's King: "I see dead people."

19.Bxb5+ Nd7

Jack: Black could seek exchanges with the forcing line 19...Bd7 20.Rxd7 Nxd7 21.Rd1 Rd8 22.Bc7 Qxa2 23.Bxd8 Kxd8 24.Rxd7+ Kc8. Despite White's gain of a piece, his swindling chances are almost gone.

20.Rd4

Jack: The tempting 20.Bc6 threatens 21.Bd5, but Black can afford to casually drop a Rook with 20... Qxa2 21.Bxa8 e5 22.Bg3 Bc5 to get his pieces into action.



Cy: *Exercise (planning)*: White continues to operate in a rapturous delirium, perhaps forgetting that material is a concrete, substantial entity, while attack and initiative are merely abstractions if no mate or win is to be found. Time for Black to unravel.

How do we transform the scattered and fragmentary parts into a seamless whole?

20...e5

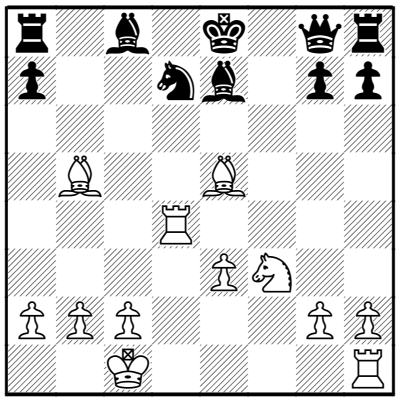
Cy: *Answer*: "Free at last, free at last!" Ignore all of White's "threats" and finally bring out some pieces! Finally, Black's ponderous position begins to unravel and experience ease of movement.

For the record, the banal and rather greedy answer 20...Qxa2! also gets the job done.

21.Bxe5

Cy: 21.Bc4 exd4 is hopeless as well for White.

21...Be7 22.Nf3



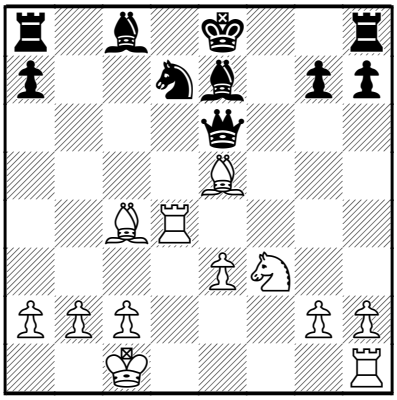
22...Qe6

d7 is secure. The comps all like taking a2 even more.

The once shy, demure Queen again enters polite society after her years at the nunnery. Black unravels while his opponent's attack grows fat and lazy.

Jack: Computers look for the largest advantage, which is not always the most practical move. With a huge material advantage, a human should look for a move that kills counterplay and guarantees a certain win.

23.Bc4



Cy: 23.Rhd1 is a better try, but White remains completely busted since he lacks a pathway to increase pressure.

23...Qxe5

Cy: Of course. We reach the finish line with minimal fanfare by returning some - but not all! - of the material to break the attack and remain two pieces up in the ending. Sifting through the ashes, we find the charred bones of what was once White's attack.

Jack: Only fifth-best, according to Houdini. I would rank it second, behind 23...Nxe5! 24.Bxe6 Nxf3 25.gxf3 Bxe6, which gets more wood off the board. And you have the advantage of the Bishop pair!

24.Nxe5 Nxe5 25.Bb5+ Kf7 26.Rf1+ Bf6 27.Rd5

Cy: Threatening one last, vulgar cheapo on e5.

27...Ke7 0-1

Cy: Nyet, Niki boy, Nyet!

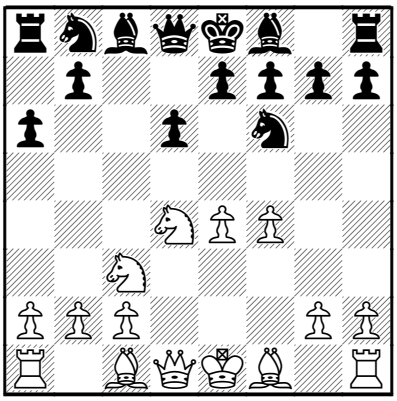
Summary: The bold novelty 11.Qe3!? is quite dangerous for Black, but in the end, still good for our side. Some Scandinavian games have the look and feel of a Morphy versus amateur game--except eerily, sometimes the amateur takes all of Morphy's pieces and wins!

Jack Peters (2351) -
Andranik Matikozyan (2441)
[B84] Sicilian Defense
Western Pacific Open (4)
Los Angeles, 28.04.2013

1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 d6 3.d4

Cy: Jack is either a stubborn man, or a man of principle (or both!). He has an awful score versus Andranik with the Open Sicilian, and so...he plays the Open Sicilian!

3...cxd4 4.Nxd4 Nf6 5.Nc3 a6 6.f4



Cy: ! At last, a change in the program.

Jack: I gave up 6.Be3 after three catastrophic losses to Andranik.

6...e6 7.Be2

Jack: A standard position in the Scheveningen.

7...Be7 8.0–0 Qc7 9.Bf3

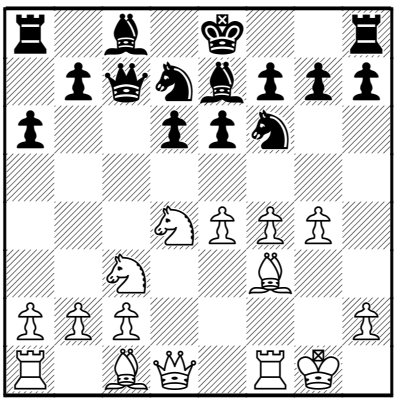
Jack: Andranik likes to develop his Bishop to b7, and this move discourages it.

More common are 9.Kh1, 9.Be3, and 9.a4.

9...Nbd7

Jack: I have played 9...0–0 10.Be3 Nc6 many times as Black.

10.g4?!



Cy: ?! Two thoughts come to mind:

1. Pain, self-inflicted, is still pain.

2. The one pleasure denied to an (attacking) addict is freedom.

Oh, no! A law circumvented does nothing to diminish the core justice of the law itself.

This has to be unsound. And if it is sound, then White effectively overturned generations of previous precedent!

I don't get Jack's g-pawn obsession, which he loves to toss forward at every given opportunity. This excessive structural expenditure is a strong indicator that he should seriously consider switching to decaf. Black hasn't even committed to Kingside castling.

Jack: Almost certainly premature. My horrible record (one win, one draw, and eight losses) as White against Andranik affects my judgment and makes me too eager to attack.

Cy: My reaction to an opponent who repeatedly clobbers me (i.e. IM Aldama) is to go into cringe/grovel mode and play the Colle and Caro Kann.

Jack: Probably 10.Kh1 is best, delaying g2-g4 until Black castles.

10...h6

Jack: Now Black intends ...g7-g5, clearing e5 for his Knight. Somehow, this idea did not occur to me before I chose 10.g4. I was uncomfortably reminded of a recent loss to Roman Yankovsky, who advanced ...g7-g5 after castling and still managed to take over vital Kingside squares.

11.h4

Jack: Believe it or not, this was not a reckless decision. I thought 16 minutes and concluded that Black would get the advantage against any sensible move. Therefore, White is committed to all-out aggression, and I disregarded the danger to my King.

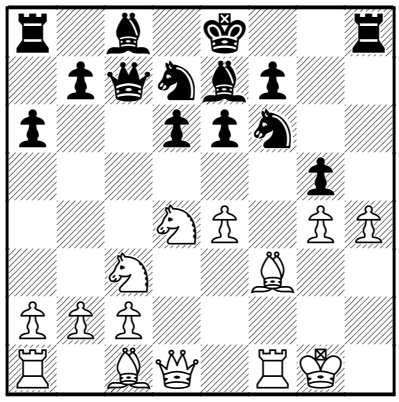
Cy: All true but the reckless decision was made on the 10th move! Structurally unnatural moves have a nasty habit of producing aberrant effects down the road--in this instance, "down the road" equals just one move!

11...g5

Jack: Black thought 17 minutes, which surprised me because I barely considered any alternatives.

But Black does have a choice. In fact, Houdini prefers 11...Nh7 12.g5 Nb6 setting up ...e6-e5.

12.fxg5 hxg5



13.Bxg5?!

Jack: I rejected 13.hxg5! because of 13...d5, but 14.Rf2□ Nxe4 *(Knight retreats allow the disruptive g5-g6)* 15.Nxe4 dxe4 16.Bxe4 Qg3+ 17.Bg2= seems all right.

13...d5?!

Jack: Sharp, but probably incorrect. Black threatens 14...Nxg4, hitting h2 and discovering on g5.

Cy: This is the human response, to punish White's opening excesses.

Jack: During the game, I was less worried by 13...Ne5 14.Be2. However, Houdini demonstrates a clear advantage for Black with 14...Qd8!, threatening 15...Nfxg4. Shocking! **Cy**: The problem is no human is going to find the atonal 14...Qd8!!.

14.Qd2

Jack: This good move took 15 minutes. I wasn't too concerned about time pressure because I expected the game to be decided in the next few moves.

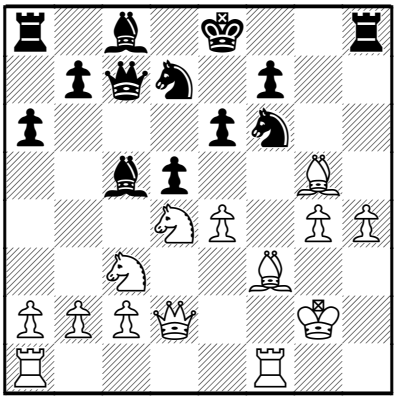
The game Lawrence Day - Jan Timman from the 1967 World Junior Championship continued 14.Kg2? Nxe4 15.Bxe4? Bxg5 16.Bg6, when 16...Nf6! would have won more quickly than Timman's 16...Ne5 17.Bh5 Bxh4.

Cy: Also playable is 14.Bg2 Bc5 15.Rxf6 Qe5 16.Rf3 Qxd4+ 17.Qxd4 Bxd4+ 18.Kf1.

14...Bc5

Jack: Opening the position by 14...dxe4 15.Nxe4 Nxe4 16.Bxe4 helps White, who leads in development. For example, 16...Bxg5 17.Qxg5 Qg3+ 18.Bg2 Qxh4 19.Qf4!± puts Black's King in more danger than White's.

15.Kg2



Jack: I looked briefly at developing my Queen's Rook to d1 or e1 and daring Black to win the pinned Knight, but 15.Kg2 was always my top choice. I don't understand how I wasted 25 minutes on the decision, though. I left myself only 40 minutes to reach the time control at move 40.

Cy: Wow, I would have played the safety first 15.Kg2 in a flash.

15...Qe5

Jack: Besides the threats to d4 and e4, Black creates the possibility of ...Bc5-d6. The game has reached a critical moment.

Jack: We both considered 15...dxe4 16.Nxe4 Nxe4 17.Bxe4 Qe5 but neither of us saw the knockout 18.Nxe6!! **Cy**: A move almost impossible to see, since it hangs the Bishop with check, yet that loses for Black! 18...Qxe4+ **Cy**: Sumptuous opulence does a person little benefit if he has just moments to live. *(***Jack***: Nor can Black survive 18...Qxe6 19.Bf5 Qc6+ 20.Kh3+-)* 19.Kh3 Qxe6 *(or 19...fxe6 20.Rae1 Qg6 21.Qd5+-)* 20.Rae1 0–0 21.Rxe6 fxe6 22.Rxf8+ Bxf8 23.h5+-. Black's Queenside pieces cannot prevent Kingside disaster.

Jack: I'm embarrassed to admit I would probably have met 15...dxe4 by 16.Bxe4?, which does not work well if Black finds 16...Nxg4∓.

16.Nde2!?

Cy: ! Jack divines his opponent's intention via pure attacking instinct. Suddenly a rational component emerges from White's previously unhinged play. Jack reminds his opponent that he alone doesn't own a monopoly on deviousness.

This line looks more clear than the Houdini alternatives.

Jack: I was very proud of this sneaky move, which threatens to trap Black's Queen, until I consulted Houdini. It points out two attacking ideas that never occurred to me.

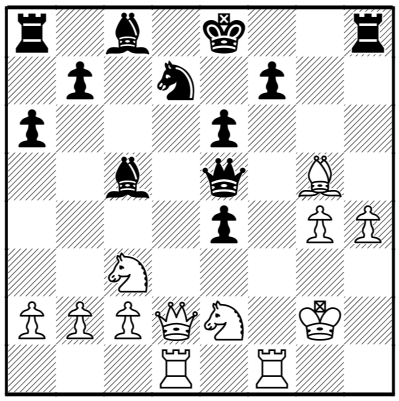
First, Houdini recommends 16.exd5! Qxd4 *(Black gets nothing from 16...Bd6? after 17.Rf2 or 17.Kh1)* 17.Qe2! Be7 18.dxe6 fxe6 19.Rae1! e5 20.Rd1 Qb4 21.Qd3+-.

Houdini also likes 16.Nf5! dxe4 *(even the tougher 16...exf5 17.exf5 0–0 18.Bh6± is very unpleasant for Black)* 17.Nxe4 Nxe4 18.Bxe4 Qxe4+ 19.Kh3→.

16...Nxe4

Jack: After 16...dxe4 17.Bf4 exf3+ 18.Rxf3, Black can save his Queen by 18...Be3 *(worse is 18...Ne4 19.Qxd7+! Bxd7 20.Bxe5 Nxc3 21.Rxc3+-)* 19.Rxe3 Qc5, but 20.Kh3 and Ra1–d1 is overwhelming.

17.Bxe4 dxe4 18.Rad1



Jack: With the cute threat of 19.Bf6. I knew that White had parried Black's onslaught, but I hadn't yet realized that Black is losing. He cannot activate his Queenside pieces.

Cy: Now it is Black's King who is caught.

18...e3

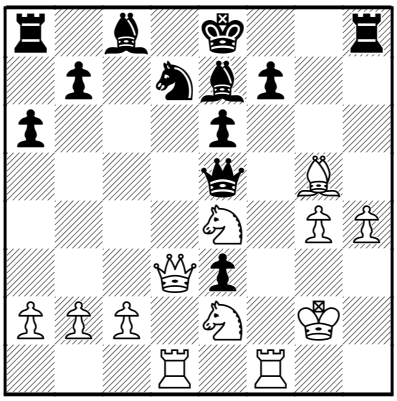
Jack: Against 18...Be7, I planned 19.Ng3. Perhaps 19.Rf4! Bxg5 20.hxg5+- is even stronger.

If 18...0–0, then 19.Bh6 Re8 20.Ng3 e3 21.Qe2 prepares the crushing Nc3-e4.

19.Qd3 Be7

Jack: A little better is 19...b6, hoping to develop the Bishop with check. White can squelch the idea by 20.Ne4+- or ignore it with 20.Ng3 Bb7+ 21.Kh3 Bc6 22.Nce4+-.

20.Ne4



Cy: ! Amazing. Black is busted and the illusory safety of his King is laid bare, and exposed to the truth: There can be only one possible outcome now.

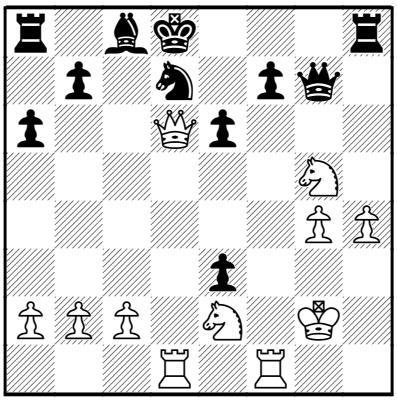
20...Qg7

Jack: As 20...Bxg5 21.Nd6+ costs Black his Queen.

21.Bxe7 Kxe7

Jack: Inserting 21...Qxg4+ 22.N2g3 does not help Black.

22.Qd6+ Kd8 23.Ng5! 1-0



Jack: Most convincing. Black cannot stand 23...Rf8 24.Nxe6+ fxe6 25.Rxf8+ Qxf8 26.Qxf8+. ♜

Team Sevillano Takes Master Junior Simul

by Jay Stallings

Santa Clarita, April 20, 2013

There is no event that compares to the Sean Reader Master-Junior Simul, which brings strong Southern Californian GMs and IMs together with promising junior players in a fun, mentoring, yet competitive event. Southern California's best young players were invited, with all costs covered by Sean's Fund. The players enjoyed a relaxed environment with their peers and their role models without any concern of rating loss. Players and their families enjoyed a catered lunch, too.

The 2013 version of "The Sean Reader" (as most call it) drew its strongest field ever, with the juniors averaging a rating of 2067. Four teams competed, each consisting of a seasoned GM or IM and 6 promising junior players. In each round, the titled players competed simultaneously against the juniors on the other team and vice versa. To win a match, a team needed 6½ of the 12 possible points.

The four teams were led by GMs Enrico Sevillano and Melik Khachiyan, and IMs Armen Ambartsoumian and Andranik Matikozyan.

In Round 1, Team Sevillano beat Team Ambartsoumian 9-3, while Team Matikozyan squeaked by Team Khachiyan 6½-5½. The list of team members and the score tables for this round are below.

In the afternoon round, Team Sevillano clinched victory when junior South African native Tameez Latib scored a win over IM Matikozyan and Sevillano completed a 6-0 sweep of the juniors.

Team Khachiyan was able to sneak in and steal 2nd Place by virtue of earning a match point from

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Danial Asaria and Stephanie Shao face IM Matikozyan in first round action. In the background are Joaquin Perkins, Michael Brown, and Simone Liao.

Team Sevillano		**R1**	**Team Ambartsoumian**	
Yusheng Xia	2247	1-0	IM Armen	
Tameez Latib	2061	0-1	IM Armen	
Leo Creger	2055	1-0	IM Armen	
Annie Wang	2048	½-½	IM Armen	
Matthew Shuben	1907	½-½	IM Armen	
Joaquin Perkins	1872	1-0	IM Armen	
GM Enrico		0-1	Michael Brown	2366
GM Enrico		1-0	Simone Liao	2177
GM Enrico		1-0	Albert Lu	2169
GM Enrico		1-0	Nicky Korba	2114
GM Enrico		1-0	Daniel Lin	2009
GM Enrico		1-0	Shyam Gandhi	1936
Team Sevillano wins 9-3				

Team Matikozyan		**R1**	**Team Khachiyan**	
Daniel Mousseri	2204	½-½	GM Melik	
Jonathan Homidan	2146	0-1	GM Melik	
Solomon Ruddell	2042	0-1	GM Melik	
Agata Bykovtsev	2033	0-1	GM Melik	
Hovanes Salvaryan	1933	0-1	GM Melik	
Anthony Ge	1856	0-1	GM Melik	
IM Andranik		1-0	Joshua Sheng	2175
IM Andranik		1-0	Craig Hilby	2173
IM Andranik		1-0	Alexander Xie	2029
IM Andranik		1-0	Elkaei Rivera	2027
IM Andranik		1-0	Danial Asaria	1930
IM Andranik		1-0	Stephanie Shao	1899
Team Matikozyan wins 6½-5½				

Team Sevillano		R2	Team Matikozyan	
Yusheng Xia	2247	½-½	IM Andranik	
Tameez Latib	2061	1-0	IM Andranik	
Leo Creger	2055	0-1	IM Andranik	
Annie Wang	2048	0-1	IM Andranik	
Matthew Shuben	1907	½-½	IM Andranik	
Joaquin Perkins	1872	0-1	IM Andranik	
GM Enrico		1-0	Daniel Mousseri	2204
GM Enrico		1-0	Jonathan Homidan	2146
GM Enrico		1-0	Solomon Ruddell	2042
GM Enrico		1-0	Agata Bykovtsev	2033
GM Enrico		1-0	Hovanes Salvaryan	1933
GM Enrico		1-0	Anthony Ge	1856
Team Sevillano wins 8-4				

Team Khachiyan		R2	Team Ambartsoumian	
Joshua Sheng	2175	0-1	IM Armen	
Craig Hilby	2173	1-0	IM Armen	
Alexander Xie	2029	0-1	IM Armen	
Elkaei Rivera	2027	0-1	IM Armen	
Danial Asaria	1930	½-½	IM Armen	
Stephanie Shao	1899	0-1	IM Armen	
GM Melik		½-½	Michael Brown	2366
GM Melik		1-0	Simone Liao	2177
GM Melik		1-0	Albert Lu	2169
GM Melik		1-0	Nicky Korba	2114
GM Melik		1-0	Daniel Lin	2009
GM Melik		1-0	Shyam Gandhi	1936
Team Khachiyan wins 7-5				

Team Ambartsoumian, while garnering enough individual points (Khachiyan, like Sevillano, was 11-1) to edge Team Matikozyan by just a half-point. See the above tables for the results of this round's games.

Each Master selects a Best Game winner. This year, the winners were:
GM Sevillano: Michael Brown
GM Khachiyan: Daniel Mousseri
IM Matikozyan: Yusheng Xia
IM Ambartsoumian: Craig Hilby

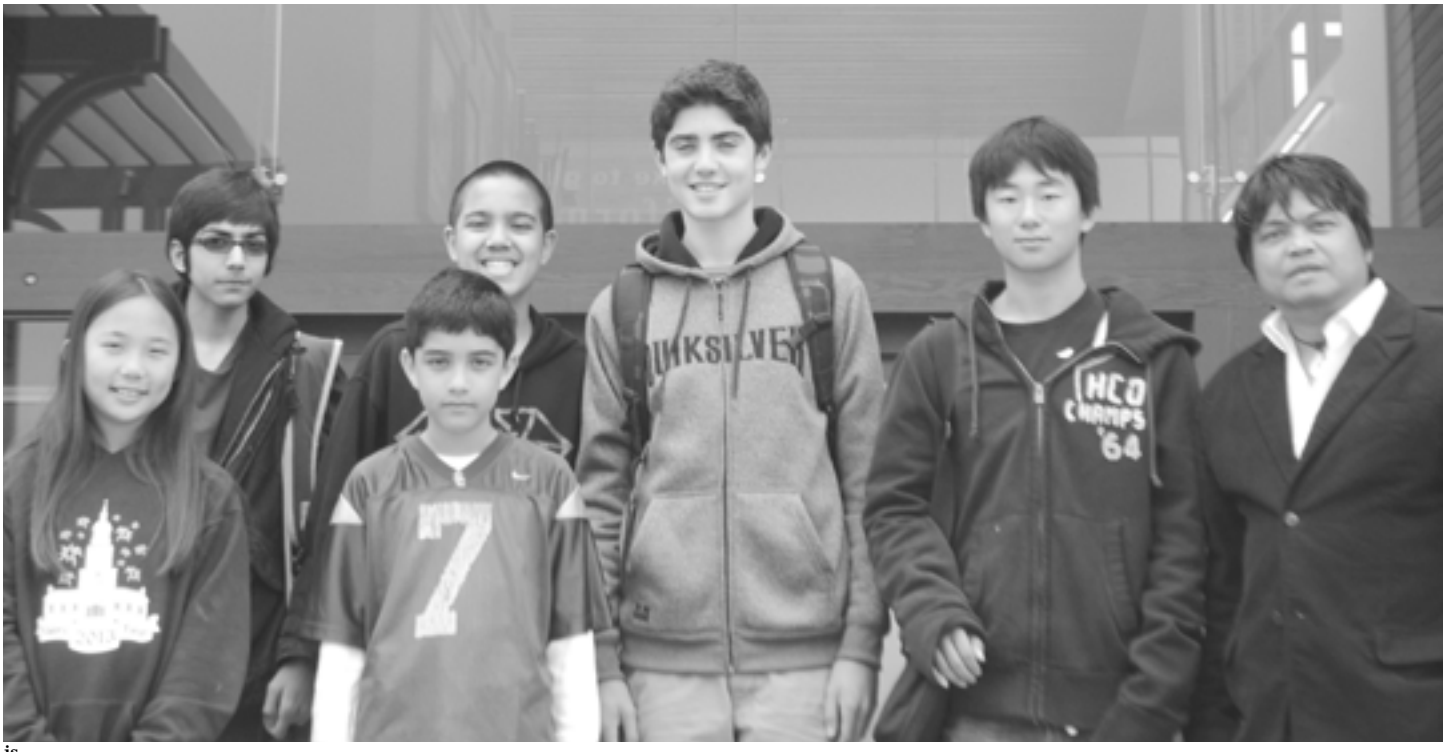
Jay & Michel Stallings organized the event with assistance from Chan Reader. National TD Randy Hough officiated.

The event's site this year was the modern Old Town Newhall Library. The old town district features historic points of interest, a community center, a Metrolink station, and an arts scene.

The Master Junior Simul event originated in the 1970's and was revised in 2000. It missed a few years, then was resurrected by Sean's Fund, in honor of Sean Reader who participated in the event in 2003. Sean, who was diagnosed with leukemia on April 1, 2005, led his school team to a tie for 2nd in the K-6 Open at SuperNationals III (2005) a few days later. Sean passed away in August of 2006.

Sean's Fund not only sponsors this event, but offers financial aid to chess students in the Santa Clarita Valley who cannot afford classes, camps, tournaments or other special events. Additionally, Sean's Fund takes chess-themed backpacks and teaches chess to the young patients at Children's Hospital Los Angeles, City of Hope Hospital, and The Painted Turtle Camp. For more information, visit **www.seansfund.org**.

We present one of the prize winning games, by Yusheng Xia.



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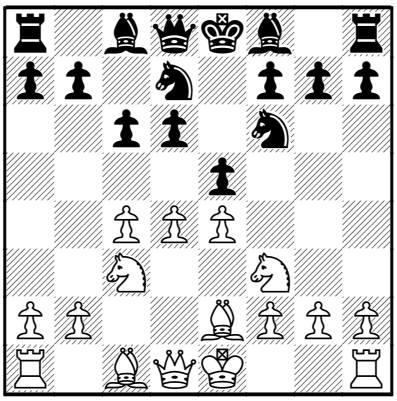
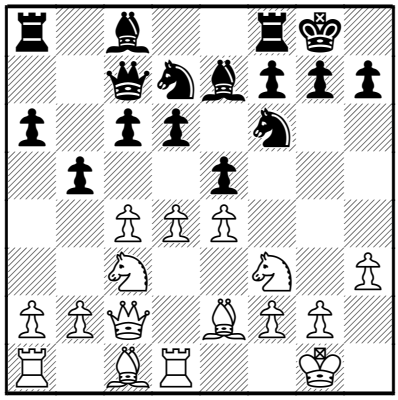
Team Sevillano does it: Annie Wang, Tameez Latib, Joaquin Perkins, Leo Creger, Matthew Shuben, Yusheng Xia, and GM Enrico Sevillano.

Yusheng Xia -
Armen Ambartsoumian
[A55] Old Indian Defense
Master Junior Simul (1)
Santa Clarita 20.04.2013
Notes by Yusheng Xia.
1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 c6 3.Nc3 d6 4.e4 Nbd7 5.Nf3 e5 6.Be2

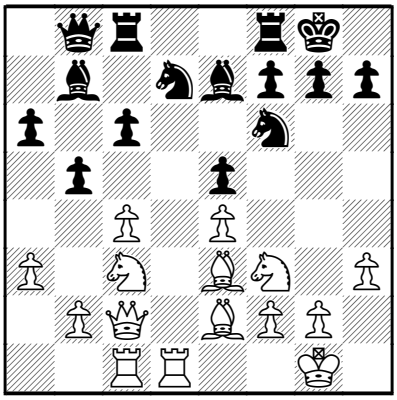


Going into the first round, I wanted to play something both positional and semi-complicated. Though I had zero game experience against the Old Indian Defense, I had a basic concept of the opening and found it perfect for the type of game I wanted to play.
6...Be7 7.0–0 a6 8.Qc2 0–0 9.Rd1 Qc7 10.h3 b5



Black takes no time contesting the center while adding pressure to c4 and threatening a future b4 push weakening e4.
11.Be3 Bb7 12.dxe5

I already had the Bishop on e3 and the Rook on d1 prepared for the exchange so I thought "why not?"
12...dxe5 13.a3 Rac8 14.Rac1 Qb8

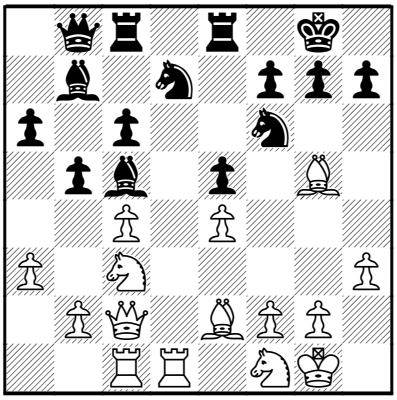


It was here in this position where I had to think of a couple long term plans. Trying to prevent Black's ...Bc5 move would be difficult, since b4 leads to the activation of the Black Bishop with ...c5, i.e., 15.b4 c5

Back row: Solomon Ruddell, Yusheng Xia, Shyam Gandhi, Matt Shuben, Leo Creger, Jonathan Homidan, Michael Brown. Third row: Tameez Latib, Joshua Lin, Craig Hilby, Alexander Xie. Second row: Agata Bykovtsev, Simone Liao, Joshua Sheng, Albert Lu, Elkaei Rivera, Stephanie Shao. First row: Jay Stallings, Annie Wang, Joaquin Perkins, Nicky Korba, Hovanes Salvaryan, Daniel Mousseri, Danial Asaria, Anthony Ge, Randall Hough. Sitting: GM Enrico Sevillano, IM Armen Ambartsoumian, IM Andranik Matikozyan, GM Melik Khachiyan.

16.cxb5 cxb4 17.axb4 Bxb4 18.Qb3 Bxc3 19.Rxc3 Bxe4=.

15.Nd2 Bc5 16.Nf1 Rfe8 17.Bg5



Trying to keep chances open, I decided to avoid all possible trades and find a way to free my Knight to get to his weak kingside White squares.

17...Qa7 18.Bh4 h6 19.Qb1 g5 20.Bg3 Nf8 21.cxb5

An interesting sideline I found after the game was an immediate b4 with plans to plant the Knight onto e3 the next move and go for a c5 lockdown. For example, 21.b4 Bd4 22.Ne3 Bxe3 23.fxe3 Red8 24.c5+-.

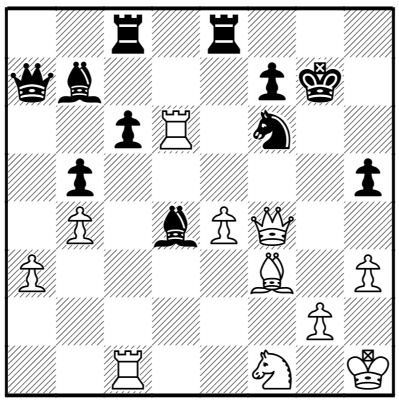
21...axb5 22.Bf3 Ng6 23.b4 Bd4 24.Ne2 Bb6 25.Rd6 Kg7 26.Qb2

Now I have the complicated position that I was going for in the game. While White seems to be at a slight disadvantage, I had most of the Black pieces locked down, while slowly maneuvering my pieces towards the Kingside.

26...h5 27.Qd2 Nf4

Now, with some calculations, the timing is perfect and I go for the attack.

28.Nxf4 exf4 29.Bxf4 gxf4 30.Qxf4 Bxf2+ 31.Kh1 Bd4



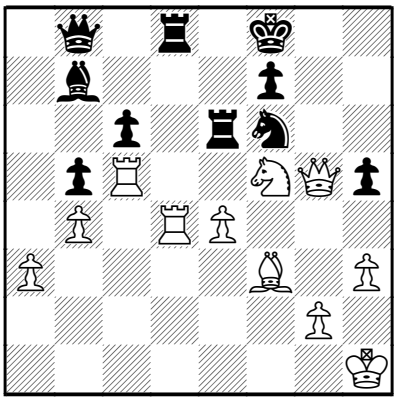
32.Rc5!!

The winning move. There were other possible follow-ups with Ng3 or Ne3 aiming for the f5 square, but I thought this would be the most forceful. Possible are both 32.Ng3 Be5 33.Qg5+ Kf8 34.Nf5 Nh7 35.Qxh5 Kg8 36.Rd7+- and 32.Ne3 Be5 33.Qg5+ Kf8 34.Nf5.

32...Re6

Due to the pressure of playing multiple opponents at the simul, my opponent forgot about the hanging bishop on d4. Still, the defenses were few and offer the advantage to White. One line might be 32...Bxc5 33.Qxf6+ Kg8 34.Bxh5 Ba6 35.Qg5+ Kf8 36.Qh6+ Kg8 37.Bxf7+ Qxf7 38.Rg6+ Qxg6 39.Qxg6+ Kh8 40.bxc5+-.

33.Rxd4 Qb8 34.Qg5+ Kf8 35.Ne3 Rd8 36.Nf5+- 1-0



Ends the game. The threat of either checkmate or losing the Queen after 36...Rxd4 37.Qg7+ Ke8 38.Qh8+ puts Black in a lost position. ♜

Solutions to Outside Shots!

From the back cover.

1.A backwards Knight move does it: ***19.Nf3*** traps the Queen, in Abrahamyan - Baginskaite, US Women's Championship, St. Louis 2013. For more on the U.S. Women's Championship, see page 19.

2.White starts a winning attack with ***13.fxe6 fxe6 14.Nd4!***, threatening mate with Qh5+ and Qf7+, in Landaw - Aldama, 25th SCCF State Championship, Monterey Park 2013. See the game with notes on page 41.

3.The Queen has the vital job of guarding against Qh5+. Therefore, attack it! ***21.Ba3! Qd5*** 21...Qxa3 gives White 22.Qh5+, with a quick checkmate. ***22.c4 Qa5*** Attacking the White Queen with 22...Bg4 fails to 23.cxd5 Bxe2 24.Bxe2 and because the White Queen was protected, White is a piece up. ***23.Bb4!! 1-0***. The Black Queen has nowhere to go, and attacking the White Queen still fails: 23...Rfe8 24.Bxa5 Rxe2 25.Bxe2 Bxa1 26.Rxa1, and White is a piece up. Matikozyan - Remlinger, 27th Metropolitan GM, Los Angeles 2013. See the whole game with notes starting on page 27.

4.White wins a piece with ***16.Nxd5*** 16.Bxf5+ Kb8 17.Nxd5 also works. ***16...Qxd5 17.Bxf5+ Kb8 18.Bxe5***. Black cannot recapture with 18... Qxe5 because 19.Qxd8+ wins the Rook. ***18...Bc5 19.Qxd5 Rxd5 20.Bxg7! 1-0***. White remains a piece and a pawn up, Abrahamyan - Belakovskaia, US Women's Championship, St. Louis 2013. For more on the U.S. Women's Championship, see page 19.

5.The only way is ***67.Be7!*** with the unstoppable plan of 68.Bf6 and 69.f4. Not 67.Ba3, which is met by 67...Bd2 68.Be7 Bc1. ***67...Kh7 68.Bf6 Kg6 69.f4 exf4 70.Bxc3 f3 71.Bd4 1-0***. White is just able to stop the Black pawns, in Khachiyan - Remlinger, 27th Metropolitan GM, Los Angeles 2013.

6.The computer sees a Rook route into the Black King's position with **28.Ne7+ Kh7 29.Bxg4 fxg4 30.Re1**, with the decisive threat of Re1–e5xh5+. White played 28.h3 instead and won later, in Landaw - Hughes, SCCF Candidates, Monterey Park 2013. See the whole game with notes starting on page 35.

GM Timur Gareev Blindfolded!

