SCCF

RANK & FILE

The magazine of the Southern California Chess Federation

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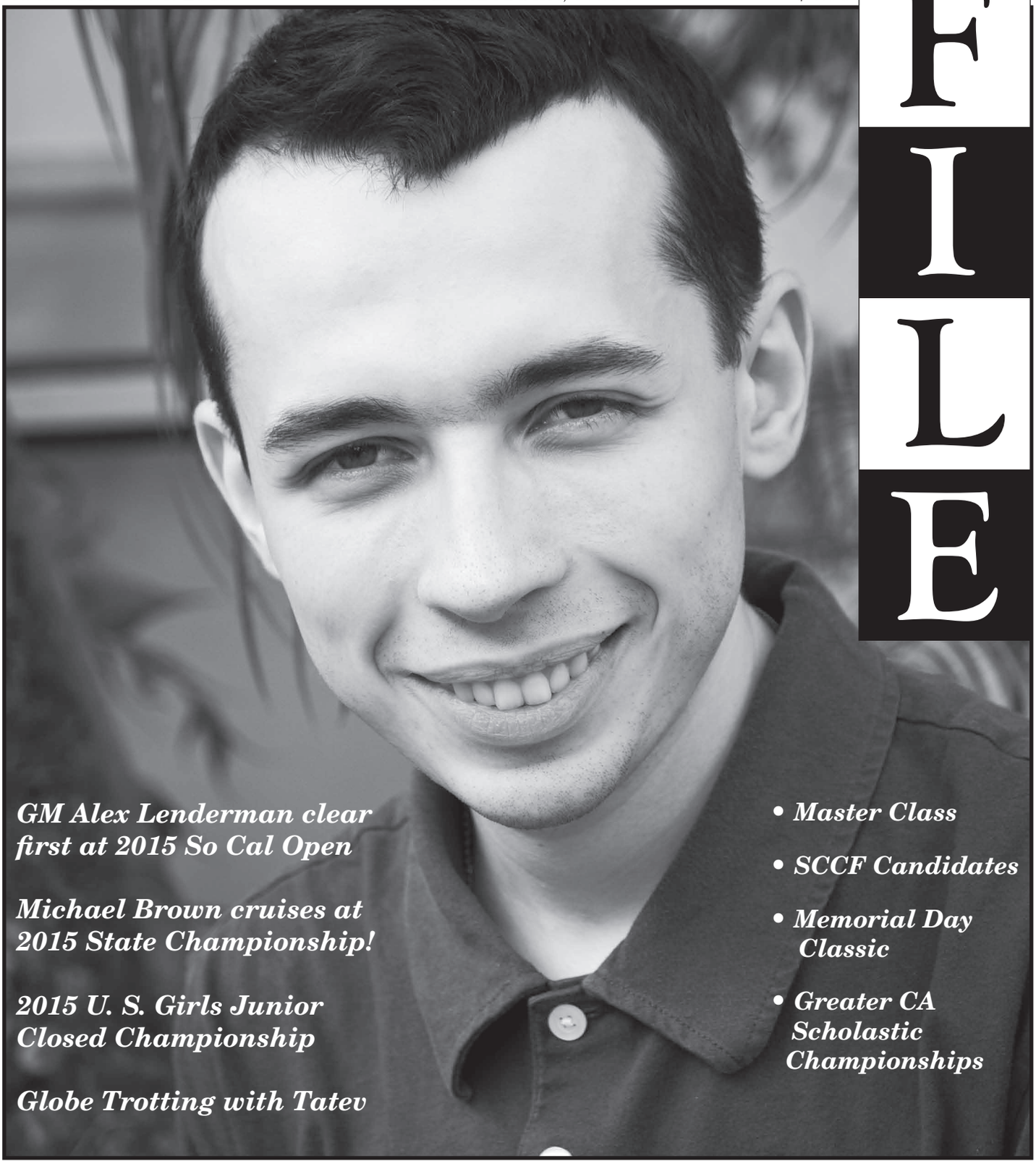


GM Alex Lenderman clear first at 2015 So Cal Open

Michael Brown cruises at 2015 State Championship!

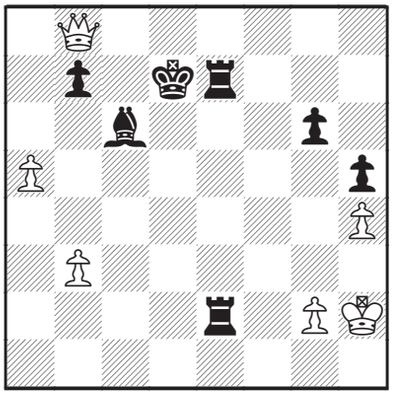
2015 U. S. Girls Junior Closed Championship

Globe Trotting with Tatev

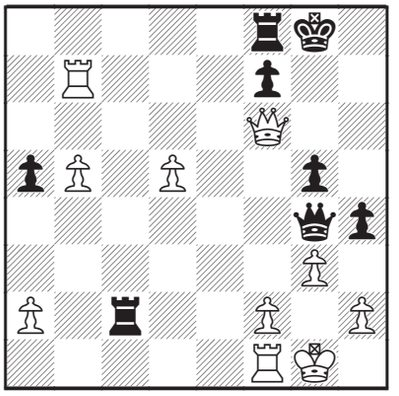
- ***Master Class***
- ***SCCF Candidates***
- ***Memorial Day Classic***
- ***Greater CA Scholastic Championships***

Inside Moves

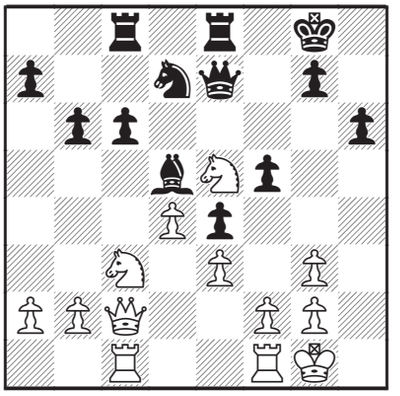
A ***tactical warm-up***: It starts out fairly easy, but they get more difficult. Solutions on page 47. - Ed.



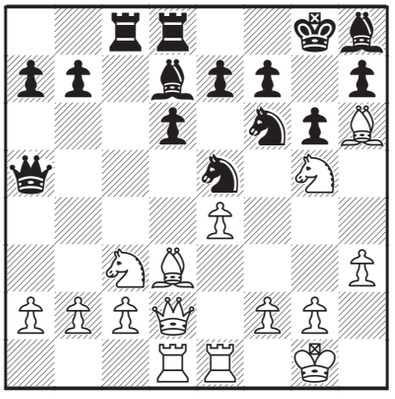
1. Black to Play



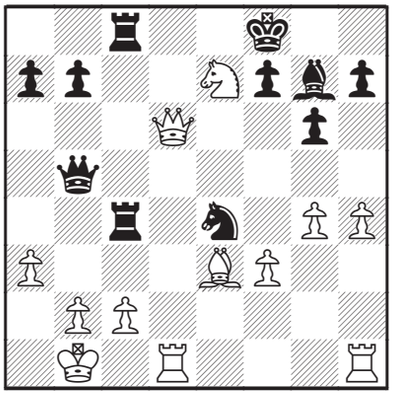
2. White to Play



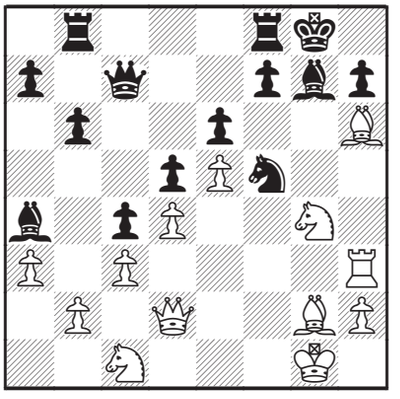
3. White to Play



4. White to Play



5. White to Play



6. White to Play

Solutions to
Final Points

From the Page 47.

1. 1. Rg7+ Kxe6 2. Qg4+ 1-0
Bykovtsev, Agata - Liao, Simone, 2015 USA Girls Invite, Tulsa, OK.

2. 1...Rxe2+ 2. Rxe2 Rxh1 wins a piece.
Virkud, Apurva - Wang, Annie, 2015 USA Girls Invite, Tulsa, OK.

3. 1. Rg7+ Kxg7 2. Qg5+ Kh8 3. Qf6+ Kg8 4. Ng4 h6 5. Nxh6+ Kh7 6. Ng4 Kg8 7. Qg5+ Kh8 8. Qh6+ Kg8 9. Nf6# , Regam, Jessica - Feng, Maggie, 2015 USA Girls Invite, Tulsa, OK.

4. 1...Rf2! 2. Kxf2 Qxh2+ 3. Kf3 g4+ 0-1
Virkud, Apurva - Yu, Jennifer, 2015 USA Girls Invite, Tulsa, OK.

5. 1...Qf3! 2. Qh3 Rxf2 0-1
Liao, Simone - Feng, Maggie, 2015 USA Girls Invite, Tulsa, OK.

6. 1...Rg1 2. Bxh5 Rg7! with threats of Qg2+ and Qxh2 would finish off the game. Instead, Black played 2...Qg2+ and won in 7 more moves. Grigoryan, Karen - Bajarani, Ulvi, World Junior Open 2015

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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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Positions

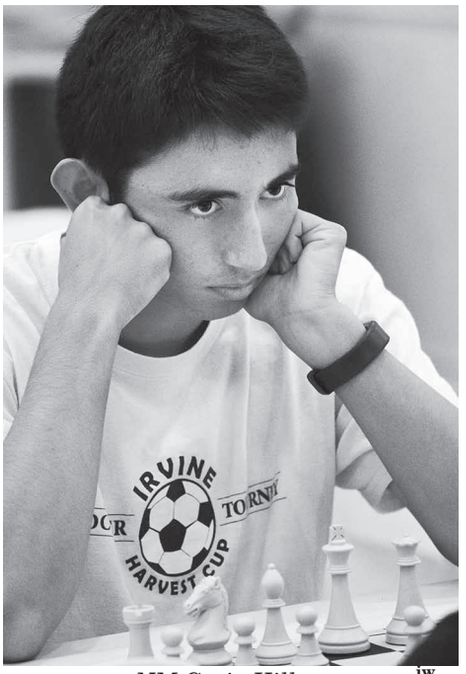
E-mail your letters to: RankAndFileEditor@gmail.com.

World Open 2015

Top scorers from Southern CA.

IM John Daniel Bryant - 6/9
FM Alexandre Kretchetov - 5/9
NM Joshua Sheng - 5/9
NM Varun Krishnan - 5/9
IM Timothy Taylor - 5/9

NM Craig Hilby scored 5½/9. After a first round win over a class "A" player, Hilby was paired against 8 GM's in a row with only one loss (last round)!
win GM Conrad Holt (2546)
draw GM Artur Jussupow (2586)
draw GM Sergey Erenberg (2585)
draw GM Alex Stripunksy (2561)
draw GM Irina Krush (2477)
win GM Alex Shabalov (2538)
draw GM Leonid Yudasin (2510)
loss GM Felipe de Cresce El Debs (2516)

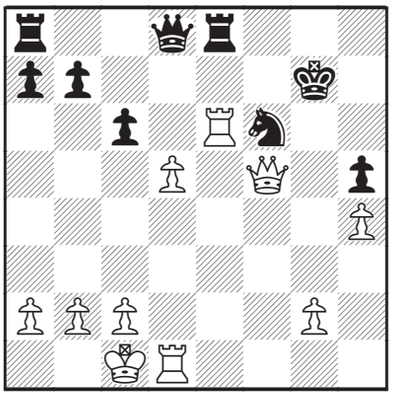


NM Craig Hilby jw

A fantastic performance, pushing his rating over 2400 (2422).
Here is his game vs. GM Shabalov.

2015 World Open
07.04.15 Rd. 7 B19
Hilby, Craig - Shabalov, Alex

1.e4 c6 2.d4 d5 3.Nc3 dxe4 4.Nxe4 Bf5 5.Ng3 Bg6 6.h4 h6 7.Nf3 e6 8.Ne5 Bh7 9.Bd3 Bxd3 10.Qxd3 Nd7 11.f4 Bb4+ 12.Bd2 Bxd2+ 13.Qxd2 Ngf6 14.O-O-O Qc7 15.Ne2 h5 16.f5 exf5 17.Qg5 g6 18.Nxd7 Nxd7 19.Nf4 Qd8 20.Rhe1+ Kf8 21.Qg3 Nf6 22.Nxg6+ fxg6 23.Qxg6 Rg8 24.Qxf5 Kg7 25.Re6 Re8 26.d5 ....



26...Rxe6?!
The computer says 26...cxd5. There follows 27. Rxd5 Qxd5 28. Qxf6+ Kg8 29. Qg6+ Kf8 30. Rf6+ Ke7 (+1.3).

27.Qg5+ Kh7 28.dxe6 Qh8 29.Rf1 1-0

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Under 2200
Leo Creger didn't start out so well, re-entered, then got in the zone and reeled off 5 wins in a row, ending up tied for 1st at 7½/9!

Kenneth Odeh was close behind with 7/9.

Leo Creger jw

U.S. Open 2015

Top scorers from Southern CA.

IM John Daniel Bryant - 6½/9
Konstantin Kavutskiy - 6½/9
Leo Creger - 6½/9
Dylan Quercia - 6½/9
Gabriel Sam - 6/9
IM Timothy Taylor - 5½/9
Vanessa West - 5½/9

Cy & Jack

By IM Jack Peters and IM Cyrus Lakdawala

Vinkovci 1968 B91
Matulovic, Milan -
Fischer, Robert James
Annotated by Cy & Jack

1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 d6 3.d4 cxd4 4.Nxd4 Nf6 5.Nc3 a6 6.g3....

Cy: This system is too quiet to stress Black. Matulovic probably wanted a safe, controlled position--maybe not the best choice against the man who may have been the strongest strategist of all time.

6...e5

Cy: More ambitious than 6...e6.

7.Nde2 Be7 8.Bg5 ....

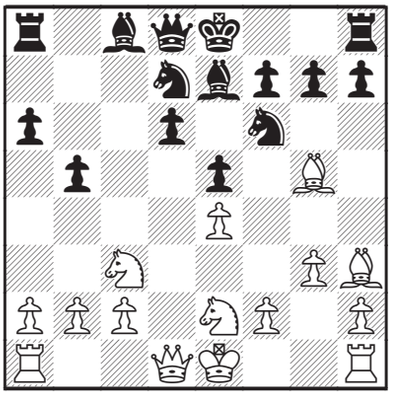
Cy: 8.Bg2 O-O 9.O-O Nbd7 10.a4 b6 11.Nd5 Nxd5 12.Qxd5 Rb8 13.Nc3 Nf6 14.Qd3 M. Carlsen - A. Naiditsch, Baden-Baden 2015. The game feels balanced after 14...h6.

Jack: I like Carlsen's treatment with 8.Bg2 O-O 9.O-O Nbd7 (maybe 9...Be6 improves) 10.a4 b6 11.Nd5 more than the old-fashioned pawn stormm11.h3 Bb7 12.g4.

8...Nbd7 9.Bh3!? ....

Cy: Matulovic had played this move before.

9...b5!



Cy: Planning a quick fianchetto in order to fight for d5. Right on cue, Fischer is armed with an improvement over the previously played 9... Nb6?! which appears artificial to place the knight in front of his b-pawn. 10.Bxc8 Rxc8 11.Bxf6 Bxf6 12.a4 Rc5 13.O-O O-O 14.Qd3 a5 15.Rfd1 M. Matulovic - S. Tatai, Reggio Emilia 1967. White controls b5, d5 and pressures d6, maintaining a safe strategic edge after 15...Be7 16.Nc1.

10.a4? ....

Cy: The bane of all mad scientists is that his creature is always altered from that which he originally designed. This move strikes me as an expression of disregard for the opponent's intent.

Question: What don't you like about White's last move?

Answer: The trouble is, White's soon-to-be backward c2-pawn is weaker than Black's d6-pawn.

Cy: 10.Nd5 without the inclusion of a4 and ...b4 is about even after 10... Nxd5 11.Qxd5 Rb8 12.Bxe7 Kxe7 $1 13.Bxd7 Bxd7 14.Qd2 Bc6 (14...b4 15.a3 a5 16.axb4 axb4 17.Qg5+ Kf8 18.Qxd8+ Rxd8 19.Kd2 is okay for White.) 15.Nc3.