Scores 14-0 in Chess Palace simul

Story and photos by Ron Smith

Garden Grove, April 20, 2013

The first thing I noticed after the long drive from the Hollywood Hills to the Chess Palace in Garden Grove was not only the free parking, but the warm welcome I received when I arrived. I had made an e-mail reservation to play in the blindfold simultaneous exhibition put on by Super Grandmaster Timur Gareev and immediately upon entering Alfred Ong figured out who the stranger was and greeted me by name.

The Chess Palace, for those of you who may never have been there, is a small but well equipped chess store that stocks the latest and most interesting chess books and equipment that will hold the interest of any novice and master.

I inquired if GM Gareev had arrived yet and I was directed to the star who was sitting in a corner reading a chess book. Being one who's not shy, I walked over and introduced myself and since I had done my homework on his background, I asked him if it was more scary jumping out of an airplane or preparing, as he was, to eventually play a 64-board simul in Oahu

at the end of this year. He laughed and said that he could jump out of planes all day long without thinking, but doing the proposed simul would require a lot of concentration.

He asked me about my own chess playing experiences and I explained to him that I stopped playing tournament chess about 5 years before he was born and haven't picked up a chess book since then, but that I really enjoyed playing Grandmasters when they would put on simultaneous exhibitions and that to me, the experience was more important than the results.

He said he was glad to see so many youngsters in attendance but wondered whether it would be more beneficial teaching them to play football or to surf than to play chess. I hope I convinced him that chess was an important skill in life because it had taught me to think before I spoke and to also plan out my moves in advance in the business world and figure out the consequences of my behavior on my adversary.

After further pleasantries I finally told him that recently I ask all the grandmasters the same question and hoped he wouldn't be insulted.

"What is the question?" he inquired.

"Can you spot me White?"

He paused, laughed, and said "Not only will I spot you White, I will alternate colors on all of the boards."

And so the 14-board blindfold exhibition started. He sat in a chair with a real blindfold, facing his opponents.

Each player is given a board number. He announces the board number, you state your name and then you announce your move. He replies in an instant and then moves on to the next board. The player cannot announce his move until he announces the board number.

I wish I could report that I defeated him, or earned a draw, or even was one of the last players standing. Truth be told that even with White, I resigned on move 17 because I couldn't get out of an old fashioned mating net without giving up substantial material. It's my own fault because, as usual, I misplayed the opening.

Let me tell you about GM Timur Gareev, a well-rounded man. He graduated with a B.A. degree in Business Marketing from the University of Texas at Brownsville, he surfs, rides a motorcycle, jumps out of airplanes, practices yoga, and has a great, fun personality.

And, unlike some other recent experiences I have had in simuls, he eagerly posed for photos both before, during and after! No prima donna attitude to be quiet when one of the youngsters sneezed or coughed or a photographer went to snap a few photos. This guy is a true gentleman and I know that he will be successful in chess or in any other endeavor.

I have played in a lot of simultaneous exhibitions, and in the past, I have played a lot better, but the game aside, this was by far the most enjoyable exhibition I have ever played in and one I will never forget.

Oh yes, and during the exhibition, the owner, out of his own pocket, went out and bought pizza and beverages for all to snack on.

From the turnout of young players, I am optimistic that chess is indeed alive and well in Southern California!

The author with a cheerful friend!

IM Justin Sarkar Tops Western Pacific Open

Philip Xiao Wang Earns IM Title *Los Angeles, April 26-28, 2013*

IM Justin Sarkar of New York scored 4½-½ to top the Western Pacific Open. IM Jack Peters finished second with 4-1, a half point above the ten players tying for third, which included GM Enrico Sevillano and Ecuador's first GM, Carlos Matamoros, and IMs Philip Xiao Wang, Zhanibek Amanov, and Timothy Taylor, in the strong 54-player Open section.

Philip Xiao Wang temporarily raised his FIDE rating during the tournament to above 2400, officially completing his final requirement for the IM title, even though a last round loss to Sarkar dropped him back under. Congratulations to new IM Philip!

In the other sections, Aaron Chang with 4-1 topped the 18-player Premier (under 2000), and Gabriel Sam took the 17-player Amateur (under 1800), scoring 4½-½. In the 15-player Reserve section (under 1600), Misha Tenenbaum won it with a score of 4½-½, and Chasen Stark scored 4½-½ to take the 16-player Booster (under 1400).

The total turnout was less than the 165 entries on which the prize fund was based. Still, since 80% of each prize was guaranteed, Aaron Chang, Gabriel Sam, and Misha Tenenbaum each received $600 for their efforts, and Chasen Stark received $320 for winning the Booster section. Sarkar received $1360 for first place, and Peters received $600 for second in the Open section.

In Saturday's WPO Scholastic, Jean Azcunaga, Brandon Yang Xia, and Varvara Okuneva all topped the 7-player Open section with 4-1, and Alex Wang swept the 21-player Reserve section with 5-0.

Ankit Gupta and Alejandro Ruiz directed the tournament, which was hosted at the Radisson LAX.

Michael William Brown vs. Justin Sarkar, in round two action, after 37...Nb5.
The top sections took place in the penthouse-floor City View room at the Radisson; the southward facing windows on the left extend below the floor level. The next table is Timothy Taylor vs. Zhanibek Amanov.

Previous WPO Winners

2003	Aleks Wojtkiewicz, Daniel Rensch 4½-½
2004	Jouaquin Banawa, Nikolay Andrianov 4½-½
2005	Suat Atalik, Alex Yermolinsky 4½-½
2006	Enrico Sevillano, Andranik Matikozyan, Nikolay Andrianov, Emory Tate 4-1
2007	Melikset Khachiyan 4½-½
2008	Enrico Sevillano, Andranik Matikozyan, Mark Paragua, Darwin Laylo, Timothy Taylor 4-1
2009	Enrico Sevillano 4½-½
2010	Alejandro Ramirez, Melikset Khachiyan, Sam Shankland, Jacek Stopa, Andranik Matikozyan, Enrico Sevillano 4-1

The Western Pacific Open was first held in 2003 and directed by John Hillery, who held it annually through 2010, the year he died. This year's edition was the ninth WPO.

Jack Peters presents his second round game, a Dragon. See also *Cy & Jack* for Peters' roughhouse 4th-round victory. - Ed.

Jack Peters (2351) -
Lawrence Stevens (2013)
[B76] Sicilian Dragon
Western Pacific Open(2)
Los Angeles, 27.04.2013

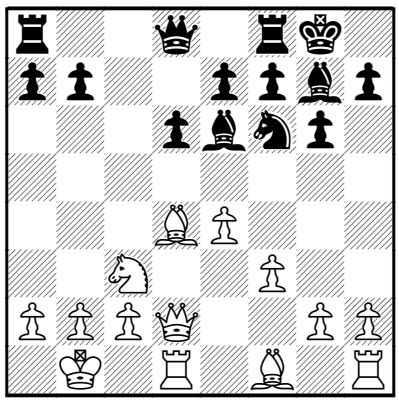
Notes by IM Jack Peters.

Before the tournament, my editor urged me to play a publishable game with a Rook sacrifice. Sorry, Larry, this was the best I could do!

1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 d6 3.d4 cxd4 4.Nxd4 Nf6 5.Nc3 g6 6.Be3 Bg7 7.f3 0–0 8.Qd2 Nc6 9.0–0–0 Nxd4

The old main line, now out of favor as 9...d5 gets most of the attention.

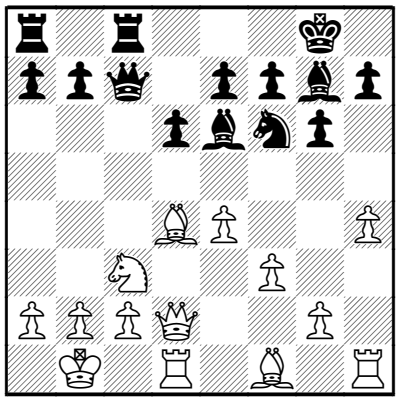
10.Bxd4 Be6 11.Kb1



11...Qc7

White's last move prevented 11...Qa5? because of 12.Nd5 Qxd2 13.Nxe7+ Kh8 14.Rxd2±.

12.h4 Rfc8



13.h5

This seems most logical because Black cannot get away with accepting the pawn sacrifice.

But some favor a more restrained approach with 13.g4 Qa5 14.a3 Rab8 15.h5. Often the game continues 15... b5 16.hxg6 hxg6 17.Qg5 Qc7∞.

White has also experimented with 13.g4 Qa5 14.Qg5!? Qxg5 15.hxg5 Nd7 16.Bxg7 Kxg7 17.Rh4, but Black should hold with 17...Nb6 18.f4 Bd7 even if he later must place a Rook at h8 to defend his h-pawn.

13...Qa5

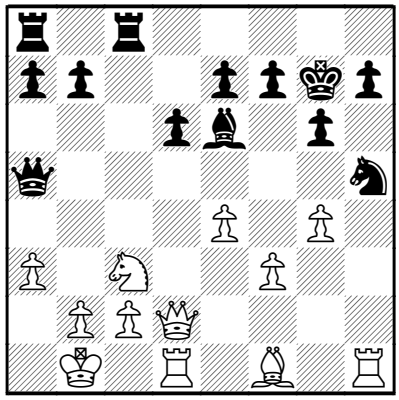
I trusted 13.h5 mostly because I remembered that grandmaster Larry Evans, a notorious pawn snatcher, willingly chose the White side. In fact, his 1966 U.S. Championship win against Bernard Zuckerman continued 13...Nxh5?? 14.Bxg7 Kxg7 15.g4 Nf6 16.Qh6+ Kg8 17.e5! dxe5 18.g5 Nh5 19.Bd3 *(most forcing is 19.Rxh5 gxh5 20.Bd3+-)* 19... e4 20.Rxh5 gxh5 21.Nxe4 Qf4 22.Nf6+ exf6 23.Bxh7+ Kh8 24.Bf5+ Kg8 25.Qh7+ Kf8 26.Qh8+.

14.a3?

Inaccurate!

The interpolation 14.hxg6 puts Black in trouble. After 14...hxg6 15.a3 Rab8 16.Bd3 Bc4 *(or 16...b5 17.Qg5!±)* 17.Bxc4 Rxc4 18.Qc1! *(planning Nc3-d5)* 18...e6 19.g4, White is close to breaking through, while Black hasn't started his counterattack.

14...Nxh5! 15.Bxg7 Kxg7 16.g4



16...Nf6??

The losing move, although neither of us realized it during the game.

Black must defend with 16... Rxc3! 17.Qxc3+ *(not 17.gxh5?! Rc5∓)* 17...Qxc3 18.bxc3 Ng3 19.Rg1 Nxf1 20.Rgxf1 Rc8 21.Kb2 Rc5∓. Black has the typical Dragon compensation for the exchange, and a draw is likely.

17.Qh6+ Kg8

Not an automatic decision.

Black could support h7 by 17...Kh8 18.Nd5? Bxd5 19.exd5 Rg8 20.g5 Nh5 and soon ...Rg8-g7.

However, White should refute 17...Kh8 with 18.e5! Qxe5 19.f4 Qe3 *(avoiding 19...Qa5 20.Ne4)* 20.g5 Qxf4 21.Bd3+-. If 21...Rg8, Black cannot keep his Queen on the c1–h6 diagonal because of the amusing line 22.Rdf1 Qe3 23.Re1 Qf4 24.Re4! Qd2 25.Rxe6 fxe6 26.Ne4.

18.Nd5! Bxd5

Black must yield a lot of material after 18...Qd8 19.e5! as 19... Bxd5 loses instantly to 20.exf6 exf6 21.Qxh7+ Kf8 22.Re1! Be6 23.Rxe6 fxe6 24.Qh8+ Ke7 25.Rh7 mate.

19.exd5+-

White wins with Larry Evans' idea. Black has no good answer to the threat of 20.g5 Nh5 21.Rxh5 gxh5 22.Bd3, attacking h7.

19...e6

The "best" defense is to give up a piece by 19...Qd8 20.g5 Qf8 21.gxf6 Qxh6 22.Rxh6 exf6+-.

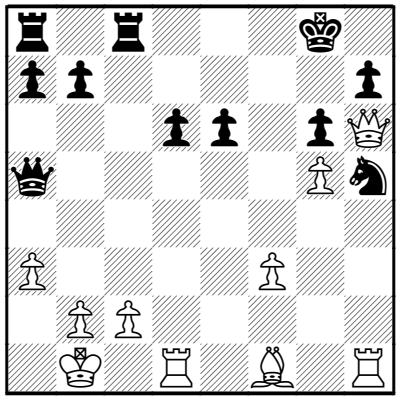
I expected 19...Qc7 20.Bd3 e5 and planned 21.dxe6 fxe6 22.g5 Nh5 23.Bxg6! hxg6 24.Qxg6+ Ng7 *(Black lasts longer with 24...Qg7 25.Qxh5+-)* 25.Rd2 Qf7 *(else 26.Rdh2 wins)* 26.Rh8+ Kxh8 27.Qxf7+-.

However, Houdini prefers to refute 19...Qc7 20.Bd3 e5 by 21.g5 Nd5 *(now 21...Nh5 22.Rxh5 gxh5 gets mated by 23.Bxh7+ Kh8 24.Rh1)* 22.Be4! Ne7 23.Qxh7+ Kf8 24.Qh8+ Ng8 25.Rh7 Qc4 26.Bxg6.

20.dxe6 fxe6

After 20...Qc7 21.Bd3, White still threatens 22. g5, and 21...fxe6 runs into 22.g5 Nh5 23.Bxg6!, as in the previous note.

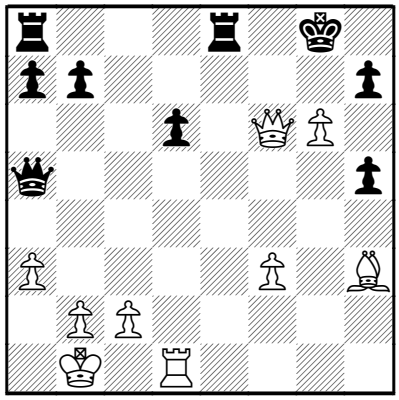
21.g5 Nh5



22.Rxh5

The customary sacrifice, but with a slightly different idea.

22...gxh5 23.Qxe6+ Kh8 24.Qf6+ Kg8 25.Bh3 Re8 26.g6! 1-0



Opening the g-file for White's other Rook. A possible finish is 26.... Qc7 27.gxh7+ Kxh7 28.Bf5+ Kg8 29.Rg1+.

That last move certainly impressed me! Nice game, Jack! -Ed.

Solutions to Inside Moves

From page 2.

1.Black wins with a backward diagonal move: ***48...Bd7+ 0-1*** winning the Bishop, for if White tries 49.g4, it's lights out with 49...Rxh4+ 50.Kxh4 Rh2 mate, in Amanov - V. Georgiev, 26th Metropolitan GM, Los Angeles 2013.

2.White forces a quick mate with ***26.Rxh7!! 1-0***. The longest defense is 26...Bf6 27.Bxf6 Qxf6 28.gxf6 Rc3 29.Rg7+ Kh8 30.Rf4 gxf5 31.Rh4 mate. Matikozyan - V. Georgiev, 27th Metropolitan GM, Los Angeles 2013.

3.Think horizontally, too! Black ends it quickly with ***30...f4!*** attacking Both Queen and Bishop ***31.Qh4*** and now the Queen trade ***31...Qg5 32.Qxg5 hxg5*** highlights Black's Kingside superiority. The game concluded with ***33.exf4 gxf4 34.h4 f3 35.Kc1 f2 36.Be2 e3 0-1*** and now the decisive 37...Bg4 can't be stopped. Amerkeshev - V. Georgiev, 26th Metropolitan GM, Los Angeles 2013.

4.Black's surprise is ***19...Bd3!! 0-1***. If 20.Bxd3 *(20.Qxb8 Qxc3+ is a quick mate)* then after 20...Rxb4 21.cxb4 Qxb4 Black's advantage in position counts even more than his advantage in material. Hinrichsen, - Hough, Memorial Day Classic, Ontario 2013.

5.Black sets up a decisive attack with ***30...Bd7! 31.Rf8***. Capturing the Rook with 31.Rxa8 allows Black to go to town on the White Kingside with 31...Bc6 32.f3 *(not 32.Rg1 Qh4 mate)* 32...Qh4+. ***31...Rxf8 32.Qxf8 Qh5+ 33.Kg1 Ne2+ 34.Rxe2 Qxe2*** and Black soon won. Latib - Pamatmat, 27th Metropolitan Qualifier, Los Angeles 2013.

6.Black highlights the fragility of White's setup with ***58...Bf1! 0-1***, threatening mate at c4. The only way out is 59.Ke4 Rc4+ 60.Rd4 Rxd4+ 61.Kxd4. But now Black gets widely separated passed pawns with 61...Bxg2 because going after the b-pawn with 62.Kc5 allows 62... g4! forcing a quick pawn promotion. Amanov - Panchanathan, 26th Metropolitan GM, Los Angeles 2013.

7.Best is ***23.Qxf6 1-0***, for if 23... Bxf6 *(neither 23...Rg8 24.Rxg7 nor 23...Qa1+ 24.Qxa1 Rg8 25.Rxg7 offers a way out)* then 24.Rxe8 mate. Also winning is 23.Rxe8+ for if 23... Nxe8 then 24.Rf8+ is a quick mate. Sammour-Hasbun - Ivanov, US Championship, St. Louis 2013.

8.White sets up a deadly double threat with the subtle backward diagonal move ***35.Qc1!*** There will be decisive Queen entry threats on both c8 and h6. ***35...Bf3*** Neither 35...Qh5 36.Qc8+ nor 35...Qe6 36.Qh6 survives. The game ended with ***36.Qh6 Kf7 37.Qg7+ Ke8 38.Qg8+ Kd7 39.Rc1 Kd6 40.Qd8+ Ke6 41.Rc7 Qd3 42.Qd7+ 1–0***. Clawitter - Kim, Western Pacific Open, Los Angeles 2013.

9.Only ***44...Bc5!!*** No credit for 44... Rg4+?? 45.Nxg4! Qxf3, because you are going down with 46.Nf6+ Kh8 47.Rh7 mate. But after the solution move, the Black King has a flight square, ...Rxg4+ is a threat, and the White Rook is en prise. ***45.d5*** If 45.dxc5 then Rg4+!! 46.Nxg4 Qxf3 47.Nf6+ Kf8; 45.Ra5 Rg4+!! 46.Qxg4 fxg4 winning. ***45...Qe8 46.Rc7*** After 46.Ra1 Bxe3 47.fxe3 Rxe3, Black's up big material. The game ended with: ***46...Rf4 47.Qh3 Bxe3 48.Qxe3 Re4 49.Qf3 Qe5 50.d6 Qxd6 51.Rc8+ Kg7 52.Qxf5 Qd1+ 0–1***. Christiansen - Holt, US Championship, St. Louis 2013.

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WGM Tatev Abrahamyan at the U.S. Women's Championship

By Tatev Abrahamyan *St. Louis, May 3-13, 2013*

There is no question that the U.S. and U.S. women's championship has become the absolutely best tournament to play in the nation, and every American player's dream-come-true event to be invited to. Once again being hosted by the fabulous Chess Club and Scholastic Center of Saint Louis, thanks to the generosity of founders Jeannie and Rex Sinquefield, the 2013 U.S. Women's Championship had a very generous prize fund of $65,000 and a competitive field.

I have been playing in the U.S. championship since 2004 and playing in St. Louis is really the highlight of the year. Not only do I enjoy playing in a beautiful chess club and staying at a very nice hotel nearby, but I really appreciate the treatment I get from the organizers and everyone working at the club. It's the one event in the year where chess players actually feel like that what they are doing is important.

The perks are not bad either: fancy and fun opening and closing ceremonies with music and local officials, food and drinks at the tournament hall, a hair and makeup session before the photoshoot, a VIP room for the players, and the list goes on and on.

The tournament was again a 10-player round robin with pretty much the same field (Anna Zatonskih, Irina Krush, Sabina Foisor, Camilla Baginskaite, Iryna Zenyuk, Viktorija Ni, Anjelina Belakovskaia, Alena Kats, Sarah Chiang and myself).

The only new faces in the tournament were the juniors, Sarah Chiang making her debut and Alena Kats, who received a wild card for second year in a row.

Just like most tournaments, this one was surrounded by superstitions. At the opening ceremony, while drawing numbers, I picked out number 1. Not only did this mean that I was going to get 5 whites, which is what I was hoping for, but I remembered that last year Irina Krush picked out number 1 and won the tournament convincingly, so I hoped it was a sign of good things to come.

Of course, one of the first things I checked after all the numbers were drawn was what colors I get against the top two competitors: Anna and Irina. I was pleased to see that I was going to be black vs. Anna and white vs. Irina, as these were the colors that I've done well with against them.

Eventually, it was time to put all the emotions and other nonsense aside, and start preparing.

This year I decided to take a different approach to the tournament, and spent a lot of time preparing. After the conclusion of the Philadelphia Open at the end of March, I started working closely with my good friend Josh Friedel. Not only did we spend a lot of time trying to fix my openings, but we also took more of a universal approach and spent some time analyzing my games and studying endgames. I am very satisfied with the way we prepared for the tournament and couldn't have had the good result I had without Josh's help and encouragement.

In the first round I faced Sabina Foisor with white. Sabina is a versatile player and seems to do specific preparation against each player, so preparing against her was a lot of work. However, my own preparation paid off, as I played 3.Nd2 vs. her French Defense for the first time ever and won a pawn out of the opening.

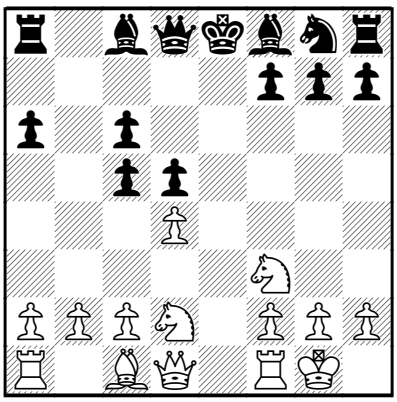
Everything seemed to have been going well until I decided to blunder every several moves or so. Eventually, we reached a position where I was up 2 pawns in an endgame but once again managed to blunder a pawn. I was so horrified and embarrassed by my blunders that I thought I just didn't deserve to win. In the end, I somehow managed to actually show some good technique in the endgame and won the game.

Tatev Abrahamyan (2385) - Sabina-Francesca Foisor (2371)
[C09] French Defense
US Women's Championship (1)
St. Louis, 03.05.2013

1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5 3.Nd2 c5 4.Ngf3 Nc6 5.exd5 exd5 6.Bb5 a6?

Black should develop. This move does nothing.

7.Bxc6+ bxc6 8.O-O



If we look at the position now, White has developed both Knights and castled, whereas Black has made no progress towards development.

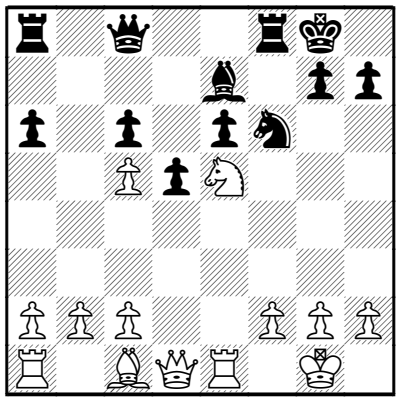
8...Nf6 9.Re1+

After this simple move, Black is already in trouble.

9...Be6 10.Ng5 Qd7 11.Ndf3 Be7

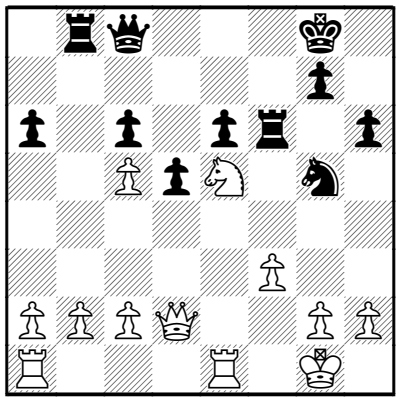
Not 11...cxd4? 12.Ne5, and if 12... Qb7 then 13.Nexf7+-.

12.Ne5 Qc8 13.dxc5 O-O 14.Nxe6 fxe6



Now White is up a healthy pawn and Black has quite a few weaknesses in her position. I made the game more adventurous than it should have been. Since it's a long game, I will focus on the key positions.

15.Be3 Rb8 16.Bd4 Ne4 17.Nd3 Bf6 18.Bxf6 Rxf6 19.f3 Ng5 20.Qd2 h6 21.Ne5?

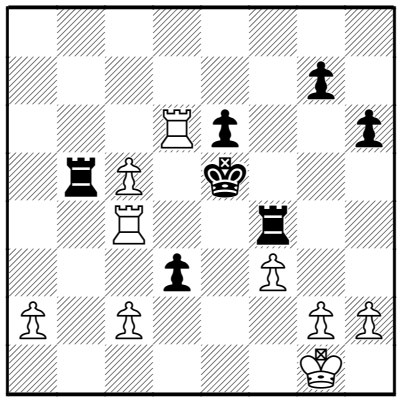


A complete hallucination. I completely overlooked that my pawn on b2 hangs. I think since I played Nd3 to defend the c5 pawn, I forgot that it was also defending the b2 pawn.

21...Rxb2 22.Qc3 Rb7 23.Rab1 Nf7 24.Rb6 Nxe5 25.Qxe5 Qc7 26.Qxc7 Rxc7 27.Rxa6 Kf7 28.Ra4

Here I calculated this ridiculous line: 28.Ra1 Rf4 29.a4 Rc4 30.Rb6 Rxc2 31.a5 Rxc5 32.a6 Ra7, and thought that after 33.Rb7+ Rxb7 34.axb7, I would be winning completely, forgetting about 34...Rb5. So I spent some time calculating this line over and over and trying to make it work until I finally made the decision to make a normal move.

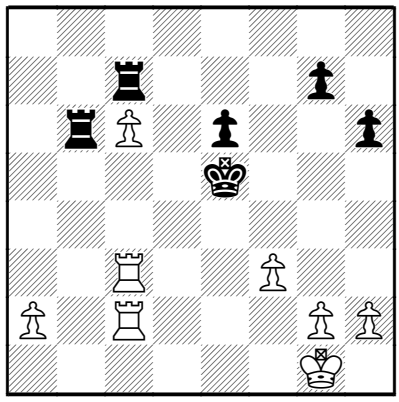
28...Rb7 29.Re3 Rb5 30.Ra7+ Kg6 31.Rc3 Rf4 32.Ra6 d4 33.Rc4 Kf6 34.Rxc6 Ke5 35.Rd6 d3



36.Rc3

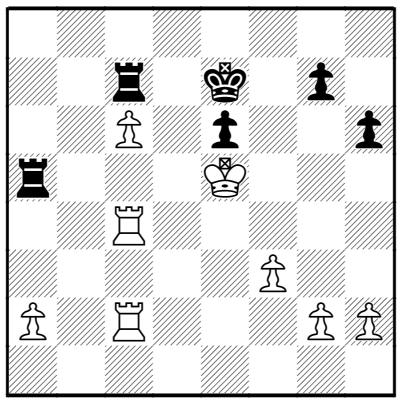
It was time trouble and I missed a pretty line: 36.Rxf4 dxc2 *(if 36...Rxc5 then 37.Rxe6+ Kxe6 38.cxd3)* 37.Re4+ Kf6 38.Rdxe6+, and if 38...Kf5, White mates: 39.g4+ Kg5 40.R4e5+ Kf4 41.Rf5.

36...dxc2 37.Rxc2 Rf7 38.Rd3 Rc7 39.c6 Rb6 40.Rdc3



I have made time control and am completely winning, up two pawns. The problem is that I still need to come up with a winning idea and make careful moves, which I failed to do, just assuming I could win regardless of what I do.

40...Kd6 41.Kf2 Ra6 42.Ke3 Ra5 43.Rc4 Ra3+ 44.Ke4 Ke7 45.Ke5 Ra5+



46.Rc5

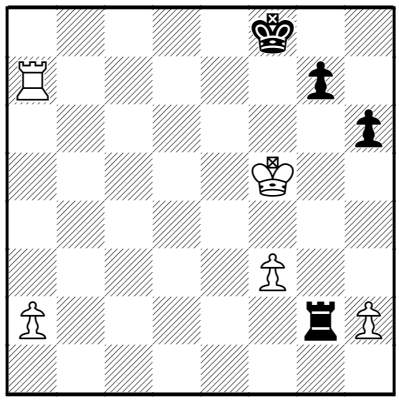
A terrible blunder. I think the problem was that I figured I'd win either way and didn't take the time to come up with a clear cut way to win.

There are several ways for me to win. One way is to push the Kingside pawns and then bring my King over to the Queenside, or 46.Kd4 Kd6 47.a4 Ra6 48.f4 Ra5 49.Kc3, and since I have two passed pawns, I can give up the c6 pawn, put my Rook behind the a-pawn and bring my King over.

46...Rxc6

I saw this move right after I played Rc5. My heart sank. I thought I had lost the full point now, and it was headed for a draw.

47.Rxa5 Rxc2 48.Ra7+ Kf8 49.Kxe6 Re2+ 50.Kf5 Rxg2



At this point, I was extremely unhappy with the course of the game. I thought this endgame would just end in a draw.

However, it's actually a very complicated endgame and a lot of factors need to considered. Black's King is not very well placed but at the same time Black's Rook is very active and will end up behind my passed a-pawn, which is where you want your Rook to be.

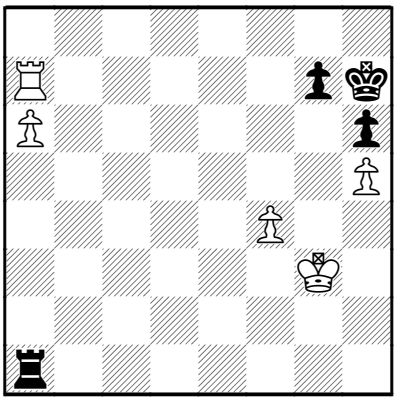
At the same time, I haven't pushed my a-pawn yet, so it's not one of those drawish positions where the Rook is on a8 and the pawn on a7 where the Black Rook on the a-file can stop all the threats. Also, having f- and h-pawns instead of g- and h-pawns benefit me because if the Black King goes to h7 then I have f4-f5-f6 ideas, attacking the pinned g7 pawn.

51.h4 Rh2 52.Kg4 Rg2+ 53.Kh3 Rc2 54.a4 Rc4 55.a5 Ra4

So far, Black has made no progress, whereas I have managed to make a lot, pushing my pawn to a5 while Black's King is still really bad.

With the pawn being on a5, I can now bring my King closer via the 5th rank, since there will be no checks.

56.h5 Kg8 57.Kg3 Kh7 58.f4 Ra1 59.a6



I thought it was the right time to play a6. Now my idea is to push f5, which limits the Black's King's mobility, and force it to the back rank, allowing me to bring my King closer to my a-pawn.

59...Ra5 60.Kg4 Kg8 61.f5

As I mentioned before, now Black's King is on the last rank and it's impossible to take my f5 pawn, as I will demonstrate by example.

61...Ra4+ 62.Kf3 Kf8

Going after the f5 pawn allows White to decisively advance the a-pawn, for example 62...Ra5 63.Ke3 Rxf5 64.Rb7 Ra5 65.a7 and now after 65...Kh7 66.Kd4 my King will simply run to b8, as my pawn on h5 is enough to stop Black from making any kind of progress.

63.Ke3 Kg8 64.Kd3 Ra5 65.Ke4 Kh8 66.Ra8+ Kh7 67.Kf4 Ra1 68.Ke5 Ra5+ 69.Ke6 Ra1 70.Kd6 Ra5 71.Kc6 Rxf5 72.Rc8 Rxh5 73.a7 Ra5 74.a8Q Rxa8 75.Rxa8 Kg6 76.Kd5 Kf5 77.Rf8+ Kg4 78.Ke4 g5 79.Ke3 h5 80.Kf2 Kh3 81.Rf3+ Kg4 82.Kg2 h4 83.Ra3 Kh5 84.Ra4 g4 85.Ra8 Kg5 86.Rh8 g3 87.Kf3 1-0

My round two opponent was Camilla Baginskaite. I have tried different lines against her 1…e5, one of them being the Evans gambit which I played several times against her without much success. Overall my score against her is pretty good with white, so I decided to stick to what works and played a closed Giuoco Piano. She blundered a pawn, but then I got a little careless and after several messy moves I trapped her Queen on h2. *(See Outside Shots! no. 1. -Ed.)*

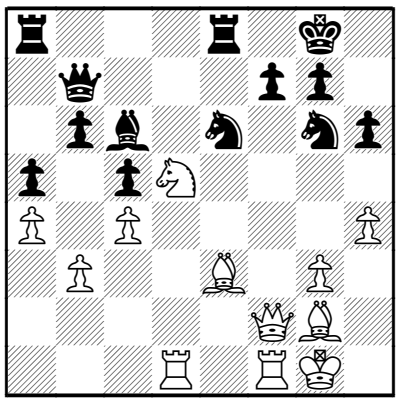
It wasn't the cleanest game, but I was happy about my perfect score. I convinced myself that I was still a little rusty and would stop blundering in the next few games.

In round 3 I had my first game with the black pieces, which made me nervous since in my previous tournaments my results with black weren't exactly inspiring.

However, I was playing Alena Kats, the only other 1.e4 player besides me, so I was happy to play the French. She didn't go for her main lines and played 2.d3.

We got into a position which neither one of us could figure out. After outplaying each other several times, she repeated the position in time trouble and missed a tactical shot that would have cost me the game. All in all, it was a lucky escape for me.

Alena Kats (2204) -
Tatev Abrahamyan (2385)
US Women's Championship (3)
St. Louis, 05.05.2013



Here White repeated with:

33.Bc1

But 33.Bxh6 crushes Black's position, as 33...gxh6 loses to 34.Nf6+ Kh8 35.Nxe8 Rxe8 36.Bxc6 Qxc6 37.Qf6+ Kh7 38.Qxf7+ Ng7 39.Rd7 Rg8 40.Rf6 Qe4 41.Rdd6.

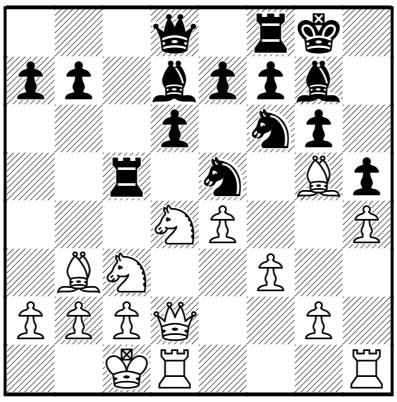
33...Nd4 34.Be3 ½-½

The next day I was going to face my long time friend and a very dangerous player - Iryna Zenyuk. Preparing against Iryna is not easy, as she plays the Accelerated Dragon and really knows her theory. Of course, when preparing against the Accelerated Dragon, I also had to prepare for the main line Dragon, since it can easily transpose. I chose the more solid 14.Kb1 instead of 14.g4, as I have played in the past, and I think it surprised her. But she continued playing quickly, which ironically made me feel more confident because I figured that we were still playing the main lines and I hadn't mixed up my lines yet.

This time, my opponent made the decisive first mistake.