Jack: If White follows his plan to control d5 with 10.Bxd7+ Qxd7 11.Bxf6 Bxf6 12.Nd5 Bd8, Black's Bishops guarantee ample compensation. He may continue with ...f7-f5, as in the Sveshnikov. Still, this represents the best White can achieve with 9. Bh3.

10...b4 11.Nd5 Nxd5 12.Qxd5 Rb8

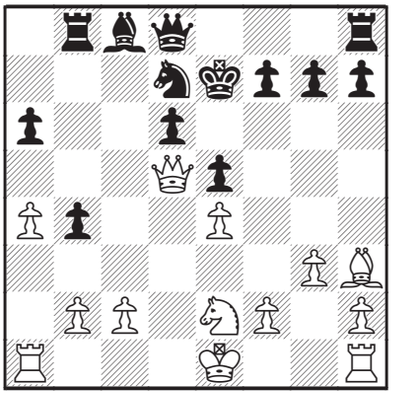
Cy: Covering his rook and preparing ...Bb7. Note that White's knight is denied access to c3, since Black's b-pawn now covers the square.

Jack: White's Knight would be great on c4 or d5, but it can't get there. Black's "weak" squares aren't weak because White cannot exploit them.

13.Bxe7 ....

Cy: That was Black's bad bishop which Fischer just unloaded.

13...Kxe7!



Cy: A key requirement to actuate Black's coming plan. Threat: ...Nf6 and ...Bxh3. The players operate on completely opposite rationales. Fischer plays for pressure down the c-file and on e4, while Matulovic bases his hopes on exploitation of the d5-square and the backward d6-pawn, neither of which he accomplishes. Watch how Fischer from this point completely has it his way, while Matulovic gets zero traction on his d5/d6 hopes.

Question: Why did Fischer give up castling rights?

Answer: His last move allows his king to participate in the defence of d6. Fischer correctly judged that his king is completely safe, since White's passive forces are in no position to generate threats.

Jack: Black may have expected } 13... Qxe7 14.O-O-O, when 14...Nf6? drops a pawn to 15.Qc6+.

14.Qd2 ....

Cy: The queen must leave d5 by any door of her choosing.

Cy:14.Bxd7 Qxd7 15.O-O Bb7 16.Qd3 Qc6 17.f3 d5! White's pieces are misplaced and Black already looks clearly better. I still think this is superior to the path White took in the game.

Jack: Both choices are awful. No wonder 9. Bh3 has such a poor rep!

14...Nf6 15.Bg2 ....

Cy: When no sorcerous scheme is available, what else can we do but follow the mundane course? This looks like a sign that matters have gone awry. Matulovic backs down, hoping to retain some influence on the light squares.

Cy: 15.Bxc8 Qxc8 16.f3 Rd8 and Black is ready to take over the initiative with ...d5 next.

15...Bb7 16.Qd3 ....

Jack: I think 16.Qe3 is a little tougher because it keeps Black's Queen off b6. However, 16...Qc7 17.O-O Rhd8 =+ still plans a breakthrough with ... d6-d5.

16...Qb6 17.O-O?! ....

Overlooking Fischer's next move. White should toss in

Cy: 17.a5.

Jack: You're probably right, although Black's Bishop can still reach the a6-f1 diagonal by } 17.a5 Qc5 18.O-O Bc6 with initiative.

And 17.a5 Qc5 18.c4 bxc3 19.Nxc3 Bc6 =+ leaves White with two loose Queenside pawns.

17...a5!

Cy: ...Ba6 and ...Bxe2 is in the air, when White is in grave danger of landing into a bad bishop position.

18.Rfd1 ....

Jack: This fares so badly that White should consider yielding a pawn by 18.c4 bxc3 19.Nxc3 Ba6 20.Nb5 Bxb5 21.axb5 Qxb5 22.Qc3-/+. He will have some chances to draw if the Queenside pawns are traded.

18...Ba6 19.Qd2 Rhc8

Cy: Pressure mounts on c2.

20.h3 ....

Jack: Houdini recommends 20.g4 Nxg4 21.Qg5+ Nf6 22.Ng3 g6 23.Rd2, but White doesn't have anything for the pawn.

20...h5

Cy: Fischer, quick to intercept even a shadow of white counterplay, alertly suppresses g4.

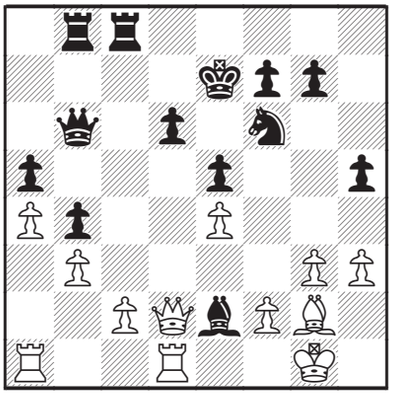
21.b3 ....

Cy: White's game sinks into atrophy, but I don't see improvements.

Cy: 21.Rac1 Rc4 22.b3 Rxe4! Now if 23.Bxe4 Nxe4 24.Qe1 Kf8 25.h4 Qc6 ...Bb7 is coming. Black's threats seem to stretch endlessly in all directions. 26.f3 Bxe2 27.Qxe2 Nxg3 28.Qf2 Nf5 29.Rd3 d5 30.c3 d4 31.c4 Re8 Black dominates.

Jack: Maybe White should try 21.g4 anyway. He can dream of maneuvering his Knight to e3 after 21...hxg4 22.Ng3 g6 23.hxg4. Admittedly, it won't save him if Black finds the sequence 23...Rc4! 24.g5 Nh7! 25.Nf1 Rd4! 26.Qe3 Rxd1 27.Rxd1 Bxf1 28.Qxb6 Rxb6 29.Kxf1 Rc6! 30.Rd2 Nxg5 -+, but that requires four excellent moves.

21...Bxe2!



Cy: Now we get a classic good knight versus bad bishop situation.

22.Qxe2 Rc3

Cy: Threat: ...Rxg3. White's dark squares leak badly, with no remedy in sight.

Jack: White needs his Bishop on d3 or c4 to put up any resistance, but he cannot do it without dropping pawns.

23.Rd3 Rbc8 24.Rxc3 Rxc3.

Cy: Renewing the threat to g3.

25.Kh2 Qc5 26.Ra2 ....

Cy: It must have been painful for a grandmaster to be obliged to make such a wretched concession. White's game progressed to a state of near-complete paralysis. Now I quite reasonably ask: Aren't Najdorf Sicilians supposed to be complicated? Fischer, through strategic magic, makes it look so simple.

Jack: The complexity comes from the variety of possible plans and counterplay. I admire Fischer's performance, but most of the credit for simplicity should go to Matulovic, who steered for a passive position.

Question: Why did White play his rook to the incredibly awkward a2 square

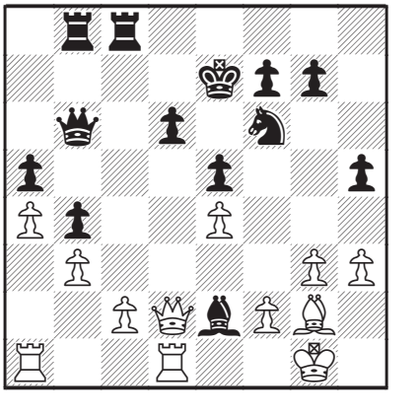
Answer: White's last move is unfortunately forced, since 26.Rc1? is met with 26...Rxb3.

Jack: I doubt that White has real chances of holding after 27.cxb3 Qxc1 28.Qa6 Qc7 29.Qa8, but I prefer Houdini's idea of meeting 26.Rc1 with 26...g6 27.Qd2 h4, increasing the pressure before pocketing material.

26...g6 27.Bf1 Qd4

Cy: Complete strategic domination. White's cohesion disintegrates, moment by moment, while Fischer's pieces all bulge with muscle as if they were a family of village blacksmiths.

28.f3 ....



Exercise (planning): The final faint vestiges of White's resistance vanished, and looking for counterplay in White's position is similar to searching for a rubber ball you tossed into the ocean a week ago, in the exact spot it fell. By now Matulovic must have pondered the vagaries of fate which brought him to this unwanted place. White's last move was a blunder in an already losing position. How did Fischer force the win of a pawn?

Cy:

Answer: *Step 1*: Chase away White's queen.

Cy: White is unable to save himself after 28.Bg2 h4 29.g4 Nd7 30.Qe1 Nc5 31.Kh1 Ne6 32.Kh2 Nf4 33.Bf1 Rf3 34.Kg1 Nxh3+ 35.Bxh3 Rxh3 36.Kg2 Rc3 with an extra pawn and overwhelming piece placement as well.

28...Re3!

Cy: Even more accurate is to toss in 28...h4! 29.g4 and only then play 29...Re3! 30.Qf2 Nxe4! when White is slaughtered.

Jack: And 31.fxe4 loses the Queen to 31...Rxh3+ 32.Kg1 Rh1+ 33.Kg2 Rh2+.

29.Qg2 ....

Cy: *Step 2*: Attack f3 twice, winning the pawn.

Cy: 29.Qf2 is met with 29...h4 30.g4 Nxe4! 31.Qxh4+ (31.fxe4?? hangs the queen to 31...Rxh3+) 31...g5 32.Qh6 Re2+! 33.Bxe2 Qf2+ 34.Kh1 Ng3# Mate!

29...Qd1

Cy: The queen approaches f3 with an almost apologetic manner.

30.Bc4 ....

Cy: 30.Bd3 h4 31.g4 Nh7 is also utterly hopeless for White.

30...Qxf3

Cy: On the chess board, theft is so much more satisfying than a fair transaction.

Question: Why win just a pawn? Isn't the a2-rook trapped in the corner?

Answer: The rook is trapped. Fischer's choice is more clear. He probably didn't want to allow his opponent unnecessary counterplay after 30... Qb1 31.Qf2 Rc3 32.Qa7+ Nd7 33.Bb5 Qxa2 34.Qxd7+ although according to Houdini it's still a fairly straightforward win for Black after 34... Kf8 35.Qxd6+ Kg8 36.Bd3 Rxc2+! 37.Bxc2 Qxc2+ 38.Kh1 Qxb3 when the b-pawn's advance will be decisive.

Jack: Too much calculation leads to time pressure and blunders! Trust me, I have plenty of evidence to back this claim! Fischer correctly went for the surer win, with less chance for anything to go wrong.

31.Qxf3 ....

Cy: "Parting is a joy when you can't stand the person you are with," remarks White's queen. There is no choice but to swap down to an absolutely hopeless ending, since treaties don't work out well for the side negotiating from a position of weakness.

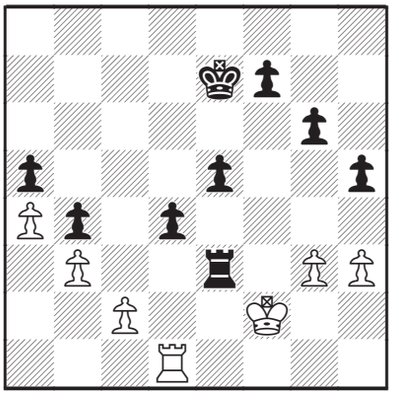
31...Rxf3 32.Kg2 Re3

Cy: *Step 3*: Pick off White's helpless e-pawn.

33.Bd3 Nxe4

Cy: A new regime expunges all records of the past, fallen one.

34.Bxe4 Rxe4 35.Kf2 d5 36.Ra1 d4 37.Rd1 Re3



Cy: ...h4 is in the air. That which was once a garden is now a ghetto, mainly due to Fischer's deceptively powerful play after White's strategic blunder on his 10th move. I'm pretty confident a 1600-rated player would win this comfortably against the world champion, so I'm not sure why Matulovic didn't resign here (or earlier!).

Jack: The story I heard was that Matulovic hated to see his losses reported in the Yugoslav newspapers. If he lasted until move 40, the result would appear merely as "adjourned." He does have a lot of 41-move losses and not too many in the upper 30s.

38.h4 Rc3 39.Rd2 Ke6 40.Kg2 f5 0-1

Cy: Another Capa game. That was just too easy!

US Ch. Berkeley 1984 B91
Kudrin, Sergey - Peters, Jack
Annotated by Jack Peters

1.e4 ...

Jack: This game took place in the fifth round. I had started horribly with .5-3.5 and felt desperate to notch a win.

Cy: The most difficult thing in the world is to play at normal strength when we begin a tournament poorly, since with a bruising reduction of ego, also comes a subtle loss of motivational energy.

1...c5 2.Nf3 d6 3.d4 cxd4 4.Nxd4 Nf6 5.Nc3 a6 6.g3 ....

Jack: I chose the Najdorf because I knew Kudrin relied on 6. g3 and I used to have a low opinion of it. I no longer trust this risky method of opening selection because I believe that familiarity with an opening outweighs its objective merits.

6...e5 7.Nde2 Nbd7

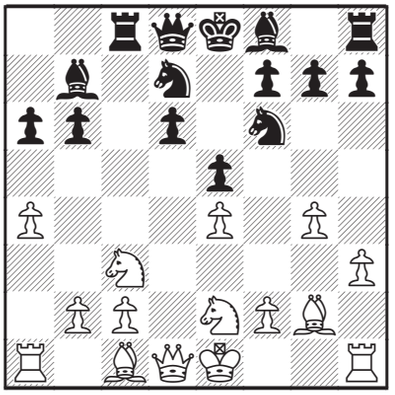
Jack: I tried 7...b5 against the other American who specializes in 6. g3, Alexander Ivanov, in 1993. He replied quickly and confidently with 8.Bg5 Nbd7 9.Nd5 Be7 10.Bxf6 Nxf6 11.Nec3 Bb7 12.a4 b4 13.Nxf6+ Bxf6 14.Nd5 Rc8 15.b3 Rc5 16.Bc4 $14 { and I never managed to generate counterplay. That's quite a handy fianchettoed Bishop on c4! Later, Ivanov said that he had won a similar game against Walter Browne.

The lesson: Don't play on your oppo-

nent's turf!

Cy: I totally agree. When I play some theoretically lame line like the Colle or the London System, I'm trading in my "+=" birthright for a familiarity advantage.

8.a4 ....



Jack: Theory claims that Black can meet 8.Bg2 successfully with 8...b5.

8...b6 9.Bg2 Bb7 10.h3 Rc8

Jack: I don't remember why I preferred this to 10...Be7, but both should equalize. Houdini likes 10... h5 to restrain g3-g4.

11.g4 ....

Cy: Of all the nerve! Kudrin plays Jack's favorite move: g4!.
The move gives White's knight a square on g3 at the cost of weakening all the kingside dark squares.

11...Nc5 12.Ng3 g6 13.O-O ....

Jack: Houdini recommends the untested 13.Be3, retaining the option of h3-h4.

13...Ne6

Cy: ! Jack begins to work over the dark squares.

Jack: Discouraging f2-f4.

14.Nd5?! ....

Jack: Badly timed. White should continue 14.Be3 and Qd1-d2, clearing d1 for a Rook and nearly forcing Black to develop his Bishop to e7.

14...Bg7!

Jack: The Bishop has more future at g7 because the a1-h8 diagonal may open after an exchange on f4.

15.c3 O-O 16.Ne2?! ....

Jack: Guarding f4, but allowing something worse. He should settle for 16.Be3 although 16...Nxd5 17.exd5 Nf4 =+ gives Black the edge.

16...Re8?

Jack: Pointless. I gave up on 16... Nxd5 17.exd5 because the Knight cannot go to f4. But 17...Nc5 sets up the powerful thrust ...f7-f5. Black would have an uncontested initiative thanks to his more active Rooks.

Cy: In general, Black should try and plug d5 with a pawn, rather than a piece in such Sicilians.

17.Be3 Nd7 =

Cy: I would still play to seal d5 with 17...Nxd5 18.exd5 Nc5.

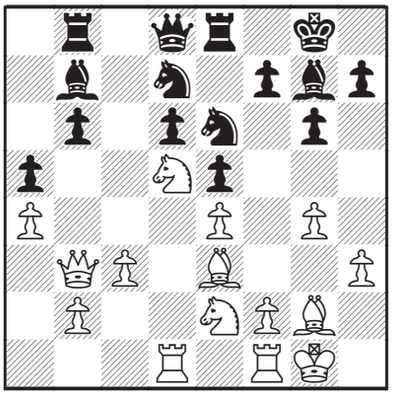
18.Qb3 Rb8

Jack: All right, but 18...Nec5 is simpler.

19.Rad1 ....