Tatev Abrahamyan (2385) -
Iryna Zenyuk (2327)
[B78] Sicilian Dragon
US Women's Championship (4)
St. Louis, 06.05.2013

1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.d4 cxd4 4.Nxd4 g6 5.Nc3 Bg7 6.Be3 Nf6 7.Bc4 d6 8.f3 O-O 9.Bb3 Bd7 10.h4 h5 11.Qd2 Rc8 12.O-O-O Ne5 13.Bg5 Rc5



14.Kb1

Better than 14.g4 hxg4 15.h5 Nxh5 16.f4 Nc4 17.Qe2 Rxg5 18.fxg5 Bxd4 19.Rxd4 Ne5∓, which is what I had played previously

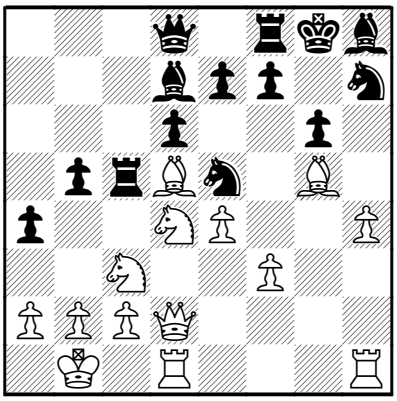
14...b5 15.g4 a5 16.gxh5 a4

Or 16...Nxh5 17.Nd5 Re8 18.a3=.

17.h6

Or 17.Bxf6 Bxf6 18.Bd5±.

17...Bh8 18.h7+ Nxh7 19.Bd5



19...Bg7

The advance 19...b4 is answered by 20.Nce2 Nxg5 21.hxg5 e6 22.Nf4 Bg7 *(not 22...exd5 23.Qh2 with a mate)* 23.Ndxe6 fxe6 24.Nxe6 Bxe6 25.Bxe6+ Nf7 26.f4±.

20.f4

Here I was also considering a3 and Qh2.

20...Nxg5??

As is common in the Dragon, Black is just lost after one mistake.

Correct is 20...Nc4 21.Bxc4 *(or 21.Qh2 Bg4∓)* 21...Rxc4 22.Qe3, and Black is fine.

21.hxg5 Ng4 22.f5 b4 23.Nce2

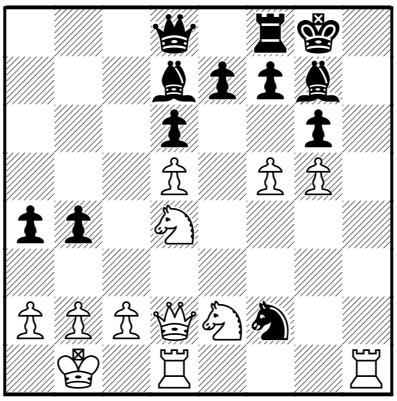
Also 23.Nxa4 Bxa4 24.fxg6 is strong.

Houdini says even better is 23.Qe1! bxc3 24.Qh4 Nh6 25.f6 exf6 26.gxh6+-. - Ed.

23...Rxd5

Better was 23...gxf5 24.Nxf5 Bxf5 25.exf5±.

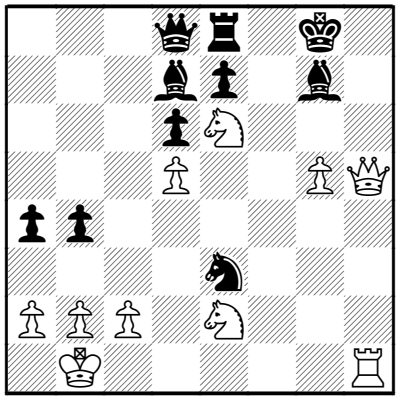
24.exd5 Nf2



25.Qf4

Even stronger is 25.Nf4 Nxh1 26.Rxh1 Qb6 27.Qh2 Rc8 28.Nde6 Bxe6 29.fxe6 b3 30.Qh7+ Kf8 31.Nxg6+ fxg6 32.Rf1+ with a quick mate.

25...Nxd1 26.Qh4 Re8 27.fxg6 Ne3 28.gxf7+ Kxf7 29.Qh5+ Kg8 30.Ne6 1-0



Round 5 was the biggest challenge of the tournament thus far: I was going to play black vs. Anna. My score vs. Anna has improved tremendously in the past couple of years, as it was atrocious before, when I pretty much lost to her every time.

In the past few years, including in 2011 when we played a match for the title, I had exclusively played the King's Indian against her with mixed results. I knew that she must have had something prepared against me, as I haven't been switching up my openings a lot.

However, this time I had a surprise prepared. The main part of my opening preparation for the tournament had been learning the Nimzo-Indian Defense, and it worked out quite well that she was going to be the first d4 player I was going to face, and wouldn't expect me to play it.

Even so, preparing against Anna is a complete nightmare. She's a practical player who can divert early on and go into a quieter position just to make her opponents uncomfortable. Luckily, the hours spent preparing paid off and I got a comfortable position.

Unfortunately, I miscalculated and missed a quiet move that would lead to an endgame with an extra pawn, and the game ended in a draw in an opposite color bishop endgame.

Anna Zatonskih (2501) - Tatev Abrahamyan (2385)
[E46] Nimzo-Indian Defense
US Women's Championship (5)
St. Louis, 07.05.2013

1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e6

The first surprise of the game.

3.Nc3

She usually plays 3.Nf3, so I think she didn't want to go down some line that she thought I had prepared. But since she's an experienced and very flexible player, I suspected that she might deviate early on.

3...Bb4 4.e3 O-O 5.Nge2 d5 6.a3 Be7 7.Nf4

Even though this is the second most common move, I was already out of prep.

Most usual is 7.cxd5 exd5 and if 8.Nf4 then 8...c6 9.Bd3 and there is the idea of bringing the Knight to c7, but it doesn't make sense if White hasn't exchanged pawns on d5.

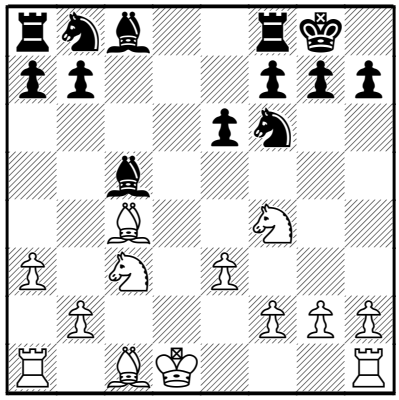
7...dxc4 8.Bxc4 c5

I decided to play more actively and challenge the center.

9.dxc5

Also possible is 9.O-O cxd4 10.exd4 Nc6 11.Be3 Bd6.

9...Qxd1+ 10.Kxd1 Bxc5

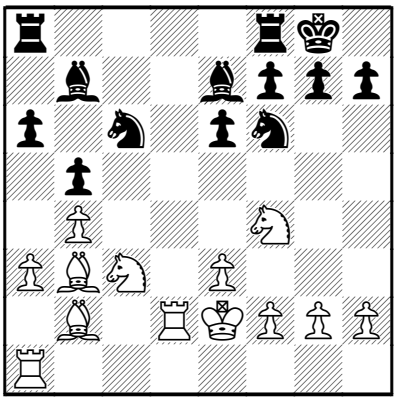


So now we have transposed into a Queen's Gambit Accepted type of position with some key differences: the Knight is misplaced on f4, my King is safe, and White's King may not be so safe in the center.

11.Ke2 Nc6 12.Rd1 a6

An alternative was 12...Ne5 13.Ba2 b6 14.b4 Ba6+ 15.b5 Bb7=.

13.b4 Be7 14.Bb2 b5 15.Bb3 Bb7 16.Rd2



This was a critical moment in the game. I can either play 16... a5 or try to make progress slowly.

16.f3 would have been more accurate to shut off my Bishop since the g2 pawn is a target.

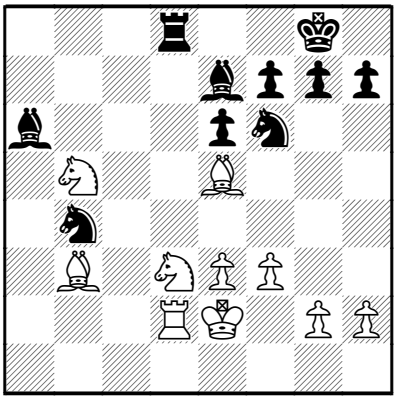
16...Rfb8

After playing 16...a5 my Rook would be more useful on the b-file and I couldn't make anything after 17.Nxb5 axb4 18.axb4 Ba6 19.Bc4 Nxb4 20.Na3 and I didn't think this was anything special.

17.Nd3 a5 18.Nxb5 axb4 19.axb4 Rxa1

Better was 19...Nxb4 20.Nxb4 Bxb4 21.Rxa8 Bxa8 22.Be5.

20.Bxa1 Nxb4 21.Be5 Rd8 22.f3 Ba6



23.Ba4?

A big mistake.

But after 23.Nxb4 Bxb5+ 24.Nd3 Nd5 25.Bxd5 Rxd5, I don't think Black can take advantage of this pin on d3.

23...Rxd3

Unfortunately, I miscalculated and went for a line where I thought I was winning a piece. I really wish I had stopped and double checked my line.

Better was 23...Nfd5 (with the idea of ...Nb6) 24.Nxb4 Bxb4 25.Rd1 f6, chasing away the Bishop that is protecting the key b8 square, 26.e4 *(not 26.Bb2 Rb8-+)* 26...fxe5 27.exd5 exd5∓.

24.Rxd3 Nxd3 25.Kxd3 Nd7 26.Bd4 e5 27.Ba7 Bc5 28.Kd2 Bxb5 29.Bxb5 Bxa7 30.Bxd7

And here I forgot that my Knight on d7 hangs.

30...Kf8 ½-½

So after five rounds Irina had a perfect score, I was a point behind in clear second, and Anna was trailing behind me with 3½. This was a good way to end the first half of the tournament, as I had the day off to look forward to, and I still had to face Irina in round 8, which meant that I was holding the fate of my tournament in my hands.

Round 6 was a pleasant surprise as I achieved a winning position after 20 moves when my opponent blundered a piece. I was playing Anjelina Belakovskaia, who was a three-time U.S. women's Champion in the 1990's but hasn't been playing actively in years.

In the tournament she seemed to have been doing specific preparation for her opponents, so it was hard to predict the opening. She played the Alekhine's Defense – one of the openings that I didn't think of preparing against. Instead of 4.c4 Nb6 5.exd6 which is what I usually play, I decided to play 4.Nf3, a line I have looked at but couldn't remember much of.

I got a fine position early, but was really mad at myself for spending too much time in the opening. During this game it hit me that the intensity of the tournament was starting to get the best of me when I returned to my board and panicked about my opponent capturing a pawn, only to realize that it was my move. *(See Outside Shots! no. 4. - Ed.)*

In round 7 I faced the U.S. Championship debutant Sarah Chiang who so far was struggling with only one point out of six.

I think this might have been the most critical game for me, as I made a decision that could have cost me the tournament. The game was pretty equal up until time trouble, when I managed to win a pawn.

However, it all started to go downhill, at least in my mind, when I spent too much time right after move 40 calculating forced lines instead of just improving my position in a pawn up endgame. After several moves I realized that I miscalculated in every line and had only several minutes left, so I lost all faith in my calculating abilities, panicked a little, and decided to offer a draw and take my chances against Irina in the following round.

At the time, it seemed like the right decision to me, but of course winning the game would have put me only half a point behind Irina who was leading with 6½-½ and perhaps put more pressure on her. How it would have changed the fate of the tournament, I will of course never know.

Unfortunately, my only loss came in the most important game of the tournament. As it is the case with Anna, preparing against Irina is not an easy task either. Having reviewed several variations of the Sicilian before the game, I was feeling extremely nervous but looking forward to a good fight. She played the Paulsen and I did my usual English Attack setup. Unfortunately, I misplayed the opening, lost a pawn and was suffering the whole game. At some point I missed a shot that would have made the game complicated, and resigned few moves later.

And just like that it was all over. I no longer had a chance at the title. The whole tournament felt miserable and pointless.

I didn't think the last round game would matter to me given that I no longer had a chance to win, but I'm still a chess player when the game starts so I wanted to play a good game and finish off on a positive note. I played Viktorija Ni, who had

Please turn to page 56, **Tatev**.

GM Magesh Panchanathan Wins 26th Metropolitan GM

Los Angeles, May 8-12, 2013

GM Magesh Panchanathan of India won the 26th Metropolitan Grandmaster norm double round robin invitational tournament. He led right from the first round, and from the third round on he was the sole leader, despite losing two games in a row in rounds seven and eight. He closed with two draws, scoring 6½-3½.

Second place was GM Vladimir Georgiev of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, just a half point behind. The nation's name is used by FIDE as the provisional reference for the newly independent Republic of Macedonia, during an ongoing naming dispute with Greece.

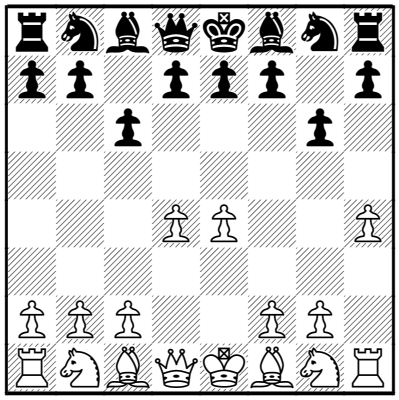
GM Enrico Sevillano finished third, scoring 5½-4½, and Madiyar Amerkeshev scored an even 5-5 to finish fourth and earn his first IM norm. He has been inactive for several years, but in this tournament he defeated GMs in rounds 6 and 7 on his way to the norm. FM Alexander Kretchetov scored 4-6 to finish fifth, and IM Zhanibek Amanov was sixth with 3-7.

The tournament was sponsored by California Market Center, Fashion Business, Inc, Chess.com, MonRoi, LawyerFy, the Law Offices of Steinfl & Bruno, EventForte Inc, and Betty Bottom Showroom.

Ankit Gupta and assistant Alejandro Ruiz directed.

IM Jack Peters annotates his favorite game from the tournament. It's wild! - Ed.

Vladimir Georgiev (2559) - Alexander Kretchetov (2271)
[B06] Modern Defense
26th Metropolitan GM(6)
Los Angeles, 10.05.2013
Notes by IM Jack Peters.
1.d4 g6 2.e4 c6 3.h4!?



Aggressive and unorthodox. That description fits most of Georgiev's games!

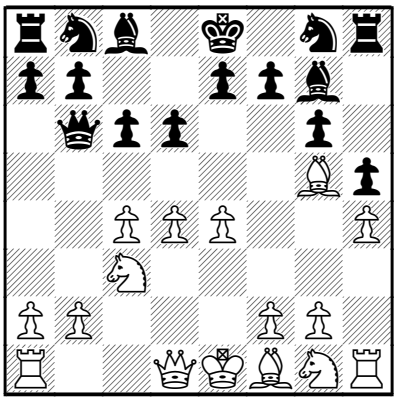
3...h5

Also reasonable is 3...d5 4.e5 h5, securing f5 for a Knight.

4.c4 Bg7 5.Nc3 d6 6.Bg5!?

The "normal" 6.Be3 resembles a Samisch Attack against the King's Indian, but without f2-f3 and ...Ng8-f6.

6...Qb6



7.Nf3?!

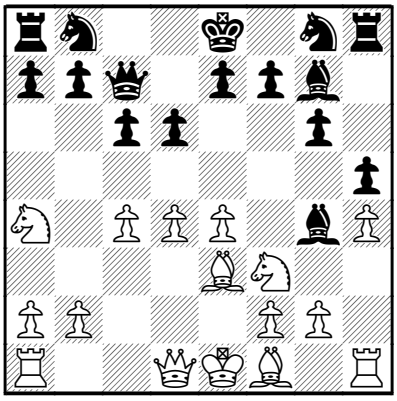
White should save both pawns by 7.Nge2. Then Black cannot risk 7... Qxb2? 8.Rb1 Qa3 because 9.Na4!± threatens 10.Bc1.

7...Bg4

Already Black has grabbed the initiative.

After 7...Qxb2 White can force a draw by 8.Na4 Qb4+ 9.Bd2 Qa3 10.Bc1 Qb4+ 11.Bd2.

8.Na4 Qa5+ 9.Bd2 Qc7 10.Be3



10...Qa5+

Apparently Black is content to draw.

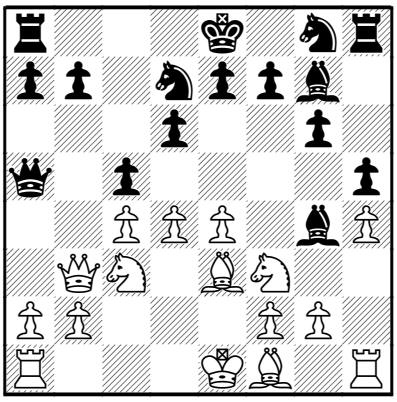
	Round by Round Pairings, Colors, and Scores		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1	Magesh Panchanathan	IND	B6	B4	W2	B3	W5	W6	W4	B2	W3	B5
	2578		**1**	**2**	**3**	**3½**	**4½**	**5½**	**5½**	**5½**	**6**	**6½**
2	Vladimir Georgiev	MKD	B5	W6	B1	B4	W3	W5	B6	W1	W4	B3
	2559		0	1	1	2	2½	2½	3½	4½	5½	6
3	Enrico Sevillano	USA	W4	W5	B6	W1	B2	B4	B5	W6	B1	W2
	2500		**1**	**2**	2½	3	3½	3½	4	4½	5	5½
4	Madiyar Amerkeshev	KAZ	B3	W1	B5	W2	B6	W3	B1	W5	B2	W6
	2191		0	0	1	1	1½	2½	3½	4½	4½	5
5	Alexander Kretchetov	RUS	W2	B3	W4	W6	B1	B2	W3	B4	B6	W1
	2271		**1**	1	1	1½	1½	2½	3	3	3½	4
6	Zhanibek Amanov	KAZ	W1	B2	W3	B5	W4	B1	W2	B3	W5	B4
	2375		0	0	½	1	1½	1½	1½	2	2½	3

Time control: 40 moves / 90 minutes + SD / 30 minutes + 30 second increment throughout.

He could try for more with 10...Bxf3 11.Qxf3 c5! 12.Qd1 *(not 12.dxc5?? Qa5+)* 12...Nf6 13.f3 Nfd7∓ followed by ...Nb8-c6, taking control of the central dark squares.

Probably White should settle for 10...Bxf3 11.gxf3 Nd7 12.Qd2∞.

11.Nc3 c5 12.Qb3 Nd7



Turnabout! Black declined to snatch the b-pawn, and now he offers his own b-pawn.

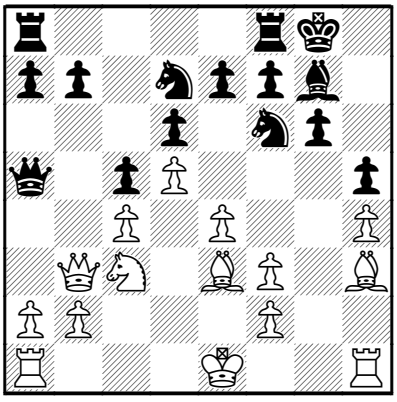
13.d5

Clearly, White cannot stand 13.Qxb7?? Rb8 14.Qc6 Bxf3 15.gxf3 cxd4–+.

White would suffer from a loose pawn structure after 13.Rd1 Bxf3 14.gxf3 cxd4 15.Bxd4 Bxd4 16.Rxd4 Ngf6∓.

Maybe 13.Qb5!? Qxb5 14.Nxb5 Kf8 15.0–0–0 is White's safest course.

13...Bxf3 14.gxf3 Ngf6∓ 15.Bh3 0–0



Black can employ the standard Benoni plan of ...a7-a6, ...Ra8-b8 and ...b7-b5. White must arrange e4-e5 or f3-f4-f5 to generate counterplay.

16.f4

Very bold!

Much less committal is 16.Ke2 a6 17.a4.

16...Rab8

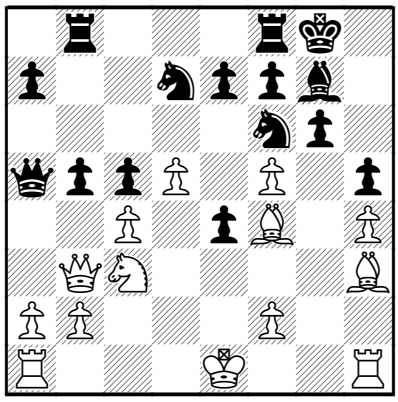
Houdini claims 16...Nxe4!? 17.Bxd7 Nxc3 18.bxc3 *(Black welcomes 18.Bd2 Qc7)* 18...Qxc3+ 19.Qxc3 Bxc3+ 20.Ke2 Bxa1 21.Rxa1 Rfd8 22.Ba4 favors Black, but the Bishops look formidable.

The modest 16...Qb4 keeps an edge without risk.

17.e5!? dxe5 18.f5 e4 19.Bf4

Else ...Nd7-e5.

19...b5!



This is the way to handle a maniacal attacker - offer material and put him on the defensive.

20.cxb5

After 20.Bxb8 bxc4 21.Qxc4 Rxb8∓, Black has more than enough for the exchange. White could lose quickly with 22.0–0–0? Ne5 23.Qa4 Qb6–+.

20...c4! 21.Qa3?!

White does not reach safety by 21.Qc2 Rxb5 22.0–0 because of 22... Rxb2! 23.Qxb2 Nxd5 24.Bd2 Nxc3–+.

Nor does 21.Qxc4 Rbc8 22.Qa4 promise an easy life, as Black strikes with 22...Qxa4 23.Nxa4 Nxd5 24.Bg5 Ne5 25.fxg6 f5!–+.

Relatively best is 21.Qa4 Qxa4 22.Nxa4 Rxb5 23.fxg6, although 23...Rb4! 24.Nc3 Nc5! 25.0–0 Rxb2∓ leaves Black in command.

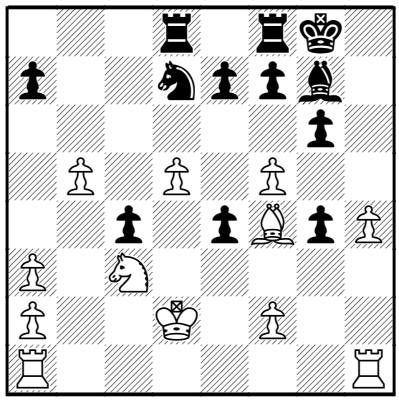
21...Qxa3 22.bxa3 Ng4! 23.Kd2

Black gains material by 23.Rc1 Bxc3+ 24.Rxc3 Rxb5–+ because White must avoid 25.Rxc4? Nde5.

23...Rbd8

Also strong is 23...Bxc3+ 24.Kxc3 Rxb5–+.

24.Bxg4 hxg4

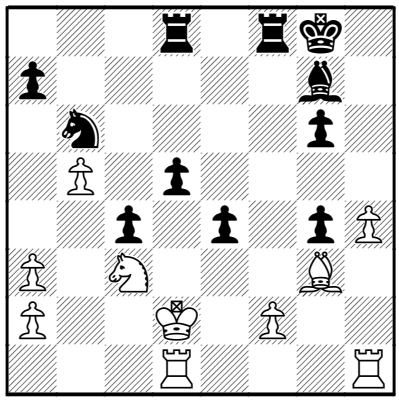


The pawn structure becomes more and more unbalanced. What counts most, though, is the superior activity of Black's pieces.

25.fxg6 Nb6!–+ 26.d6

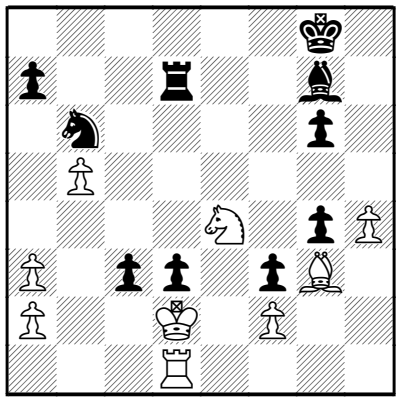
Futile, but White had no defense to the threatened ...Nb6xd5.

26...fxg6 27.Bg3 exd6 28.Rad1 d5



The pawn structure has clarified, and Black's dominance is obvious. The finish came soon.

29.Kc2 Rd7 30.Rhe1 Rf3 31.Re3?! d4! 32.Rxf3 exf3 33.Ne4 d3+ 34.Kd2 c3+! 0-1



As 35.Nxc3 loses a piece to 35... Nc4+ 36.Kc1 Bxc3. ♜

IM Andranik Matikozyan Tops 27th Metropolitan GM

Los Angeles, May 15-19, 2013

With the help of a six-game winning streak, IM Andranik Matikozyan scored 7½-2½ to take first in the 27th Metropolitan Grandmaster norm tournament and earn his second GM norm. He turned around his slow start of two draws and a loss in the first three rounds and defeated all five opponents in the next five rounds, and then defeated IM Larry Remlinger again to secure a sole first place finish with a round to spare. Second, a point and a half behind, was GM Melikset Khachiyan, scoring 6-4, third at 5½-4½ was GM Vladimir Georgiev, of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, and fourth at 4½-5½ was GM Enrico Sevillano. Finishing fifth was IM Zhanibek Amanov, 4-6, and Remlinger was sixth with 2½-7½.

The tournament, which included three GMs and three IMs, was directed by Ankit Gupta with Alejandro Ruiz assisting.

IM Jack Peters has chosen two games to annotate and one game fragment from Matikozyan's winning streak. -Ed.

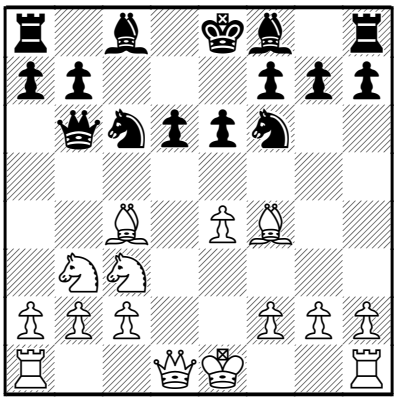
	Round by Round Pairings, Colors, and Scores		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1	Andranik Matikozyan	ARM	B2	W5	B3	B6	W4	W2	B5	W3	W6	B4
	2441		½	½	1	2	3	**4**	**5**	**6**	**7**	**7½**
2	Melikset Khachiyan	USA	W1	B4	W6	W5	B3	B1	W4	B6	B5	W3
	2518		½	1	2	2½	3	3	4	4½	5	6
3	Vladimir Georgiev	MKD	B5	B6	W1	B4	W2	W5	W6	B1	W4	B2
	2559		**1**	**2**	**2½**	**3**	**3½**	**4**	**5**	5	5½	5½
4	Enrico Sevillano	USA	W6	W2	B5	W3	B1	B6	B2	W5	B3	W1
	2500		**1**	1½	**2½**	**3**	3	3	3	3½	4	4½
5	Zhanibek Amanov	KAZ	W3	B1	W4	B2	W6	B3	W1	B4	W2	B6
	2375		0	1	1	1½	2½	3	3	3½	4	4
6	Larry Remlinger	USA	B4	W3	B2	W1	B5	W4	B3	W2	B1	W5
	2308		0	0	0	0	0	1	1	1½	1½	2½

Time control: 40 moves / 90 minutes + SD / 30 minutes + 30 second increment throughout.

Andranik Matikozyan (2411) - Vladimir Georgiev (2559)
[B57] Sicilian Defense
27th Metropolitan GM (8)
Los Angeles, 18.05.2013

Notes by IM Jack Peters.

1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Nc3 d6 4.d4 cxd4 5.Nxd4 Nf6 6.Bc4 Qb6 7.Nb3 e6 8.Bf4!?



A subtle move that became popular in the 1990s.

Obviously White can develop with 8.Be3, but 8...Qc7 will persuade White to retreat his Bishop from c4, negating his gain of tempo.

8...Ne5 9.Be2 a6 10.Be3 Qc7 11.f4 Nc4

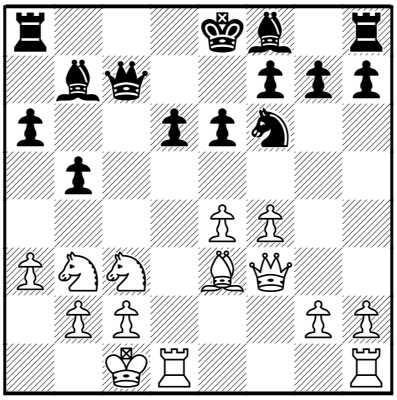
Most aggressive, but White will obtain a valuable lead in development.

The modest 11...Nc6 produces a common Scheveningen position with the extra move Nd4-b3, which is exactly what Black wants when he chooses 6...Qb6. The Knight's absence from the center lets Black advance ...b7-b5. Even 12.Bf3 would not discourage 12...b5=.

12.Bxc4 Qxc4 13.Qf3 Be7

Imprecise.

Black should begin his Queenside counterplay at once with 13...Qc7 14.O-O-O b5 15.a3 Bb7.



The difference is that White cannot launch the pawn storm 16.g4?? because 16...Rc8∓ threatens both 17...Bxe4 and 17...d5.

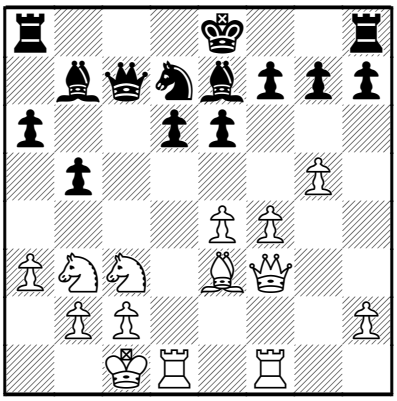
14.O-O-O Qc7 15.g4! b5 16.g5

Avoiding 16.e5?? Bb7.

16...Nd7 17.a3 Bb7

If 17...Rb8 18.Bd4 O-O 19.h4 b4 20.axb4 Rxb4 21.f5→ White's attack arrives first.

18.Rhf1



18...Rc8

Similar is 18...O-O, meeting 19.f5 by 19...exf5 20.Qxf5 Ne5±.

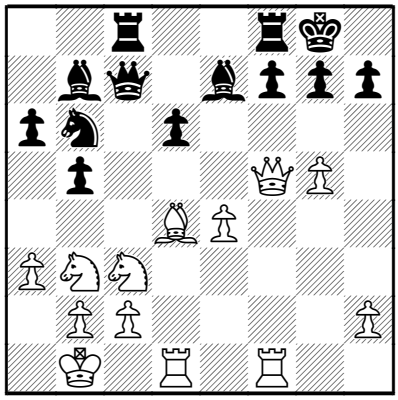
Black can hide his King on the Queenside, but 18...O-O-O 19.Nd4 strengthens the threat of f4-f5. Then 19...g6 20.Qh3 Kb8 21.f5± makes Black relinquish control of d5.

19.Kb1 Nb6?!

Both sides have played logically, producing a double-edged position typical of the Sicilian. Black has nearly caught up in development, and he can dream of using his Bishops when the position opens. But he moves his Knight away from the vital e5 square just at the moment when he could castle safely.

Black can tolerate 19...O-O 20.f5 exf5 21.Qxf5 Ne5∞ because White will need to advance his h-pawn to create a serious threat against g7 or h7.

20.f5!± exf5 21.Qxf5 O-O 22.Bd4



22...Na4?

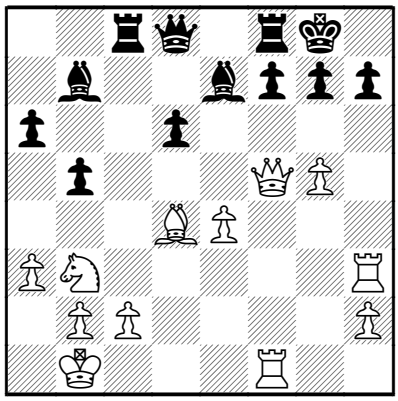
Not sensing the danger. Black had to redirect his Knight toward e5 by 22...Nc4 23.Rd3 g6 24.Qg4 Rce8 *(not yet 24...Ne5?? because of 25.Bxe5 dxe5 26.Rd7+-)* when 25.Rh3?! Ne5 26.Qh4 h5 holds. Probably White can improve with 25.h4.

23.Rd3 Nxc3+?

A fatal mistake, but Black was already in deep trouble.

The better 23...g6□ 24.Qg4 Nxc3+ 25.Bxc3 Rce8 is not secure. After 26.h4→ White plans h4-h5 and a timely capture at g6, creating threats to h7 and e6.

24.Rxc3 Qd8 25.Rh3



25...g6

Allowing the prettiest finish.

Neither 25...f6 26.Rxh7 nor 25...h6 26.gxh6 offers Black the slightest hope.

26.Rxh7! 1-0

Andranik Matikozyan (2441) - Larry Remlinger (2308)
[C51] Evans Gambit
27th Metropolitan GM (9)
Los Angeles, 19.05.2013

Notes by IM Jack Peters.

1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bc4 Bc5 4.b4!?

The Evans Gambit suits Matikozyan's style.

4...Bxb4 5.c3 Be7

Fashionable.

Theory claims Black should do well with 5...Ba5 but some lines have been heavily analyzed, and 5...Be7 is still fresh.

6.d4 Na5

Dangerous is 6...exd4?! 7.Qb3.

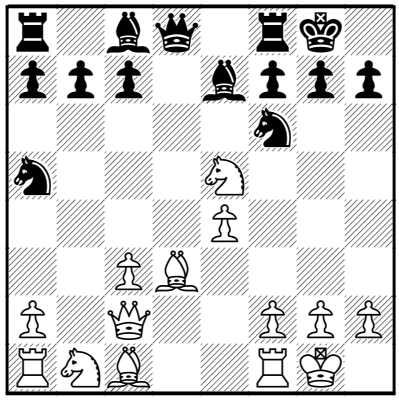
7.Bd3

Supposedly Black equalizes against 7.Nxe5 by 7...Nxc4 8.Nxc4 d5 9.exd5 Qxd5.

7...d6 8.dxe5 dxe5

Also tempting is 8...Bg4!?

9.Nxe5 Nf6= 10.O-O O-O 11.Qc2



11...c5

Another good method is 11...Qd6!? 12.f4 *(or 12.Nf3 Rd8 13.Be2 Qc6=)* 12...Rd8=.

But 11...b6?! lets White take the initiative by 12.Nf3 *(threatening 13.e5)* 12...h6 13.Rd1±.

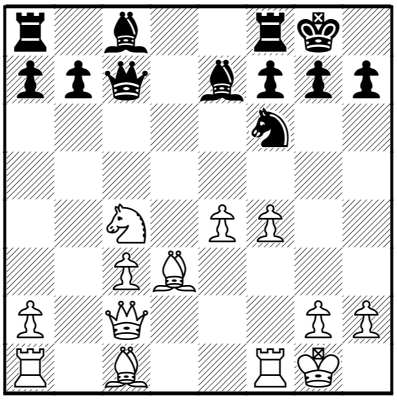
12.Nd2 Qc7 13.f4 c4?!

Imaginative, but the routine 13...Be6 is more effective. For example, 14.Ndc4 Nxc4 15.Bxc4

Bxc4 16.Nxc4 Qc6 17.Re1 b5 18.Ne5 Qa6 equalizes.

Houdini prefers 13...Bd6 14.Ndc4 Bxe5 15.Nxe5 Re8=. It seems odd to trade Bishop for Knight, but Black has pressure against e4 thanks to the possibility of ...c5-c4. And 16.c4 Ng4 trades Knights so Black can occupy d4.

14.Ndxc4± Nxc4 15.Nxc4

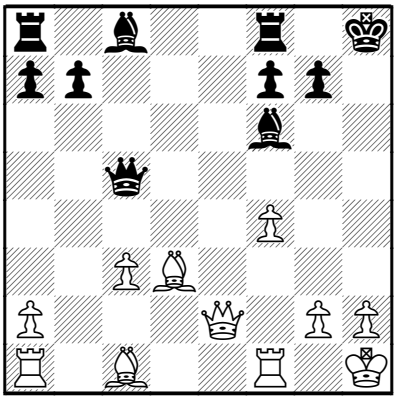


15...Nxe4?

Too optimistic.

Black gets fair compensation for the pawn from 15...Be6 16.Ne3 Rfc8 17.Bd2 *(or 17.Nd1 Bc4⩱)* 17...Bc5 18.e5 Nd5 19.Bxh7+ Kh8 20.Rae1 Bxe3+ 21.Bxe3 Qxc3⇄.

16.Bxe4 Qxc4 17.Bxh7+ Kh8 18.Bd3± Qc5+ 19.Kh1 Bf6 20.Qe2



20...Bd7??

Overlooking White's idea.

Only 20...Kg8 resists.

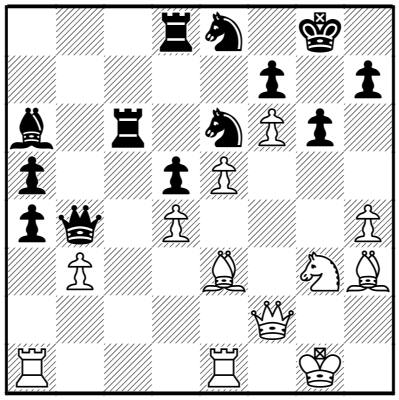
21.Ba3!+-

Removing the guard (Black's Queen) of h5.

21...Qd5 22.c4 Qa5 23.Bb4! 1-0

Next is a fragment from the second win of the 6-game streak - Ed.

Andranik Matikozyan (2441) - Enrico Sevillano (2500)
27th Metropolitan GM (5)
Los Angeles, 17.05.2013



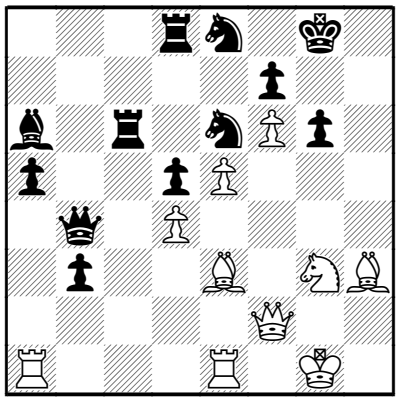
Winning six games in a row takes a bit of luck, too.

32.h5!

Great judgment! White launches what should be a winning attack.

Few players would dare to abandon the Queenside because the "normal" 32.bxa4± preserves a small advantage.

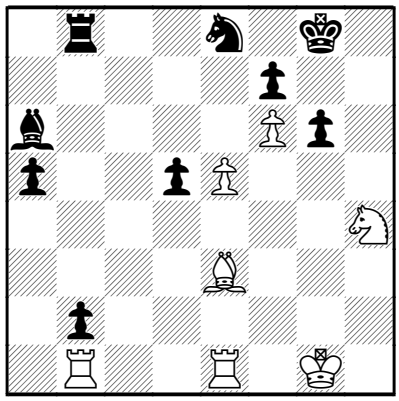
32...axb3 33.hxg6 hxg6



34.Nf5?

Apparently good enough to draw.

But inserting 34.Bxe6 Rxe6 makes 35.Nf5!→ much stronger. White's main threat is 36.Nh6+ Kf8 37.Bc1! and next Bc1-a3. Black cannot parry it by 35...b2 36.Rab1 Rb8 37.Qh4 Bd3 because White breaks through with 38.Nh6+ Kf8 39.Nxf7!+-. Thus 35...Rb8□ 36.Qh4 Rxe5□ 37.dxe5 *(the tempting 37.Bd2? permits 37...Rxf5□ 38.Bxb4 b2 39.Rab1 axb4 40.Rxb2 Nxf6 41.Ra1 Bc4 42.Rxb4 Re8 with a fortress draw even if all the Rooks are traded.)* 37...Qxh4 38.Nxh4 b2 39.Rab1 produces a critical position:



Black cannot stand 39...a4? 40.Nf5! gxf5□ *(as 40...a3? 41.Ne7+ Kh7 42.Kf2 leads to mate)* 41.Kf2 Rb4□ 42.Bd2! Re4 43.Rxb2+-.

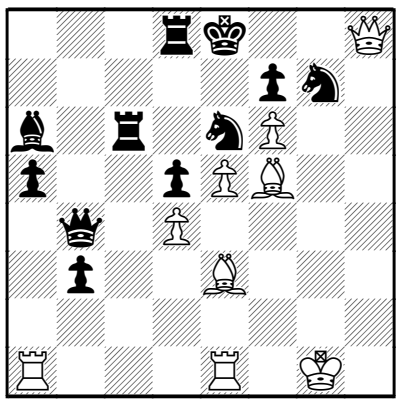
It seems that Black can do no better than reach a lost endgame by 39... Bd3 40.Bd4 Bxb1 41.Rxb1 a4 42.Rxb2 Rxb2 *(White refutes 42...Ra8?! quickly with 43.e6! Nd6* (it's mate after 43... fxe6 44.Rb7) *44.Rb6 Ne4 45.e7 Kh7 46.Ra6+-)* 43.Bxb2 Nc7 44.Kf2 Ne6 45.Ke3+-.

34...gxf5! 35.Bxf5 N8g7! 36.Qg3 Kf8 37.Qh4??

This mate threat should lose!

White must try 37.Bh6! Qxd4+ 38.Kg2 when Houdini claims a draw by the amazing variation 38...Rc2+! 39.Bxc2 bxc2 40.Ra3 Kg8 41.Bxg7 Qd2+ 42.Kh1 c1Q 43.Bh6+□ Ng5□ 44.Rxc1 Qxc1+ 45.Kg2 Kh7 46.Bxg5 Qf1+ 47.Kh2 Qe2+ 48.Kg1 Qf1+.

37...Ke8 38.Qh8+



38...Kd7??

Time pressure? Black should win with 38...Qf8 39.fxg7 Nxg7–+.

39.fxg7 1–0 ♜

IM Jack Peters Takes 34th Lina Grumette Memorial Day Classic

Just like last year! *Ontario, May 25-27, 2013*

IM Jack Peters finished with three straight wins to score 5-1 and take first place in the 34th Lina Grumette Memorial Day Classic. Second at 4½-1½ were Grandmasters Enrico Sevillano and Carlos Matamoros, and Expert Agata Bykovtsev. Matamoros also won the best game prize for his win against Craig Hilby, and Bykovtsev gained 88 rating points for her efforts. She annotates one of her games in this article.

In the other sections, Barry Lazarus scored 5½-½ to win the Premier section (under 2000) with Shaurya Jain second at 4-2. Richard Peterson and Dante Peterson, father and son, both scored 5-1 to win the Amateur (under 1800). Paul Jones with 5-1 topped the Reserve (under 1600), and Eugene Kim swept the Booster Section (under 1400) 6-0.

The five sections were hosted at the Hilton Ontario Airport and attracted a total of 118 players.

In the side events, Chris Pensoneau won Sunday's 12-player Action Swiss with a score of 4½-½, and Mark Ayers swept Monday's MDC Hex with 3-0. TDs Aaron and Anthony Ong directed.

Sunday's 10-player MDC Scholastic Open section was won by Liam Fairweather who scored 4½-½, and the 20-player under 1000 section finished in a three way tie at 4-1, with Dylan Gould, Jason Duan, and Rohan Nair. TD Marcos Montes Sr. was assisted by Aaron Ong. - Ed.

Confessions of the Winner

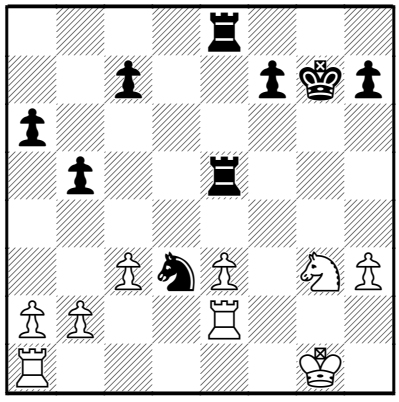
by Jack Peters

You've probably heard players complain that their outstanding tournament performance went unrewarded because someone who faced easier opposition or benefitted from opponent's blunders snuck past them in the standings. Maybe it's happened to you. I've been a victim a few times. But I lost my right to grouse about bad luck after I got all the breaks in the 2013 Memorial Day Classic.

Many tournament reports feature a good game or two by the winner. If I merely showed my last-round win (by far my best game), you would be misled about the quality of my play. So here is a truthful account, a round-by-round summary that reveals the good and the bad.

In the first round, James Williamson outplayed me in the early middlegame and forced me to accept a drawish endgame. On move 26, I tried to avoid the draw and picked a move that should have lost a pawn. He missed the idea, and I still had to struggle to draw.

Jack Peters (2444) -
James Williamson (2018)



26.Rd1?

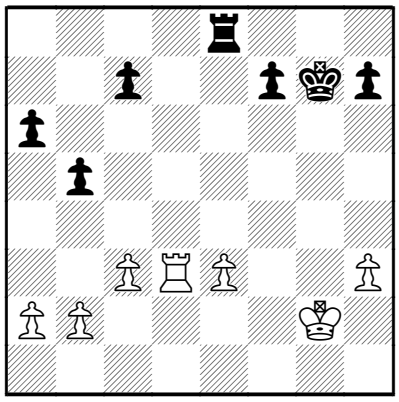
I hoped to chase the annoying Knight and use the d-file. Much too optimistic!

Correct is 26.Rf1 c5 27.Nf5+ Kf8 28.Nh6 Rg5+ 29.Kh2 Re7 30.b3=.

26...Rg5?

Black will gain a pawn by 26...Nf4 27.Rh2 Nd5 28.e4 Nf6∓.

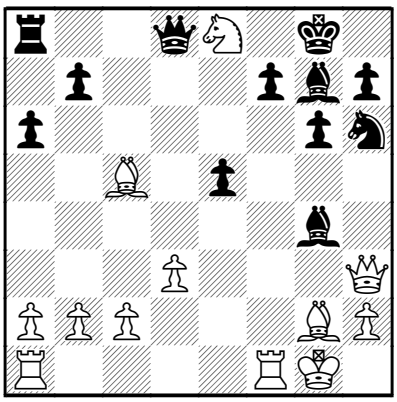
27.Rxd3 Rxg3+ 28.Rg2 Rxg2+ 29.Kxg2



I didn't come close to winning this very drawish endgame, and we agreed to a draw at move 58.

My second-round win against Randy Hough featured a near-disastrous oversight. After a strong opening, I was not satisfied to win the exchange for a pawn, but my "brilliant" Queen sacrifice should have failed. In fact, I gave him two opportunities to save the game.

Jack Peters (2444) -
Randall Hough (2065)
Memorial Day Classic (2)

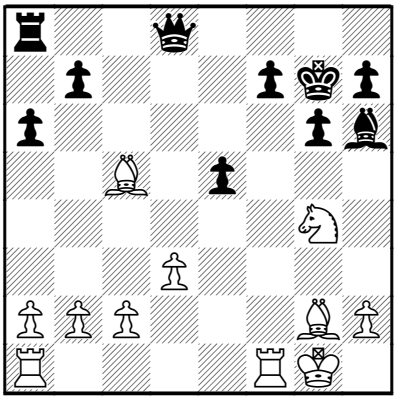


20.Qxh6??

White should win with 20.Qg3 Qxe8 21.Bxb7 Rb8 22.Bd5, but I thought White had a quicker way.

I avoided the trap 20.Nf6+ Bxf6 21.Qxh6 Bg5, although White still retains winning chances with 22.Qf8+ Qxf8 23.Bxf8 Kxf8 24.Rae1±.

20...Bxh6 21.Nf6+ Kg7 22.Nxg4



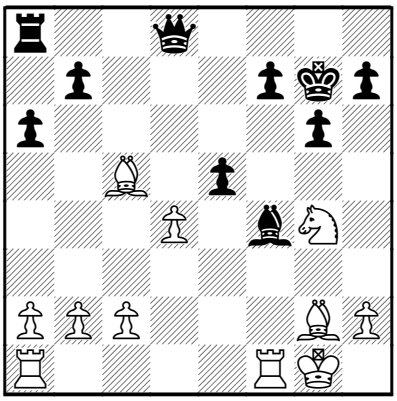
22...Bf4!?

The reply I had anticipated, and drastically underestimated.

I had considered the double attack 22...Qc8! but mistakenly assumed that 23.Nxh6?? would save White, overlooking that 23...Qxc5+ is a check.

Luckily, White does not have to lose. Best play is 22...Qc8! 23.Rxf7+! Kxf7 24.Nxh6+ Kg7 25.Be3 Qxc2 26.Rc1 Qxd3 when White has a draw, but no more, by 27.Rc7+ Kh8 28.Nf7+ Kg8 29.Nh6+ Kh8 30.Nf7+.

23.d4?!



A little better is 23.b4 f5 24.Nf2=.

23...Qc7??

Black misses his chance to complicate the game.

I did not fear 23...Rc8! because I expected White to consolidate by 24.Rae1? Qh4 25.h3. However, Black emerges on top after 25...f5 26.Nxe5 Bxe5 27.Rxe5?? *(maybe White can hang on with 27.c3∓)* 27...Rxc5! 28.dxc5 Qd4+ 29.Kh1 Qxe5-+.

Meeting 23...Rc8! by 24.Bxb7 allows another surprise: 24...Rxc5! 25.dxc5 Qg5∓.

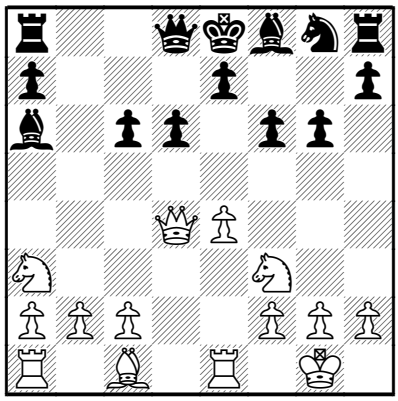
24.Rae1+-

It should be easy now.

The low point of my tournament came after 11 moves in Round Three. Venkat Iyer had me on the ropes as I fell way behind in development. I was contemplating an even score after three rounds and wondering if I should drop out. He let me escape, through no skill of mine, and soon I had a chance to gain a pawn. I missed it. A few moves later, I won a pawn with a different tactic, but the ending was drawn. Only later did I learn that I could have reached a more favorable pawn-up endgame. Sloppy, sloppy!

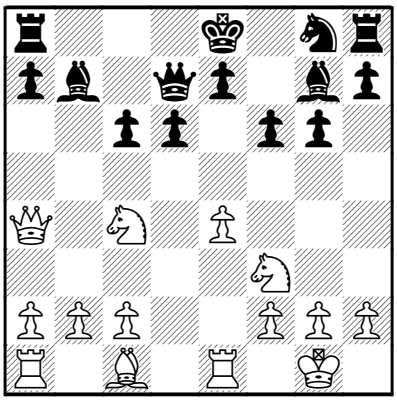
Venkat Iyer (2136) -
Jack Peters (2444)
[B51] Sicilian Defense
Memorial Day Classic (3)
Ontario 26.05.2013

1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bb5 d6 4.Bxc6+ bxc6 5.O-O g6?! 6.d4!↑ Ba6 7.Re1 cxd4 8.Qxd4 f6 9.Na3



White has an ominous lead in development.

9...Bg7 10.Qa4 Bb7 11.Nc4 Qd7



12.Na5

White can restrain ...c6-c5 by 12.b4± or rely on rapid development by 12.Bf4 c5 13.Qxd7+ Kxd7 14.Rad1⟳, followed by a sacrifice at d6.

12...Rb8 13.Nxb7 Rxb7 14.c4 c5

Black has nearly equalized.

15.Qc2 Nh6 16.Bxh6?! Bxh6 17.Rad1 Qc6 18.Rd3 O-O 19.Nd2 Rfb8 20.b3 a5

The target is b3.

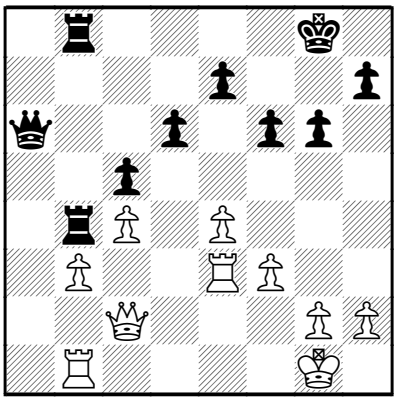
21.Rb1

White cannot generate serious threats by 21.Rh3 Bf4∓.

21...a4 22.f3 Qa6 23.Nf1 Rb4 24.Ne3? axb3 25.axb3?!

Necessary is 25.Rbxb3∓.

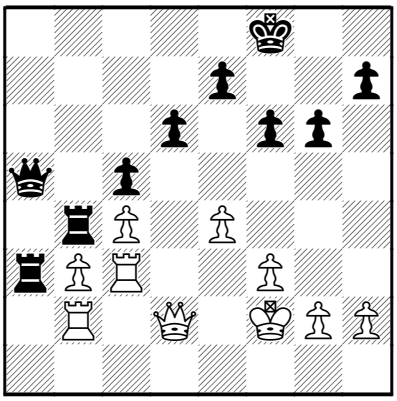
25...Bxe3+ 26.Rxe3



26...Qb7?

I was looking for tactics on the b-file but missed the opportunity for 26...Qxc4! 27.bxc4 Rxb1+ 28.Kf2 R8b2 29.Re2 Rxc2 30.Rxc2 Kf7, with a likely win.

27.Qd3 Kf8 28.Qc2 Qa8 29.Rc3 R8b6 30.Qd2 Ra6 31.Kf2?! Ra3 32.Rb2 Qa5!

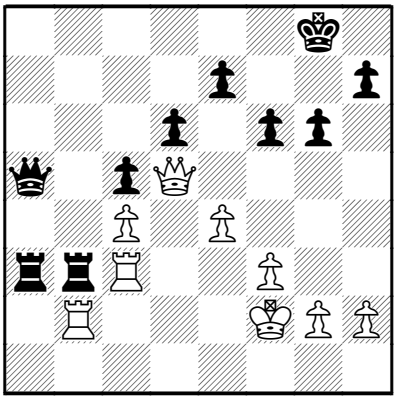


Setting up another trick.

33.Qh6+

White should sit tight with 33.Qc2∓.

33...Kg8 34.Qd2?! Rbxb3! 35.Qd5+



35...Kf8?

I did all the groundwork for the combination, and then botched it.

With 35...Kg7 36.Rcxb3 Rxb3 37.Rxb3 Qa2+ 38.Kg3 Qxb3 39.Qe6 Qb7∓ Black does not let White's Queen reach a dominating post. The maneuver ...Qb7-c7-d8-f8-f7 will chase White's Queen and give Black some hope of exploiting his extra pawn.

36.Rcxb3 Rxb3 37.Rxb3 Qa2+ 38.Kg3 Qxb3 39.Qa8+! Kg7

Or 39...Kf7 40.Qh8=.

40.Qe8 Qb7 41.Qd8!=

Now I saw only one chance for Black to make progress.

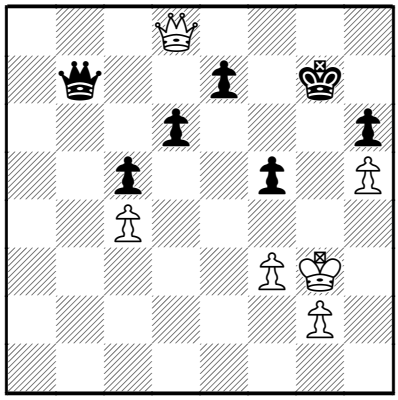
41...f5!? 42.exf5 gxf5 43.h4

I dreamed of 43.Kf4?! e5+ 44.Kxf5? Qf7+ 45.Ke4 Qxc4+ 46.Ke3 Qe6∓.

43...h6

White can parry 43...d5 44.cxd5 c4 by 45.d6 (other ideas work too) 45...exd6 46.Qg5+ Kh8 47.Qd8+, drawing.

44.h5!



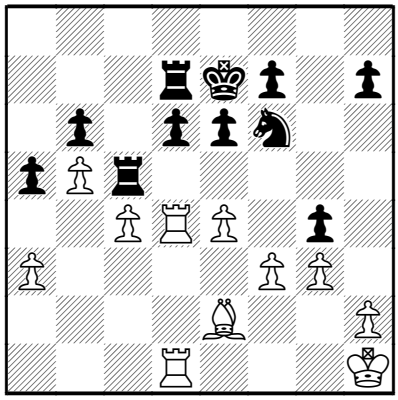
Threatening Qd8-e8-g6. Black must be realistic and seek a draw.

44...Kf7! 45.Qh8 Qb1! 46.Qxh6 Qe1+ 47.Kh3 Qh1+ ½-½

Before the fourth round, I estimated that my 2-1 score against experts had cost me a dozen rating points and almost any hope of a top prize. The first 25 moves of the game did not brighten my mood. Albert Lu set up a solid position that almost guaranteed a draw.

But he made a blunder that cost a pawn, and immediately resigned. A gift point for me.

Albert Lu (2181) -
Jack Peters (2444)
Memorial Day Classic (4)



33.Kg2

Correctly rejecting 33.fxg4?! e5 34.R4d3 Nxe4∓.

33...gxf3+ 34.Bxf3??

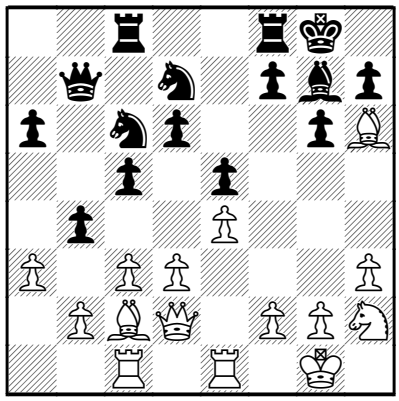
Albert made this move instantly on his return to the board, even before he sat down. A moment's thought could have saved him a half point.

After 34.Kxf3∓ Black's control of e5 assures him a nominal advantage, but it's difficult to imagine Black winning unless White blunders.

34...e5 35.R4d2 Rxc4 0-1

Round Five didn't start well for me, as Joshua Sheng played Black and neutralized my opening almost effortlessly. Perhaps my insipid play made him overly ambitious, as he weakened his Kingside without provocation and allowed a not-too-difficult combination. I felt that I played better than on the first two days, even though I missed the most convincing version of the combination.

Jack Peters (2444) -
Joshua Sheng (2177)
Memorial Day Classic (5)



19.Ng4 Bxh6 20.Qxh6 f5?

Consistent, but very loosening.

21.exf5 gxf5 22.Ne3±

Simple and strong.

Houdini prefers 22.d4, which I never considered.

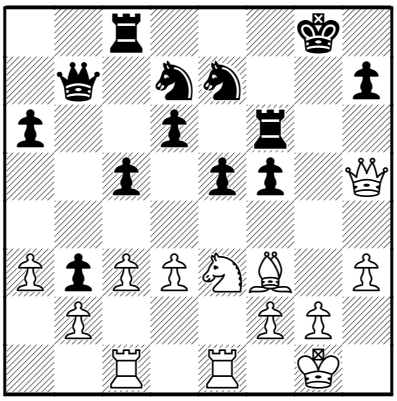
22...Rf6 23.Qh5

The greedy 23.Qg5+ Kh8 24.Nxf5? encourages the counterattack 24...Rg8 25.Qh5 Rxg2+ 26.Kxg2 Nd4+, when White barely survives with 27.Re4 Rxf5 28.Qe8+ Rf8 29.Qe7=.

23...b3

Stopping Bc2-b3, but Black can no longer open a Queenside file.

24.Bd1 Ne7 25.Bf3



25...e4?

Against 25...d5?, I planned 26.Nxd5! Nxd5 27.c4 e4 28.dxe4. Joshua pointed out 28...N5b6 29.exf5 Qc7 30.Re7+-.

Black should settle for 25...Qb8±.

26.dxe4

Second best.

Most decisive is 26.Nxf5! Rxf5 27.Qg4+ Kh8 28.Bxe4 Rd5 29.Qe6 Ne5 30.c4+-.

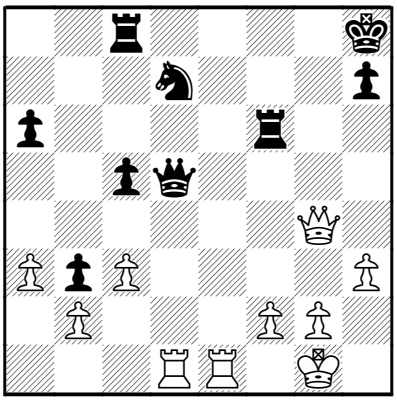
26...fxe4?!

During the game, I was unsure of 26...Ne5!? 27.exf5 Nxf3+ 28.gxf3, but now I'm convinced that Black cannot bother White's exposed King. For example, 28...Kh8 29.Ng4 Rff8 *(neither 29...Rg8 30.Kf1 nor 29... Rxf5?! 30.Rxe7 will save Black)* 30.f6 Nd5 31.Qh6+- threatens 32. Re7 and 32. c4.

27.Qg4+ Kh8 28.Bxe4 d5 29.Nxd5

An easy combination clinches the win.

29...Nxd5 30.Bxd5 Qxd5 31.Rcd1 1-0



White can meet 31...Qa8 32.Rxd7 Rg8 effortlessly by 33.Qe4+-, or emphatically by 33.Rxh7+! Kxh7 34.Re7+ Kh6 35.Qh4+ Kg6 36.Qh7+ Kg5 37.f4+!, forcing mate in six moves.

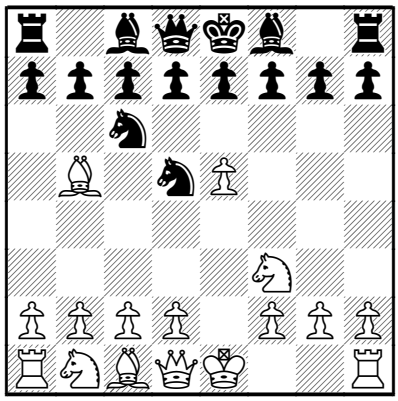
Round Six – the money round! To my surprise, I realized I had a chance for first prize. Grandmasters Carlos Matamoros and Enrico Sevillano would face each other on first board, while I played IM Roman Yankovsky on Board Two. Yankovsky was a half-point behind, which meant that he needed to win, and I had the luxury of playing solidly - which I wasted, of course, with my choice of opening!

Roman Yankovsky (2546) - Jack Peters (2444)
[B00] Nimzovich Defense
Memorial Day Classic (6)
Ontario 27.05.2013

1.e4 Nc6 2.Nf3 Nf6 3.e5

After 3.Nc3 Black can transpose to the Four Knights Game by 3...e5 or try the rarely tested 3...d5.

3...Nd5 4.Bb5!?



Reaching an unknown position after only four moves.

I expected 4.d4 d6 5.c4 Nb6 6.e6!? a lively variation of Alekhine's Defense.

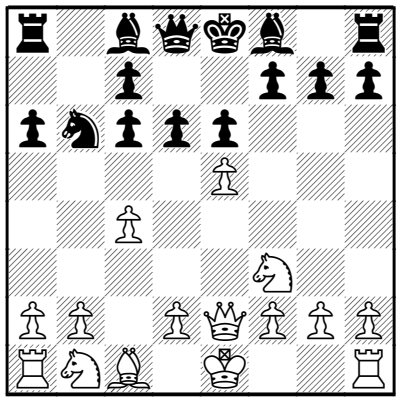
4...a6 5.Ba4 d6 6.Qe2

Another promising option is 6.d4 Nb6 *(White treats 6...Bg4?! roughly with 7.h3 Bxf3 8.Qxf3 e6 9.c4 Nde7 10.Bg5±)* 7.Bxc6+ bxc6 8.0–0±.

6...e6

Not 6...Bg4?? 7.Qc4+-, but 6...b5 7.Bb3 dxe5 8.Nxe5 Nxe5 9.Qxe5 Bb7= looks satisfactory.

7.c4 Nb6 8.Bxc6+ bxc6



A difficult position to evaluate. I imagined Black's extra Bishop, blocked at the moment, causing trouble from a6 or b7. Perhaps Black can fight for central squares with ...c6-c5 or ...f7-f6. Nevertheless, I doubt that Black has equalized yet.

9.b3

Supporting c4. White's center comes under fire from 9.d4 a5⇄.

9...Be7 10.Bb2 0–0 11.0–0 a5

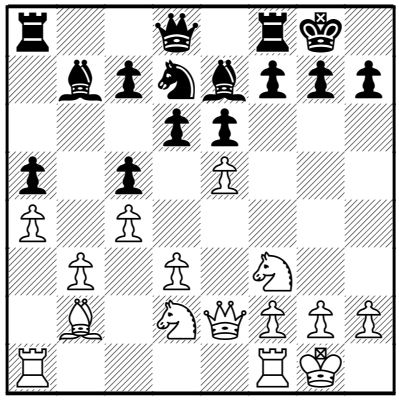
The immediate 11...c5 is reasonable too.

I thought White could stifle Black's central pawn mass after 11...f6 12.exf6 Bxf6 13.d4± and Nb1-d2-e4.

12.a4!?

I expected 12.d3 a4 13.Nbd2. Instead, White accepts a backward pawn at b3 so he can take aim at the weakling on a5.

12...Nd7 13.d3 c5 14.Nbd2 Bb7



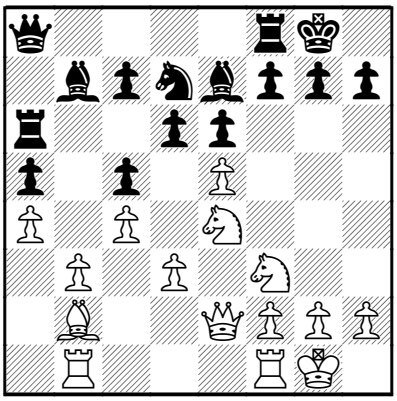
Now the Bishop works effectively. I was content with the outcome of the opening.

15.Rab1

In postgame analysis, we tried to protect g2 with the maneuver Qe2-

e3-f4-g3. But White doesn't have time if Black reacts properly. For example, 15.Qe3 Ra6 16.Qf4 drops a pawn to 16...dxe5! 17.Nxe5 Nxe5 18.Bxe5 Qxd3∓ as 19.Bxc7? runs into 19...e5! 20.Bxe5 Rg6 21.g3 Bg5–+.

15...Ra6 16.Ne4?! Qa8



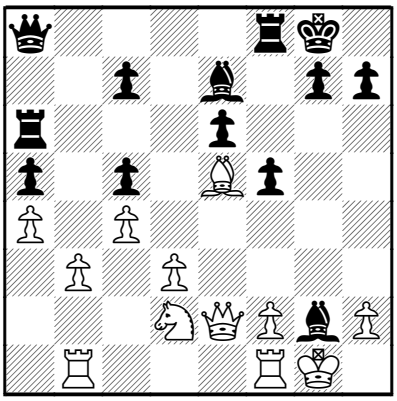
I've read Nimzovich! Attack the center from the flank!

17.Bc3?

Capturing on d6 would be a serious strategic concession.

Apparently White must take back his last move with 17.Ned2, although 17...dxe5 18.Nxe5 Nxe5 19.Qxe5 Bf6 20.Qg3 Bxb2 21.Rxb2 Rd6∓ is unpleasant.

17...dxe5 18.Nxe5 Nxe5 19.Bxe5 f5 20.Nd2 Bxg2



Winning, despite Black's shattered pawn structure. White's pawns are shaky too, and his King is exposed.

21.Rfe1 Bb7 22.f3

After 22.Bxc7 e5!, Black's Rook gets to g6.

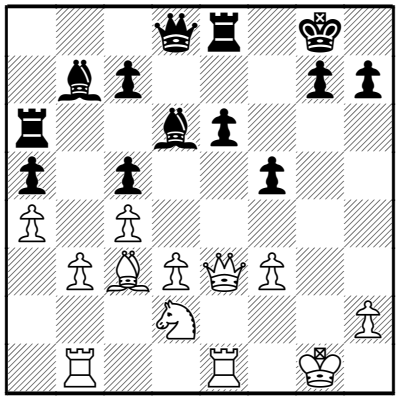
22...Qd8 23.Qe3 Bd6?!

Black should exchange Bishops by 23...Bf6, not fearing 24.Qxc5? be-

Jack Peters: "My last bit of luck..."

cause 24...Bxe5 25.Qxe5 Qg5+ picks off the Knight.

24.Bc3 Re8



With an extra pawn and a time advantage (28 minutes to White's 10), Black has a comfortingly large margin for error.

25.Re2 f4!

Else Re2-g2 manufactures counterplay.

26.Qf2 Bf8

Safe.

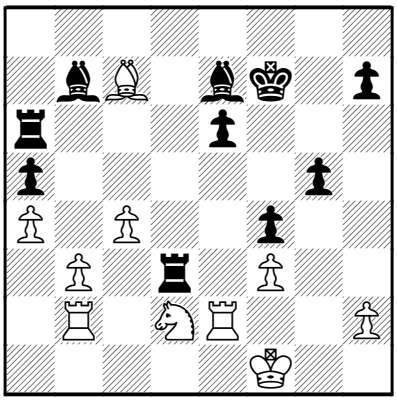
Houdini recommends the energetic 26...Be7 27.Be5 Qxd3 28.Bxf4 Bf6 29.Be3 Bh4! 30.Qf1 e5!, going after White's King.

27.d4 cxd4 28.Qxd4 Qxd4+ 29.Bxd4 Rd8 30.Be5 Bd6∓

My shrinking advantage is still sufficient.

I did not seriously consider Black's most aggressive line, 30...Rd3 31.Bxf4 Bc5+ 32.Kg2 e5!

31.Rb2 Kf7 32.Kf1 g5 33.Bc3 Be7! 34.Be5 Rd3 35.Bxc7



35...Ba3

Most persuasive is 35...Bf6 36.Be5 Bxf3–+.

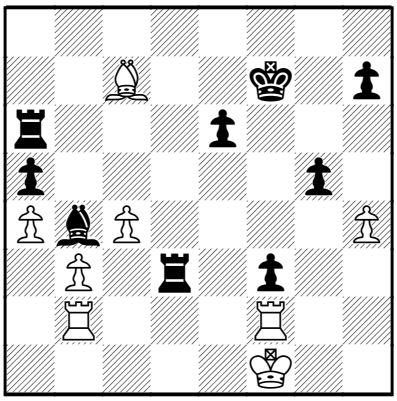
36.Rb1 Bb4 37.Rb2 Bxf3

Readying Black's Kingside pawns for the final charge. Meanwhile, White cannot advance his c-pawn.

38.Nxf3 Rxf3+ 39.Rf2 Rd3 40.h4

White makes the time control with three seconds to spare.

40...f3 0-1



Black plans 41.Rb1 g4–+.

My last bit of luck was that Matamoros and Sevillano drew, making me the clear winner at 5-1.

If you're still not convinced that I was a lucky and undeserving winner, consider one more piece of evidence. For my great triumph, I gained two rating points. ♜

We asked Expert Agata Boykovtsev, who tied for second place with two grandmasters, to annotate a game for the article. -Ed.

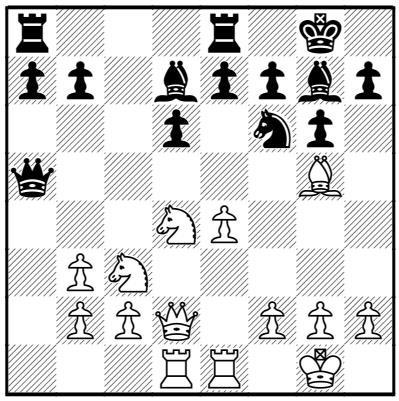
Agata Bykovtsev (2049) - Willis Kim (2087)
[B70] Sicilian Dragon
Memorial Day Classic (5)
Ontario 27.05.2013

Notes by Agata Bykovtsev.