Jack: Black refutes 19.Nxb6?? with 19...Nec5 20.Bxc5 Nxc5 21.Qb4 a5! 22.Qxa5 Bxe4 23.Bxe4 (as 23.Nc4? Bd3 costs White a Knight) 23...Nxe4 24.Nc4 Qxa5 25.Nxa5 Rxb2 26.Rfe1 Nd2 27.Kg2 Rc8 -+, threatening to win the Knight by 28...Rc5. I'm sure I saw the first few moves of this variation.

19...a5



Cy: ! Excellent strategic judgment. White is unable to make good use of the b5 hole. Meanwhile Black activates his sleeping light squared bishop via a6.

20.Qa3 Ba6 21.Rd2 Bf8 22.b3 ....

Jack: White plans to lock the Queenside by c3-c4. Nothing can be done in the center. That leaves the Kingside ...

22...Qh4! 23.c4 h5!?

Cy: If Jack can't play his favorite ...g5, then ...h5!? is the next best thing.

Jack: Houdini claims that 23...Bb7 24.Nec3 Ndc5 favors Black by about 0.2 pawns. Maybe so, but my move led to a sharper fight!

24.gxh5 ....

Cy: !? A move made with the thought: In a life-threatening emergency, indecision is akin to death. Risky. I would stabilize with f3.

Jack: Sturdier is 24.f3 =. Black should not break open the Kingside by 24...f5?? 25.exf5 gxf5 26.gxf5 Ng7 because White's pieces come to life with 27.f4 Nxf5 28.Bf2 Qd8 29.Be4 +-.

24...Qxh5 25.f4!? ....

Jack: Kudrin also wanted activity. Chances seem about even.

25...Bb7 26.f5? ....

Jack: White should reactivate his Queen by 26.Qa2 = (or 26.Qb2=)

26...Bxd5

Cy: !

27.exd5 Nec5 =+

Jack: No direct threats yet, but Black will take control of e4.

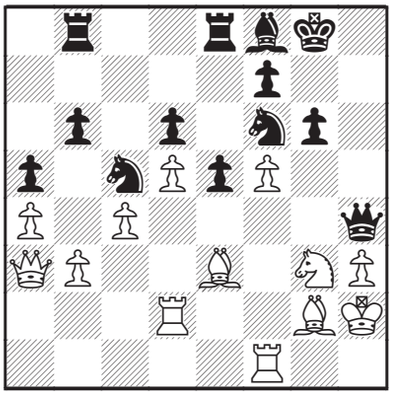
28.Kh2?! ....

Jack: Short of time, Kudrin chooses a "safe" move that actually increases the danger to his King. Houdini suggests 28.Qb2 Bh6 29.Qc3 =+.

Cy: 28.Ng3 Qh4 29.fxg6 fxg6 30.Bf2 Qh6 =+ is also in Black's favour.

28...Qh4 29.Ng3? Nf6

See diagram



Jack: White's last two moves have made 30...Ng4+ a very annoying threat.

Cy: The discrepancy in White's logic is that he believes he is the one attacking.

30.Bf3 Bh6

Cy: ! Now White's dark squares grow even weaker with the swap of bishops.

31.Bxh6 Qxh6 32.Rg2 g5! -+

Jack: White cannot hold back both ...g5-g4 and ...e5-e4.

Cy: ! Once latent threats now become visible. Jack's move flatly contradicts Kudrin's assumption that White is the one attacking on the kingside. }

33.Ne2 ....

Jack: If 33.Kg1, Black can evacuate his King from the battleground by 33...Kf8 (or plunge into combat with 33...Qxh3 34.Nh5!? Nxh5 35.Rxg5+ Kf8 36.Rxh5 Qg3+ 37.Bg2 Qe3+ 38.Kh1 Ke7 -+, as ...Re8-h8 will exploit the newly-opened Kingside files.)

33...e4 34.Bg4 e3

Jack: The passed e-pawn demands attention. Even more disturbing to White, a Black Knight or Rook could infiltrate through e4.

Cy: Also very strong is 34...Nd3 35.Kg1 e3 and White is unable to play 36.Qxd6? since 36...Nxg4 wins a piece.

35.Rf3 ....

Jack: Keeping the Knight from going to e4, but it finds another invasion route. White has too many weak squares to muster a defense.

35...Nd3

Jack: Threatening mayhem on e5, e1, and f2.

Cy: A redistribution of wealth is about to take place.

36.Kg1 Ne1

Jack: Perhaps 36...Nxg4 37.Rxg4 Ne5 38.Rfg3 Nxg4 39.hxg4 Re4 is most decisive.

37.Rfg3 Nxg2 38.Kxg2 Qh4

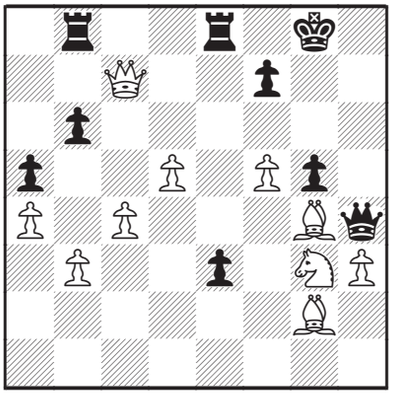
Cy: ! The move's inference is made plain. Threat: ...Ne4. The mad queen's diseased psyche rests unhealthily fixated upon White's still- living king.

39.Qxd6?! ....

Cy: This move invites fatal reprisal, but White had no defense at this stage.

Jack: Against 39.Bf3, Black can win fairly easily by 39...Ne4 40.Bxe4 Qxe4+ 41.Kg1 Qxf5 42.Qxd6 Qf2+ 43.Kh1 Qf1+ 44.Ng1 as long as he pauses for 44...f6! -+.

39...Ne4 40.Qc7 Nxg3 41.Nxg3 ....



Jack: The sealed move. The game continued after a two-hour dinner break. There is no blockade after 41.Qxg3 Qxg3+ 42.Kxg3 Kg7 because Black's King can walk the dark-square road to b4.

41...e2!

Cy: ! Jack: The Rooks need an open file!

42.Bxe2 ....

Jack: Or 42.Nxe2 Qe1 -+.

42...Qf4! 43.d6 Rbd8?!

Jack: Good enough, but I missed checkmate by 43...Re3! 44.Qxb8+ Kh7.

Cy: One of my biggest weaknesses over the board is that I tend to settle on the "good enough," in positions which demand an absolute.

44.Bh5 ....

Cy: Feeling enobled, the bishop offers his services to the cause. Kudrin hopes to insulate his own king by tying Black down to defense of f7.

44...Qd2+ 45.Kg1 Re1+ 46.Nf1 Rf8 47.Qxb6 ....

Cy: "It is distressing to see a once powerful woman, now reduced to that of a common criminal," says Black's queen to her sister, with a sad shake of the head. Fear of deprivation causes Kudrin to pause to close the gap on his material deficit, so he searches the wreckage for objects of value.

Jack: It's mate after 47.d7 Qd3.

47...Rfe8

Jack: Threatening 48...Rxf1+.

Cy: Black's pieces all turn in unison to White's king, as if they were a single individual.

48.Qf2 ....

Cy: Defenders quickly congeal around White's king.

48...Qxd6 49.Kg2 Qd3 50.Ng3 R8e3 51.Bf3 Rc1 0-1

Jack: I was relieved to win a game, but I never recovered from my poor start. I finished 16th with 6-11, while poor Kudrin managed only 3.5-13.5.

Southern California Open, 37th Edition

By Chuck Ensey

The Labor Day weekend event had a big turnout of 190 players, plus 2 reentries for an official total of 192. This was gratifying to the organizers after only 166 players showed up last year. The robust turnout was spread across all sections, but the U1800 section stood out with 43 players. The Open had 31 players, while the U2200 had the second highest with 36, followed closely by U2000 with 35.

l to r, GM Melikset Khachiyan, GM Yaruslav Zherebukh, GM Alex Lenderman and GM Varuzhan Akobian (So. Cal. Open Champ) **jw**

The Open section was the strongest ever with five Grandmasters (GM's Yaruslav Zherebukh, Varuzhan Akobian, Alex Lenderman, Melikset Khachiyan & Enrico Sevillano), plus two Women GMs (Tatev Abrahamyan & Nadya Ortiz).

GM Alex Lenderman of New York scored 5½ out of 6 to finish a full point ahead of GMs Akobian, Khachiyan and Zherebukh, plus IM John Byrant, all at 4½. IM Keaton Kiewra, Joshua Sheng and Craig Hilby tied for 6-7th with 4 points. Youthful players WIM Annie Wang, Xiexin Wang and Jianwen Wong tied for BU2300 with 3 points. Varuzhan Akobian has recently returned to Los Angeles and claimed the title of Southern California Open Champion on tiebreaks over Mekikset Khachiyan. GM Yaroslav Zherebukh resides in Texas.

Young players seemed to be everywhere, and in the U2200 four of them tied for First – Fourth Place: Bohan Li of Arizona, Danial Asaria of Santa Monica, plus Kevin Yang and Alex Costello of San Diego, all with 4½.

In the U2000 section, the more experienced players won out, with Joselito Quiba and Steven P. Miller tying for First Place with 5/6. James Gould was 3rd Place and six other players tied for 4th Place, including one youngster, 10 year old Robert Shlyakhtenko.

I played Shlyakhtenko in the last round and after a few hours of play, I noticed that he used almost no time! I thought maybe his clock was broken, but then I realized that he rarely took more than 30 seconds to make a move and for this event we were using a 30 second increment.

This was a new feature added this year, and the time control was shortened up from the traditional 40/2, SD/1, d5 to a new style G/100 +30. There were mixed reviews on this move, some people really like the old style classic 6 hour game, but in these modern times the movement seems to be going more towards the faster time controls. It will take several years for this debate to be settled, but I think we are on the right track and the future is with the increment over the delay.

A 30 second increment avoids the "clock punching monkeys" scenario so often seen at the end of games with 5 second delay. This way the result

See diagram

Kevin Yang (U2200) **jw**

Alex Costello (U2200) **jw**

can be decided over the board with a semblance of dignity instead of the crazy, mad rush of speed chess. Also the moves must be recorded by both sides, which is a good thing. As far as going from a 6 hour game to a 4 ½ hour game, I believe most players are happy with the more reasonable time schedule and the higher turnout this year may have something to do with that, although it is hard to say for sure.

One player told me he thought it brought out more of the younger players who like the faster time controls. I was thinking, well that is a good thing, but he complained that in the 5 rounds he played, he faced 5 kids! I think that was just the luck of the draw, I am not sure the faster time control had much to do with the abundance of youthful players; I think there are just more of them these days with all the successful scholastic programs going on. Anyway, I think 6 hour games are just too long and draining, and I notice even the North American Open, coming up in December in Las Vegas, has gone to a five hour format.

There was a clear winner in the U1800 section as John Paul Baligad of Las Vegas won $1,000 with 2 draws and 4 wins. Six others tied for 2nd-4th.

Luke Wang of Arizona also won $1,000 in the U1600 section with a 5½ point score. Dylan Gould and Andy Johnson shared the 2nd- 3rd place prizes for $500 each and 3 others split the 4th place money.

Finally in the U1400 section, David Olea won $600 with a 5½ point score, while Rigoberto Rodriguez and Michael Reitzenstein shared 2nd and 3rd Place. Jonathan Barbosa was BU1200 and four other players shared 4th place and 2nd U1200.

The Town and Country Hotel was a great host for the event with a spacious ballroom, skittles room and bookstore space. Bruce Baker and Jeffrey Turner directed flawlessly with very few disputes or problems. All the rounds started on time and many compliments were received as to the quality of the tournament and how it was conducted. We hope the next edition of the SCO will be even bigger and better.

Please put it on your calendar and save the date for next year: September 3rd-5th, 2016 at the same great location! Chuck Ensey

Best game awards:
1st: Mike Casella $75 (Open)
2nd: John Bryant $50 (Open)
3rd: Carlos Hernandez $25

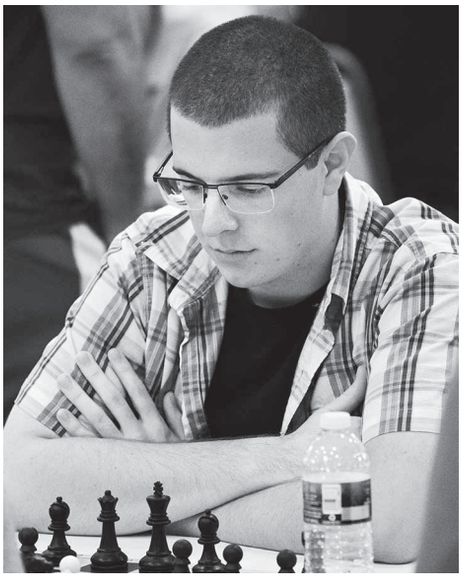
Best Game (1st Place)
SoCal 2015 Open
9.7.2015 Round 5 B42
Casella, Michael (2338) -
Aldama, Dionisio (2420)

1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 e6 3.d4 cxd4 4.Nxd4 a6 5.Bd3 Nf6 6.O-O d6 7.c4 g6 8.Nc3 Bg7 9.Nb3 O-O 10.Be2 b6 11.Bf4 e5 12.Bg5 h6 13.Be3 Bb7 14.f3 Ne8 15.Qd2 g5 16.Rfd1 Nd7 17.Rac1 Bf6 18.Na1 a5 19.Nc2 Nc5 20.Bxc5 bxc5 21.Ne3 Kh7 22.Nf5 Ra6 23.Nd5 Rg8

jw

See diagram

Joselito Quiba (U2000) **jw**



Steven Miller (U2000) **jw**

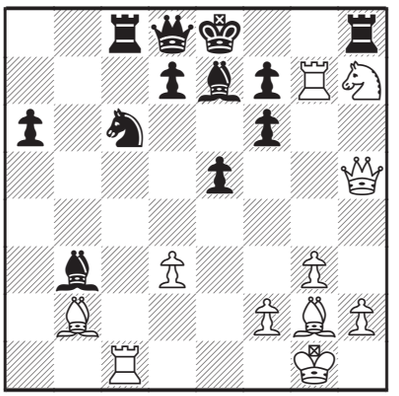
Luke Wang (U1600) **jw**

24.Rc3 Bg7 25.Rb3 Bc6 26.Nde7 Ba4 27.Rb7 Bxd1 28.Bxd1 Rf8 29.Ba4 Qa8 30.Rd7 Nf6 31.Rxd6 Rxd6 32.Qxd6 Qd8 33.Nc6 Qxd6 34.Nxd6 Nd7 35.Nxa5 Nb6 36.Bc6 Bf6 37.Ne8 Be7 38.b3 Rg8 39.g4 Rg6 40.Bb5 Na8 41.Nc6 Bd6 42.Kf2 h5 43.gxh5 Rh6 44.Kg3 Nc7 45.Nxd6 Rxd6 46.Nxe5 Rd2 47.Nxf7 Ne6 48.h4 gxh4+ 49.Kxh4 Nd4 50.Kg4 Rxa2 51.Ba4 Kg7 52.Ne5 Kh6 53.Nd3 Rg2+ 54.Kf4 Rg5 55.e5 Rxh5 56.Nxc5 Rh4+ 57.Ke3 Nf5+ 58.Kd3 Nd4 59.e6 Nf5 60.Ne4 Rh3 61.Nd2 Kg7 62.Bc6 Kf6 63.Bd5 Ne7 64.Kd4 Nf5+ 65.Kc5 Ke7 66.b4 Rh8 67.b5 Rc8+ 68.Kb4 Kd6 69.f4 Ne7 70.Ne4+ Kc7 71.Kc5 Rf8 72.b6+ Kb8 73.Kd6 Nc8+ 74.Ke5 Ne7 75.Nf6 Ng6+ 76.Kf5 Ne7+ 77.Kg5 Kc8 78.Be4 Rd8 79.Nd7 Rg8+ 80.Kf6 1-0

Best Game (2nd Place)
SoCal 2015 Open
9.7.2015 B23
Bryant, John Daniel (2486) - Davidson, Kevin (2236)

1.e4 c5 2.Nc3 a6 3.g3 b5 4.Bg2 Bb7 5.d3 e6 6.Nf3 Nf6 7.O-O b4 8.e5 bxc3 9.exf6 cxb2 10.Bxb2 gxf6 11.Rb1 Bc6 12.Ng5 Rg8 13.Nxh7 Be7 14.Bh3 c4 15.Qh5 cxd3 16.cxd3 Bd5 17.Rfe1 Bxa2 18.Ra1 Bd5 19.Ra4 Nc6 20.Rg4 Rh8 21.Bg2 Bb3 22.Rc1 Rc8 23.Rg7 e5

See diagram

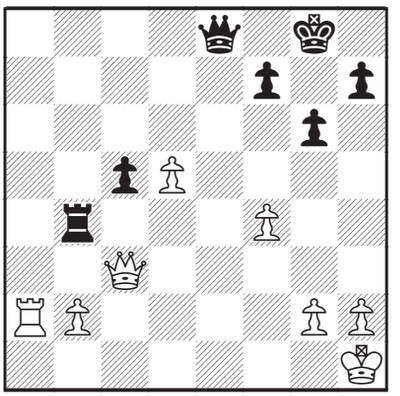


24.Rc4! Bxc4 25.dxc4 Qb6 26.Nxf6+ Bxf6 27.Qxf7+ 1-0

Best Game (3rd Place)
SoCal 2015 U2000
9.6.2015 A61
Taylor, James (1802) - Hernandez, Carlos (1942)

1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 c5 3.d5 e6 4.Nc3 exd5 5.cxd5 d6 6.Nf3 g6 7.Nd2 Bg7 8.e4 O-O 9.Be2 Nbd7 10.O-O Qc7 11.f4 Re8 12.Qc2 a6 13.a4 Rb8 14.a5 b5 15.axb6 Rxb6 16.Nc4 Rb4 17.Bd2 Qb8 18.Rfe1 Nb6 19.Nxd6 Qxd6 20.e5 Qd8 21.exf6 Bxf6 22.Bxa6 Bxa6 23.Rxe8+ 23.Rxa6 Qxe8 24.Rxa6 Bd4+ 25.Kh1 Nc4 26.Ra2 Nxd2 27.Qxd2 Bxc3 28.Qxc3 ....