1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 d6 3.Nc3 Nf6 4.d4 cxd4 5.Nxd4 g6 6.Bc4 Bg7 7.O-O O-O 8.Bb3

Up until now, all is theory for me.

8...Nbd7 9.Bg5 Nc5 10.Re1 Nxb3 11.axb3 Bd7 12.Qd2 Re8 13.Rad1 Qa5



14.Kh1?!

My idea was to get my King off the a7-g1 diagonal to prepare f4 and e5.

Perhaps better is 14.Bxf6 Bxf6 15.Nd5 Qxd2 16.Nxf6+ *(also possible is 16.Rxd2 Bxd4 17.Rxd4 Rac8)* 16...exf6 17.Rxd2 f5. This endgame is probably about equal, maybe slightly better for White.

I considered this continuation during the game, but then decided that I wanted to keep the Queens on the board so that I would still have chances to complicate the position.

14...Bc6 15.f4 h6 16.Bh4 Qh5 17.Nf3 Rad8 18.Nd5

With 18.Nd5, I am trying to provoke 18...Bxd5 because after 19.exd5 Black has a weakness on e7 which I can try to exploit, maybe by doubling on the e-file with my Rooks.

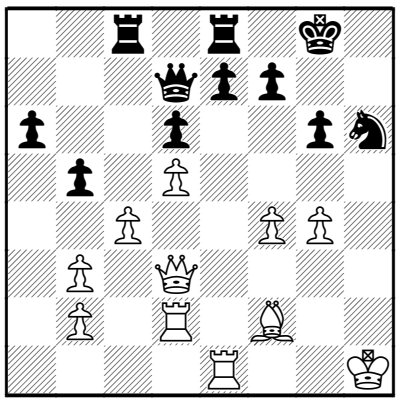
18...Bxd5 19.exd5 Rc8 20.c4

Providing support for the d5 pawn.

20...a6 21.h3 Qf5 22.Nd4 Qd7 23.Qd3 Nh5 24.Qf3 Bxd4 25.Rxd4 Ng7 26.Rd2 b5 27.Qd3 Nf5 28.Bf2 h5 29.g4!?

This may not have been the most accurate move, but I wanted to complicate the position with some active play.

29...hxg4 30.hxg4 Nh6



31.g5

There is an interesting variation starting with 31.Re6. During the game I considered it, but was not able to see what would happen after 31... Nxg4 32.Rxg6 fxg6 33. Qxg6 Kf8.

After analyzing, I found the interesting move 34.Bh4, which cuts off the e7 square in case the King ever needs to run to the Queen-side. It also threatens to play 35.Rg2.

After 31.Re6, here are some variations:

Best is 31...Nxg4 32.Rxg6+ fxg6 33.Qxg6+ Kf8 34.Bh4 *(not 34.Bd4 e5 35.dxe6 Rxe6-+)* 34...e6 35.Qxg4∞ *(not 35.Rg2 Qg7-+).*

If Black plays 31...fxe6 then 32.Qxg6+ and White will mate in several moves: 32...Kf8 33.Qxh6+ Kf7 34.Qh7+ Kf8 35.Bd4 e5 36.fxe5 dxe5 37.Rf2+ Qf5 38.Rxf5 mate.

31...bxc4 32.bxc4 Nf5 33.b3

White's threat here is to play Qh3, move the Bishop (Bd4 or Bg1), and then Rh2 trying to mate.

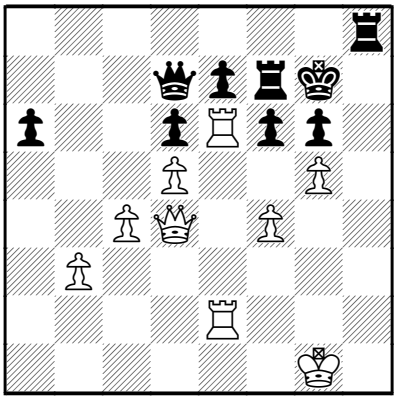
I think Black should have gone for something like 33...Qb7 followed by ...e6. Black's Queen would then tie White's Queen to the b3 pawn, preventing plans such as 34.Bd4 Nxd4 35.Qd4, with the idea of 35.Rh2.

33...Kg7?

Better was 33...Qb7, for if 34.Bg1 trying to play Qh3 and Rh2, then Black can play 34...e6.

Also possible is 33...e6 34.dxe6 Rxe6 35.Rxe6 Qxe6 36.Ra2.

34.Bd4+ f6 35.Re6 Rh8+ 36.Kg1 Nxd4 37.Qxd4 Rcf8 38.Rde2 Rf7



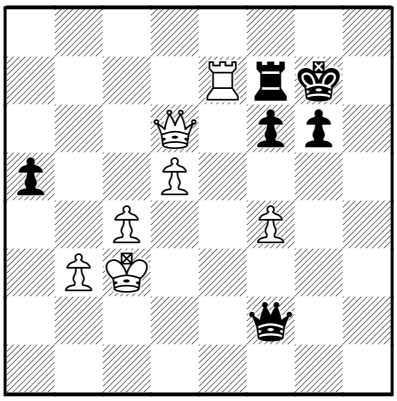
39.gxf6+?

Here I was in time pressure and missed an easy win with 39.Rxe7 Qg4+ *(not 39...Qxe7 40.Rxe7 Rxe7 41.Qxf6+ and not 39...Rxe7 40.gxf6+)* 40.Rg2 Qf5 41.Qxf6+ Qxf6 42.gxf6+ Kxf6 43.Re6+ Kf5 44.Rxd6+-.

39...exf6 40.Qb6 Rh4 41.Qxd6 Qc8 42.Rh2

Because I am up a pawn I just wanted to simplify the position as much as possible.

42...Rxh2 43.Kxh2 Qh8+ 44.Kg2 Qh5 45.Re7 Qg4+ 46.Kf2 Qh4+ 47.Ke2 Qh2+ 48.Kd3 Qg3+ 49.Kc2 Qf2+ 50.Kc3 a5



51.Qe6

White should advance the d-pawn: 51.Rxf7+! Kxf7 52.Qe6+ Kg7 53.d6+-.

51...Qf3+ 52.Qe3 Qd1 53.Rxf7+ Kxf7

White can now win easily by playing basically any move other than what I played in this position.

For example, after 54.Qe6 Kg7 White can, as before, just play 55.d6 and easily promote the d-pawn. It could continue 55...Qf3+ 56.Kd4

Please turn to page 58, **MDC**.

Kretchetov and Landaw Qualify in SCCF Candidates

Monterey Park, June 1-2, 2013

FMs Alexander Kretchetov and Julian Landaw qualified for the 25th SCCF State Championship in the SCCF Candidates tournament. Kretchetov, Landaw, and FM Eugene Yanayt all scored 3-1, with Kretchetov, who scored two wins the first day and two draws the second, having the top tiebreaker. Landaw defeated Yanayt in a playoff game to earn the eighth and final spot in the finals. Yanayt, the only player in the tournament with three wins, lost only to Kretchetov in the second round. The 16-player field included eight masters and one IM. All had earned places in this tournament by placing high enough in SCCF qualifying tournaments in the previous year.

The time limit was 90 minutes for 40 moves and 30 minutes for the rest of the game, with an increment of 30 seconds per move starting from the first move. The tournament was held at Chess Headquarters, 443 W. Garvey Avenue, Monterey Park, with Randall Hough directing.

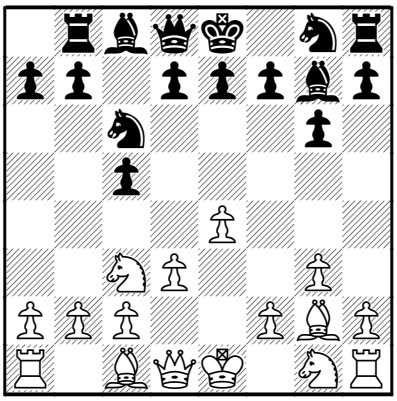
A wild game by Julian Landaw follows! -Ed.

Julian Landaw (2370) -
Austin Hughes (2156)
SCCF Candidates
Monterey Park 01.06.2013
Notes by FM Julian Landaw.

1.e4 c5 2.Nc3 Nc6 3.g3

My favorite Closed Sicilian!

3...g6 4.Bg2 Bg7 5.d3 Rb8

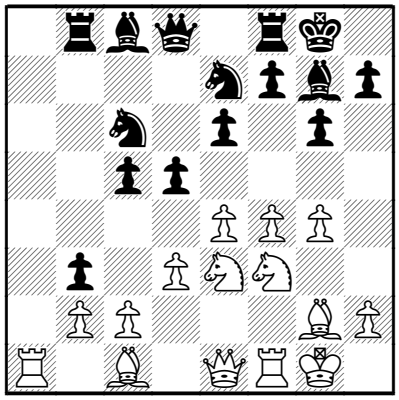


Preparing a rapid expansion on the Queenside. Other common moves are ...d6, ...e6, and ...Nf6.

6.f4 b5 7.a3 a5 8.Nf3 b4 9.axb4 axb4 10.Nd5 e6 11.Ne3 d5 12.O-O Nge7 13.g4

While Black plays on the Queenside, and White plays on the Kingside.

13...O-O 14.Qe1 b3!



15.g5?!

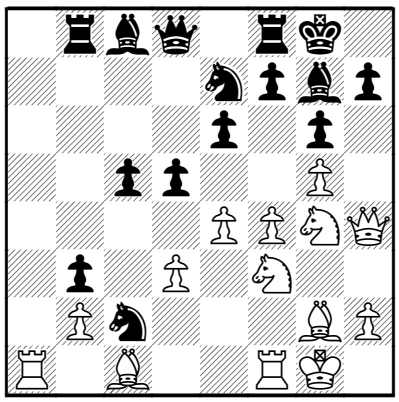
Rather than defending the Queenside, White ignores Black's threats and continues with the Kingside attack. This turns out not to be accurate for me, but fortunately it works out in the game.

Instead, 15.c3 d4 16.cxd4 Nxd4 17.e5 Bb7 leaves chances for both sides, though Black is slightly better.

15...Nd4 16.Ng4?

Once again, ignoring what is occurring on the Queenside and allowing Black a free Rook!

16...Nxc2 17.Qh4



17...Nxa1?

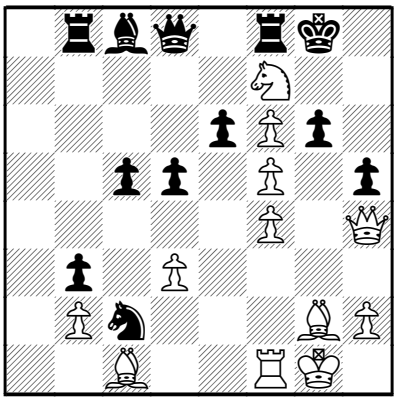
Before snapping the Rook off, Black should have first opened the d-file (and the fourth rank!): 17...dxe4! 18.dxe4 Nxa1 19.Nf6+ Bxf6 20.gxf6 Nc6! 21.f5!? *(worse is 21.e5 Nd4 22.Bh3 Kh8 23.Qh6 Nxf3+ 24.Rxf3 Rg8 25.Bf1 Qf8 when Black has neutralized White's attack and is simply up a Rook)* 21...exf5 22.e5 Nxe5 23.Nxe5 Rb4! 24.Qg3 Nc2, and Black is up the Exchange and is much better.

18.Nf6+ Bxf6 19.gxf6 Nf5

If 19...Re8, then 20.f5!? Nxf5 *(not 20...exf5?? 21.Qh6)* 21.exf5 exf5 22.Bf4 Rb6 23.Rxa1 Qxf6 24.Qxf6 Rxf6 25.Rc1 leaves Black probably better in an interesting endgame.

20.exf5 exf5

In the game I thought Black should have ignored capturing the pawn and played 20...Nc2, and surprisingly there is a drawing continuation in which both White and Black must play extremely accurately: 21.Ng5 h5 22.Nxf7!



Please turn to page 45, **Candidates**.

IM Andranik Matikozyan Wins 4th SCCF Title

June 20-23, 2013

IM Andranik Matikozyan won the 25th SCCF State Championship with a score of 5-2, just ahead of two-time winner GM Melikset Khachiyan, who trailed by half a point. Third was four-time winner GM Enrico Sevillano with 4-3. Tied for fourth at 3½-3½ were FMs Alexander Kretchetov and Julian Landaw, who both qualified from the SCCF Candidates tournament held three weeks earlier. It was Landaw's third trip to this championship, having played in 2007 and also in 2008, the year he won the U.S. Open Blitz tournament in Dallas. Kretchetov, who placed first in 2008, won the prize for the best game of the tournament for his victory against Sevillano.

Finishing sixth with 3-4 was IM Roman Yankovsky, who won the title in 2011. FM John Daniel Bryant, in his second time in the finals, scored 2½-4½ and was seventh. IM Dionisio Aldama, in his first time, scored 2-5 and placed eighth.

We would like to thank Jack Peters and especially Randy Hough, whose leadership and work made the tournament possible. At a discouraging time, Jack stepped in and helped greatly in the fund raising. The previous year's SCCF champion had always been invited, but for 2013, Peters decided to organize the tournament instead. Randy volunteered his services as TD for both the Candidates and the Championship, as has done many times.

Thanks again for your help, Jack and Randy, we appreciate it!

Also, thanks to Chris Roberts, who ran the ICC relay which broadcast the games live on the web. He also provided the state championship pages at the SCCF website, with the crosstable, the moves of each game, and photos and bios of all the players.

We present four games from the tournament. The first is a Kan Sicilian in which Matikozyan commits to the attack with 10.Bg5 and the key clearance idea of 14.e5!.

With 12.d5, Yankovsky changes the game from a double King's pawn opening with King's Bishop on c4 to a closed King's Indian position with more space and a g2-to-d5 pawn chain. I have always wondered what to do next. We get to see one answer in this game, which has many phases.

In the next game, Landaw strikes when the Black King does not castle soon enough. See Outside Shots no. 2 for a preview.

The final game does both players credit, Kretchetov for his attacking play, and Sevillano for his tenacity in difficult positions. Be sure to get out your chess board and men to play over these games! -Ed.

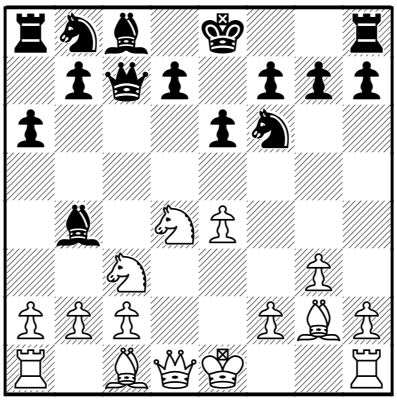
Round by Round Pairings, Colors, Scores, and Leaders	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1 Andranik Matikozyan	B4	W6	W8	B7	W5	B2	W3
2553	½	**1½**	**2½**	**3½**	**4**	**4½**	**5**
2 Melikset Khachiyan	W5	B8	B3	W4	B6	W1	B7
2600	½	**1½**	2	3	3½	4	4½
3 Enrico Sevillano	W7	B5	W2	B8	B4	W6	B1
2558	½	**1½**	2	3	3	3½	4
4 Alexander Kretchetov	W1	B7	W5	B2	W3	B8	B6
2398	½	½	½	½	1½	2½	3½
5 Julian Landaw	B2	W3	B4	W6	B1	W7	W8
2393	½	½	1½	1½	2	2½	3½
6 Roman Yankovsky	W8	B1	W7	B5	W2	B3	W4
2322	0	0	1	2	2½	3	3
7 John Daniel Bryant	B3	W4	B6	W1	W8	B5	W2
2527	½	1½	1½	1½	1½	2	2½
8 Dionisio Aldama	B6	W2	B1	W3	B7	W4	B5
2565	**1**	1	1	1	2	2	2

Time control: 40 moves / 90 minutes + SD / 30 minutes + 30 second increment throughout.

Andranik Matikozyan (2553) - Dionisio Aldama (2565)
[B43] Sicilian Defense
25th SCCF State Championship (3)
Monterey Park 21.06.2013

Notes by IM Andranik Matikozyan.

1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 e6 3.Nc3 a6 4.d4 cxd4 5.Nxd4 Qc7 6.g3 Nf6 7.Bg2 Bb4?!



The idea of this move is to force White to play Nde2 and then move the Bishop back to e7.

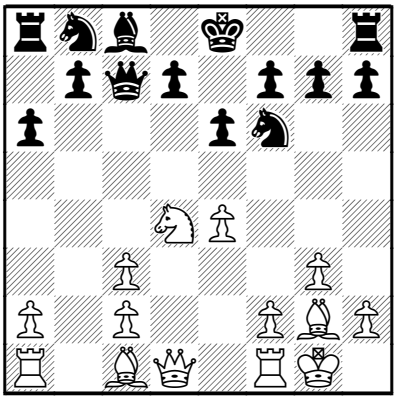
The main line is 7...Be7 8.O-O O-O.

8.O-O!

I checked in the database, in which most of the games White played 8.Nde2 or 8.Bd2, but after

8.O-O, Black must play 8...Bxc3, where White is better, or else Black loses a tempo by moving 8...Be7.

8...Bxc3 9.bxc3



9...O-O

Taking the pawn is dubious: 9... Qxc3?! 10.e5 Qxa1 11.exf6 gxf6 12.Nf5! exf5 13.Re1+ Kd8 14.Be3 Qb2 15.Qd6 Nc6 16.Qxf6+ Qxf6 17.Bb6 mate. A very beautiful finish.

10.Bg5!?

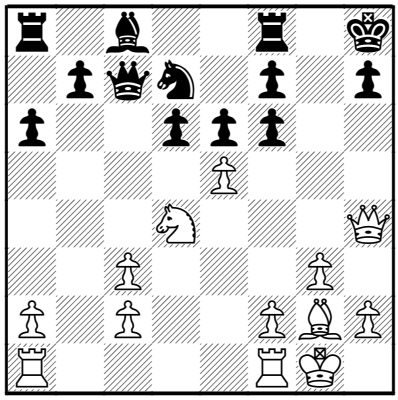
My opponent had achieved this position against Enrico Sevillano in 2012. Here, Enrico played 10.Ba3, another good variation.

I knew about Enrico's game but during the game I liked the move 10.Bg5.

10...d6 11.Bxf6 gxf6 12.Qg4+ Kh8 13.Qh4 Nd7

Not 13...Qe7? 14.e5 dxe5 15.Be4+-.

14.e5!



This is the key move that made me play 10.Bg5.

14...f5

Best was 14...Nxe5 15.Qxf6+ Kg8 16.Rad1±.

Less good is 14...dxe5? 15.Be4 f5 16.Nxf5, for if 16...exf5? then 17.Bxf5+-.

15.exd6 Qxd6 16.Rfe1 Rg8 17.Nf3 Qf8

Not 17...Rg4? 18.Ng5+-.

18.Qd4+

The Queen has finished her work on the Kingside, and now it's time to centralize her.

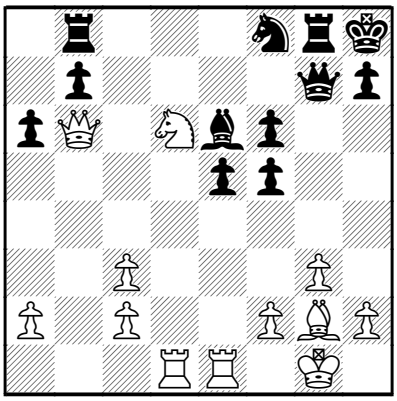
18...Qg7 19.Rad1 Nf8

Not 19...Rb8 20.Qd6 Qxc3 21.Ne5+-.

20.Ne5

Now the Knight is going to land on d6 via c4.

20...f6 21.Nc4 e5 22.Qb6 Be6 23.Nd6 Rb8



24.Bxb7?!

cr

All eight: John Daniel Bryant, Alexander Kretchetov, Julian Landaw, Roman Yankovsky, Dionisio Aldama, Melik Khachiyan, Enrico Sevillano, and 2013 SCCF State Champion Andranik Matikozyan.

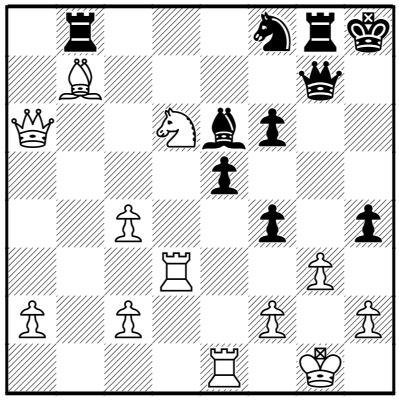
This move allows Black to have counterplay on the Kingside.

Better was 24.Bh3! Qg6 25.Qc7 Nd7 26.Bxf5 Bxf5 27.Nxf5 Qxf5 28.Rxd7 Qxc2 29.Rxe5+-.

24...f4 25.Qxa6 h5 26.Rd3

Interesting was 26.Bd5!? trying to exchange Bishops to weaken Black's attack. 26...Bxd5 27.Rxd5 h4 28.Rd3±.

26...h4 27.c4



In this complicated position, I had 17 minutes to Aldama's 40, but he spent over 30 minutes to come up with 27...Nh7, although there are many candidate moves for Black like ...Ng6 or ...Qc7.

27...Nh7

The idea of this move is to activate the Knight via g5 to h3.

28.Ne4

I came up with this move while my opponent was thinking, and played it quickly to save some time for future complications.

Interesting is 28.Bd5!?.

28...Bf5 29.Bd5 Rgf8 30.c5 Bxe4 31.Bxe4 f5

We both had very little time here.

32.Bc6 e4 33.Rd7 Qc3

Better was 33...Qh6! 34.Rd6 Nf6 35.Bd5 hxg3 36.hxg3 fxg3 37.fxg3 Qh3 38.Rxf6 Qxg3+ 39.Kf1 Qf4+ 40.Ke2 *(not 40.Kg2? Qg5+-+)* 40... Qf3+ 41.Kd2 Qf2+ 42.Qe2 Qxe2+ 43.Kxe2 Rxf6 44.c6∞.

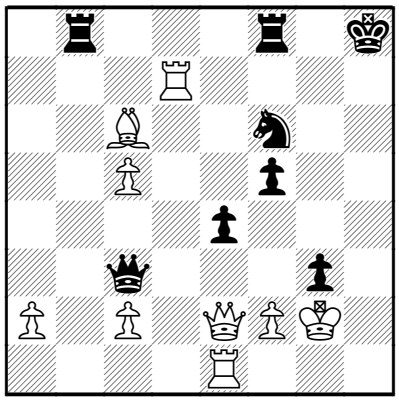
34.Qe2 hxg3 35.hxg3

The Rook sacrifice 35.Rxh7+ Kxh7 36.Qh5+ is just a perpetual: 36...Kg7 37.Qg5+ Kh7 38.Qh5+ Kg7 39.Qg5+ etc.

35...fxg3 36.Kg2!?

Trying to bring the e1 Rook into the attack.

36...Nf6



37.fxg3?!

Better was 37.Rh1+!? Kg8 38.Bd5+ Nxd5 39.Rxd5 gxf2 40.Kxf2 Rb7 41.Rg1+ Rg7 42.Rxg7+ Qxg7 43.Qc4±.

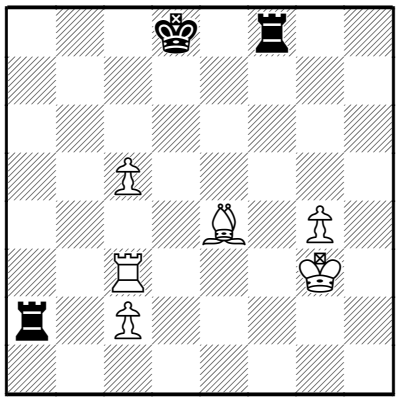
37...Kg8?!

Better was 37...Nxd7!? 38.Bxd7 Kg7 39.Rf1 Rb2 40.Rf2∞.

38.Qe3 Qxe3 39.Rxe3 Nxd7 40.Bxd7 Rb2

The time control is over, and White has good winning chances.

41.Rc3 Kf7 42.Bxf5 Ke7 43.g4 Kd8 44.Bxe4 Rxa2 45.Kg3



During the game, I thought it should be a winning position for White, but when I looked deeper I noticed that it is not that easy.

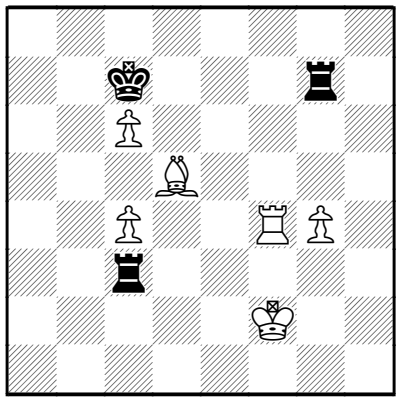
45...Ra4 46.Bc6 Ra5 47.Bf3 Kc7 48.c6

My plan was to put my Bishop on d5 and pawn on c4.

48...Rg8 49.Rc4 Ra3 50.c3 Ra1 51.Rf4 Rc1 52.c4 Rc3 53.Kh4 Rh8+ 54.Kg3

Because we were in time pressure, I repeated moves to gain time from the 30-second increment.

54...Rg8 55.Kf2 Rg7 56.Bd5

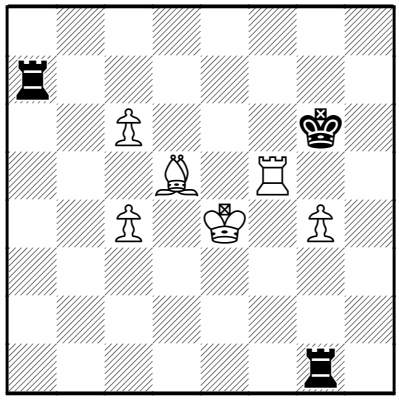


After 20 moves, I got what I wanted.

56...Kd6 57.Rf6+ Ke5 58.Re6+ Kf4

Slightly better was 58...Kd4 59.g5 *(or 59.Re8 and it's not easy for Black to defend)* 59...Rxg5 60.Re4+ Kc5 61.c7 Rf5+ 62.Ke2 Rf8 63.Be6 Kb4 64.Kd2 Rf2+ 65.Ke1 Rf8 with good drawing chances.

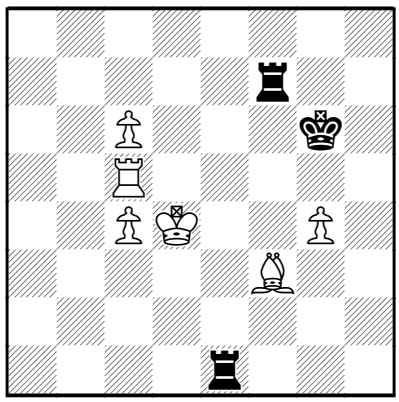
59.Re4+ Kg5 60.Re3 Rc1 61.Kf3 Ra7 62.Re5+ Kf6 63.Rf5+ Kg6 64.Ke4 Rg1



65.Kf4

65.Ke5 Rxg4 66.Rf8 wins easily.

65...Re7 66.Rg5+ Kf6 67.Rf5+ Kg6 68.Bf3 Rc1 69.Rc5 Rf7+ 70.Ke4 Re1+ 71.Kd4?

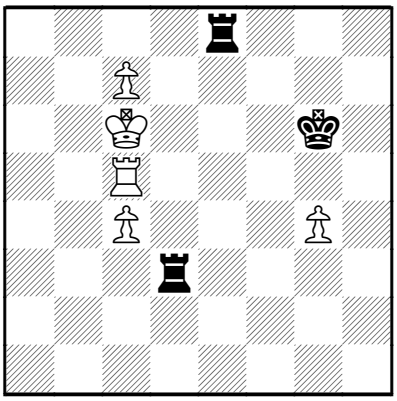


Correct was 71.Kd5+-.

71...Rf4+?

Black has a surprising resource to draw: 71...Rxf3! 72.c7 Rd1+ 73.Ke4 Rff1!! 74.c8Q *(or 74.Rd5 Rde1+ 75.Kd4 Re8=)* 74...Rfe1+ 75.Kf4 Rf1+ 76.Kg3 Rg1+ etc.

72.Kd5 Rxf3 73.c7 Rd3+ 74.Kc6 Re8



75.Rd5 Rc3 76.c5 Kf7 77.Rd7+! Kg6 78.Rd8 Re5 79.Rd5 Re8 80.Kd7 1-0

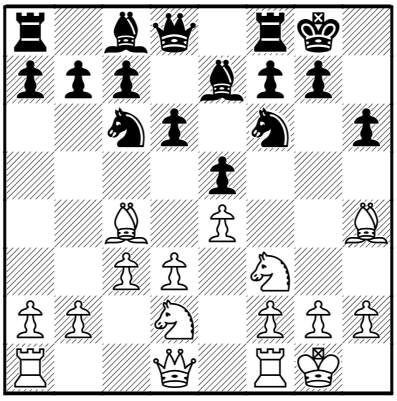
Roman Yankovsky (2546) -
John Daniel Bryant (2552)
[C50] Giuoco Piano
25th SCCF State Championship (3)
Monterey Park 21.06.2013

Notes by IM Roman Yankovsky.

1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bc4 Bc5 4.c3 Nf6 5.d3 O-O 6.Bg5 h6 7.Bh4 Be7

Another possible plan for Black was 7...g5 8.Bg3 d6.

8.Nbd2 d6 9.O-O



9...g5?!

A strange choice. If Black wants to play ...g5, it makes sense to keep the Bishop on the a7-g1 diagonal.

Best was 9...Nh5, trading the bad Bishop on e7. I thought I had 10.Nxe5, but I missed 10...Nxe5 *(10...Bxh4 11.Nxc6 bxc6 12.Qxh5 works for White)* 11.Bxe7 Qxe7 12.Qxh5 Bg4, trapping the Queen. So after 9...Nh5 White should choose 10.Bxe7 Qxe7 without any real advantage.

10.Bg3 Kg7 11.d4

The Bishop on g3 is usually a horrible piece, but this time it manages to put pressure on the e5 pawn.

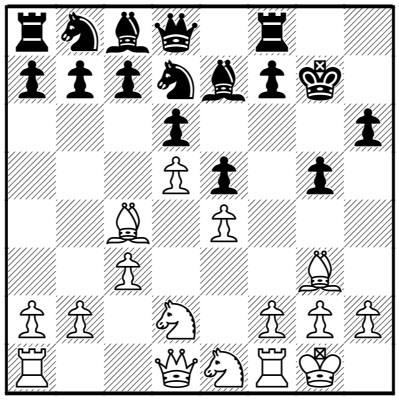
11...Nd7 12.d5

I have transposed to a position similar to King's Indian, where a Black pawn is already on g5, which eliminates the standard plan of ...g6xf5, after ...f5 and exf5.

12...Ncb8 13.Ne1

White needs to be able to free the Bishop with f3.

I considered 13.Be2, after which 13...c6 is easily met with 14.c4, but I was worried about 13...h5.



13...Rh8

Black could have tried to undermine White's center with 13...c6, but after 14.Nc2 Nb6 15.Ne3 cxd5 16.Bxd5 Nxd5 17.Nxd5 Black's light squares seem to be too weak. White also manages to keep control over the d5 square.

I mostly expected 13...Nb6 14.Bd3 f5 15.exf5 Bxf5 *(I forgot about 15...Nxd5 with an unclear position.)* 16.Bxf5 Rxf5 17.c4, followed by Ne1-c2-e3 and Nd2-e4, where White should be better because of the control over the e4 square.

14.Be2

White moves towards the King's Indian setup Nd3, f3, Bf2. The only thing that I was worried about was the Knight on d2. On c3 (after c4) it would be much better.

14...Nf6 15.c4 Nbd7

Immediate attack with 15...h5 doesn't give Black anything, as after 16.f3 h4 *(16...g4 17.f4)* 17.Bf2, he still needs to bring out his pieces from the Queenside.

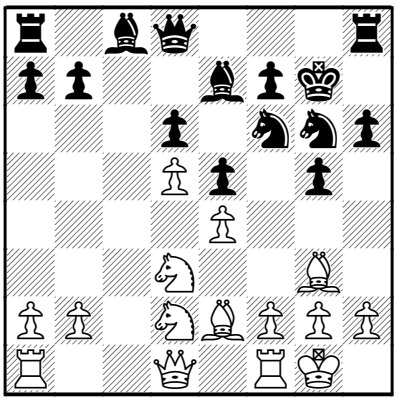
16.Nd3 Nf8 17.c5

17.Nxe5 was tempting, but after 17...dxe5 18.Bxe5 Ng6 19.Bc3 Bd6 White can't even push e5, so Black is almost winning.

17...Ng6 18.cxd6

It wasn't necessary to trade so early: 18.Rc1 might have been better, but I was worried that in case of some complications on the Kingside I wouldn't have had time for this trade.

18...cxd6



19.Rc1

There were plenty of other ideas, like 19.Qa4, 19.Qb3, or 19.Qc2, planning Rc1 and Qc7, but the idea Rc1-

Roman Yankovsky: plenty of ideas.

c3-a3 seemed strongest to me. If Black then plays a6, Nd2-c4-b6 is coming, and in case of b6, White has Nd3-b4-c6.

19...h5

Another option was 19...Nf4 20.Bxf4 gxf4 21.Qb3, but after Bf3 and, if necessary, Ne1, it's almost impossible for Black to get any attack on the Kingside.

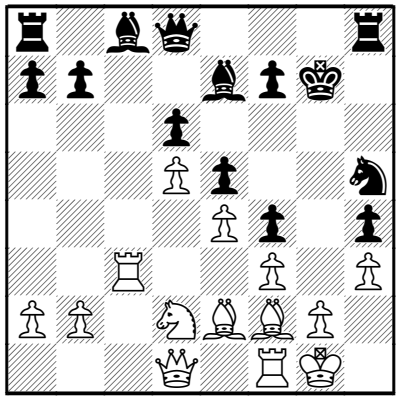
20.f3 h4

20...g4 was possible, but after 21.f4 h4 22.Be1 exf4 23.Nxf4 with Nc4 and Bc3, the Black King is in much bigger trouble than White's. If Black tries to push, then ...g3 is met with h3, and ...h3 is met with g3.

21.Bf2 Nh5 22.Rc3 Ngf4 23.Nxf4 gxf4

23...Nxf4 24.Re1 seems to be safe enough. Now White plays Bf1 and h3, stopping Black's attack. After 24... h3, in the worst case White even has 25.g4.

24.h3



Now it may look like Black has a very dangerous attack on the g2 pawn, but it turns out that there are not enough resources to apply serious pressure. Also, Black's e7 Bishop can't get into the game. If he ever tries Bd8-Bb6, White can stop it with Nc4.

I would have liked to start with 24.Re1, being able to save the Bishop with Bd3 after Black's ...Ng3, but 24... h3 25.g4 fxg3 26.hxg3 h2+ seemed dangerous.