See diagram



28...Rc4 29.Qd2 Qe2 30.Ra8+ Kg7 0-1

SoCal 2015 Open
09.07.2015 C05
Abrahamyan, Tatev (2437) - Lu, Albert (2325)

1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5 3.Nd2 Nf6 4.e5 Nfd7 5.Bd3 c5 6.c3 Nc6 7.Ngf3 cxd4 8.cxd4 Qb6 9.O-O Nxd4 10.Nxd4 Qxd4 11.Nf3 Qb6 12.Qa4 Qb4 13.Qc2 Nc5 14.Bd2 Qa4 15.b3 Qd7 16.Be2 b6 17.b4 Qa4 18.Qb2 Ne4 19.Nd4 Ba6 20.Bxa6 Qxa6 21.Be3 h6 22.f3 Qd3 23.fxe4 Qxe3+ 24.Kh1 Qxe4 25.Qc3 Rd8 26.Qc6+ Rd7 27.Rxf7 Be7 28.Qxe6 Qxd4 29.Rxe7+ Rxe7 1-0

SCCF 2015 Candidates

The 2015 SCCF Candidates Tournament was played over the June 6-7 weekend to determine the last 3 slots for the 2015 CA State Championship.

WGM Tatev Abrahamyan started off Saturday with two wins over Daniel Mousseri and Eugene Yanayt. Hot on her heels were Ilia Serpik, Alex Kretchetov and Timothy Taylor, all with 1½ points. Tatev pretty much dashed everyones hopes with a win over Taylor in round 3, leading the field by a full point. Tatev only needed a draw against Kretchetov in round 4, which she secured, to win the tournament and secure a spot in the Championship. Serpik and Taylor both won their last round games vs Mousseri and Furman. That gave Serpik clear 2nd (and a Championship spot). Taylor's win (see annotated game in Master Class article) forced a playoff against Kretchetov for the remaining championship spot. However, Kretchetov was able to secure that last coveted spot by winning the playoff.

The late Richard Kasa directed.

Tatev Abrahamyan jw
Qualified

Ilia Serpik jw
Qualified

Alexandre Kretchetov jw
Qualified (Won Playoff vs Taylor)

SCCF 2015 Candiates
6.6.2015 B04
Abrahamyan - Taylor

1. e4 Nf6 2. e5 Nd5 3. d4 d6 4. Nf3 dxe5 5. Nxe5 c6 6. Be2 Bf5 7. O-O Nd7 8. f4 f6 9. Nf3 Qc7 10. Nh4 e6 11. Nxf5 exf5 12. c4 N5b6 13. c5 Nd5 14. Nc3 Nxc3 15. bxc3 b6 16. Re1 Be7 17. Bc4 bxc5 18. d5 Kf8 19. dxc6 Nb6 20. Be6 g6 21. Qf3 Kg7 22. a4 a5 23. c4 Bd6 24. g3 Rad8 25. Bb2 Rhf8 26. Bc3 Qa7 27. Rab1 Rfe8 28. Bxf6+ 1-0

	Player	USCF	Rd 1	Rd 2	Rd3	Rd4	Total
1	Tatev Abrahamyan	2422	W6	W5	W4	D3	3½
2	Ilia Serpik	2354	W8	D4	D3	W6	3.0
3	Alexandre Kretchetov	2426	D10	W11	D2	D1	2½
4	Timothy Taylor	2395	W7	D2	L1	W9	2½
5	Eugene Yanayt	2339	W9	L1	L6	W8	2.0
6	Daniel Mousseri	2280	L1	W10	W5	L2	2.0
7	Craig Clawitter	2225	L4	D8	D9	B--	2.0
8	Vadim Kudryavtsev	2209	L2	D7	W11	L5	1½
9	Leonid Furman	2180	L5	B--	D7	L4	1½
10	Michael Casella	2338	D3	L6	U--	U--	½
11	Alaa-Addin Mousa	2237	H--	L3	L8	U--	½

Master Class
An Annotated Game

By IM Timothy Taylor

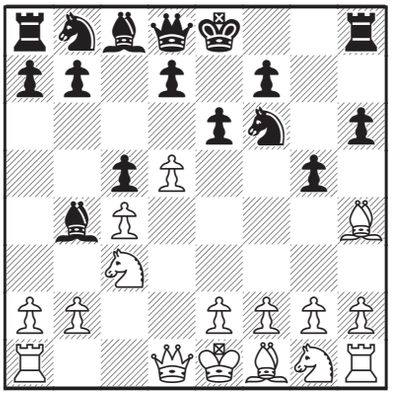
This game is from the final rtound of the SCCF Candidates tournament, a must win situation for me. My only chance of qualifying for the State Championship was to win this game.

Taylor, Timothy - Furman, Leonid
Nimzo – Indian Defense
(Leningrad Variation)
SCCF Candidates, Laguna Hills 2015

1.d4	**Nf6**
2.c4	**e6**
3.Nc3	**Bb4**
4.Bg5	**....**

I play Boris Spassky's favorite Leningrad Variation. Out of thirty tournament games at the highest level, Boris scored an awesome 77%, losing only once (to Tal, nothing to be ashamed of) while beating such "fish" as Smyslov and Keres!

4...	**c5**
5.d5	**h6**
6.Bh4	**g5**



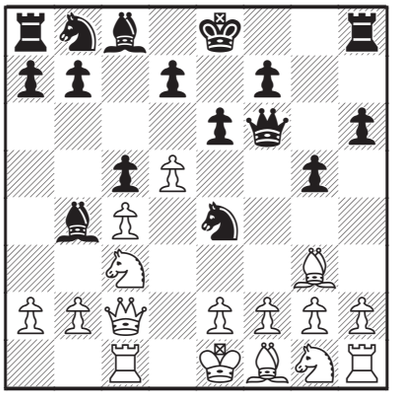
Michael MacDonald-Ross, in his excellent book "Nimzo-Indian Defense: Leningrad System," remarks that "early unpins with ... g5 are usually unsatisfactory for Black" to which I would add that this is no exception!

It is possible my opponent was already "out of book" here: 6... g5 is the sixth most popular move for Black, and White scores a powerful 60% against it. The top three replies are 6... Bxc3+, 6... d6 and the gambit 6... b5, all of which are better than the text.

7.Bg3	**Ne4**
8.Qc2	**Qf6**

During the game I noted that the other Q attack fails: 8...Qa5 9.Be5 f6 *(not 9...0–0 10.Qxe4+–)* 10.Qxe4 fxe5 and now 11.Qxe5 is good enough, but Mr. Fritz wants the fancy 11.Qg6+ Kf8 12.0–0–0 which should also win.

9.Rc1	**....**

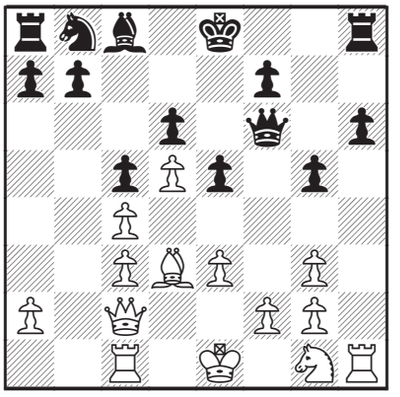


Here's the problem: Black's temporary initiative has come to a complete halt, but his kingside weaknesses will be there forever—and where is the Black King going to hide?

9....	**Bxc3+**
10.bxc3	**Nxg3**
11.hxg3	**e5**

After the game my opponent suggested that he should have played 11...d6 here, but I don't see a significant difference after the simple 12.Nf3.

12.e3	**d6**
13.Bd3	**....**



I suppose it's too early to call Black's position lost (Mr. Fritz is only at plus equals) but in human terms Black is condemned to perpetual suffering. White can attack on the b and h files that were opened by Black's early exchanges, while White also rules the b1-h7 diagonal.

Black's biggest problem is his unsafe king—vulnerable in the center, but probably even worse off if he castles on either side, as in both cases there is an open file waiting for him!

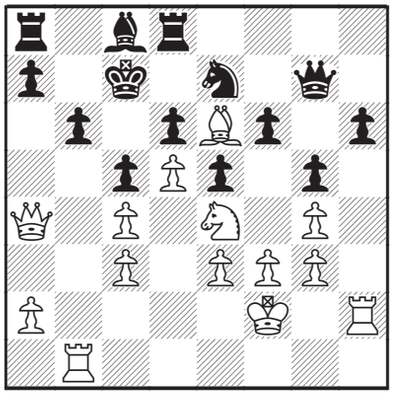
13....	**Nd7**
14.Nf3	**Qe7**
15.Rb1	**b6**
16.Bf5	**Bb7**
17.Qa4	**f6**
18.Nd2	**Kd8**
19.Ne4	**Nf8**
20.g4	**Kc7**
21.f3	**Qg7**
22.Kf2	**Ng6**
23.g3!	....

I decline to allow Black even one active piece!

Now the positional bind is complete: Black has no play whatsoever.

But how can White win? Having played the Leningrad many times before, I knew a sacrifice was the answer!

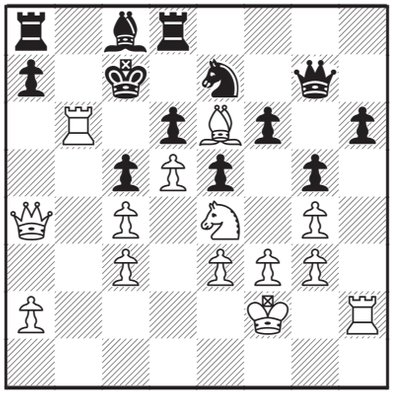
23.... Rhd8
24.Rh2 Ne7
25.Be6 Bc8



If Black sits, then something like this happens: 25...Qf8 26.Rbh1 f5 27.gxf5 Nxf5 28.Bxf5 Qxf5 29.Rxh6 g4 30.Rf6 which is less spectacular than the game but good enough.

Now you can test your tactical ability: White to play and win!

26.Rxb6!! ....



I took about twenty minutes on this move. Variation A was easy. Variation B was easy. But then I saw the move that Furman actually played, and that gave me trouble for a while—until I realized that White's position was so strong I could simply play calmly, a piece down, and my attack would be irresistible—note especially Variation C in the note to Black's 27th move.

26.... Bxe6

Black plays the tough one! The other two can be quickly dismissed:

A.26...axb6 27.Qxa8 Bxe6 28.Qa7+ Kc8 29.dxe6 with a winning attack.

B.26...Kxb6 27.Qb5+ Kc7 28.Qa5+ Kb7 29.Qxd8 Bxe6 30.Nxd6+ Ka6 31.Qxa8 and White mates in a few.

27.Ra6! ....

The key continuation that I had foreseen: the attack rages, a piece down, as Black has no counterplay and for the moment is basically playing without his Queen.

27.... Nc8

All moves that keep the piece lose:

A. 27...Bd7 28.Rxa7+ Rxa7 29.Qxa7+ Kc8 30.Nxd6 Mate.

B. 27...Bf7 28.Rc6+ Nxc6 *(28...Kb7 29.Qb5#)* 29.Qxc6+ Kb8 30.Kg1.

C. And finally the most difficult and spectacular: if 27...Bg8 28.Kg1!! and Black is helpless as the white king rook comes across to give the coup de grâce.

28.dxe6 Kb8
29.Qb5+ Qb7
30.Rxh6 ....

I learned this from Tal: after the most violent and dashing sacrifices, he was always willing to switch gears and win prosaically when necessary.

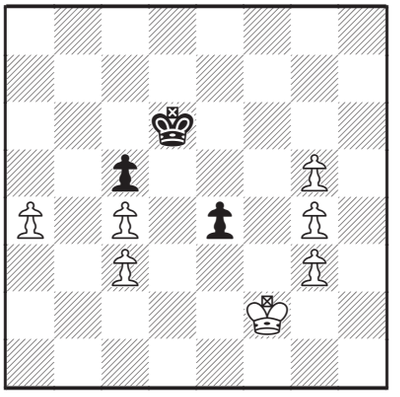
With two extra pawns, White will win the ending easily—but my opponent, instead of exchanging queens, allows a final combination.

30.... Nb6
31.Rxf6 d5
32.e7! ....

A neat finish.

32... Qxe7
33.Rfxb6+ axb6
34.Qxb6+ ....

At this point I calculated 34.Qxb6+ Qb7 35.Rxa8+ Kxa8 36.Qxd8+ Ka7 37.Qa5+ Kb8 38.Qb5 dxe4 39.Qxb7+ Kxb7 40.f4 with a winning the King and pawn ending, e.g. 40...exf4 41.exf4 Kc6 *(or 41...gxf4 42.gxf4 Kc6 43.g5 Kd6 44.g6 Ke6 45.f5+ Kf6 46.a4)* 42.fxg5 Kd6 43.a4



and one of the outside passers queens—Note White's perfect pawn structure!

The reader may find some quicker wins of course.

However, no such variations ensued, as my opponent, after a long look, resigned the game!

1–0

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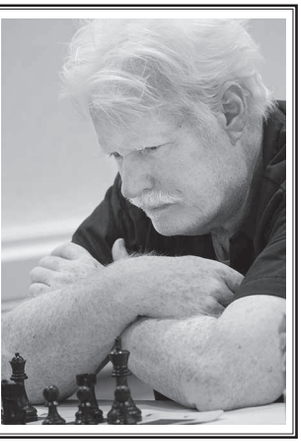


Michael Brown rolls at California State Championship

By Phil Chase

Michael Brown jw

It is fortunate that Southern California's best chess players have great spatial reasoning skills. Otherwise, they would have been unable to find the mysterious room at the top of the winding staircase in the castle of Beverly Hills High School where the 27th State Championship would take place. Somehow, they surmounted the steps and began to duel on the muggy afternoon of July 9.

The competitors included a wide range of characters, from the elder statesman IM Jack Peters, who could describe past encounters with Korchnoi, Larsen and other immortals, to the 18-year old Michael Brown, about to begin his study of applied math and physics at Brigham Young University. American Open winner John Daniel Bryant descended from the desert of Tehachapi with an optimistic style and a pessimistic vocabulary—after each game "I played horribly!" The incumbent State Champion, Konstantin Kavutskiy, could not quite catch the magic, but has developed his imagination and technique so that even more rapid improvement lies in his future. A Nebraska migrant, now residing in San Diego, is IM Keaton Kiewra, an amenable yet intimidating gentleman, who recently had a 40 game streak with no losses. He is now in Europe, hoping to return as a GM!

Alexander Kretchetov was unable to attend the first two days of the event, as the Russian consulate required him to fulfill a secret mission (renewing his passport). Alex did play three games, but his score was not included in tournament standings. One qualifier from the Candidates Tournament was attorney Ilia Serpik, recent winner of the Memorial Day Classic, who pointed out that he was the only non-professional player in the field. WGM Tatev Abrahamyan was the winner of the Candidates Event, and although she got off to an 0-3 start, won her last three games to finish in a tie for 4th place.

Keaton Kiewra jw

Player	USCF	KK	JB	MB	KK	JP	AK	TA	IS	Total
Keaton Kiewra	2502	X	1	0	½	½	-	1	1	4.0
John Bryant	2493	0	X	0	½	1	-	1	1	3½
Michael Brown	2449	1	1	X	1	0	-	1	1	5.0
Konstantin Kavutskiy	2434	½	½	0	X	0	-	0	½	1½
Jack Peters	2427	½	0	1	1	X	-	0	½	3.0
Alexander Kretchetov	2424	-	-	-	-	-	X	-	-	-
Tatev Abrahamyan	2417	0	0	0	1	1	-	X	1	3.0
Ilia Serpik	2380	0	0	0	½	½	-	0	X	1.0

Spectators might have noticed that the participants all had brown hair, except Peters (blondish) and Abrahamyan (purple).

The participants were all close in rating, and the trend for fighting chess was obvious from the start. In the end, there were only six draws in the entire event, several of those lasting 60 moves or more.

Michael Brown got off to a good start by defeating Keaton Kiewra with the black pieces, and that propelled him to an amazing 5-0 run, capped off by a brilliant win over Bryant in the 5th round. Even though Jack Peters played his best game in Round 6 to end Brown's streak, Michael still ended as the winner with a 5-1 score. Kiewra defeated Bryant in a game played early so Keaton could make his flight to Europe, and played up to his 2520 rating for the rest of the tournament, but the loss to Brown put him in 2nd place(4-2). Bryant defeated Peters (for the 5th straight time!), and wins over Abrahamyan and Serpik earned him 3rd place (3½-2½).

John Daniel Bryant **jw**

Abrahamyan and Peters tied at 3-3, as Abrahamyan completed her comeback with a piece sacrifice against Peters' Sicilian in Round 7, the last game to finish. The other places were filled by Kavutskiy 1½-4½, and Serpik 1-5. Kretchetov drew Serpik of the three games he played.

The amazing total of 26 sponsors allowed this State Championship to offer one of the best prize funds in the history of the event, $5500. Here is a partial list of the wonderful donors who created this successful championship: Alessandro Steinfl, Ashok Ramadoss, Ben Deng (Beyond Chess), Elliot Landaw, Show Kitagami, Eric Ferguson, Alvin Huang, Raymond De Turenne, Milton Chow, Armando Macedo, Max Baca, Larry Smith, Marian Nic Nita, Willis Kim, Ankit Gupta , John Wright, Ala'a-Addin Moussa, Dewain Barber, Adam Brody, Steve Morford, Dylan Quercia, and several more who wished to remain anonymous. (To sponsors: If I have inadvertently omitted a name, please let me know and we will include it next issue!) Therefore, the awards were as follows: Michael Brown $1800, Keaton Kiewra $1200, John Daniel Bryant $800, Tatev Abrahamyan $500, Jack Peters $500, Konstantin Kavutskiy $300, Ilia Serpik $200. Remainder will be awarded as Best Game prizes. The State Championship was organized by Phil Chase, and directed by David King and Dylan Quercia.

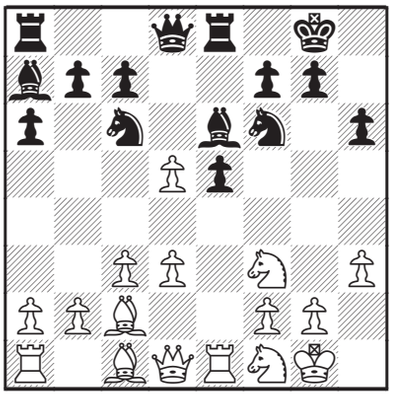
l to r, IM Jack Peters, FM Michael Brown, IM Keaton Kiewra, WGM Tatev Abrahamyan, Konstantin Kavutskiy, IM John Daniel Bryant, Ilia Serpik and FM Alexander Kretchetov. **jw**

2015 SCCF Championship
07-11-15 Rd 5 C50
Bryant, John Daniel (2514) - Brown, Michael William
(Notes by Michael Brown)

1.e4 ....
Going into this game I had a perfect 4/4. with my opponent trailing me by half a point. I needed to win this game to ensure first place, but I knew Bryant is a tough opponent and decided to play solid.

1... e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bc4 Bc5 4.d3 Nf6 5.O-O d6 6.c3 a6 7.Bb3 Ba7 8.Nbd2 ....
A normal Italian Game; nothing too special from the opening.

8... O-O 9.h3 h6 10.Re1 Re8 11.Nf1 Be6 12.Bc2 d5 13.exd5 ....



This was the first new move for me. I had never seen any player take on d5 so quickly. Other moves include 13. Qe2, where White is readying for Ng3, Nh2, and Qf3 without allowing the chance for Black to trade queens, and simply 13. Ng3, though then dxe4 is possible.

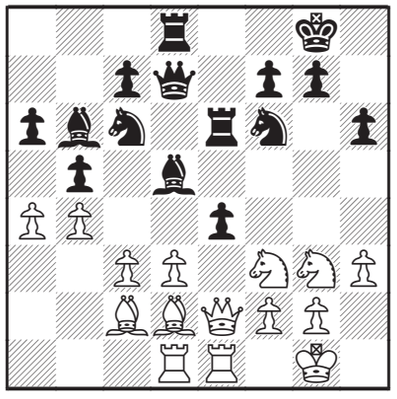
13... Bxd5 14.Ng3 Qd7 15.Bd2 ....
A bit passive for my taste; I think White should have played Be3 and traded the dark-squared bishops. His pieces get cramped after this move.

15... Rad8 16.Qe2 b5!
An important move in my opinion. Now Black also has threats of e4, where if White takes Black can slide his bishop into c4 and almost trap White's queen! White has to be careful here.

17.a4 Bb6 18.b4 Re6
Basically waiting for White's reply. Since d4 is not possible for White, I slowly improve my position and make e4 look even more threatening. How should White play?

19.Rad1? ....
Unfortunately, the most natural move on the board is also the losing one. White had to keep the d1-square open for his queen, because now I have...

19... e4!!

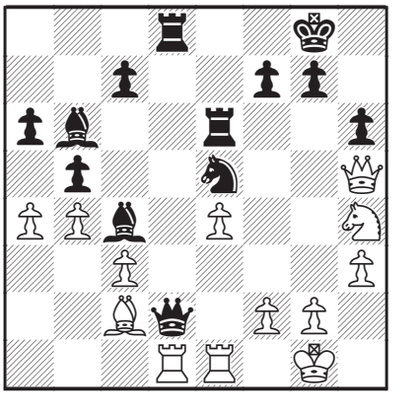


20.Nh4 ....
Forced. Taking on e4 is complete suicide: 20.Nxe4 Nxe4 21.dxe4 Bc4. 20.dxe4 Bc4 and White's queen is trapped!

20... Ne5!?
Perhaps not the best move objectively, but it certainly puts a lot of pressure on White's position. In fact, I was hoping he would play exactly as he did in the game, foreseeing my queen sacrifice. 20...exd3 This may have been the best option. 21.Qxd3 Ne5 22.Qf1 (22. Qf5 g6! 23.Qf4 g5!) 22...Bc4 23.Ne2 Nd3 and White's pieces are all paralyzed. In fact, White is almost lost here!

21.Nxe4? ....
The final mistake. 21.d4! was White's best option. Though my pawn on e4 is now a monster, White has closed my bishop on b6 and can hope to make some use of the f5 square on the kingside. 21...Bc4 22.Qe3 -/+.

21...Nxe4 22.dxe4 Bc4 23.Qh5 Qxd2!!



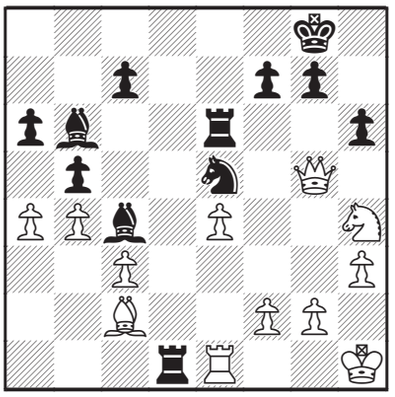
The point of my play. Taking the queen leads to a lost position as Black's pieces work beautifully to corner White's King.

24.Kh1 ....
Losing a piece, but none of White's other options looked very good. The f2-pawn is hanging with check, and taking the Rook leads to more material loss. 24.Rxd2 Rxd2 25.Rd1 (25. Rc1 Bxf2+ 26.Kh1 Be2 and White is forced to give up his knight. If he tries to keep it, 27.Nf3 (27.g4 Bxh4 28.Qxh4 Bf3+ 29.Kg1 Rg2+ 30.Kf1 Rf6 with a winning attack) 27...Nxf3 28.gxf3 Rf6 29.Kg2 Be3 and Black's attack is unstoppable.) 25...Be2! stops any back rank tricks.

24...Qg5!
Protecting the rook on d8 and my queen at the same time. After

25.Qxg5 Rxd1

See diagram



White is lost! He cannot save both his queen and his Rook at the same time.

26.Qg3 Rxe1+
and I converted the game with my extra material.

27.Kh2 Rc1 28.a5 Ba7 29.Nf5 Ng6 30.Qxc7 Bxf2 31.Qd8+ Kh7 32.Qd2 Rf1 33.Bd3 Bg1+ 34.Kg3 Bxd3 35.Qxd3 Rxf5 0-1

As after 36. exf5 Re3+ White is forced to go into a losing endgame, White decided to end the game. And with this I was able to win the title of So. Cal. State Champion!

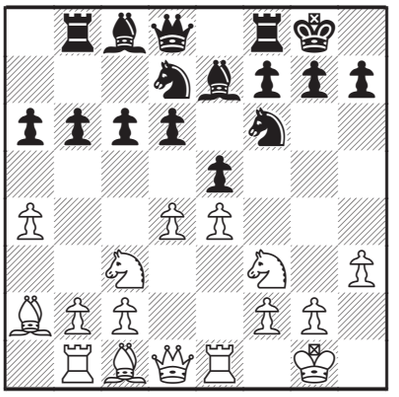
2015 SCCF Championship
07-12-15 Rd. 5 C41
Abrahamyan, Tatev - Serpik, Ilia
(Notes by Tatev Abrahamyan)

1.e4 d6 2.d4 Nf6 3.Nc3 e5 4.Nf3 ....
transposing into a Philidor. 4.dxe5 dxe5 5.Qxd8+ Kxd8 is another possibility but I didn't want to play an endgame so early on.

4...Nbd7 5.Bc4 Be7 6.a4 ....
6.dxe5 dxe5 7.Bxf7+ Kxf7 8.Ng5+ Kg8 9.Ne6 Qe8 10.Nxc7 Qg6 11.Nxa8 Qxg2 12.Rf1 Nc5 13.Qe2 Bh3 14.Be3 Qxf1+ 15.Qxf1 Bxf1 16.Kxf1 Ncxe4 17.Nxe4 Nxe4 18.Bxa7 is a long theoretical line that was played between Kiewra and Serpik in an earlier round. The endgame looks harmless, but due to the pawn structure which makes it hard for Black to create a passed pawn, I like White's chances.

6...c6 7.O-O O-O 8.Re1 b6 9.h3 a6 10.Ba2 Rb8
a pretty standard position in this line. Black's plan is to get in b5 and gain some space in the Queen side.

11.Rb1?! ....



I've played this line several times before as White and have misplayed it each time. The idea is to meet b5 with b4 to stop Blacks from advancing in the Q-side and I didn't want my pawn to hang after a move like d5.
11.Be3 b5 12.axb5 axb5 13.b4 is the more normal continuation.

11...b5 12.b4?! ....
another inaccuracy. I should take the pawn first.

12...Qc7 13.Be3 bxa4
because my e4 pawn is hanging I can't take back on a4. I thought that losing the a4 pawn is temporary and I'll get it back eventually.

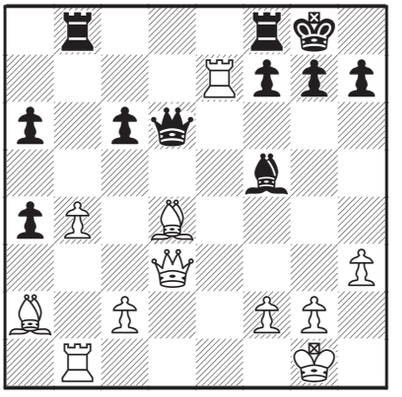
14.Qd3 d5?
Too impatient. White's pieces are more active and better coordinated, so opening up the position can benefit White. Black is behind in development and his pieces are loose.

15.dxe5 dxe4
15...Nxe5 16.Nxe5 Qxe5 17.Bd4 Qf4 18.exd5 and we can see the looseness of Black's position as the bishop on e7 hangs.

16.Nxe4 Nxe5 17.Nxe5 ....
17.Nxf6+ Bxf6 18.Nxe5 Bxe5 19.Bc5 Rd8 20.Rxe5 was my original intention and I thought I was winning a piece, but... 20...Be6! and my bishop on a2 hangs.

17...Qxe5 18.Nxf6+ Qxf6
18...Bxf6 19.Ba7 Qc7 20.Bxb8 Qxb8 I thought this was Black's best chance as he has a pair of bishops and a temporary extra pawn.

19.Bd4 Qd6 20.Rxe7 Bf5
20...Qxe7 21.Qg3 hitting the rook b8 and threatening mate.



21.Rxf7! 1-0
my opponent resigned here but if he takes my queen then there is a beautiful checkmate that follows 21... Bxd3 22.Rxg7+ Kh8 23.Rg8#

27th Southern California Ch.
07-12-15 Rd. 6 C95
Peters, Jack - Brown, Michael W.
(Notes by Jack Peters)

1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bb5 a6 4.Ba4 Nf6 5.O-O Be7 6.Re1 b5 7.Bb3 d6 8.c3 O-O 9.h3 Nb8
The Breyer variation, a small surprise. In two earlier games, we tested 9...Na5 10.Bc2 c5 11.d4 Qc7 12.Nbd2 cxd4 13.cxd4 Rd8.

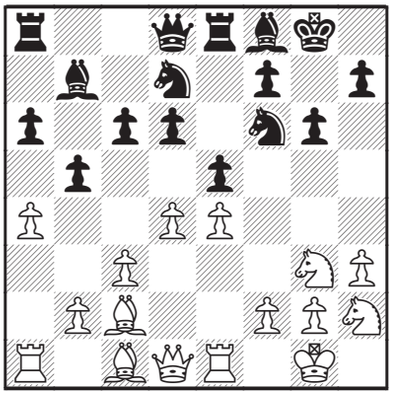
10.d4 Nbd7 11.Nbd2 Bb7 12.Bc2 Re8 13.Nf1 Bf8
Spassky tried 13...d5!? four times, with three short draws and a loss to Kindermann. Best appears 14.Nxe5 Nxe5 15.dxe5 Nxe4 16.f3 Nc5 17.Be3.

14.Ng3 g6 15.a4 ....
15.b3 d5!? 16.Nxe5 Nxe5 (also reasonable is 16...Nxe4 17.Nxe4 dxe4 18.Bf4

f6) 17.dxe5 Rxe5 18.f4 Re8 19.e5 =.

15...c6
The main line, and probably best, begins 15...c5 16.d5 c4.

16.Nh2 ....



I wasn't sure how to meet Black's novelty, but I believe in aggression. How fitting that I began an aggressive but doubtful plan. The modest 16.Bd3 += reduces counterplay by discouraging ...c6-c5.

16...Qc7
Also good is 16...exd4 17.cxd4 c5

17.f4?! Bg7?!
Black should definitely strike back with 17...exd4! 18.cxd4 c5 19.Be3.
Black gets a promising Modern Benoni structure from 19.d5 Bg7 =+ , as White cannot advance e4-e5.
19...b4 (threatening to capture on e4) 20.d5 Nb6=+.

18.Nf3 ....
The decentralized Knight returns, restoring equality.

18...c5 19.d5....
I rejected 19.fxe5?! dxe5 20.d5 because I imagined Black Knights reaching c5 and d6 after 20...c4. A Knight at d6 would guard f7 and frustrate White's attempt to create Kingside threats. Later, Black could shift most of his pieces to the Queenside for counterattack.

19...c4
I expected 19...exf4 20.Bxf4 Ne5 21.Nxe5 (nearly forced, as 21.Rf1 Nfd7 looks ideal for Black) 21...dxe5 22.Be3 c4, when White benefits from the trade of Knights.
After 23.Rf1 Red8 24.Qf3 Ne8 25.Qf2, White may disturb Black by bringing his Bishop to c5 or d6. And h2-h4-h5 may loosen Black's Kingside. Houdini recommends 19...exf4 20.Bxf4 Nb6!?, intending ...Nf6-d7. Then 21.Qc1 sets up Be3-h6 and Ng3-f5, with dangerous threats.