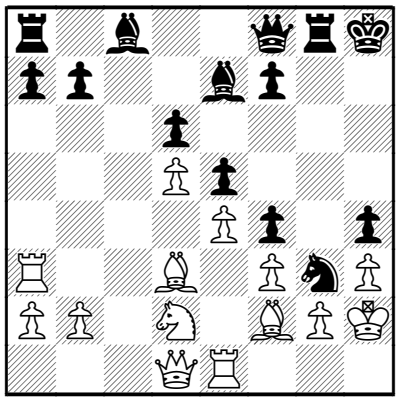
24...Ng3 25.Re1 Rg8

Maybe 25...Nxe2+, trading the Bishop that could go to f1 and protect the g2 pawn, was a better try, but in this case it would be much easier for White to coordinate his pieces: 26.Qxe2 and Rec1, and Black's counterplay is probably going to be late.

26.Bd3

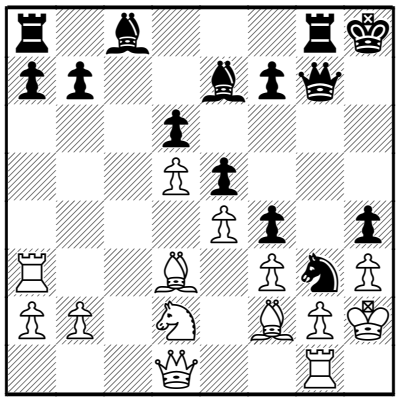
Eliminating the ...Nxe2 option and preparing for ...f5, if Black ever plays it.

26...Kh8 27.Kh2 Qf8 28.Ra3



Finally, White gets time to follow up on the idea of his 22nd move. I also had some thoughts like Qa4 with Bd3-b5-Bd7, but the move in the game seemed to be more convincing.

28...Qg7 29.Rg1



Black has reached the setup he was going for, but now it turns out that there is no way to improve his position. ...Bxh3 is always met with gxh3, and there is no piece that can attack g2 one more time. The only idea, of getting the Rook from a8 to g6, obviously takes too long.

29...Nh5

Tactically, this deals with the attack on a7, but it works only for one move.

However, there was no way to protect the pawn. Against 29...b6 White has 30.Ba6 Bd7 (after the Bishop trade, White gets in through the light squares with Ra6 and Qa4-Qd7) 31.Bb7 Rab8 32.Bc6.

29...a6 doesn't help due to 30.Nc4.

Maybe the best try was 29...f5, but Black is not even threatening anything. White can just take the pawn, since the only forced line - 30.Rxa7 Rxa7 31.Bxa7 fxe4 32.Nxe4 Nxe4 33.fxe4 Qg3+ 34.Kh1 Bxh3 35.Qh5+ Kg7 36.gxh3 - is to White's advantage.

30.Qc2

The White Queen needs to protect the g2 pawn.

Taking now with 30.Rxa7? Rxa7 31.Bxa7 Qg3+ 32.Kh1 Bxh3 is good for Black.

30...Nf6 31.Rxa7

Now the pawn can be taken.

31...Rb8

The line 31...Rxa7 32.Bxa7 Qg3+ 33.Kh1 Bxh3 34.Nf1 - now it's clear why 30.Qc2 was important - 34... Bxg2+ *(if 34...Qg5 then 35.gxh3, and the Rook on g1 is protected by the Bishop on a7)* 35.Qxg2 leaves Black a piece behind.

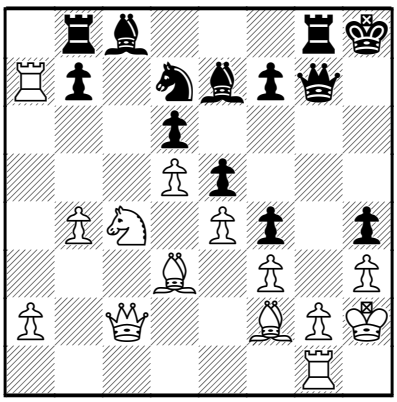
32.Nc4

Forcing 32...Nd7 and locking in the Bishop on c8.

32...Nd7

Otherwise White plays Nb6 and takes on c8, removing the last tactical chances involving ...Bxh3.

33.b4



Surprisingly, I didn't see a simple winning plan, so I started with limiting the Black pieces on the Queenside, and giving extra protection to my King. After 33.b4 the Black Knight can't go to c5.

33...Qg6 34.a4 Bd8 35.a5

Taking the b6 square under control. The Rook on a7 will come into the game later.

35...Qh6 36.Kh1 Rg3

The last chance. Taking the Rook, after 37.Bxg3 hxg3, allows some Knight jumps combined with ...Bxh3.

37.Rc1

Bringing the Rook out. The g2 pawn will now be protected by the Bishop, after Bf1.

37...Nf8 38.Bf1 Nh7 39.Nb6 Bxb6 40.axb6

Freeing the Rook.

40...Bxh3

Otherwise White just plays Qc7, winning the game.

41.gxh3 Ng5

Before Black played 40...Bxh3, I didn't consider the sacrifice seriously, but unexpectedly I had big problems finding a simple win here.

42.Bxg3

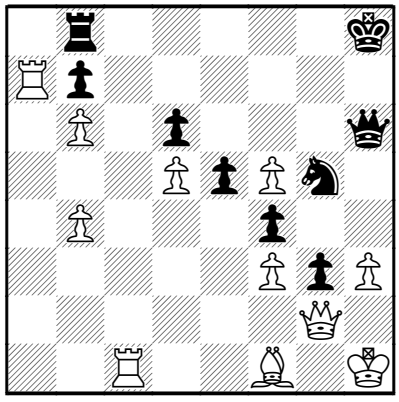
The easiest win could be reached by 42.Qc7 Rg8 43.Bxg3 hxg3 44.Qd7 Nxf3 45.Rc8+-, but I didn't see the idea of bringing the Queen to d7.

42...hxg3 43.Qg2 f5

If Black plays 43...Kg7, trying to get the Rook to the h-file, he doesn't get there in time: 44.Rc7 Rh8 45.Raxb7, and there is nothing Black can do on the Kingside.

43...Qh5 doesn't create a threat - ...Nxf3 can be met with Be2.

44.exf5

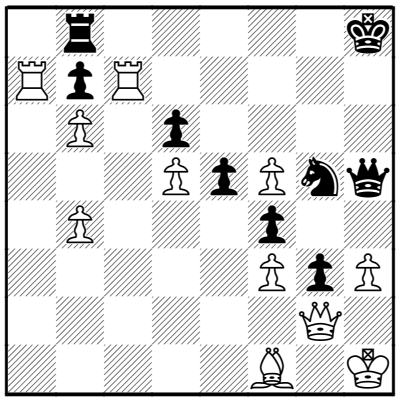


44...Qh5

The main line was 44...e4 45.Rc7 45...exf3 46.Qb2+ Kg8 47.Raxb7 Rxb7 48.Rxb7 g2+ *(after 48...Nxh3 49.Qg7+ Qxg7 50.Rxg7+ Kxg7 51.Bxh3, the b-pawn promotes)* 49.Bxg2 fxg2+ 50.Qxg2, and White is winning here. However, that was something Black could go for, because even here after 50...Qh4 the win is not so obvious. Of course, the computer gives several forced wins, but it would still be necessary to concentrate and find one.

The computer gives 44...e4 45.fxe4 f3 46.Qxg3 Nxe4 47.Qe1, but I was worried about 47...Qf4 with threats of ...f3-f2 and ...Ng3+. I missed 48.Rc4 Ng3+ 49.Kg1, when Black has no follow-up.

45.Rc7 1-0



Black resigned here. Several possibilities were:

45...Nxf3 46.Be2 e4 47.Bxf3 Qxf3 *(47...exf3 48.Qb2+ is a mate)* 48.Qxf3 exf3 49.Raxb7+-;

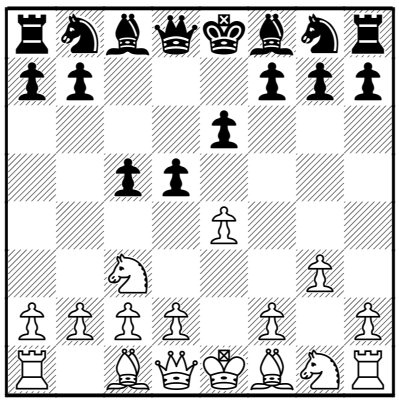
45...e4 46.Qb2+ Kg8 47.Qg7 mate;

and if 45...Kg8 then 46.Raxb7 Rxb7 47.Rxb7 e4 48.Qc2 is a simple win.

Julian Landaw (2393) -
Dionisio Aldama (2565)
[B23] Sicilian Defense
25th SCCF State Championship (7)
Monterey Park 23.06.2013

Notes by IM Jack Peters.

1.e4 c5 2.Nc3 e6 3.g3 d5



Avoiding the most common variations of the Closed Sicilian.

4.Bg2 Nf6

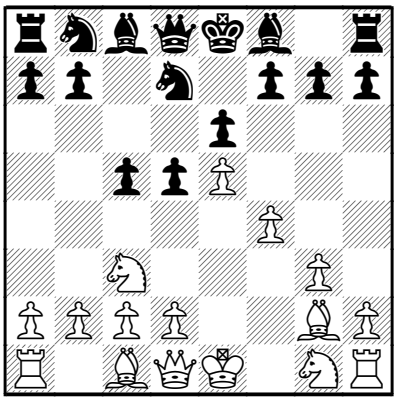
After 4...d4 5.Nce2 e5 6.d3 Nc6 7.f4 Bd6, the position resembles a King's Indian Defense with colors reversed.

5.e5

More ambitious than 5.d3=.

Not recommended is 5.exd5 exd5 6.d4?! because 6...cxd4 7.Qxd4 Nc6 8.Qa4 Bd7 leaves White's Queen precariously placed.

5...Nfd7 6.f4



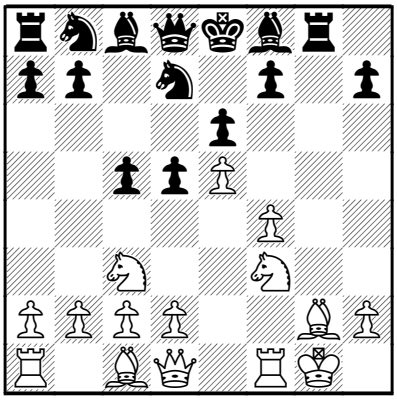
Now the position looks like a French Defense, but without a White pawn at d4.

6...g5!?

Borrowing a French Defense idea. Black wants to undermine e5.

If 6...Nc6 7.Nf3 Be7, White could try 8.Ne2 O-O 9.c3 to prepare d2-d4.

7.Nf3 gxf4 8.gxf4 Rg8 9.O-O



Safe enough, despite the open g-file. Chances appear about even.

9...Nc6 10.d3 h6

Perhaps Aldama feared 10...b6 11.Ng5 h6□ 12.Nxe6 fxe6 13.Qh5+ Ke7, when White can force a draw

Julian Landaw: clarifies it.

cr

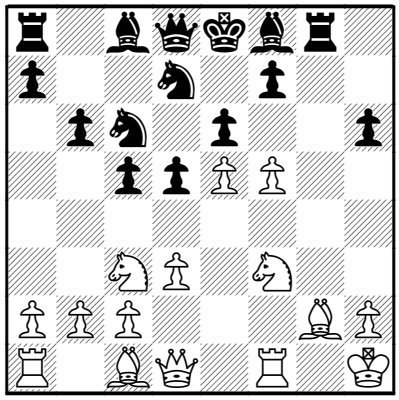
by 14.Nxd5+ exd5 15.Qh4+ Kf7 16.Qh5+ Ke7 *(too dangerous is 16... Kg7? 17.Bxd5→)* 17.Qh4+. White could even try for more with the speculative 14. Nb5!?, which sets up c2-c4.

11.Kh1 b6?!

Black's timing is still off!

Safest is 11...Nb6, supporting d5 and planning to castle Queenside in a few moves.

12.f5!



12...Bb7??

A fatal oversight.

Black must also reject 12...Ndxe5?? 13.Nxe5 Nxe5 because 14.Qh5 Bd6 15.Bf4, intending Ra1-e1, creates deadly threats on the e-file.

But Black does have a defense. He needs his Bishop at e6 to fortify f7. Thus 12...Ndb8! 13.Bf4 exf5 14.Qd2 Be6= should hold.

13.fxe6 fxe6 14.Nd4! Qh4

As good as any.

Black cannot stand 14...Ndxe5 15.Nxe6+-.

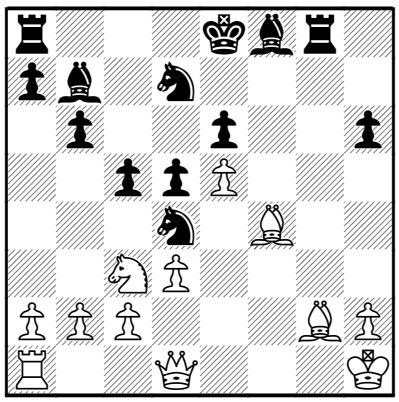
15.Rf4

The complications of 15.Nxe6 Ncxe5 16.Nc7+ Kd8 17.Nxa8 favor White, assuming that he parries the counterattack 17...Bd6 properly by 18.Qe1! Qg4 19.Qe2. Landaw chooses a simpler idea that forces Black to give up his Queen.

15...Qxf4

Black cannot preserve his Queen by 15...Qe7 16.Qh5+ Kd8 17.Rf7 Qe8 because of the devastating 18.Nxe6+! Qxe6 19.Bh3.

16.Bxf4 Nxd4



17.Qh5+

Black has almost enough for the Queen, so White correctly pursues the initiative before Black completes development.

Black would have more hope after 17.Ne2?! Nc6 18.c3 O-O-O±.

17...Kd8 18.Rf1 Be7

Worthless is 18...Nxc2?! 19.Qf7+-.

Or, if Black attempts to connect his Rooks by 18...Kc7?, his King lands on the same diagonal as White's Bishop. White explosively capitalizes on the lineup by 19.Nxd5+! exd5 20.e6+ Bd6 21.Bxd6+ Kxd6 22.exd7, with the deadly threat of 23. Rf6+.

19.Qxh6 a6 20.Bg3

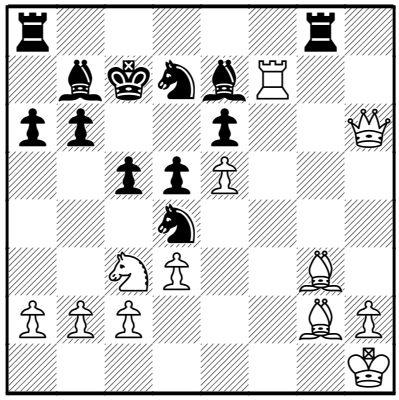
White could destroy e6, the base of Black's pawn chain, by 20.Be3! Nxc2 21.Qxe6 Rg7 22.Bh3 d4+ 23.Ne4+-.

He would have to foresee that 20.Be3! Nf8 fails, to 21.Bxd5! exd5 22.Qxb6+ Kc8 23.Bxd4 cxd4 24.Na4 *(threatening both 25.Nc5 and 25.Rf7)* 24...Nd7 25.Qe6+-.

20...Kc7

If Black had time for ...Ra8-f8, he might survive. But White strikes first.

21.Rf7



21...Rxg3

Black yields more material rather than suffer a discovery from the Bishop after a sacrifice on d5. Two examples are:

21...Bg5 22.Qh7 Rgd8 23.Nxd5+! Bxd5 24.Bxd5 exd5 25.e6+ Kc6 26.Rxd7+-;

and 21...Rae8 22.Bxd5! exd5 *(White refutes 22...Rxg3 23.Bxb7 Nxe5 most convincingly by 24.Rxe7+ Rxe7 25.Qf8! Rgg7 26.Qc8+ Kd6 27.Ne4 mate.)* 23.e6+ Rxg3 24.Qf4+! Kc6 25.exd7+-.

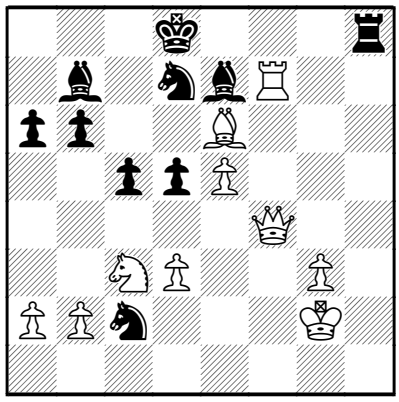
22.hxg3 Re8 23.Qf4

Not merely defending e5. White again threatens a sacrifice at d5.

23...Kd8 24.Bh3! Rh8 25.Kg2 Nxc2

Against other moves, White evicts the Knight by 26.Nd1 and 27.c3.

26.Bxe6

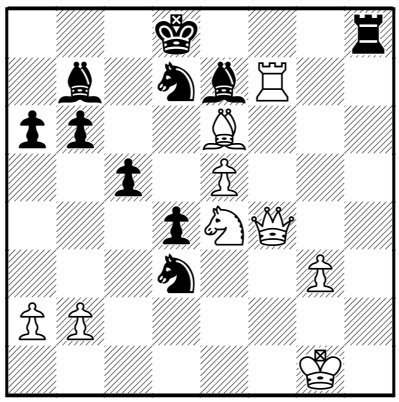


26...d4+

Black loses "only" one piece with 26...Ne1+ 27.Kg1 Nxd3 28.Rxe7!

Nxf4 29.Rxd7+ Ke8 30.gxf4 Bc8 31.Rd6+-.

27.Ne4 Ne1+ 28.Kg1 Nxd3

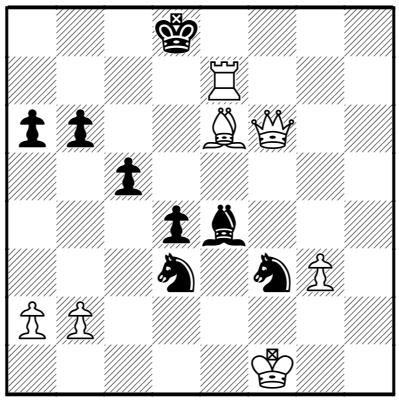


The position looks messy, as Black threatens the Queen, the e-pawn, and possibly h1. But White's next move clears away all confusion.

29.Rxe7! N7xe5

The allegedly best defense, 29... Rh1+ 30.Kxh1 Nxf4 31.Rxd7+ Kc8 *(or 31...Ke8 32.Rxb7+-)* 32.gxf4 Bxe4+ 33.Kg1, costs Black a Rook.

30.Qf6 Rh1+ 31.Kxh1 Bxe4+ 32.Kg1 Nf3+ 33.Kf1 1-0



As promised, the best game prize-winner completes our coverage for this year's championship. -Ed.

Alexander Kretchetov (2398) - Enrico Sevillano (2558)
[A50] English Defense
25th SCCF State Championship (5)
Monterey Park, 22.06.2013
Notes by IM Jack Peters.

1.d4 e6 2.c4 b6 3.a3

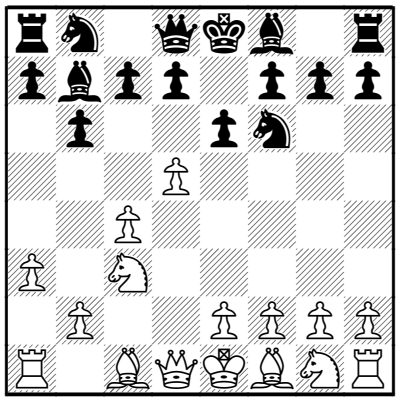
The most popular and best-scoring reply, according to the database.

The direct 3.e4 Bb7 4.Bd3 scores less than 50% when Black risks 4... f5!?

3...Bb7 4.Nc3 Nf6

If Black tries to control e4 by 4... f5, White wins the battle by 5.d5 Nf6 6.g3±.

5.d5



White's fourth pawn move, but the idea is sound. If White maintains a pawn at d5, Black's Bishop at b7 will be blocked and his Knight cannot use c6.

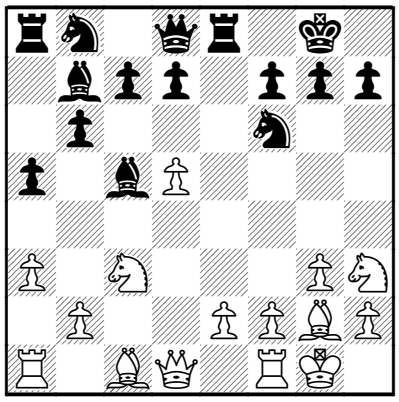
5...exd5

Varuzhan Akobian tried 5...Qe7 against Tim Taylor in the 2002 American Open. Black managed to draw after 6.Bg5 h6 7.Bh4 g5 8.Bg3 exd5 9.cxd5 Bg7 10.f3 Nh5 11.d6 Qe3.

6.cxd5 Bc5

The fashionable variation 6...b5!? intends the risky pawn grab 7.e4 b4 8.axb4 Bxb4 9.Bd3 Qe7 *(also possible is 9...c6⇄)* 10.Nf3 Nxd5 11.O-O⩱.

7.g3 O-O 8.Bg2 Re8 9.Nh3 a5 10.O-O±



White plans to advance his e-pawn, and possibly f2-f4. How will Black obtain counterplay? White

Alexander Kretchetov: best game! cr

would not mind ...c7-c6xd5, which leaves Black with shaky pawns. It seems Black must arrange ...b6-b5-b4 to apply pressure to d5.

10...Na6 11.e4

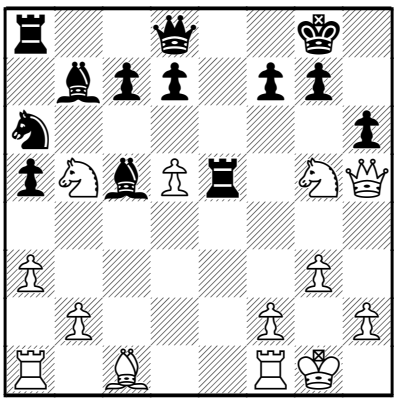
If White feared the reply, he could play more safely with 11.Re1±.

11...b5!?

Houdini regards this as premature and suggests instead 11...d6 12.Re1 Bc8 13.Qc2 Bd7, hoping for a more favorable moment to advance the b-pawn.

12.Re1

A solid reply, but Houdini recommends the unprepossessing 12.Nxb5! Nxe4 13.Bxe4!, not fearing light-square weaknesses. Indeed, the position favors White after 13...Rxe4 14.Ng5 Re5 *(Black cannot stand 14... Re7? 15.Qc2 g6 16.Ne4+-)* 15.Qh5 h6



16.Qxf7+ Kh8 17.Nf3 Rxd5 18.Nc3 Rd6 19.Ne5.

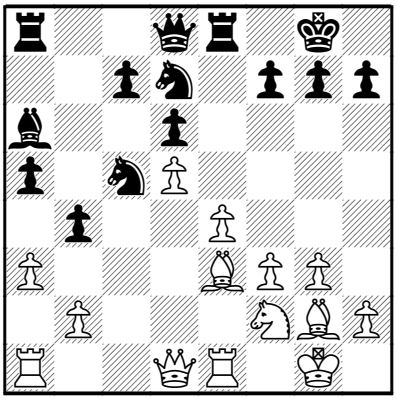
12...b4 13.Na4 d6 14.Nxc5 Nxc5=

Now Black can dream of occupying b3 or d3.

15.f3 Nfd7 16.Be3

This Bishop, which has no Black counterpart, will star in the middlegame drama.

16...Ba6 17.Nf2



17...Qb8?!

The right way to exploit b3 is 17... Bb5! 18.axb4 *(or 18.Bf1 Ba4⇄)* 18... axb4 19.Rxa8 Qxa8 20.Bd4 Qa2⇄.

Note that White can rebuff 17... Bc4 18.Bh3 Nb3? by 19.Bf1! Bxf1 20.Qxb3 Ba6 21.axb4±.

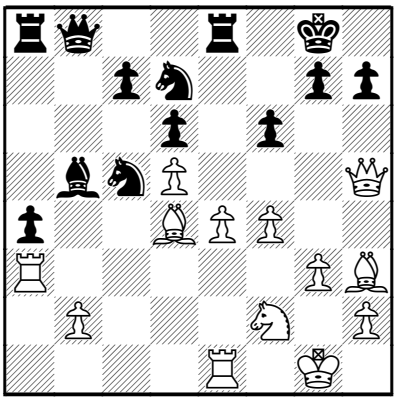
18.Bd4± bxa3

It's too late for 18...Bb5 because 19.a4 Bc4 20.Re3 closes the Queenside.

19.Rxa3 a4 20.f4 f6

Creating a hole at e6, but Black must restrain e4-e5.

21.Bh3 Bb5 22.Qh5!



Beginning the attack that earned Kretchetov the best game prize.

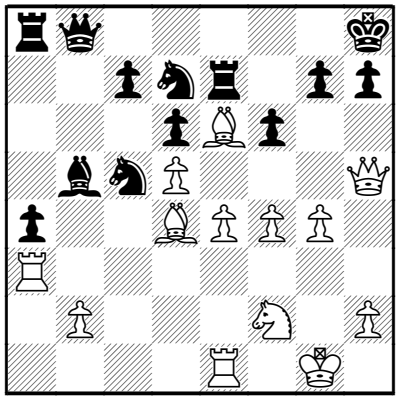
22...Re7 23.Be6+!

Also very strong is 23.Bf5 g6 24.Qg4±.

23...Kh8

After 23...Nxe6 24.dxe6 Nf8 *(not 24...Rxe6?? 25.Qd5 Nf8 26.f5 c6 27.Qa2+-)* 25.f5± Black's Knight is stuck at f8. Eventually he will have to sacrifice it for two pawns. In the meantime, White could keep pressing on the Kingside by g3-g4-g5 or go after the a-pawn by Re1-a1 and Nf2-d1-c3.

24.g4!



Threatening mate in four, starting with 25.Qxh7+.

24...Nxe6?!

Not much better is 24...Rxe6 25.dxe6 Nxe6 26.Rh3 Ndf8 *(or 26...Nef8 27.g5+-)* 27.Be3, as White still intends a dark-square breakthrough with f4-f5 and g4-g5. Black can delay it only briefly by 27...Be8 28.Qd5 Bf7 29.Qd2±.

Black should block the Rook's access to h3 by 24...Nb3 although 25.Bc3 Qa7 26.g5 fxg5 27.Qxg5 Rae8 28.f5 still appears unanswerable.

25.dxe6 Rxe6

The "improvement" 25...Nf8 26.f5± will not save Black.

26.Rh3 Nf8

Maybe Black can stand 26... h6 27.g5?! Qe8. But 26...h6 27.Qd5! Re7 28.g5 ensures a decisive breakthrough.

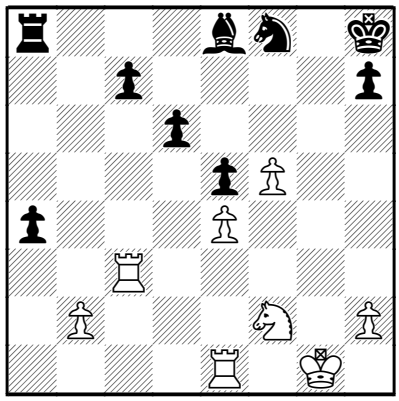
27.f5 Be8 28.Qh4 Re5 29.g5!+-

Continuing to assault the dark squares. White need not rush to trade his mighty Bishop for Black's Rook.

29...Qd8 30.gxf6 Qxf6

Even worse is 30...gxf6 31.Ng4, as Black loses the f-pawn and the exchange.

31.Qxf6 gxf6 32.Bxe5 fxe5 33.Rc3

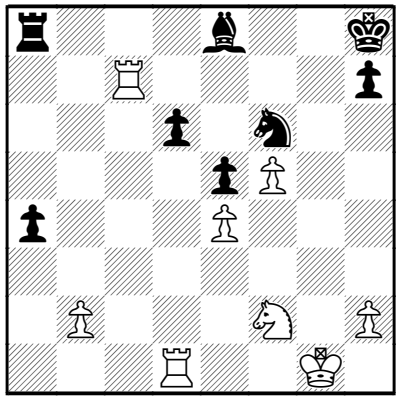


Clinching victory, as Black must cede another pawn.

33...Nd7

Or 33...c6 34.Rd3+-.

34.Rxc7 Nf6 35.Rd1



35...Bb5

Sevillano does not give up easily! He hopes for 36... Rg8+ 37. Kh1 Be2, threatening mate.

Against 35...Rd8, the cautious 36.Rd2 Bb5 37.Kg2 lets White refute 37...d5 by 38.Rf7.

Black could gain a pawn momentarily by 35...Bh5 36.Rd2 *(not 36.Rxd6? Ne8)* 36...Bf3 37.Rf7 Nxe4 38.Nxe4 Bxe4 but 39.Rxd6 recovers it while setting up 40.Rdd7.

36.h3 Be2 37.Re1 Bh5

A bit tougher is 37...Rg8+ 38.Kh2 Bf3 but White wins anyway with 39.Rg1! Rxg1 40.Kxg1 Nxe4 41.Nxe4 Bxe4 42.f6 Kg8 43.Kf2. Black cannot hang on to all of his pawns.

38.Re3 Rb8 39.Rd3

39...Rxb2

The endgame reached by 39... Ne8 40.Ra7 Rxb2 41.Rxa4 Rb7 offers Black no real hope. White could seize the seventh rank by 42.Rda3 and Ra4-a7.

40.Rxd6

White won material in the middlegame with a mating attack, and he repeats the strategy to finish the game elegantly.

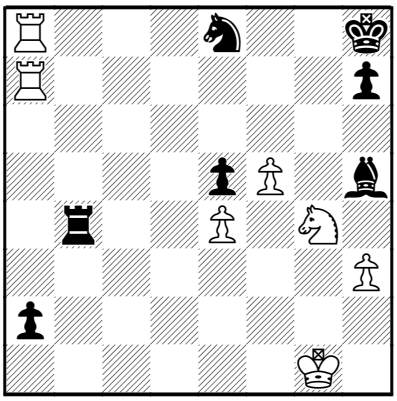
40...Ne8 41.Rd8 a3 42.Ra7

Not falling for 42.Re7?? a2 43.Rdxe8+ Bxe8 44.Rxe8+ Kg7 45.Ra8 Rb1+ 46.Kg2 a1Q.

42...a2 43.Rda8 Rb4

The a-pawn falls, as 43...Bf7 allows 44.Rxf7 Rb1+ 45.Kg2 a1Q 46.Rxe8 mate.

44.Ng4!

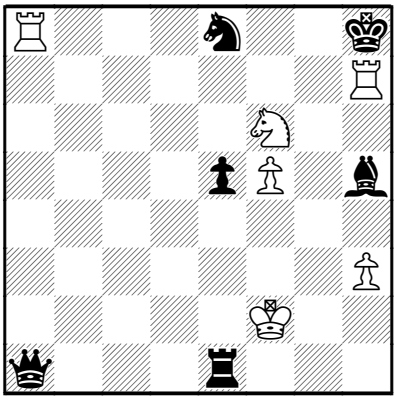


44...Rxe4

When there is no defense, play the most aggressive move and hope that the opponent goes wrong.

Black can eliminate White's Knight only by 44...Rb1+ 45.Kf2 a1Q 46.Rxa1 Rxa1 47.Rxa1 Bxg4, but 48.hxg4 Nf6 49.Kf3 isn't worth continuing.

45.Nf6 Re1+ 46.Kf2 a1Q 47.Rxh7 mate



The defender, too, deserves credit in this battle. We hope you have enjoyed these games, and please consider supporting this event next year! -Ed. ♜

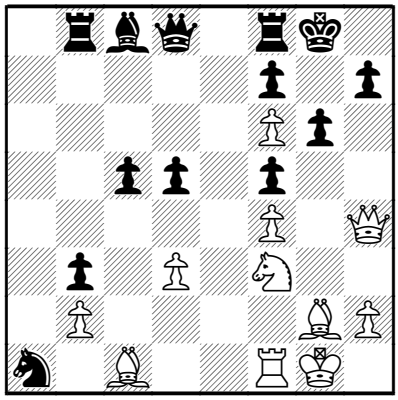
Candidates, continued from page 35.

Not 22...Kxf7?? 23.fxg6+ Kxg6 24.f5+ because 24...exf5 leads to mate with 25.Qg5+ Kf7 26.Bxd5+ Ke8 *(or 26...Qxd5 27.Qg7+ Ke6 28.Qe7 mate).*

Also losing after 22...Kxf7?? 23.fxg6+ Kxg6 24.f5+ is 24...Kf7 25.Qxh5+ Kxf6 26.Bg5++-.

Necessary is 22...Rxf7□ 23.fxg6□ Rxf6 24.f5! c4= 25.Bg5 Qb6+ 26.Kh1 Rxf5 27.Qxh5 Rb7 28.g7! Rxf1+ 29.Bxf1 Kxg7 *(also drawing is 29...Rxg7 30.Qe8+ Kh7 31.Qh5+ Kg8)* 30.Bh6+ Kg8 31.Qg6+ Kh8 32.Bg5 Qa7 33.Bf6+ Rg7 34.Qe8+ Kh7 35.Qh5+ Kg8 36.Qe8+ with perpetual check.

Back to the game:



21.Be3! d4 22.Bd2

White has provoked Black to play ...d4 before playing Bd2. Now the a8-h1 diagonal is open, and there are dual threats of Rxa1 and Ba5.

22...Nc2?

Black should have bitten the bullet and played 22...Qd6 23.Rxa1 Rb6, when White has the generally favorable material imbalance of two minor pieces for a Rook, though Black should have decent chances to hold.

23.Ba5!

Now White is doing very well and is nearly winning.

23...Rb6 24.Bxb6?

The simple 24.Qh6 Qxf6 25.Bxb6 wins a piece, since 25...Qxb6 26.Ng5 is an unstoppable mate. I really have no explanation why I missed this!

24...Qxb6 25.Ne5 Ne3 26.Nc6! h5

It's mate after 26...Nxf1?? 27.Qh6.

27.Bf3! Ng4?

Better was 27...Re8, when after 28.Ne7+ Rxe7 29.fxe7 Bd7 Black has stopped White's attack and has a very strong Knight on e3, despite being down the Exchange for two pawns.

Not 27...Nxf1?? 28.Ne7+ Kh8 29.Bxh5.

28.h3?

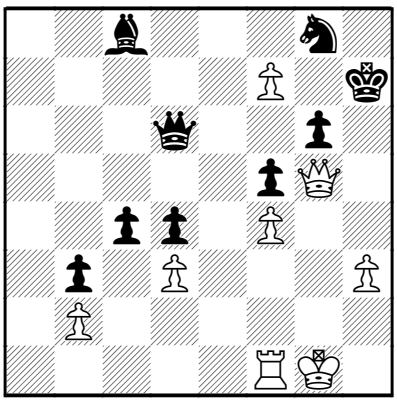
Winning much faster was 28.Ne7+ Kh7 29.Bxg4 fxg4 30.Re1! threatening 31.Re5 followed by 32.Rxh5+ gxh5 33.Qxh5 mate. Black must give up decisive material with, for example, 30...Qa7 *(White is a Rook up after 30...Re8 31.Re5 Rxe7 32.fxe7 Bd7 33.e8Q Bxe8 34.Rxe8)* 31.Nxg6! fxg6 32.Re7+ Qxe7 33.fxe7 and White has a Queen for Rook, Bishop, and pawn, but the position heavily favors the Queen.

28...Nh6 29.Ne7+ Kh7 30.Bxh5! c4?

Not 30...gxh5?? 31.Qg5 because Black must give up the Queen with 31...Qxf6 to avoid immediate mate.

Better was 30...Qd8 31.Qg5 Rg8 32.Bf3 Be6 33.Nxg8 Qxg8, but it's also pretty miserable for Black.

31.Qg5 Rg8 32.Nxg8 Nxg8 33.Bxg6+! fxg6 34.f7 Qd6



35.Re1!