20.f5 ....
White could temporize with 20.Kh1 but I doubted that f4xe5 would ever worry Black, so I chose the committing move at once.

20...Nc5 21.Kh1 Rab8
It's time for White to stir up trouble on the Kingside. If he hesitates, Black will soon push ...b5-b4 to generate Queenside threats.

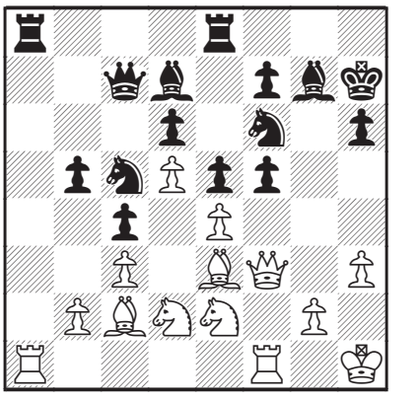
22.Bg5 h6
A difficult decision. Moving the h-pawn turns both g6 and h6 into targets. Black may have to advance ...g6-g5 later. However, if Black leaves the pawn at h7, White's Re1-f1 will chase the Knight from f6, and then either f5-f6 or h3-h4-h5 could step up the pressure.
I think 22...Bc8 is better because Black retains the option of ...h7-h6. White cannot take control of h6 by 23.Qd2?! because 23...bxa4 24.Bxa4 Bd7 =+ creates threats against b2, b3, and d3.

23.Be3 Bc8 24.Nd2 Kh7
Black correctly rejects 24...gxf5? 25.exf5 Bb7 (or 25...Nxd5 26.Nh5 with attack) 26.Bxc5 Qxc5 27.Nde4 Qxd5?! 28.Nxf6+ Bxf6 29.Ne4 Bg7 30.Qg4 because White has an irresistible attack.

25.Rf1 Bd7 26.axb5 axb5 27.Qf3 ....
I felt White had the advantage, but the position is too unbalanced to evaluate accurately.

27...Ra8 28.Ne2 ....
Preparing a pawn storm, starting with g2-g4.

28...gxf5?!



The sharpest and riskiest choice, turning the game into a slugfest where White must prove that Black's King is too exposed. However, that was beyond my ability.
During the game, I wondered if Black could shut the Kingside by 28...g5 29.g4 Ng8. Now I think that 30.h4 Bf6 (or 30...f6 31.Qh3, forcing 31...gxh4 32.Qxh4+=) 31.Qg2 += and Nd2-f3 causes unbearable trouble.
Perhaps Black should seek counterplay with 28...Reb8 29.g4 Rxa1 30.Rxa1 b4 although 31.g5 hxg5 32.Bxg5 looks uncomfortable for Black.

29.Bxc5?! ....
Second best. White offers a pawn to make e4 an outpost for his Knight.
Black would be delighted by 29.exf5? Rxa1 30.Rxa1 e4.
Houdini has convinced me, after much analysis, that 29.Ng3! is strongest. Then White meets 29...Rxa1 30.Rxa1 f4 by 31.Bxf4+=, intending to work on the f-file after Bf4-e3 and Ra1-f1. Black fares even worse with 31...exf4?! 32.e5+ Kg8 33.exf6 Bxf6 34.Qxf4 Bg5 (or 34...Bg7 35.Nh5+-) 35.Bh7+! Kf8 36.Qd4+-, with a relentless attack.

29...Qxc5 30.exf5 Kh8 31.Ng3! ....
More ambitious than 31.Ne4 Nxe4 32.Bxe4 f6+=, when Black can probably hang on.

31...Rxa1 32.Rxa1 Qxd5
Obviously the critical variation. However, I worried more about 32...e4!? 33.Ndxe4 Qxd5 34.Rd1 Qe5 35.Nxd6 Re7, when I saw no way to

overpower Black. If 36.Nh5?! Nxh5 37.Qxh5, Black fights back with 37... Bc6!, inviting a draw by 38.Nxf7+ Rxf7 39.Qxf7 Bxg2+ 40.Kxg2 Qe2+.
After 32...e4!? 33.Ndxe4 Qxd5 34.Rd1 Qe5 35.Nxd6 Re7, Houdini suggests 36.Qa8+ Kh7 37.Nge4 Nxe4 38.Qxe4 Kg8 (not 38...Qf6?? 39.Qxe7 Qxe7 40.f6+ while 38...Qxe4?! 39.Bxe4 Bf6 40.Bd5 += looks promising for White) 39.Qf3, but I'm not sure if White can capitalize on his extra pawn.

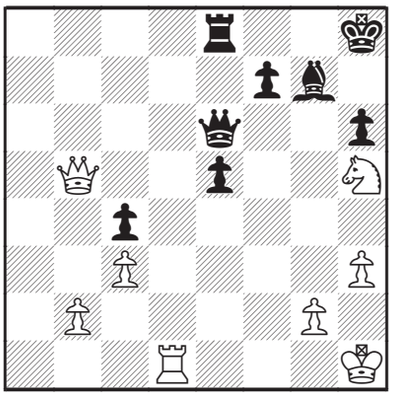
33.Nde4 Qc6 34.Rd1 d5 35.Nxf6 Qxf6 36.Nh5! ....
I had 19 minutes to reach move 40, and I used 15 of them on this move. I rejected 36.Qxd5?! Bc6 because Black may usurp control of e4.

36...Qg5 37.Qxd5 ....
White retains a bit of initiative, perhaps sufficient for "+/=."
I spent most of my time on the previous move trying to find a forced win after 37.f6? Bf8 38.Qxd5, which threatens to move the Queen to d7, f7, or e4. But I couldn't refute 38... Bxh3! 39.gxh3 (both 39.Qe4? Bxg2+ 40.Qxg2 Qxh5+ and 39.Ng7? Rd8! fail for White) 39...Qxh5 40.Qg2 e4 41.Rg1 Qf3 =+.

37...Bxf5
Or 37...Qxh5 38.Qxd7 +=
38.Bxf5 Qxf5
Not entirely clear is 38...Qxh5 39.Bg4 Qg6 40.Qxb5 Rf8 (Black is not ready for 40...f5?? 41.Bxf5) 41.Qxc4 f5 42.Be2, but White would have some winning chances because of his Queenside pawns.

39.Qxb5 Qe6??

See diagram



So natural, but a serious mistake.
If 39...Re6? 40.Nxg7 Kxg7 41.Qxc4 e4 42.Qd4+, White's extra pawn and better-protected King give White fair chances to win, despite the powerful e-pawn.
But 39...Rc8! should defend. I had a vague idea of fighting for control of e4 and f5 with 40.Ng3 Qg6 41.Qb7, but 41...Rf8 = wins that battle.
Or, if 39...Rc8! 40.Qd7 Qxd7 41.Rxd7 Kg8, the threat of ... Rc8-b8 saves Black.

40.Rd6! +- Qe7
After 40...Qxd6 41.Qxe8+ Qf8, White forces a winning endgame by 42.Nxg7 Kxg7 43.Qxe5+.

41.Qc6! Kg8 42.Rxh6 Rd8?!
Black's last chance is 42...e4! 43.Nxg7 Kxg7 44.Rh5 Rh8, when White must find 45.Rf5! (during the game, I looked only at 45.Rxh8?! Kxh8 46.Qxc4 e3 47.Qe2, when 47...Qe5 += challenges White to eliminate the annoying e-pawn) 45...e3 46.Qf3! to win. The main point is 46...e2 47.Qg3+ Kf8 48.Re5 Qf6 49.Qe3, picking off Black's passer.

43.Nxg7 Qg5
This time, 43...Kxg7 44.Rh5 Rh8 (or 44...f6 45.Qe4+=) 45.Rxh8 Kxh8 46.Qxc4 e4 won't succeed because 47.Qd4+ Kh7 48.Kg1 +- will block the e-pawn.

44.Nh5 1-0
I hoped for the snappy finish 44.Nh5 Qe3 45.Rh8+ Kxh8 46.Qf6+ Kh7 47.Qg7#

27th Southern California Ch.
07-12-15 Rd. 4 C76
Peters, Jack - Kretchetov, Alex
(Notes by Jack Peters)

1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bb5 g6
An odd defense to the Ruy Lopez, once championed by Vassily Smyslov.

4.O-O Bg7 5.c3 a6 6.Ba4 d6 7.d4 ....
White is content to transpose to a familiar line of the Modern Steinitz.

7...Bd7 8.dxe5 Nxe5 $1
Improving on our game from the 2014 Pacific Southwest Open, which continued 8...dxe5 9.Be3 Nf6 10.Nbd2+=

9.Nxe5 Bxe5
Theory recommends 9...dxe5 10.Be3 (Black renders 10.f4 harmless by 10... Bxa4 11.Qxa4+ b5 =) 10...Nf6 11.Nd2 O-O, nearly equalizing.

10.f4?! ....
Too loosening. Instead, the solid 10.Bb3 Qe7 11.Nd2 keeps an edge. If 11...Bg7 12.Re1 Nf6 13.Nc4 +=, White may threaten e4-e5 or Nc4-e3-d5.

10...Bg7 11.Bb3 ....
I mistakenly thought the possibility of e4-e5 would prevent Black from developing his Knight to f6.

11...Qe7 12.Nd2 O-O-O 13.Re1 Nf6 14.Nf3 ....
Best. I hate to spend more than 20 minutes on a move. I quickly realized that my intended 14. e5? would fail, but it took me 29 minutes to decide on an acceptable alternative.
The problem with 14.e5? dxe5 15.fxe5 ? is that Black wins with 15...Qc5+ 16.Kh1 Ng4 17.Ne4 Qxe5 -+.

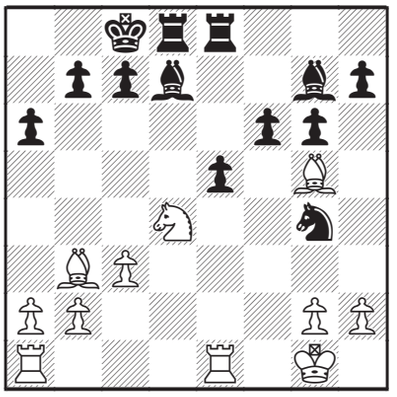
14...Rhe8
My mood improved when Black spent 23 minutes on this move. Black gets adequate compensation, but no more, from 14...Nxe4 15.Ng5 f5 16.Nf7 =.

15.e5 ....
The only move worth considering. If the pawn stays at e4, it becomes a target for Black's better-developed army.

15...dxe5 16.fxe5 Ng4
Probably best, although Alex criticized it later. I had foreseen that 16... Bc6?? would lose a piece to 17.exf6 Qc5+ 18.Nd4 +-.
But I overlooked 16...Bg4!?, as suggested by Kretchetov after the game. If 17.Qe2 , both 17...Nd5 and 17... Nd7 18.Bg5 Qxg5 give Black at least equality. However, Houdini points out the wild line 16...Bg4!? 17.exf6! Qc5+ 18.Kh1 Rxd1 19.Bxd1, when Black must yield another piece. White emerges with a small advantage after 19...Rxe1+ 20.Nxe1 Qc4 21.Bxg4+ Kb8 22.Be3 Bxf6 23.Bf3 Bxc3! 24.Rd1! Bf6 25.b3.

17.Bg5 Qc5+?!
Black can assure full equality by 17...f6! 18.exf6 Qc5+ 19.Qd4 Qxd4+ 20.Nxd4 Bxf6 =.

18.Qd4 Qxd4+ 19.Nxd4 f6?



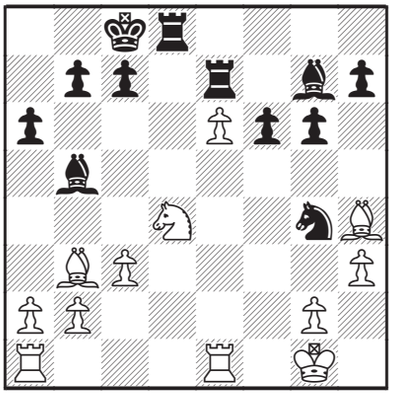
Black should sacrifice the exchange, but not by 19...Nxe5?! 20.Bxd8 Rxd8 21.Re3 += because White's Rooks will dominate the e-file unless Black makes the concession ...f7-f6.
Instead, 19...Bxe5! 20.Bxd8 Bxh2+ 21.Kh1 Rxd8 22.Bxf7 Bd6 appears defensible.

20.e6! Bb5
The first point is that 20...fxg5? loses to 21.exd7+ Kxd7 22.Be6+ .
Secondly, 20...Bc6 drops the exchange to 21.Nxc6 bxc6 22.e7! Rd5! 23.Bxd5 cxd5, when Houdini claims White should press his advantage with 24.Be3! Rxe7 25.Bc5.

21.Bh4? ....
Too slow! Not 21.e7?? Rxd4 -+ .
White must act at once with 21.Nxb5 axb5 22.e7! Rd6 (useless is 22...Rd7 ? 23.Be6 fxg5 24.Bxg4 +-) 23.Bf7!, picking up the exchange. Even the toughest defense, 23...Kd7 24.Bxe8+ Kxe8, should not save the game after 25.Bf4 Ne5 26.Rad1.
Nor can Black survive 21.Nxb5 fxg5 because of 22.e7!, intending to refute 22...axb5 by 23.exd8=Q+ Rxd8 24.Be6+.

21...Re7?
Too slow! White has only a small advantage after 21...Ne5 22.Nxb5 axb5 23.a4 b4.

22.h3 +- ....



22.... Nh6
Black must relegate the Knight to the edge, as 22...Ne5 drops material to 23.Rxe5 g5 (or 23...fxe5 24.Nxb5 +-) 24.Rxb5 axb5 25.Nf5 +-.

23.Nxb5 axb5 24.a4! +-
White wants an open a-file.

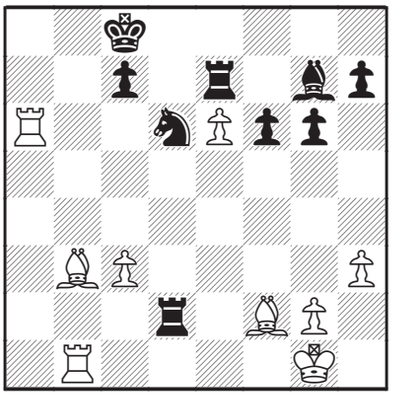
24...b4 25.Bf2 bxc3 26.bxc3 Nf5
After 26...Rd3 27.Bc5 Re8 28.e7 +-, White's active pieces can support the e-pawn or make threats against Black's King. One possibility is 28... f5 29.Bc4! Rd2 (or 29...Rxc3 30.Be6+ Kb8 31.Bd7 +-) 30.Ra3 b6 31.a5! bxc5 32.a6 Kb8 33.a7+ Ka8 34.Bb5.

27.a5 Rd2 28.a6 ....
Suddenly White has an economical mating attack.

28...bxa6
Black cannot stand 28...Kb8 29.axb7 Kxb7 30.Reb1.

29.Rxa6 Nd6
Black lasts a little longer with 29... Rb2 30.Ba4 Rb8, but 31.Ba7 Rb2 32.Bc5 +- is too much.

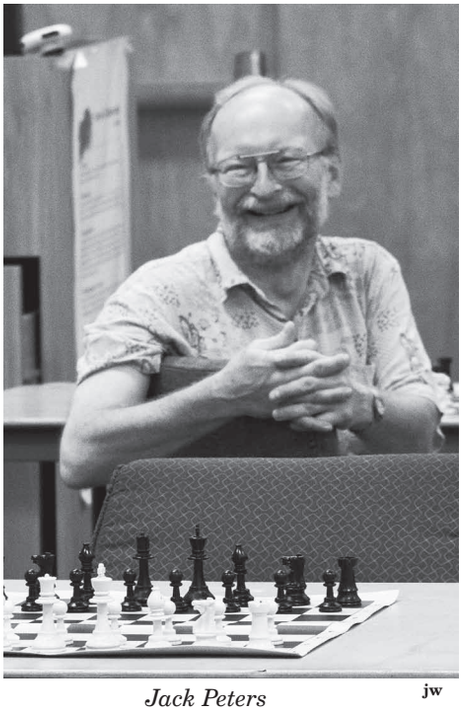
30.Rb1! ....



Threatening 31. Ra8+ Kb7 32. Bd5#.

30...Nb5
There is no salvation in 30...Kd8 31.Ra8+ Nc8 32.Bc4.

31.Bc4 c6 32.Rxc6+ 1-0
As 32.Rxc6+ Nc7 runs into 33.Ba6+ Kd8 34.Rb8# .



Jack Peters **jw**

Pawn Sacrifice - A Movie Review

By Jack Peters

I saw "Pawn Sacrifice" this afternoon. I didn't think it was a good movie, but, surprisingly, my wife Sharon liked it. Fischer is portrayed as rude, crazy and obsessed by chess, which probably isn't too far off the mark. The other significant characters are Spassky (who displays some personality, but is basically a representation of Soviet might), Lombardy (a very unrealistic portrayal), and Fischer's lawyer Paul Marshall (whose role is greatly exaggerated).

I tried to be tolerant of factual errors. Almost every chess movie gets things wrong. But I couldn't help thinking that this was a sloppily-made film, and not just for chess reasons. It shows Paul Marshall telling Fischer in 1965 that he was going to make him a star "like Jimi Hendrix." In 1965, Jimi Hendrix was still an unknown. Some of the background music was more recent and not what Fischer would have liked. Doesn't everyone know Fischer preferred Motown?

The purpose of the Paul Marshall character was to have someone taking care of Fischer's money woes, insulating him from real life. This bothered me because I feel that it diminishes the accomplishments of the real Fischer, who achieved his chess success while overcoming the hurdles of trying to earn a living from a not at all lucrative game.

Also, the movie tried to create excitement by having the characters rushing about while music played very loudly. It it had been better written, these tricks wouldn't have been needed.

I was pleasantly surprised to see that some chess positions were accurate. They showed the blunder ...Bd6xh2 in Game #1 of the world championship, although they had Fischer resign instantly after the reply g2-g3. They talked about the Benoni in Game #3 and the daring ...Nf6-h5 move, followed by ...Qd8-h4 and ...Nf6-g4. I couldn't see all the pieces at the end of Game #5, but what I could see was correct. They showed Fischer starting Game #6 with 1. d4 and they had Spassky standing to applaud him when he resigned. They also called Game #6 the greatest game of all time, and they had a couple of know-nothing commentators saying, before the game, that the winner of Game #6 would win the match. I think this is what Tony Saidy calls "artistic license."

The chess consultant was Richard Berube, whom I don't know. On the FIDE website, he is listed as a FM from Canada, born in 1960, who has run tournaments in Quebec. I think he did a pretty good job on the 1972 match, but there were some other scenes where the moviemakers obviously should have listened to him. For example, they had spectators following the games, move by move, in other cities, and the spectators were punching chess clocks just like the players! The Fischer and Spassky characters moved the pieces a bit clumsily, but much better than most actors in other chess movies.

When Fischer arrives in Santa Monica for the 1966 Piatigorsky Cup, he stays in a motel and loses his virginity to a prostitute. More artistic license ... But they do show him losing to Spassky and finishing second in the tournament.

The film uses descriptive notation for all of the chess talk. I wish they had used algebraic notation so young viewers today would have a better chance of understanding it. As far as I know, Fischer did use descriptive notation, as did most Americans in 1972.

The movie included a brief segment of the famous Dick Cavett interview where Fischer says the highlight of winning a chess game is when he "breaks his ego." But they have Tobey McGuire's face and voice substituted for the real Fischer, and the scene is not as chilling as when Bobby said it.

There were about 30 people in the screening room when Sharon and I watched the film, and I was surprised how quiet everyone was when it ended. No applause, no boos, no rushing for the exit. I couldn't tell if they were stunned or bored or disappointed. Maybe some of them were reviewers who do this all the time, and it's routine for them. The audience included one young man who played in scholastic tournaments about a decade ago, but no one else I recognized.

Your film critic, Jack Peters

U.S. Girls Junior Closed Championship

By Annie Wang

In June, I participated in the prestigious U.S. Girls Junior Closed Championship held in Tulsa, Oklahoma. Seven of the ten highest rated girls under 21, according to the USCF May rating lists, including fellow southern Californians Simone Liao and Agata Bykovtsev, participated. After flying from Las Vegas right after the National Open, my dad and I arrived in Tulsa just a few hours before the first round started. Frank Berry, the TD and co-organizer along with his brother Jim, picked us up at the airport with USCF President WIM Ruth Haring. The playing venue was a historical hotel off a busy freeway and the schedule an exhausting two-rounds per day, with the exception of day one. The time control was 90 minutes with 30 seconds increment from move one.

I did well in the beginning of the tournament, leading after three rounds with a perfect score. However, a losing streak of three games put me in fifth place after six rounds, along with other two three pointers. Game 5 against Carissa Yip from Massachusetts was a roller coaster of a game that was full of drama; I was better after the opening, then winning, then totally lost, and then winning again, but lost on time in the end. I annotated this memorable game below for the reader. I managed to obtain 2½ out of the remaining three games. In the end, I won second place, after Ashritha Eswaran from Northern California, a participant of the 2014 U.S. Women's Championship, and the lowest rated player in the event.

Best Game Award
2015 US Girls Junior Closed
Tulsa 6.24.15 Rd. 5 E63
Wang, Annie - Yip, Carissa

1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 g6 3.Nc3 Bg7 4.g3 0–0 5.Bg2 d6 6.Nf3 Nc6 7.0–0 a6 8.b3 Rb8 9.Bb2 b5 10.cxb5 axb5 11.Rc1 Nb4?!

Not the main line in this position. 11...b4 12.Na4 is the main line.

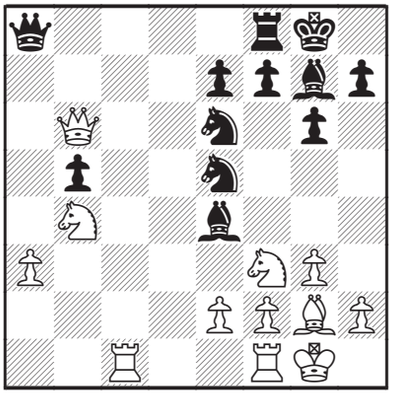
12.a3?! ....
12.e4!? Controlling the d5 square, which is essential to both White and Black in this opening. If White manages to get a pawn on d5, he will have fixed Black's weak pawn on c7. If Black manages to gain control of the d5 square, he will be able to push his c7 pawn to c5, gaining space and getting rid of his weakness.

12...Na6 13.b4 c5 14.bxc5 dxc5 15.dxc5 Nxc5 16.Na2?! ....
16.Nd5! Qxd5 17.Qxd5 Nxd5 18.Bxg7 Kxg7 19.Rxc5 White's pieces are active and occupying excellent squares, while Black's pieces are not yet developed and hold defensive positions.

16...Ne6 17.Qb3 Bb7 18.Be5 Bd5 19.Qb2 Rb6 20.Nb4?! ....
20.Nc3!? White's knight is better on c3 than b4, as on c3, where the knight can attack Black's b5 pawn, and also force Black's d6 bishop away from its centralized outpost.

20...Bb7 21.Bh3! 20...Be4 21.Qb3?! Qa8
21...Bh6 22.Rc3 White blocks her own e4 Bishop diagonal. So Black is trying to trade White's light-colored bishop by playing 23...Ng4. 22...Ng4!

22.Qe3! Ng4?! 23.Qxb6 Nxe5



24.Nh4? ....
A positional blunder. I missed Black's strong 24…Nd4. 24.Qa6! White is up material, so naturally I should aim to trade off the pieces into an endgame. 24...Bxf3 25.exf3!? White needs the g2 bishop to cover holes in the kingside, such as h3. 25...Nxf3+ 26.Kh1.

24...Nd4! 25.Rfe1?! ....
25.Kh1!? White needs to get his king away from the g1 square, where Black's e5 knight has threats of a discovery attack. 25...Nxe2 (25...g5? 26.Qxd4) 26.Rc7 g5? 27.Qe3.

25...g5!
Even better is 25...Bxg2! 26.Nxg2 Qxa3.

26.f3?? ....
26.Bxe4!? White needs to get rid of Black's active minor pieces. 26...Qxe4 27.Ng2 Qg4 27...Nxe2 merely leads to a perpetual check. 28.Kf1.

26...Qxa3 27.fxe4?! ....
27.Qc5!? Protecting the c1 rook, this preventing Black from going 27... Nxe2+.

27...Nxe2+ 28.Kh1 Nxc1 29.Nf5 Qxb4 30.Rxc1 Bf6 31.Qb7? ....
Purpose?

31...Nd3 32.Rf1 Qc5 33.h3 ....
Purpose?

33...b4 34.Nh6+ Kg7 35.Nf5+ Kh8 36.Nh6 Nf2+ 37.Kh2 ....
I had about less than one minute left on my clock, while my opponent had a few minutes left.

37...Be5 38.Qa6 b3 39.Qe2 b2 40.Qf3 ....
Now I had only a few seconds left on my clock, while Carissa had one or two minutes.

40...Qc1 41.Qf5 Bf6??
A huge mistake.

42.e5 Bg7 43.Nxf7+!! Kg8 44.e6? ....
44.Bd5!

44...Rb8 45.Nxg5 b1Q?? 46.Qf7+ Kh8 47.Rxc1 Qxc1 48.Qf5 Qb1?? 49.Be4 Ng4+?? 50.hxg4 Qb2+ 51.Kh3 Kg8 52.Qxh7+ ....
52.Qf7+!

52...Kf8 53.Qg6 ....
53.Qf5+

53...Qf2 0–1

The closing ceremony was held right after the last round. TD/Organizer Mr. Frank Berry and USCF President Haring gave out prizes to the players. Besides winning second prize in the tournament, I, along with my Carissa Yip, won the best game prize for our Round 5 encounter.
An end of tournament celebration is always joyful, no matter what the result. A group of 16 people, including all girls who had not left already, along with their parents and Ashritha's coach, went to a popular Mexican restaurant across the street from our hotel. It was past nine o'clock already, but we had to wait for almost 20 minutes to get a table. Of course, there was a lot of talking, laughing, and taking pictures.

I am grateful to Messrs. Frank and Jim Berry for organizing and sponsoring this tournament. I also appreciate the fact that USCF gives top girls from around the country the opportunity to compete against each other, and thank President Haring for taking the time to travel to the event. All in all, the tournament was strong and the competition was intense. Hopefully, next year, the third annual U.S. Girls Junior Closed will take place, and I look forward to participating in it.

Q & A's with Organizer Frank Berry

by Editor

Q. How did the girls qualify?
A. The girls qualified by rating from the "U-21" list.

Q. Was this the strongest Girls Championship ever? Average rating over 2200, very impressive!
A. This was only the 2nd such event although the Boys U-21 and Cadet U-16 have been going on for dozens of years.
Last year it was held in New Hampshire by Alex Relyea.

Q. What does the winner get?
A. The main interest in this was the guarantee of the winner to be invited to St. Louis next year for the 2016 U. S. Women's Championship.
Five of the these players had already previously played at the U. S. Women's Championship events in St. Louis.

Q. Any complaints or other issues?
A. No real complaints from players or parents.
No outbursts after loses. Of course, some players weren't happy after losses.
TD's never really had to step in to make any decisions.
The Internet was very unstable and Monroi was difficult to broadcast.
It needed a private phone to hook up to for broadcast capabilities. Michael Kneen from UT-Dallas kept the Monrois going.
About the only complaint from the parents was the poor stability of the hotel Wi-Fi.
As Annie Wang's dad pointed out the hotel should not be called old, really, it was just "historic!"

The 30 move ruled was NOT in effect but there were really no early draws. Also the players always showed up at the start of the rounds without the threats that St. Louis likes to put into their rules. At the start of the event - after pairing draws - the girls were given their own Berger RR charts which showed their future pairings and they kept the tourney results up-to-date themselves on those charts.

l to r top row, Ashritha Eswaran, Sarah Chiang, Jessica Regam, Agata Bykovtsev, Apurva Virkud, Frank Berry.
l to r bottom row, Annie Wang, Maggie Feng, Carissa Yip, Jennifer Yu and Simone Liao.

Q. Any other tidbits?
A. Most all the players had met before and played each other before.

Only one player - Regam - travelled alone though she "roomed" with another girl.

Ashritha traveled with her Mom and coach - Bulgarian GM Bojkov - who stayed out of the tourney room and kept a low profile.

Ashritha and Agata and their teams traveled from here to Cali, Columbia for the Pan Am Youth.

Both Regam and Chiang will be attending Wash U in St. Louis as premed students.

Prizes:
Best Game - Carissa Yip and Annie Wang for their Rd. 5 game.

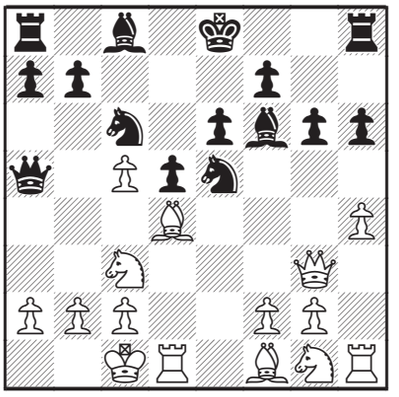
Best Combination - Agata Bykovtsev

Fighting Spirit - Jessica Regam

Best Endgame - Sarah Chiang

Best Combination
2015 USA Girls Invite
Tulsa, OK 06/23/2015 Rd. 2 C13
Bykovtsev, Agata -
Regam, Jessica

1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5 3.Nc3 Nf6 4.Bg5 Be7 5.e5 Nfd7 6.h4 h6 7.Be3 c5 8.Qg4 g6 9.dxc5 Nxe5 10.Qg3 Nbc6 11.O-O-O Qa5 12.Bd4 Bf6?
Better was 12...f6 13.f4 Nf7 14.Qxg6 (14.Nf3 Rg8) (14.Bb5 Rg8) 14...Nxd4 15.Rxd4 Kf8 =.



13.Bb5 +- Nd7 14.Bxf6 Nxf6 15.Qe5 Ke7 16.Qd6+ Ke8 17.Bxc6+ bxc6 18.Qxc6+ Kd8 19.Qxa8 Kc7 20.a4 Qxc5 21.Nb5+ 1-0

Best Endgame
2015 USA Girls Invite
Tulsa, OK 06/23/2015 Rd. 2 A28
Yu, Jennifer - Chiang, Sarah
Annotator Braunlich

1.c4 e5 2.Nc3 Nf6 3.Nf3 Nc6 4.d4 exd4 5.Nxd4 Bb4
I think this line of the English is supposed to be pretty harmless for black, but it does lead to interesting positions. }

6.Bg5?! ....
6.g3 was Reti's choice.

6...h6 7.Bh4 O-O?!
Surely black should take the chance for 7...Bxc3+ 8.bxc3.

8.e3 ....
8.Rc1)

8...d6 9.Nxc6 ....
Now we get the multiple doubled pawns on the c-file that becomes the key feature of this game, which one the Best Engame Prize for the tournament.

9...Bxc3+ 10.bxc3 bxc6 11.Bd3= Qe7 12.Qf3 Rb8 13.Bxf6 Qxf6 14.Qxf6 gxf6
Despite yet more double pawns, black is okay in this ending -- she will have very active pieces and will be first to target the weaknesses.

15.Rd1 Ba6 16.Ke2 Rfe8 17.f4!? ....
17.Rb1 Rxb1 18.Rxb1 Re5 19.Kd2 Ra5 20.Rb2 =.

17...f5 18.Rb1 Kg7 19.Rb4 c5 20.Rb3 d5!
The pressure on the diagonal is enough to give Sarah some initiative now.

21.Rhb1 Rbd8 22.Ra3! Bxc4 23.Bxc4 ....
23.Rxa7! =.

23...dxc4
Threatening ...Rd3 now.