35.fxg8Q+? Kxg8 36.dxc4 d3 is also good for White, but the move played in the game is much better.

35...Be6

This allows a fun finish, but there was no way out:

35...Kg7 36.fxg8Q+ Kxg8 37.Re8+ Kf7 38.Rxc8;

35...Nf6 36.Re8; and finally

35...Nh6 36.Re7 Kg7 37.Qxh6+! Kxh6 38.f8Q+ Kh5 39.Rh7 mate.

36.Rxe6 Qxe6 37.f8N+ 1-0 ♖

IMs Ronchetti and Matikozyan Tie for First in 53rd Pacific Southwest Open

Los Angeles, July 5-7, 2013

IM **Andranik Matikozyan and Italy's IM Niccolo' Ronchetti** scored 5-1 to tie for first in the 53rd Pacific Southwest Open. Four players tied for third in the 52-player section with 4½-1½: FM Joel Banawa, Kyron Griffith, FM Alisa Melekhina, and Jonathan Homidan. Melekhina has played in the U.S. Women's Championship five times, in 2007 and 2009-2012.

Jonathan Homidan gained 85 points and raised his rating above 2200 for the first time, to 2279. Just two weeks later, at the Pacific Coast Open, he defeated GM Ehsan Ghaem Maghami of Iran and IM Roman Yankovsky, and drew with Matikozyan and GMs Gareev and Sevillano, raising his rating to 2364. His last rated loss (his two losses in April's Master Junior Simul were not rated) was in the first round of the U2200 section at the American Open, way back in 2011. He won his next five games there, and in the twenty months since then, he has played just 31 rated games, extending his unbeaten streak to 36, including 12 draws. It's a remarkable record, certain to attract attention!

Shyam Gandhi and Alex Lin topped the U2000 section with 5-1, and Richard Peterson took the U1800 section with the same score. Callaghan McCarty-Snead and Gino Zie with 6-0 swept the U1600 and the U1400 sections respectively. The U2000, U1800, U1600 and U1400 sections attracted 32, 16, 20 and 20 players, respectively.

In the Saturday PSO Scholastic, Jack Easton swept the 14-player Open, and Achintya Gupta swept the 23-player Reserve, both scoring 5-0.

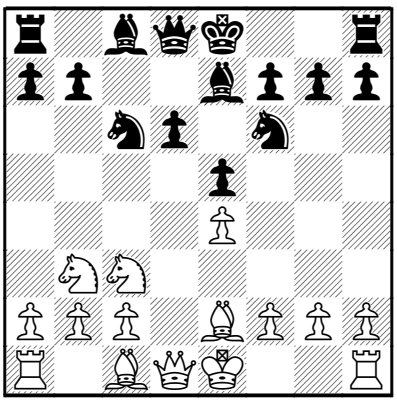
The tournament was directed by Ankit Gupta, assisted by Alejandro Ruiz, and was hosted by the Radisson LAX.

We present a fierce battle between IM Jack Peters and Varun Krishnan, who both provided notes.

Jack Peters (2360)
Varun Krishnan (2346)
[B59] Sicilian Defense
Pacific Southwest Open (5)
Los Angeles, 07.07.2013

Notes by IM Jack Peters and Varun Krishnan.

1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Nc3 d6 4.d4 cxd4 5.Nxd4 Nf6 6.Be2 e5 7.Nb3 Be7



Jack: The Boleslavsky System. I've played the Black side more often than the White side.

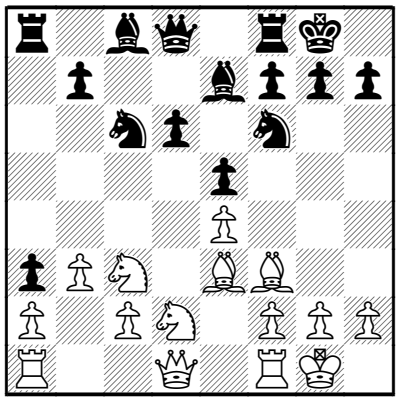
8.O-O O-O 9.Be3 a5 10.Bf3

Jack: Unusual.

Varun: Very interesting. I had never seen this move before but couldn't find any obvious refutation over the board.

Jack: I wanted to avoid 10.a4 because Black gets a handy outpost for a Knight at b4.

10...a4 11.Nd2 a3 12.b3



12...Nb4

Jack: Black takes b4 anyway! I felt that Black had easily equalized, but Houdini claims White has a tangible advantage of .45 pawns.

If 12...Be6, White fares poorly with 13.Nd5? Bxd5 14.exd5 Nb4 15.c4 Nd7∓ because Black's hold on the dark squares b4 and c5 immobilizes White's Queenside majority. Black can make progress on the Kingside with ...f7-f5 or ...Be7-g5.

But 12...Be6 13.Nb5, intending c2-c4, improves. If Black opens the center with 13...d5 14.exd5 Nxd5 then White's pieces come to life by 15.Bxd5! Bxd5 16.c4 Be6 17.Ne4±.

13.Nc4 Ra6

Jack: This involves a pawn sacrifice.

Varun: This move is fine, but Black must have the right response planned against Bc1 (and I didn't). In lieu of that, 13...Be6 was a much better try, with a placid but relatively solid position. (I say relatively solid because in the Sicilian no position is solid!)

Jack: I expected 13...Be6 14.Nb6 Ra6.

I assumed 15.Nca4!? d5 would suit Black, but 16.exd5 Nfxd5 17.Nxd5 Nxd5 *(or 17...Bxd5 18.c3±)* 18.Bc5 may keep a tiny advantage.

And 15.Ncd5 Bxd5 16.Nxd5 Nbxd5 17.exd5 Nd7 seems about even.

14.Bc1

Jack: I didn't see anything better than snatching a pawn. I had already used 44 minutes, and I was not comfortable with my position.

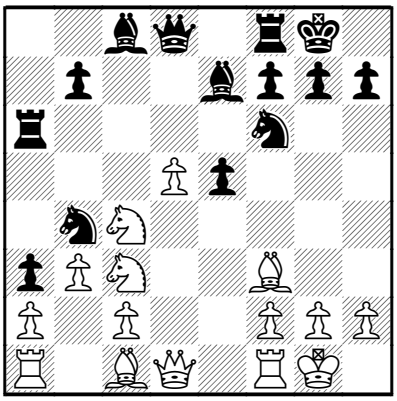
14...d5

Jack: This still looks dubious to me. I recognize the logic - while White ignores development to grab a pawn, Black cracks open the center and activates most of his pieces.

Jack: I spent some time looking at 14...Be6 15.Nxa3 Qa8?! 16.Nab5 *(Houdini prefers 16.Ncb5 Rc8 17.c4)* 16...Nxa2 but missed the sharp reply 17.Na4! Nxc1 18.Nc7±.

Jack: Probably Black can improve with 14...Be6 15.Nxa3 Qc8!? 16.Ncb5 d5⇄.

15.exd5



15...Bf5?

Varun: This is the wrong move order, simply because it allows White to play 16.d6, which I had underestimated.

Still clearly better for White is 15...Bc5! 16.Bxa3 *(16.Nxa3 Bf5 transposes to the game, which is very playable for Black).*

16.Nxa3

Jack: I spent 13 minutes on this move and 10 minutes on White's next move, although I anticipated Black's reply. To say I was unsure would be an understatement!

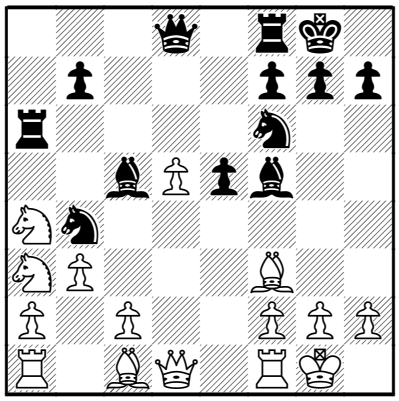
I barely considered 16.d6! because I assumed that 16...Bxd6?? was fine for Black, overlooking the refutation 17.Bxb7+-.

Actually, 16.d6! may be White's strongest choice. If 16...Nxc2 17.dxe7 Qxe7 then 18.Bg5! Nxa1 19.Nd5 Qd7 20.Bxf6 gxf6 21.Qxa1+- looks crushing.

I tried to analyze 16.Ne3 Bg6 but couldn't find an attractive move for White.

Varun: Also clearly better for White is 16.Bxa3 e4 17.Be2 Nfxd5 18.Nxd5 Nxd5 19.Bxe7! The key difference is that White can trade Queens in this line through a Bishop exchange: 19...Nxe7 20.Qxd8 Rxd8.

16...Bc5 17.Na4

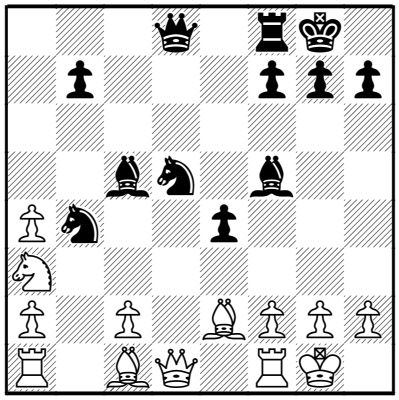


17...Rxa4!

Varun: This is forced, but now White has a very tough time untangling.

Jack: I had foreseen a version of this idea, beginning 17...Bd4 18.c3 Rxa4, and I had planned the refutation 19.bxa4 Bxc3 20.Bd2!+-. But Varun has a different idea that doesn't let White simplify.

18.bxa4 e4 19.Be2 Nfxd5



Jack: Houdini claims a decisive White advantage of more than two pawns, which agrees with my in-game assessment. I figured that a couple of accurate moves would kill Black's threats and leave White with an enormous advantage in material.

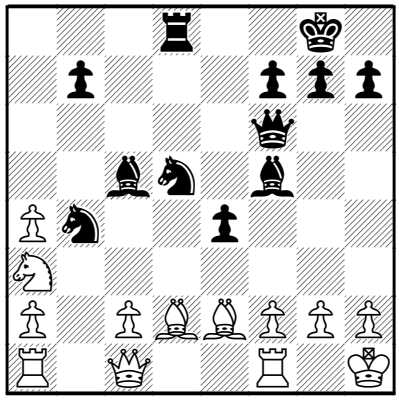
Now I realize that I tragically underestimated the value of Black's active pieces. I'm consoled by the fact that Houdini was also completely wrong.

Varun: It's important to note that even though Black is an Exchange and a pawn down, he has no intention of regaining the material anytime soon. As long as Queens are on the board, Black is technically one pawn up (The Queenside pawns are virtually meaningless) and Black's Bishops are biting down on juicy targets.

20.Bd2 Qf6 21.Kh1

Jack: White's last two moves seem reasonable. However, I consumed 10 and 19 minutes on them, leaving me only 22 minutes to reach move 40. My optimism began to fade.

21...Rd8 22.Qc1!



Varun: This is the most efficient way for White to play; a tough defensive minded move which simultaneously defends the Knight, threatens Bg5, and protects c3 after a potential c4.

22...h6

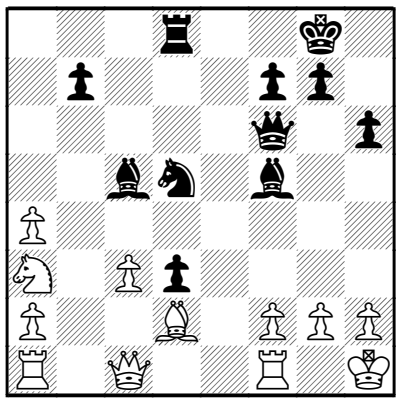
Varun: There is no rush to do anything; Black should play as if he's not down material.

23.c3?

Jack: Definitely a mistake.

Much stronger is 23.c4! making Black retreat. After 23...Ne7 24.Bxb4 Bxb4 25.Rb1 Nc6 26.Nb5 Black still has a lot of compensation, but White is not in immediate danger.

23...Nd3 24.Bxd3 exd3



Varun: By this point, even Houdini starts to like Black's position. It's clear that Black's attack will be very dangerous, and I thought that in a practical sense, Black has a huge advantage.

25.Nc4

Jack: I assumed that I could blockade the d-pawn, and I hoped to trade pieces by Nc4-e3. But I did not realize the danger to my poorly-defended Kingside. Although White can stop threats against f2 and g2 by a timely f2-f3, Black's reply reminded me that I must also worry about defending h2.

25...Qh4 26.f4?!

Jack: I abandoned my original intention of 26.Ne3! because I feared 26...Bd6?! 27.g3?? Be4+, when Black wins.

But 26.Ne3! is the right move. White must meet 26...Bd6?! by 27.f4! Be4 *(White can refute 27...Bxf4? by 28.Rxf4 Qxf4 29.Nxd5+-)* 28.Nxd5 Bxd5 29.Qe1 Qh5 30.Qg3±.

Houdini considers 26.Ne3 Bg6 27.Qe1 Re8 the critical line. I think Black has ample compensation because White still cannot free his major pieces.

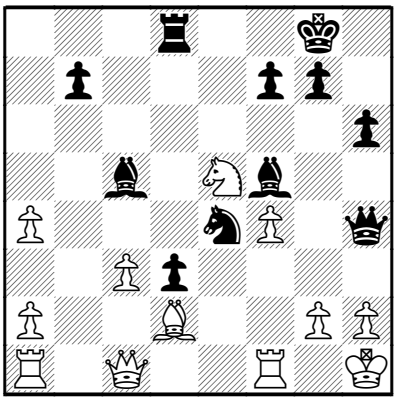
26...Nf6

Varun: The Knight looks great on d5, but now it has a new home where it will be even more deadly: e4.

27.Ne5

Jack: My original intention was 27.Qe1 Qh5 28.Ne5, setting the trap 28...Ne4?? 29.g4+-. But I did not see a good reply to 28... Re8.

27...Ne4



Jack: Only now did I realize that Black was winning.

28.Be1

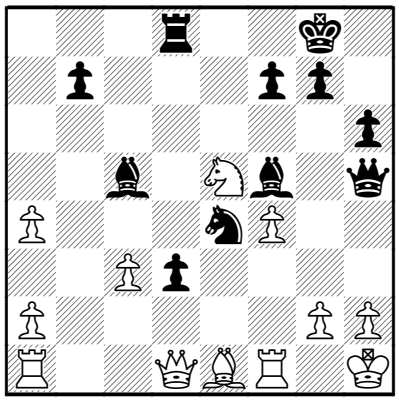
Jack: To slow Black on the Kingside, White must give up the blockade of the d-pawn, creating a new set of problems.

Against 28.Qe1, simply 28... Qxe1 29.Bxe1 d2∓ will cost White a piece.

28...Qh5

Varun: 28...Qe7 is also strong, and even simpler, preserving Black's advantage. White's position is on the brink of collapse.

29.Qd1



29...Qe2!

Jack: Another unpleasant surprise.

Varun: At first, Houdini doesn't like this move, but he's wrong.

Jack: I anticipated 29...Qxd1 30.Rxd1 d2 31.Nf3 Be3 and assumed White was lost. However, 32.Bxd2 Nxd2 33.Nxd2 may survive. For example, 33...Bc2 34.Nc4! Bxd1 35.Nxe3 Bxa4 36.Re1∓ appears defensible.

30.Bh4 f6

Varun: Allowing White an opening, but he can't really make use of it.

31.Qb3+

Jack: After 31.Nf3 Qxd1 32.Raxd1 Nxc3 33.Rc1 Ne4∓ White will soon drop more material.

31...Kh7 32.Nf3

Jack: Later I wondered about 32.Rae1, and Varun showed the elegant refutation 32...Nf2+ 33.Bxf2 Bxf2 34.Nf3 Bxe1 35.Rxe1 Qxe1+ 36.Nxe1 d2 37.Qd1 dxe1Q+ 38.Qxe1 Bc2 39.Kg1 Rd1.

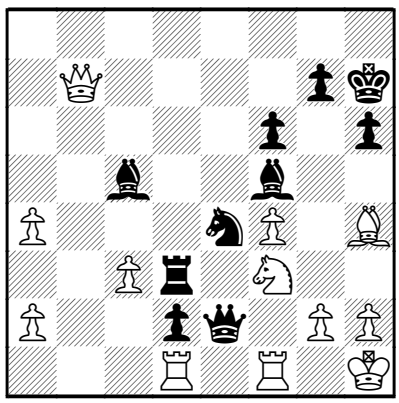
Varun: You're being modest. We found it together.

Jack: Nor does 32.Rfe1 help, as 32...Qh5 33.Nf3 d2 34.Red1 allows 34...Qxh4! 35.Nxh4 Nf2+.

32...d2 33.Rad1 Rd3

Jack: Threatening 33... Nxc3.

34.Qxb7



34...Rxf3!

Jack: After seven minutes thought, Varun finds a pretty and convincing finish.

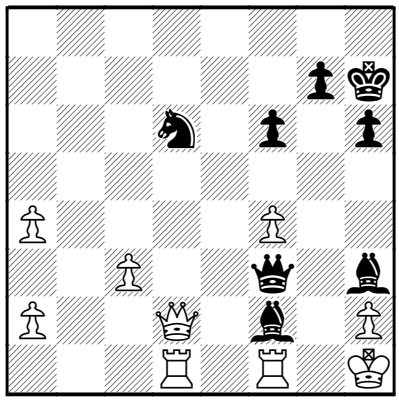
Houdini points out the quicker win 34...Bh3! 35.gxh3 Rxf3.

Jack: Of course, Black does not bother with 34...Nxc3?! 35.Bxf6, although he can still win with 35... Rd7.

35.gxf3 Nd6 36.Qd5 Bh3 37.Bf2

Jack: One point is that 37.Rg1 gets mated by 37...Bg2+ 38.Rxg2 Qxd1+.

37...Bxf2 38.Qxd2 Qxf3 mate



Varun: A very well played and ultra-complicated game by both players, which even the almighty Houdini has trouble fully comprehending.

Unfortunately, I couldn't build on this win, as in the final round I lost the title game (and $1,000!) to Matikozyan. ♜

Third Metropolitan Chess Camp: A Brief Look

Los Angeles, July 10-14, 2013

The third Metropolitan Chess Camp took place at the Radisson Hotel at LAX, with World Champion Viswanathan Anand as chief instructor, with familiar local teachers GM Melik Khachiyan, IMs Andranik Matikozyan, Zhanibek Amanov, and Armen Ambartsoumian, and two visiting instructors, GMs Dejan Bojkov and Vladimir Milov. In addition to the daytime teaching sessions and practice games, there were evening simuls by the instructors, and on the final day, Anand played twenty selected opponents, giving up one draw to Michael William Brown, and a loss to ten-year-old Marcus Miyasaka of New York.

Over one hundred players, young and old, attended the five-day event.

Here are a few photos from the simuls. -Ed.

kp *The twenty-player simul took place at the City View room on the penthouse level.*

kp *Michael William Brown gets a draw.*

kp *Some players were very young.*

An evening clock simul with GM Melik Khachiyan.

Here and There

Local News and Events Around the Southland

*With "***Here and There***" in your subject line, please send your club or tournament news and notices to the editor at:* RankAndFileEditor@gmail.com.

La Palma

With an undefeated score of 6½-½, national master Craig Faber won **La Palma Chess Club's *2013 Club Championship***, his second clinching of this title. The club, which meets Friday nights, held the 43-player event at La Palma's Central Park ended May 17. Runners-up tied at 5½-1½ were Barry Lazarus and Joe Warhula. Other prizewinners were Christopher Zalecki, best U1700, and Brandon Xia, best U1500. Stuart Kusdono won the biggest upset prize (467 points) and the biggest rating gain trophy (111 points). Austin Hughes won the best game prize for his win over Howard LeFevre.

The club would like to make a special thanks to Dr. Harold Valery for his generous donation to the event's prize fund.

With a perfect score of 3-0, long time LPCC player and TD Leigh Hunt won La Palma Chess Club's ***Chess Final Exams***. The 38-player event held at La Palma's Central Park ended June 14. In the lower section, Eric Lu clinched clear first place also with a perfect 3-0 score. Lu also won the biggest rating gain prize by gaining 58 rating points. Justin Hsu won the best U1400 prize.

National master Craig Faber won the ***Big Dogs & Porch Dogs*** Swiss with a score of 4½-½. Tied for second place at 3½-1½ was George Shahin and Robert Hutchinson. The 36-player event held at La Palma's Central Park ended July 19. In the lower section, Joseph Warhula won clear first place by a full point with a score of 4½-½. Tied for second place at 3½-1½ was newcomer Siswo Segoro, Christopher Zalecki and Eric Lu. Brandon Xia won the biggest rating gain prize for a gain of 101 rating points, and Shahin's win over Chris Barnett won the best game prize as judged by IM Jack Peters.

See the club's website at **www.lapalmachess.com** for wall charts, games, pictures and a schedule of events.

In other **LPCC** news, after more than six months of competition, Leigh Hunt leads LPCC's open ***Grand Prix*** section with 61 points, and Peter Holzer and Neil Bellinger lead the U1800 Grand Prix section with 59. The competition runs until the end of the year. Complete Grand Prix standings are here: **www.lapalmachess.com/LPCC/Current/lpcc_2013_grand_prix_standings.html**.

On July 26, IM Jack Peters played a simultaneous exhibition against 31 players. Winning their games were Mark Jackson and Howard LeFevre. Bob Hutchinson, Chris Roberts, Sid Somasundaram, Barry Lazarus, and Joe Warhula obtained draws. Although one of the players was knocked off in only 14 moves, most of the games went on until late in the night.

Jack prefaced the simul, set up by Brian Scanlon, with a very entertaining lecture on short games lost by famous grandmasters.

Lancaster

Chess was a feature at the Antelope Valley Harley Davidson ***19th Annual Thunder on the Lot***. Almost 200 attendees stopped by for the free Chess Activity between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m. on Sunday, June 9. They played on the 40 regular-size chess sets, the large chess set, and the HUGE chess set (18" tall King!), in a tournament or in casual games. Dozens received lessons, either on the basics or more advanced strategies and tactics.

Thunder on the Lot is held on the Antelope Valley Fairgrounds and is the largest annual fundraiser in the valley. It has raised over $5 million dollars for local charities.

Nine-year-old Eric Tianxiong Chen tied for 2nd Place in the

dm

Thunder on the lot: the big board.

Eric T. Chen at Las Vegas

June 8 ***International Youth Chess Championship***'s Nine and Under Section. The Lancaster resident, who attends Miller Elementary School and will be in the 4th Grade this fall, competed against 35 players from California, Arizona, Utah, and other states. The tournament was part of the annual Las Vegas Chess Festival held over the June 8-9 weekend at the Las Vegas Riviera Hotel.

Chess tournament in planning: for October 26, 2013, USCF-rated section with CASH PRIZES!

Free Unrated Sections: age 3 through Kindergarten; grades K through 3; grades K through 6; grades 5 through 9; grades 7 through 12; at least 18 years old; at least 50 years old.

Volunteers and sponsors needed: to make this tournament a success, at least 20 volunteers are needed. You can help, even if you don't know how to play chess! We also need sponsors to donate printing, trophies, etc.

To help out, or for more information, please email **daa@mahowald.org**.

Palmdale

The ***Chess Spectacular*** drew 49 children from 20 different schools around the Antelope Valley for the all day event on Saturday, May 18. The tournament, open to Kindergarten through 8th Grade, was held at Palmdale Learning Plaza, starting at 9 a.m. and finishing at 3 p.m.

Girls and boys of all skill levels competed. Most played at least 10 games during the day, and some played more than 20.

In addition, throughout the day the three Event Facilitators, Ms. Daa, Master Matt, and their 21-year-old daughter Ms. Morgan provided small

Life of a King: a Chess Movie

By Daa Anne Mahowald

In early November of last year a 'call' went out for chess players to be extras on November 11 in a movie about the life of chess coach Eugene Brown. Among the 50+ chess players who responded were five Antelope Valleyans: Jerry Stone and Christian Mercado of Palmdale, and Matt, Daa, and Morgan Mahowald of Lancaster, who all drove to Bishop Conaty High School in Los Angeles, and served from 9:30 a.m. until after 8 p.m.

Life of a King, starring Cuba Gooding Jr., is the true story of Eugene Brown's mission to give inner city kids of Washington, D.C. something he never had - a future. After serving eighteen years in prison for armed robbery, Brown started the Big Chair Chess Club to get kids off the streets and working towards brighter futures.

Director Jake Goldberg said, "My goal is to make *Life of a King* an emotionally honest film. I'm excited to explore Eugene Brown's philosophies as well as his personal uphill battle. Most importantly I'm looking forward to honoring Eugene's most fundamental lesson, both in chess and in life... 'Think before you move.'"

The World Premier of *Life of a King* was June 22 at the Los Angeles Film Festival. I had the exciting adventure of being in the 'rush line' at the premier! I got there early enough to be first in line and was in line for three hours. As the start time neared, almost 50 people lined up behind me, including my friends Christian Mercado and Jerry Stone.

A half hour before the film was to start, a woman walked up to the 'rush line' monitor and handed her a ticket, saying that she wasn't going to use it, and the monitor could give it to whomever she chose, and she chose me! The ticket was an expensive one, too, as it included entry into the 'After Party' where there was a free buffet and drinks as well as the opportunity to hobnob with the actors and crew of the film.

I found out later that unfortunately, no one from the rush line got in, since the theater was filled to standing room only by ticket holders.

My husband Matt, a USCF National Master, gets some serious face-time in the film, since he plays against one of the movie's protagonists in a crucial chess match. My back is in the movie, and my arm got in there twice. Morgan, Christian, and Jerry can each be seen in quick crowd shots.

Life of a King is to be released into theaters in early September. ♜

With Eugene Brown during the making of the film. dm

group lessons about various aspects of the game.

The event also included a simultaneous exhibition at which Master Matt and Ms. Morgan took on 28 children.

During the Awards Ceremony at the end of the tournament, every child received a Participation Certificate and one third earned a trophy.

Sponsors of this event included the **AV Chess House** and Palmdale Learning Plaza.

Contact Daa Mahowald at **daa@mahowald.org** to subscribe to **Chess in the AV**, a free e-newsletter which covers chess activity in the Antelope Valley.

Irvine

GM Melik Khachiyan allowed just one draw, scoring 5½-½ to win the six-round, five-section ***Southern California Class Championships*** with 5½-½, June 14-16 at the Irvine Hyatt Regency. Second with 5-1 was FM Alexander Kretchetov, who drew with the winner. The 21-player Open section also attracted three NMs. In the A-section, Jason Garfield and Siddharth Somasundaram were first with 4½-1½. Grant Yosenick scored 5-1 to take the B section, and David Chacon, also with 5-1, won the C. With 5-1, Eugene Kim and Chris Lane took the U1400. The 85-player event was run by Bay Area Chess and directed by Scott Mason.

Santa Monica

Topping the **Santa Monica Chess Club's *April Swiss*** field of 15 players, were Rory Wasiolek (2132), Liz Taylor (1811), and Neel Tiruviluamala (1675P), each with 3-1. They split the combined Open, U1800, and U1600 Prizes.

The four ***May Quads*** were won by Rory Wasiolek (2149), Liz Taylor (1844), Richard Rasiej (1578) and Stephen Bosch (1552), and Ruben Barabalce (1498). The event drew 16 entries.

Rory Wasiolek (2155) and Dmitry Cherkasky (2052) split the ***June Swiss*** first prize, both scoring 3-1. Jack O'Donnell (1730) won the U2000 Prize with 2-2, and Richard Rasiej (1578) took the U1600 Prize with 2½-1½.

On Monday evenings from September 9 to 30, the Club will hold a 4-round Swiss Tournament the ***September Swiss***. EF: $10 with Club membership ($35 for the remainder of the year). Registration is at 7 p.m., rounds start at 7:10 p.m., G-1:55 + 5-second delay. Half point byes are available in rounds 1 and 2.

The 4-player ***October Quads*** will be played on Mondays from October 7, 21, & 28. $10 EF, G/1:55, 5 second delay. $10 EF with Club membership ($35 for the remainder of the year). Registration is at 7 p.m., rounds start at 7:10 p.m.

The Club is located in the St. Andrew's Church Library at 11555 National Blvd., West Los Angeles at corner of Federal and Barry Ave. at National Blvd. (Ample parking in the church lot) Contact: TD Pete Savino (310) 827-2789, **smbchess@yahoo.com**. Santa Monica Bay Chess Club - Google Sites.

San Diego

This year we have named some of our events to honor young players who have become masters while at the **San Diego Chess Club**.

In April and May, the ***Kyron Griffith Open*** featured 54 players in a McMahon pairing system.

The **McMahon Pairing System** is an accelerated pairing system that allows you to:

1. Organize a tournament in a single section.

2. Pair players that are close in rating to each other.

3. Not to worry about having an odd number of players like you might have with a normal 5-section Swiss event.

For example in this tournament, Masters and Experts started with 4 bye points, Class A with 3, Class B with 2, Class C with 1 and Class D and below with 0 bye points.

In the McMahon everyone is in one big section, so at most you will need just one house player.

The bye points make strong players battle with other strong players instead of the top half slaughtering the bottom half as in a normal Swiss.

If your club holds tournaments one round per week, a higher rated player does not have to look forward to several long freeway drives only to play someone much lower rated in the first few rounds.

It really works quite well once you get used to it and we are surprised more clubs haven't adopted it. As far as we know, San Diego is the only club that uses it with regularity.

Bruce Baker won the 6-round event with 8½ points, followed by Todd Smith, Kyron Griffith and Jim Humphrey with 8. Jim won the U2200, trailed by Paul Agron and Alejandrino Baluran with 7½. Shaun Sweitzer won best U2000 with 7½, followed by Miguel Ceballos with 7. Eliza Eggert was best U1800 with 6 points and Steve Perry won 2nd U1800 with 5½. Rocio Murra won best U1600, Tygan Zeng best U1400 and Patrick Edwards best U1200.

In June, the ***Varun Krishnan Open*** was split into 4 sections. There was a 4-way tie in the Open section between Alejandrino Baluran, Raoul Crisologo, Mario Vinoya, and Peter Hodges. In the Premier Section, Joel Batchelor and Bruce Charnov tied for top honors. Steve Perry was best U1800. In the Reserve Section (U1600), Bill Murray, still playing strong well into his ninth decade, won first place and Maria Murra was best U1400. The fourth section was a Doubleheader Swiss at G/45, d/5, where you played the same opponent twice, alternating colors. This was won by Buddy Morris and Shaun Sweitzer. Mark Lawless was best U1800, Robert Henderson best U1600 and Tygan Zeng best U1400.

In Gambito Open action, the ***May Super Gambito Open*** was won by Cyrus Lakdawala with 3½-½, with Kyron Griffith winning Second Place and Bruce Baker best U2400, both with 3 points, along with Jeff Turner with 3, who captured the best U2200 prize. Jerry Qu won best U2000. In the Reserve Section, it was Ben Kelt-

ner winning best U1800 while Ben Duong won best U1600.

The ***June Super Gambito Open*** drew 36 players and was won by Cyrus Lakdawala with a perfect 4-0, followed by Bruce Baker and Peter Graves with 3-1. Then there was a rare 6-way tie between Venkat Iyer, Ben Barquin, Jeff Turner, Alex Costello, Jerry Qu and Daniel Zhu. The players pooled five prizes to win $45 each. In the Reserve Section, John Donahoo won all four games of the usual G/40, d/5 format. We often use John as a house player, but he must have had a premonition and actually came up with the $25 entry fee on this day and so he took home $75. The 4 wins pushed him over 1800 for the first time, congrats John, now comes the hard part of trying to hold on to that Class A rating! Sabrina Duong also won $75 as best U1600.

On June 22 we had a 5-round ***Special Gambito (#615)***, which we like to do in the summer when attendance is often higher and, sure enough, 36 players showed up. There was a 3-way tie for first at 4-1 between Cyrus Lakdawala, Kyron Griffith and Nikolay Arutyunov (back from Russia!). Jeff Turner was best U2200 and the visiting Roberto Aiello took best U2000. In the Reserve Section, Ben Duong put on a strong performance, raising his rating 96 points to 1678 with a 4½-½ score. Matthew Wang was best U1600 with 4-1.

The following week we had 34 players for a regular ***Gambito #617*** and for the June Super Gambito it was also 34 players. We are still looking to get 50 players on one of these Saturdays to break our record of 49 players for a Gambito Open, which has been running continuously for over 12 years. This time we had 3 sections, and the Open was won by none other than, surprise, Cyrus Lakdawala, with a 4-0 sweep. Peter Graves was second, Elkaei Rivera was best U2400, while Jason Ma and Leonard Sussman were best U2200. In the Premier Section (U2000), Luiz Uribe won four in row for the second week in a row, boosting his rating up to 1846. Rolando Ignacio won best U1800. In the Reserve Section (U1600), Justin Kang, recently arrived from Irvine, won best U1600 and Mark Negus won best U1400.

Beverly Hills

Beverly Hills Chess Club

New Hours: We are expanding our business hours to Seven-Days-A-Week in order to accommodate our growing roster of Chessletes™. We are located at 8950 West Olympic Blvd. Please view our calendar of activities online at **bhchessclub.com** for a full list of all our activities for the month of August.

Julian Landaw Events:

FIDE Master Julian Landaw has joined the coaching team at Beverly Hills Chess Club and will be giving his introductory events this month. Register Early: $25/ea. Early Registration. $29/ea. at the door. Call to register: 310-274-7873.

Discover our ongoing series of camps for this summer: ***Three-week Session***: Members: $950, Non-Members: $1275. Daily Rates: Members: $85, Non-Members: $100.

The Art of Thinking Ahead: Chess Boot Camp Taught by National Master Vanessa West. For Knight level (beginners) to Rook level chess champs. This class covers, tactics, middlegame and endgame principles. Learn how to think and calculate quickly and accurately. Registration is limited so call now: 310-274-7873. Monday – Friday, 9 a.m. - 1 p.m.: Session 2: July 13 – August 2; Session 3: August 2 – 30.

ap

Matt Robertson: on a tear!

After joining the Beverly Hills Chamber of Commerce, the five-year-old Club has been nominated for a local **Golden Palm Award** in Small Business innovation.

Lawndale

Matt Robertson is on a tear, winning **Alondra Park Chess Club's *End of Spring*** and ***Beginning of Summer*** tournaments with two perfect 6-0 whitewashes. To further drive the point home, Matt finished a full point and a half ahead of second place in both.

The club's weekly rounds are played on Tuesday evenings.

In the first tournament, Ted Roth and Michael Bynum shared second place and top A at 4½-1½. Both lost to Matt, in rounds 4 and 3 respectively. The logjam at 4-2 included tournament director Richard Meller, Howard Lefevre, Al Peña at top B and Nathan Shankaran at top C. In the most recent tournament, concluded July 9, Top A Alireza Fallahi had sole possession of second place, losing to Matt in round 4. This tournament's 4-0 group included Ted Roth, who lost to Matt in round 5, Richard Meller, who won a very messy last round Caro-Kann against Al Peña, Michael Bynum who was Matt's last victim, and Kanata Yamayoshi who was top C. Ed Englehaupt was top B with 3½ points. Both tournaments had 26 players.

The **Alondra Park Chess Club** meets Tuesday evenings at 6:30 p.m. in the clubhouse at 3850 W. Manhattan Beach Blvd., Lawndale. For more information, contact Richard Meller at 310.227.2873 or **RichardMeller@yahoo.com**.
The club's Website is:
www.alondraparkchessclub.com.

Arcadia

The 6-round **Arcadia Spring Open** attracted 58 players and was held April 15 to May 20, with one

round each Monday night. Leading the pack with 4½-½, Melandro Singson (2164) and Feiyue Yang (2208) drew their final game allowing Randall Hough (2065) and Phil Chase (2004) to match them at 5-1 for a 4-way tie. Queena Deng (1792) took B honors with 3½ points. The C prize was shared as Johan Akesson (now 1741) and Cory Chen (now 1629) both jumped up a class scoring 3½. Abinanda Mukundan pegged 3 points, gaining 120 rating points and the D-E-Unrated prize.

The 60-player ***McGuire Challenge*** ended cordially July 8, with Melandro Singson (2176) and Henry Castro (2104) drawing their last round encounter to share first place with 5 points. Dave Matson (1990), Ke Chen (1959) and Daniel Manahan (1896) scored 4½, sharing the A prize. Hau Lu (1944) provisional, joined John Anderson (1788), Jeff Schroeder (1785), Melvin Bond (1755), Johan Akesson (1751), David King (1707) and David Munoz (1704) to divide the B prize. 3 points were scored by Tony Grauso (1545), Robert Head (1498) and Kyle Li (1476) sharing the C prize. Ryan Yang (1349), with 2½ points, gained 171 rating points and the D/E prize.

The **Arcadia Chess Club** meets Mondays at 6:45 p.m. for continuous 6-round tournaments. More information and directions can be found at **ArcadiaChessClub.com**.

kp

Criag Hilby, right, defeated Bill Richards to earn the NM title.

Whittier

At the free, rated, Tuesday night, G/30 + 5 second delay ***Whittier High School library tournaments***, the section winners since early April included IM Tim Taylor; experts Michael Cooper, Santy Villanueva and Romeo Rearios; Adam Rieng, Ethan Pau, Thad Franco, Jose Malabanan, Richard Peterson, Rory Mulcahey, Daniel Rivera, father-son combo Daniel and Raphael Manahan; and finally brother-sister combo CM Joaquin Perkins and his sister Adriana Perkins.

A couple of notable upsets and a couple of heartbreakers: Dante Peterson (1853) put his tactical skills on display in beating NM Bill Richards (2159) and now has 6 wins in the last 12 months against opponents rated at least 2000. He almost took another expert scalp against Villanueva, but missed the best move and resigned in a winning position! The aggressive Adam Rieng (991) earned the full point against the provisionally-rated Korab Limani (1803). Honorable mention goes to Daniel Manahan, who had a completely winning position against Cooper before an endgame blunder cost him the game.

However, the most significant achievements at Whittier involved two young local stars who achieved master ratings by reaching the elusive 2200 mark. On May 16, approaching the June supplement and World Youth rating deadlines, Craig Hilby scored a valuable win over Richards to earn the final points towards his goal. At the same event, Joshua Sheng was paired against an even stronger opponent, IM Taylor, who converted a pawn-up endgame in time pressure to win the event. But Sheng was not to be denied for long, as he returned to Whittier a couple of weeks later and defeated expert Romeo Rearios to make 2200.

Special congratulations to these two players, their coaches, their parents, and everyone in the chess community who played a role in their success.

kp

Joshua Sheng, left, raised his rating to 2204 by defeating Romeo Rearios.

Pasadena

Pasadena Chess Club

The ***Pasadena City Open***, with 75 players, saw Albert Lu win the first section. Two other youngsters, Yusheng Xia and Feiyue Yang, split second

place. Mike Carlson, Jesse Victoria, Annie Wang, and Randy Hough tied for U2100 honors. Greg Hall, Anthony Ge, George Shan, and Hamlet Tovmasyan split U1900 laurels, and Adam Stanford-Moore was top U1700.

Julian Chang topped the second group, ahead of Neil Hultgren, Roberto Queiro, and Xavier Armagnac. Hector Valdez and Winston Qian split the U1600 prize; Hanmingmei Li was best U1400, and Gahan Sudhir earned U1200 honors.

Turnout in the ***Mount Wilson Open*** set a club record at 79! Jonathan Homidan won the first section, reaching a 2194 rating (and easily surpassed the Master barrier at the Pacific Southwest Open soon thereafter). Feiyue Yang and Prasanna Borse (best U2100) tied for second, and Greg Hall was best U1900. Edward Wu and Vinay Shukla tied for U1700 honors.

Jason McKeen won Section Two, ahead of Neil Hultgren, ahead of Justin Chang, Matthew Ung, and Huansheng Xue. Jonathan Huang and Hanmingmei Li split the U1500 prize, Gahan Sudhir was top U1300, Ashley Huang best U1100, and Won Joon Ki Choi top Unrated.

The **Pasadena Club** meets Friday nights at the Boys and Girls Club, 3230 East Del Mar in Pasadena. For further information see the webpage **www.tim-thompson.com/pasadena.html**. It includes a catalogue of the hundreds of books in the club's lending library.

jy

At the WVCC, ten-year-old Rachel Burak defeated Vincente Fierro in the final round and gained over 200 points on her provisional rating.

The ***San Gabriel Valley Championship***, five rounds in one section, runs September 6 through October 4. For further information contact Randy Hough at (626) 282-7412, **randallhough@yahoo.com**.

West Hills

The Thursday night **West Valley Chess Club**, located at Shomrei Torah Synagogue in West Hills, has continued its trend of good turnouts with an average of over 50 players per event.

On July 18, the oldest club in the San Fernando Valley concluded its 6-week ***2013 Summer Swiss Championship***. The event had a Top 16 section, an U1900 section and an U1500 section. Expert Juan Santacruz took first in the Top 16 section with a 4½-1½ score. 14-year-old NM Daniel Mousseri took 2nd with 4-2 and Arnel Odero took 3rd with 3½-2½. In the U1900 section, Gilbert Coronel took 1st with a 5-1 score to regain his "A" class status (1807). "B" player Chantelle Field gained 85 rating points (from 1637 to 1722) in taking 2nd place with 4½-1½. "B" player Michael Moody won 3rd place with 4-2.

In the U1500 section, 12-year-old rising star Benjamin Garcia had a 5-1 score in taking first and gained 346 rating points (from 858 to 1204!). Other winners were Maurice Marchesini and 8-year-old Noah Estiva, taking 2nd and 3rd place honors respectively with identical 4½-1½ scores. WVCC holds 6-week USCF-rated tournaments all year round. For info go to: **www.westvalleychessclub.com** or contact Jerry Yee at 818-915-5572 or email him at: **jyee6@socal.rr.com**.

Hemet

Marcos Montes has decided for family reasons to step down as President of the Hemet Chess Club. Marcos asked Lloyd Albano to take over as president of the club.

Ventura

A new group meets noon to 4:00 p.m. Saturdays in the Bank of Books bookstore, 748 E. Main St. Casual play, instruction. Free. Contact Rob Radford at (805) 204-7154 or at **rob_radford55@yahoo.com**.

Thousand Oaks

On July 8, the Monday night **Thousand Oaks Chess Club** concluded its 5-round ***2013 Summer Spectacular*** tournament. The 15–player Open Section was won by Master Larry L. Smith, with a 4½-½ score, drawing only with second place winner Expert John R. Williams. Third place was Expert Leo Creger with 3½-1½. Also, 1470-rated Justin Yao surprised everyone by beating two Class A players, finishing with 3-2 while raising his rating to 1613 and earning him the best U1800 trophy!

The U1500 Section, which also consisted of 15 players, was swept by provisionally rated player Scott Haskell with a perfect 5-0 score, defeating the second and third place winners Patrick Gordon-Davis and James Nelson, who scored 4-1 and 3½-1½, respectively. Brian Sui, rated 555, scored 3-2, earning him the best U700 trophy.

There was also a 12-player Unrated section, which was a fun, non USCF-rated event for the beginners. Aditya Maddileti took clear 1st with 4½-½, and Naren Krishnan and Kshitij Patibandla were 2nd and 3rd, respectively, with 3½ -1½.

The event was a success with a total of 42 players, including several Master, Expert and Class A players.

The club's next tournament, the ***Summer Knights Swiss***, begins Monday July 29th with one round played per week, concluding on August 26.

The ***TOCC*** meets Monday nights from 6-8:45 p.m. at the Goebel Adult Community Center, 1385 E. Janss Rd, Thousand Oaks, CA. Casual play, blitz, bughouse, plus frequent rated and non-rated tournaments. Tournaments usually last five weeks, with 2-4 weeks of casual play in between.

For more information, contact Cindy Garcia at **ThousandOaksChess@att.net** or check out their website **www.tochessclub.org**. ♜

Solutions to Final Points

From page 59.

1.It's mate starting with ***23.Rxh7+! Kxh7***. If 23...Kg8 then 24.Qg5+ Ng7 25.Rdh1 mates. ***24.Rh1+ 1-0*** If 24... Kg6 then White mates by helping the Queen get to g5, with either 25.Rh5 or 25.Nf3. Roberts - Liu, Pacific Southwest Open U2000, Los Angeles 2013.

2.White wins material with ***20.Bxf6 Rxf6 21.Nxd5! cxd5 22.Qxd5+ Be6 23.Qxa8+*** and White is up two pawns and the Exchange and later won. Hall - Chow, Western Pacific Open, Los Angeles 2013.

3.It's lights out after ***29.Qh8+!!*** with a mate next move. Khachiyan - Georgiev, 27th Metropolitan GM, Los Angeles 2013.

4.Black goes the long way around starting with ***51...Rb8! 0-1***, and White can stop ...Rh8 mate only by giving up the Queen. Kretchetov - Landaw, 25th SCCF State Championship, Monterey Park 2013.

5.White realizes that trades are decisive: ***38.Bxe5 Kxe5*** If 38... Rxf4 then 39.Bxf4 Nd7 40.c6 Nb6 41.Bc7 wins. ***39.Rxg4 Nxg4***, because after ***40.b6 1-0*** the pawn Queens. Matikozian - Yankovsky, 25th SCCF State Shampionship, Monterey Park 2013.

6.Black scarfs up a piece with ***30... Qxg3!*** because after ***31.hxg3 Kf7*** White has to create an escape square for the King with ***32.Rf2*** which allows a magical Knight's tour: ***32...Nxf2+ 33.Kg1 Ne4+ 34.Kf1 Nxg3+ 35.Ke1 Nxe2 0-1***, and Black is up a Rook. Bryant - Aldama, 25th SCCF State Championship, Monterey Park 2013.

7.Black can exploit the Bishop's shortage of good squares with **66... Qf5! 67.Bc4** After 67.Re2+ Kd1 68.Bc4 Qg4+ Black wins material and Queens quickly, and 67.Be8 allows 67...e2!. **67...b5 68.Be2 Qf2+ 69.Rxf2 exf2+** and Black takes the Bishop and Queens next move. But ***66...Qh5*** was played, and the game was eventually drawn. Stevens - Mousseri, Western Pacific Open, Los Angeles 2013.

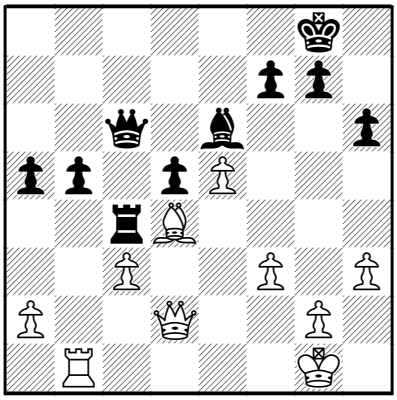
8.White had a quick win with **30.Rxe4!!**, for after **30...Qxh8** (if 30...Rxe4 then 31.Nh7+ Ke7 32.Qxg8 with a decisive advantage.) **31.Nh7+** Black must give back the Queen with **31...Qxh7 32.Rxe8+ Kxe8 33.gxh7** and the h-pawn can't be stopped. Although White played ***30.Qh4***, he still won. Stripunsky - Robson, US Championship, St. Louis 2013.

9.Black pulls out a draw with ***25... Bxg4! 26.Qd3*** If 26.Qxg4 then 26... Bxc3, and Black threatens both d2 and e4. ***26...Bxc3 27.Qxc3*** Not 27.Bxc3 Re2+ 28.Kf1 Rxe4 29.Bd2 Be2+ 30.Qxe2 Rxe2 31.Bxe2 Qe4 32.Rh3 Qxd5∓. ***27...Qxe4+ 28.Kf2 f6*** Black needed to pause to stop the mate on g7. ***29.Qxb2*** If 29.a8Q, then Rxa8 30.Rxa8+ Nxa8 31.Qxb2 Qf3+ is a perpetual check. ***29...Qf3+*** and as before, Black gets the perpetual. ***30.Kg1 Qg3+ 31.Kf1 Qf3+ ½–½***. Wang - Sevillano, Western Pacific Open, Los Angeles 2013.

Tatev, continued from page 23.

a great showing at last year's U.S. championship. The game was even for the most part, until she made a careless move that resulted in a tactic losing a pawn:

Viktorija Ni (2262) -
Tatev Abrahamyan (2385)
US Women's Championship (9)
St. Louis, 12.05.2013



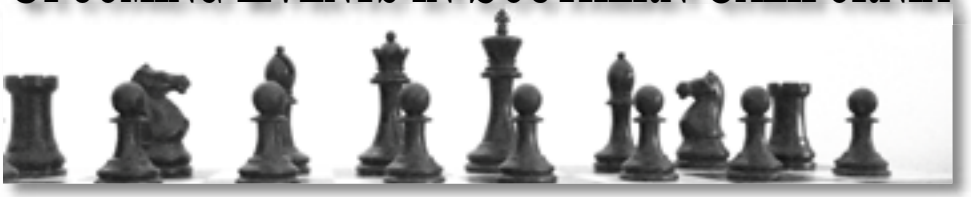
White has just played 30.h3, an innocent looking move, but now ***30... Bxh3!*** If 31.gxh3 then Qg6+ winning the Rook back. The game concluded with ***31...Bxe6 32.Qf4 Kh7 33.Re1 b4 34.Qe5 f6 35.Qxe6 Qxe6 36.Rxe6 bxc3 37.Be3 c2 38.Bc1 Rd4 39.Kf2 Rd1 40.Re1 d4 41.Bf4 d3 0–1***.

After putting things into perspective, I realized that I had an amazing event. In most of my games, I didn't get in trouble in the opening and was the one pressing for the win.

For a change, I think my opponents had trouble preparing against me. Even though I only scored ½ of 2 against the top two players, I scored 6 out of 7 against the rest of the field and gained 30 FIDE rating points.

Of course, once again being very close to the title and not achieving it was a big disappointment, but I think in the long term my chess has improved and my opening repertoire is more versatile now. I'll be looking to win my first title next year. ♜

Upcoming Events in Southern California



***** Please see uschess.org for the complete TLA for each event.***

August 31 - September 2 or September 1-2

35th Annual Southern California Open

A Heritage Event!
Chess Magnet School Junior Grand Prix!
Trophies Plus Grand Prix Points: 150 (Enhanced)

6-SS, 40/2, SD/1 d5 (2-day schedule rds 1-3 G/60 d5, then merges). Town & Country Hotel, 500 Hotel Circle North, San Diego, CA 92108. $$20,000 in Guaranteed prizes, 5 Sections.

Prizes: Open Sec 1st $2,400-1,600-1,200-900-600-500-400, BU2300 $1,000-600, BU2200 $1,000-600-400-200; Premier Section (U2000): $1,000-600-400-200; Amateur Section (U1800) $1,000-600-400-200; Reserve Section (U1600) $1,000-600-400-200; Booster Section (U1400) $600-400-200-100, BU1200 $300-150, Best Unrated $100. Plus Best Game Prizes: $75-50-25, one reserved for non-open sections.

Reg.: 3-day: 8 to 9:30 am, Sept official rating list used. 2-day: 8 am to 9 am Sunday. Rds.: 3 day: 10 am & 5 pm on Sat-Sun, 9 am & 4 pm on Mon. 2-day: 9:30 am, 11:45 & 2 pm Sun, then merges.

EF: $100 if received by 8/12, $120 after 8/12, or $140 at door. No credit cards at door, checks or cash only. Special rate of only $75 if U1400 or unrated if pd by 8/12, $90 after 8/12, or $100 at door. Special rate for GMs and IMs: $20 if registered by 8/12, $40 after 8/12 or $60 late entry at door.

Open section will be FIDE rated except for 3 fast games in the 2 day schedule. Unr players are eligible for place prizes only in the Open Section, or the unrated prize in the U1400. Players who forfeit any round are ineligible for prizes!

SCCF membership req'd $18 Adult, (Scholastic: $13 or $3 non-ma) for all So Cal residents. Two byes allowed, but must be requested at least one hour before round, and round 5 & 6 byes must be requested before rd 2 and are irrevocable.

Entries: SDCC, PO Box 120162, San Diego, CA 92112 or enter online at www.scchess.com. For more info call Bruce Baker at (619) 239-7166, or e-mail Chuck Ensey at chucnglo@aol.com. SCCF Annual Membership Meeting: Sunday 3 pm.

Hotel Rates: Special rate of only $109, 619-291-7131, or 1-800-772-8527 if booked by 8/12/13, book ASAP, as rates may go up and rooms may sell out by mid-August. Large hotel is in the heart of Mission Valley, close to airport, great attractions such as Sea World, Legoland, The San Diego Zoo and Fashion Valley for shopping. The Town and Country Hotel (see www.towncountry.com) has over 1,000 rooms, 4 great restaurants, a heated pool, a spa and fitness center, plus golf next door. NS. NC. W. State Championship Qualifier.

October 11-13 or 12-13

10th Annual Los Angeles Open

Chess Magnet School Junior Grand Prix!
Trophies Plus Grand Prix Points: 80 (Enhanced)

5SS, 40/110, SD/30 d10 (2-day option, rds. 1-2 G/90 d5), Sheraton Agoura Hills Hotel, 30100 Agoura Rd., Agoura Hills, CA 91301 (26 miles west of Burbank, 12 miles from Malibu, 28 miles from Ventura). Free parking.

$$15,000 based on 200 paid entries (re-entries & U1300 Section count 50%), $10,000 (2/3 each prize) minimum guaranteed.

In 5 sections. **Open**: $1800-900-500-300, clear or tiebreak winner $100 bonus, top Under 2300/Unr $600-300. FIDE. **Under 2200**: $1200-600-300-200, top Under 2000/Unr $500-250. **Under 1900**: $1200-600-300-200, top Under 1700 (no Unr) $500-250. **Under 1600**: $1000-500-300-200, top Under 1400 (no Unr) $400-200. **Under 1300**: $500-300-200-100, plaques to 1st, top U1100, U900, U700, Unr.

Mixed doubles bonus prizes: best male/female 2-player "team" combined score among all sections: $400-200-100. Team average must be under 2200; teammates may play in different sections; teams must register (no extra fee) before both players begin round 2; teammate pairings avoided but possible. Unrated may not win over $200 in U1300, $400 U1600 or $600 U1900.

Top 4 sections EF: $105 online at chessaction.com by 10/9, $110 phoned to 406-896-2038 by 10/9, 3-day $108, 2-day $107 mailed by 10/2, all $120 (no checks, credit cards OK) at site or online until 2 hours before first game. GMs, IMs & WGMs free; $90 deducted from prize.

U1300 Section EF: All $50 less than above. **SCCF membership** ($18, Scholastic: $13/$3 non-mag) **req.** for rated Southern CA residents. Special 1 year USCF dues with magazine if paid with entry. Online at chessaction.com, Adult $30, Young Adult $20, Scholastic $15. Mailed, phoned or paid at site, Adult $40, Young Adult $30, Scholastic $20. Re-entry $60; not available in Open Section. **3-day schedule**: Reg ends Fri 6 pm, rds. Fri 7 pm, Sat 12 & 6, Sun 11 & 4:30. **2-day schedule**: Reg ends Sat 9 am, rds. Sat 10, 2 & 6, Sun 11 & 4:30.

All: Half point byes OK all, limit 2, Open must commit before rd. 2, others before rd. 3. **HR**: $95-95, 818-707-1220, reserve by 9/27 or rate may increase. Car rental: Avis, 800-331-1600, AWD D657633, or reserve car online through **chesstour.com**.

Ent: **chessaction.com** or Continental Chess, Box 8482, Pelham, NY 10803 (**DirectorA@Chess.us**, **chesstour.com**, 347-201-2269.) $15 service charge for refunds. Advance entries posted at **chessaction.com** (online entries posted instantly).

Nov. 28 - Dec. 1 or Nov. 29 - Dec. 1

49th Annual American Open

An American Classic!
A Heritage Event!
Chess Magnet School Junior Grand Prix!
Trophies Plus Grand Prix Points: 120 (Enhanced)

8SS, 40/2, SD/1 d5. Doubletree Hotel Anaheim/Orange County, 100 City Dr., Orange, CA 92868. $$50,000 b/o 500 entries, $25,000 guaranteed.

In 6 sections. **Open**: $5000-2400-1000-300-150, U2450/Unr. $1000-300-150, U2300/Unr. $600-180-150. **U2200**, **U2000**, **U1800** Each $4000-2000-1000-300-150. **U1600** $3000-1500-700-300-150. **U1400 / Unr**: $2500 - 1000 - 500 - 200 - 150, U1200 $1400-400-150 (not a separate section; U1200s also eligible for U1400 prizes), Unrated: $500-200 (Unrateds in this section eligible for these prizes only).

EF: $200 by Nov. 28th, register by 10/16 save $50, register by 11/06 save $40, register by 11/20 save $20, U1400 save additional $10. $50 more for players rated under 2000 playing in Open, U1600 & U1400 save $10. No checks at door - cash only, credit card accepted for a $10 fee. **SCCF membership $18 required for So Cal residents**. **4-day schedule**: Reg. closes 11am on 11/28, (Rounds 12:30-7:30, 12:30-7:30, 10:30-5, 10-4:30). **3-day schedule**: Reg. closes 9:30am on 11/29, Rounds. 11-2:30-5-8pm (G/60 d5), schedules merge in Rd. 5 and compete for common prizes. Two byes max with advance notice.

HR: Mention SCC for $95 single or double, rates may go up after. Call Doubletree (714) 634-4500. Don't be shut out; surrounding hotels in the area may be as high as $199/night; make your reservations early and be sure to ask for the special SCC rates; Doubletree sells out most weekends. Cutoff for special hotel rate/offer is Oct 31st. RESERVE NOW! Credit card or one night room deposit will be required to hold reservation, may be canceled 72 hours in advance without penalty. Parking cost $10.

Info: organizing club - Chess Palace 714-899-3421, **play@americanopen.org**. Ent: American Open, 5246 Lampson Ave., Garden Grove, CA 92845 or **www.AmericanOpen.org**. NS. W. F.

November 30

American Open Blitz (BLZ)

5 round double swiss, G/5 d0. Doubletree Hotel Anaheim/Orange County. 100 City Dr., Orange, CA 92868.

Projected prizes $1000, 80% Guaranteed! $300-100; U2200, U2000, U1800, U1600, U1400, Unr. each $100. EF: $35 by Nov. 20th. $40 after. Registration ends 9 pm. Rounds 9:30 pm -10-10:30-11-11:30. Info: 714-899-3421, **play@americanopen.org**. Ent: American Open, 5246 Lampson Ave., Garden Grove, CA 92845 or **americanopen.org/main-tournament/side-event**.

Nov. 30 - Dec. 1 or Dec. 1

American Open Scholastic

Chess Magnet School Junior Grand Prix!

Doubletree Anaheim/Orange County, 100 City Dr., Orange, CA 92868. (714) 634-4500. Hotel rate is $95. Chess Computer for each 1st place winner per section. Trophies to top 10 places and top 3 in teams, in each section. Finalist medals to all above-average scorers.

9 Sections based on grade and rating: Varsity K-3, K-6, K-9, K-12; Junior Varsity K-1, K-3 rated U600, K-6 rated U800, K-9 rated U1000, K-12 rated U1200. Info: **americanopen.org/junior-tournament**. Inquire: **play@americanopen.org**. Chess Magnet School JGP for Varsity Sections.

December 1

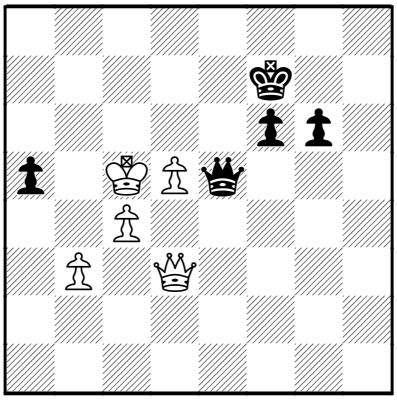
American Open Action

5 round SS, G/30 d5. Doubletree Hotel Anaheim/Orange County. 100 City Dr., Orange. CA 92868. Projected prizes $500, 80% Guaranteed! EF: $25 by Nov. 20th. $30 after. Registration 10:30-11. Rounds 12-1:15-3-4:15-5:30. Info: 714-899-3421, **play@americanopen.org**. Ent: American Open, 5246 Lampson Ave., Garden Grove, CA 92845 or **americanopen.org/main-tournament/side-event**.

MDC, continued from page 34.

Qf2+ 57.Kd5 Qf3+ 58.Kc5 Qxf4 59.Qe7+ Kh6 60.d7+-.

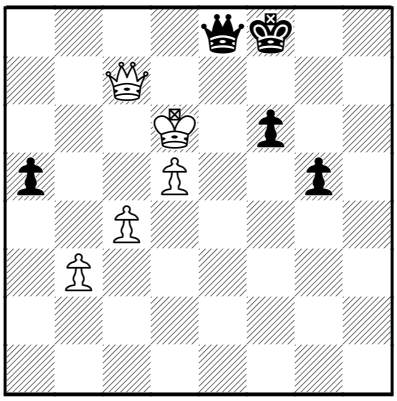
54.Qd3? Qc1+ 55.Kd4 Qxf4+ 56.Kc5 Qe5



57.Qh3

Better was 57.Kb5 Qb8+ 58.Kxa5 and the King escapes after 58...Qa7+ 59.Kb4 Qb6+ 60.Kc3 Qa5+ 61.Kb2+-.

57...g5 58.Qh7+ Kf8 59.Kc6 Qe8+ 60.Kc7 Qe5+ 61.Kd7 Qe8+ 62.Kd6 Qb8+ 63.Qc7 Qe8



64.Qxa5?

I was greedy and went for the pawn, allowing Black to get counterplay.

Best was 64.Kc5 Qe3+ *(or 64...g4 65.d6 Qe3+ 66.Kb5 Qxb3+ 67.Ka6+-)* 65.Kb5 Qxb3+ 66.Ka6+-.

64...Qe7+?+-

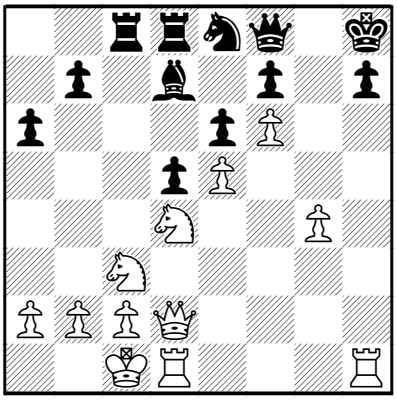
This game had been going on for a long time now and I think that both my opponent and I were tired.

After 64...g4! Black has good chances of getting a draw.

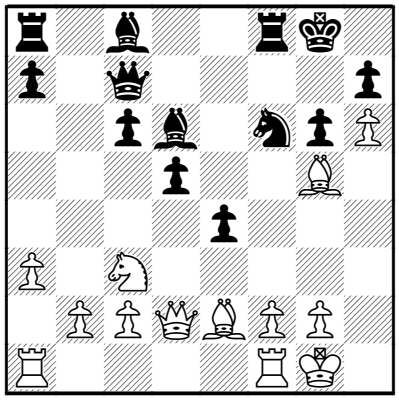
65.Kc6 Qe8+ 66.Kb7 Qe7+ 67.Qc7 Qb4+ 68.Kc8 Qxb3 69.d6 Qh3+ 70.d7 Ke7 71.Qc5+ Kf7 72.Kc7 Qg3+ 73.Qd6 1-0

Final Points

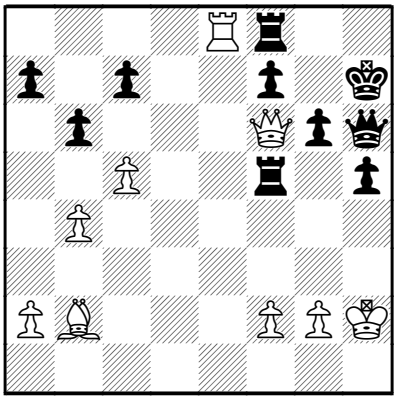
We hope you have enjoyed this issue. Since there are three months until the next one, here is another quiz page. These positions are mostly from recent games by Southern California players. Many thanks to our organizers, directors and players! And keep submitting those scoresheets! See page 56 for solutions. - Ed.



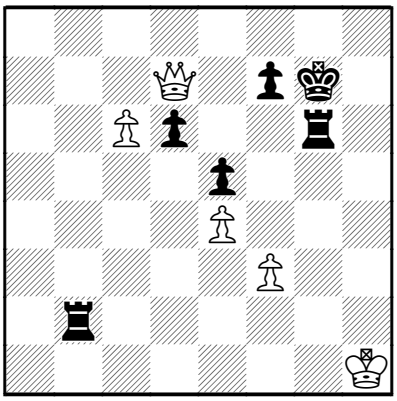
1. White to Play



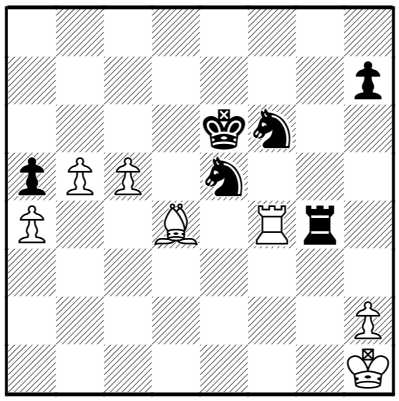
2. White to Play



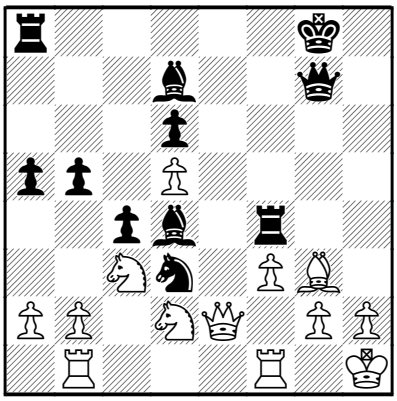
3. White to Play



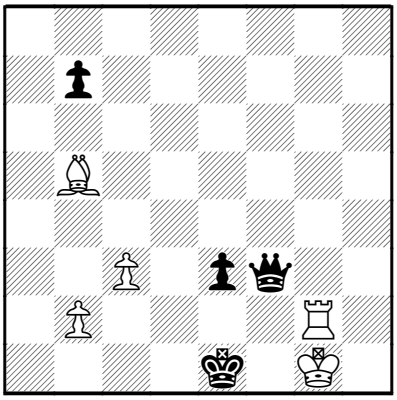
4. Black to Play



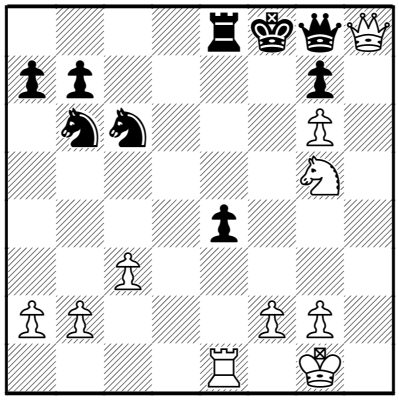
5. White to Play



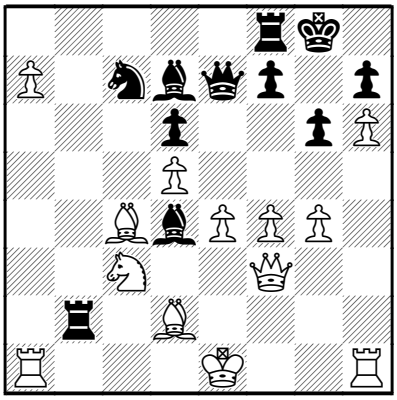
6. Black to Play



7. Black to Play



8. White to Play



9. Black to Play

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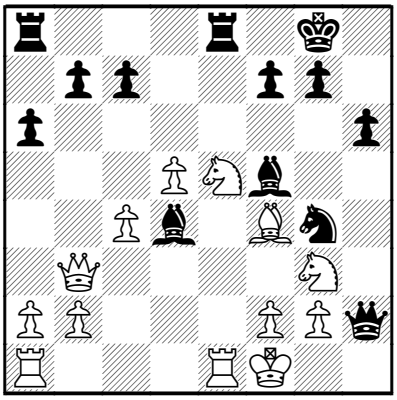
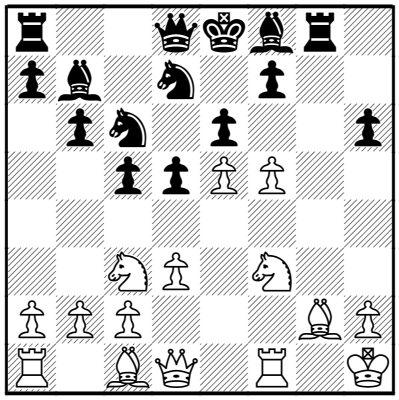
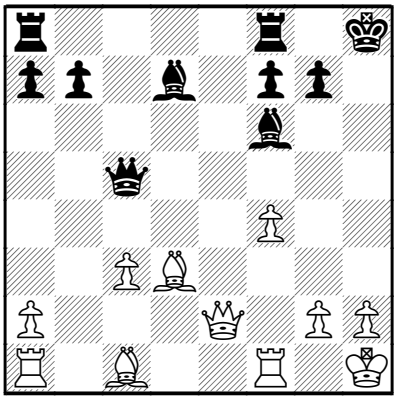


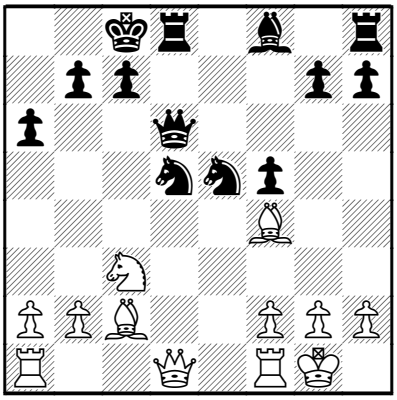
1. White to Play



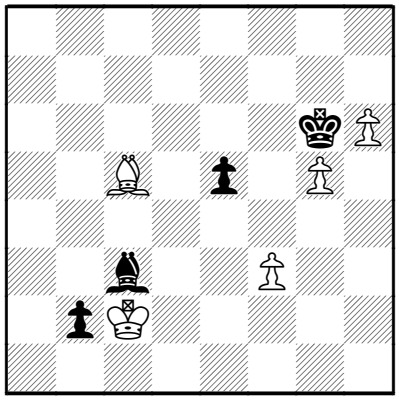
2. White to Play



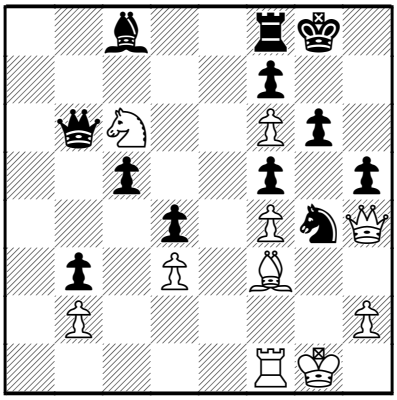
3. White to Play



4. White to Play



5. White to Play



6. White to Play

See page 13 for solutions.