24.Kf3 Rd3 25.Re1 Re7 26.Rxa7

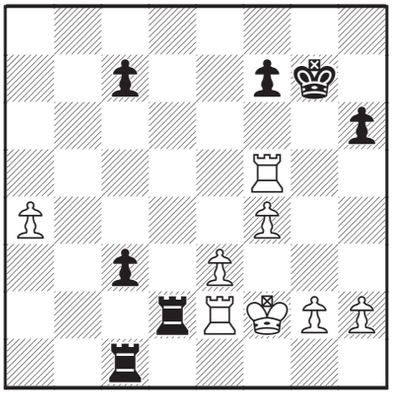
Final Ranking crosstable 2015 U. S. Girls Closed Championship

Rk.	Name	Rtg	FED	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Pts.	TB1	TB2	TB3
1	Eswaran Ashritha	2143	USA	*	1	1	0	0	½	1	1	1	1	6½	27.25	0.0	6
2	WIM Wang Annie	2264	USA	0	*	1	1	1	1	1	0	0	½	5½	23.75	0.0	5
3	WCM Feng Maggie	2209	USA	0	0	*	1	½	1	½	1	1	0	5.0	21.25	0.0	4
4	WFM Chiang Sarah	2282	USA	1	0	0	*	1	½	½	0	1	½	4½	20.50	0.0	3
5	WFM Bykovtsev Agata	2143	USA	1	0	½	0	*	1	0	1	0	1	4½	20.00	0.0	4
6	WIM Liao Simone	2203	USA	½	0	0	½	0	*	½	1	1	1	4½	18.00	0.0	3
7	WCM Virkud Apurva	2233	USA	0	0	½	½	1	½	*	1	0	½	4.0	16.75	0.0	2
8	Yip Carissa	2257	USA	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	*	1	1	4.0	16.50	1.0	4
9	WFM Yu Jennifer	2285	USA	0	1	0	0	1	0	1	0	*	1	4.0	16.50	0.0	4
10	WFM Regam Jessica	2159	USA	0	½	1	½	0	0	½	0	0	*	2½	12.00	0.0	1

Rxc3
Guess which one of black's three c-pawns will be the hero?

27.Ra5 Rc2 28.Re2 Rc1 29.Rxc5 c3 30.Kf2? ....
An unfortunate move. It's hard to see why, but the king here is exposed to some nice tactics. White is still okay after 30.Rxf5 Rd7 31.Rc5 Rd2 32.e4 =.

30...Rd7 31.a4 Rd2 32.Rxf5 ....



32...c5!!
An incredible shot!

33.a5 ....
The point is that after 33.Rxc5 the rook is suddenly vulnerable on c5 by 33...Rcc2 34.Rxd2 cxd2! 35.Ke2 Rxc5. So white saw she couldn't take the offered c-pawn, but now that same pawn will clog up her defense to black's passed pawn

33...c4 34.a6 Ra1 35.a7 ....
35.Rc5 Rxe2+ 36.Kxe2 c2 -+.

32....c2 36.Rxd2 c1=Q 37.Rfd5 c3 38.Rd1 Qb2+ 39.Kg3 Rxa7 40.Rc5 Ra2 0-1

2015 USA Girls Invite
Tulsa, OK 60/26/2015 Rd. 9 A61
Feng, Maggie -Eswaran, Ashritha
Annotator Braunlich

This was the key last-round game between the two leaders.

1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e6 3.Nf3 c5 4.d5 exd5 5.cxd5 d6 6.Nc3 g6 7.Bf4 a6
Maggie chooses one of the most fashionable variations against the Benoni, and Ashritha responds the best way. An example of the type of trouble black can get in here is my game with Michael Langer from 2005: 7...Bg7 8.Qa4+! Bd7 9.Qb3 with pressure on both d6 and b7 -- 9...Qc7 10.e4 O-O 11.Nd2 Re8 12.Be2 Na6 13.O-O +/- 1-0 Braunlich ,T -Langer,M /OCF Masters/ Tulsa 2005 (31)

8.a4 Bg7 9.h3 O-O 10.e3 ....
This is the modern treatment. The pawn goes to e3 for now rather than to e4 where it is a target. White plans to finish development and expand later.

10...Ne8
With ideas of ...f5 to take advantage of white's approach. This leads to complex middlegames where white has a theoretical advantage but black seems to always score well.

11.Be2 Nd7 12.Nd2 ....
Rare, and perhaps an inaccuracy because now black can play ...f5 without having to be worried about white replying with Ng5-e6.
In previous games black would play ...h6 before playing ...f5, but now Ashritha avoids having to spend that tempo and gets a good game.
12.O-O Qe7 13.Re1 h6 14.a5 Nc7 15.Rc1 f5 as in Aronian,L (2781)-Gashimov,V (2759) 2010.

12...Ne5 13.O-O f5 14.Bg3 Qe7 15.Re1 Nf6+= 16.f4!? ....
Risky, but typical of the aggression of these girls. White hopes to follow someday with e3-e4 after preparation.

16...Nf7 17.Nc4 Qc7 18.a5 Bd7 19.Qb3 Rae8 20.Bf3 Nh6 21.Bf2 ....
More prep is needed. If 21.e4? fxe4 22.Nxe4 Nxe4 23.Bxe4 Nf5 is good for black.

21...Kh8 22.Nd2 Nf7 23.Qc4 Rc8 24.Ra3 ....
Maggie is patient; she has a solid edge and black must wait.

24...Rb8? 25.b4! ....
Taking the sudden chance for this break, which will make d5 a passed pawn and enhance e3-e4 when it comes.

25...Rfc8 26.bxc5 Qxc5 27.Qxc5 dxc5

27...Rxc5 28.e4 Rc7 29.e5 dxe5 30.fxe5 Nxe5 31.Bg3! +/-.

28.Nc4 +/- Bb5 29.Ne5 Nd6 30.e4 ....
Finally the break! White is winning.

30...Bf8 31.Raa1 Kg7 32.exf5 Nxf5 33.g4 Nd6 34.Bh4 ....
34.Nxb5 Nxb5 35.g5 is winning the exchange in a way that gives less compensation to black than happens in the game. 35...Nh5 36.Bxh5 gxh5 37.Nd7 +- Ra8 38.Nb6.

34...Nfe8?!
34...Be8

35.Nxb5 axb5 36.Nd7 b4 37.Nxb8 Rxb8
White is still winning, but black's queenside pawns give some counterplay and time pressure is becoming a big factor.

38.Reb1 Nc4 39.Be2 Na3 40.Rc1 Ra8 41.a6! bxa6 42.Bf2 Nc7 43.Bxc5 Nxd5? 44.Bf3 Nc3 45.Bxb4 ....
Simpler was 45.Bd4+ Kf7 46.Bxa8 Ne2+ 47.Kf2 Nxd4 48.Rc7+ When black's loose king and pieces won't survive white's suddenly active rooks.

45...Bxb4 46.Bxa8 Ne2+ 47.Kf2 Nxf4 48.Rc7+ Kf6
White is still winning, up two exchanges for a pawn, but in time trouble it isn't easy to see a clear path. Ashritha does a great job in resistance and it pays off for her in the end.

49.Bg2 a5 50.Rxh7 Nc2 51.Rd1? Bc5+ 52.Kg3 Nxg2 53.Rd5? ....
53.Rc7! Nce3 54.Rxc5 Nxd1 55.Kxg2 +-.

53...Bb4 54.Rb5....
Now, since 54.Kxg2 Ne3+ 55.Kf3 Nxd5 is good only for black,

Continued on pg 31

Memorial Day Classic

By Randy Hough

NM Ilia Serpik jw

This tournament, begun in 1980, is named in memory of Lina Grumette, a revered organizer who among her many other accomplishments was noted as something of a surrogate mother to Bobby Fischer. For the second year in a row, the event was held at the Holiday Inn Express in Ontario. The turnout was 107 players.

Veteran (though only 37) Ilia Serpik took the trophy by half a tiebreak point over 14-year-old Joshua Sheng. Serpik, playing in the faster two-day schedule as always, notched a key win against FM Mark Duckworth in the third round, and clinched the tie at the end by drawing IM Larry Remlinger (at 73, he's really a veteran), who had downed Sheng with a sharp attack in Round 4. Meanwhile, Sheng had a key upset of IM John Bryant in the third round and easily downed the newest junior phenom, Gabriel Sam, in the finale. Remlinger and top Under 2200 Kevin Wang tied for third at 4½.

Looking at the four other sections: In the Premier (Under 2000), the not always consistent 10-year-old Jeffrey Chou was on his game, taking clear first with 5-1, a half point ahead of Martin Leung. They drew with each other – in the first round! Stephanie Shao (who accounted for Chou's other draw), Queena Deng, and Omega Tjokrosurjo tallied 4. In Amateur (Under 1800), Kaitlyn Chu continued a series of victories (most have been in Mixed Doubles, a feature this event lacked), taking first with 5. James Gould and Danny Soong trailed by a half point.

Reserve (Under 1600) also had a clear winner at 5 points, young Andrew Huang. Alex Wang was a half point behind, and Brian Huang (Andrew's brother), Steve Dahl, and Willie Roy split third place. Jose Diaz Aguilera was a convincing winner in

NM Joshua Sheng jw

Jeffrey Chou jw

Booster (Under 1400), tallying 5½. A point behind were Brandon Xie (Diaz Aguilera's only draw) and Saul Lopez Monson. Leon Zhou and Drake Fisher split Under 1200 honors with 4 points, and Alexander Vinas was best Unrated with 2½.

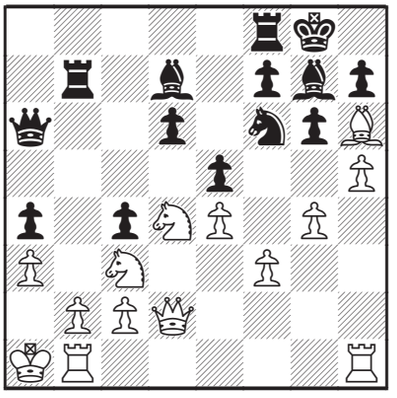
The freeway convenience and free continental breakfast drew compliments from the players, and SCCF hopes to return to the Holiday Inn Express next year with another fitting memorial to Lina Grumette.

The tournament, as always, featured several side events. In the Scholastic Open, with 15 players, Ivan Leong's 4 1/2 of 5 left him a half point ahead of Cameron Lee. The Scholastic Under 1000 drew 38, allowing two perfect scores, Armen Andranigian and Kaiway Tang. The Hex had two sections, with Eric Youngquist and Paul Fitzpatrick taking the honors. And Raoul Crisologo topped the 12-player Action with 4-1.

Andrew Huang jw

2015 **Memorial Day Classic**
05.25.15 Rd 6 B77
Sheng, Joshua - Sam, Gabriel

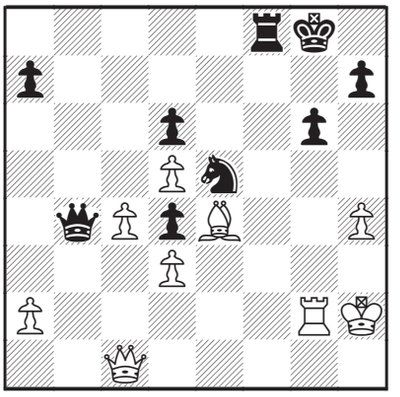
1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.d4 cxd4 4.Nxd4 g6 5.Nc3 Bg7 6.Be3 Nf6 7.Bc4 O-O 8.Bb3 d6 9.f3 Bd7 10.Qd2 Rb8 11.O-O-O Na5 12.Kb1 b5 13.g4 Nc4 14.Bxc4 bxc4 15.Ka1 a5 16.h4 a4 17.a3 Qb6 18.Rb1 Qa6 19.h5 Rb7 20.Bh6 e5



21.Nf5! Bxf5 22.gxf5 Rfb8 23.hxg6 fxg6 24.fxg6 hxg6 25.Qg5 1-0

2015 **Memorial Day Classic**
05.24.15 Rd 3 B26
Bryant, John Daniel - Sheng, Joshua

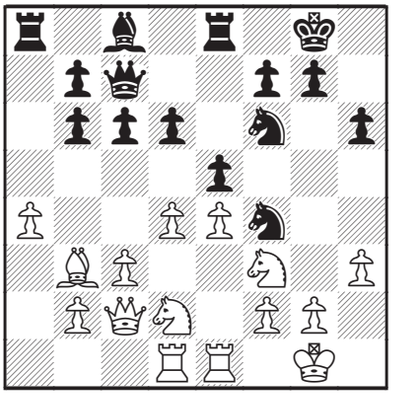
1.g3 g6 2.Bg2 Bg7 3.e4 c5 4.Nc3 Nc6 5.d3 d6 6.Be3 e5 7.Nh3 Rb8 8.f4 Nge7 9.O-O O-O 10.Kh1 Nd4 11.Qd2 Bd7 12.Rf2 Qc8 13.Ng5 f6 14.Nf3 Be6 15.Raf1 Qd7 16.Nh4 b5 17.Nd5 b4 18.c3 bxc3 19.bxc3 Bxd5 20.exd5 exf4 21.Bxf4 Nb5 22.Be3 f5 23.c4 Nd4 24.Bh3 Qb7 25.Ng2 Rfe8 26.Nf4 Qb4 27.Qd1 Nc8 28.Bxd4 Bxd4 29.Qc2 Nb6 30.Ne6 Nd7 31.g4 fxg4 32.Bxg4 Ne5 33.Rg2 Qa3 34.Bf5 Rb2 35.Qc1 Rf2 36.Be4 Rb8 37.Nxd4 Rxf1+ 38.Qxf1 cxd4 39.h4 Qb4 40.Kh2 Rf8



41.Qc1 Qb7 42.h5 Qe7 43.Qg5 Qxg5 44.Rxg5 Kf7 45.Rg2 Rb8 46.hxg6+ hxg6 47.Kg3 a5 48.Rc2 Nd7 49.Rf2+ Kg7 50.Rf4 Nc5 51.Bg2 Nxd3 52.Rxd4 Nc5 53.Rd2 a4 54.Rc2 Kf6 55.Re2 Rb1 56.Be4 Rb4 57.Rf2+ Kg7 58.Bg2 Rxc4 59.Rb2 Kf6 60.Rb8 Rc2 61.Rf8+ Ke7 62.Rg8 Rxa2 63.Rxg6 a3 64.Rg7+ Kd8 65.Ra7 Kc8 66.Bf1 Kb8 67.Ra5 Kb7 68.Kf3 Ra1 69.Bc4 Rc1 70.Be2 Rc3+ 71.Kg2 Rc2 72.Kf3 a2 73.Bd1 Rc1 0-1

2015 Memorial Day Classic
05.25.15 Rd 4 C50
Sheng, Joshua - Remlinger, Larry

1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bc4 Bc5 4.O-O Nf6 5.d3 O-O 6.c3 d6 7.h3 Ne7 8.Be3 Bb6 9.Nbd2 Ng6 10.Re1 c6 11.Bb3 h6 12.Bxb6 axb6 13.a4 Qc7 14.d4 Re8 15.Qc2 Nf4 16.Rad1 ....



16....Bxh3 17.dxe5 dxe5 18.gxh3 Qd7 19.Re3 Qxh3 20.Ne1 Qh5 21.Nf1 Rad8 22.Rd2 Ng4 23.Rg3 Nh3+ 24.Kg2 Rxd2 25.Qxd2 Nhxf2 26.Kf3 Nf6+ 0-1

Inaugural 2015 Greater Calif. Scholastic Championships

By Jerry Yee

193 kids participated in Glendale, California on the weekend of August 15-16 in the Inaugural 2015 Greater California Scholastic Championships. The event was sponsored by the Kasparov Chess Foundation and organized by two of southern California's most prominent and successful chess education programs, Beyond Chess and the American Chess Academy (ACA). Beyond Chess and ACA have enjoyed the most competitive scholastic chess rivalry in the area for several years now, dominating at California's annual Super States event every year.

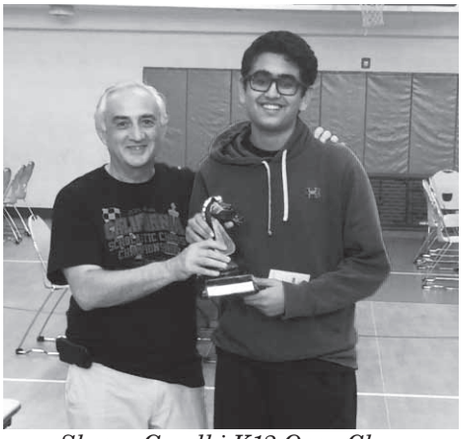
Getting ready for action!

In March, it was Beyond Chess co-founder IM Sarah Lu who approached ACA's IM Armen Ambartsoumian and Jerry Yee about teaming up and organizing a big summer youth event. The three agreed there was a void in the summer the last few years and that it was worth considering. Soon after their meeting, Ambartsoumian contacted KCF President Michael Khodarkovsky about sponsoring the inaugural event. It would be the first west coast scholastic event sponsored by the Kasparov Chess Foundation.

Some of the prizes.

The event was the result of several months of planning with concerns about the event possibly conflicting with the vacations of many local chess families in the month of August. The two day event's good turnout put those concerns to rest and further illustrated that scholastic chess in the southern California area continues to thrive, even in the summer!

The venue was Glendale's iconic Maple Park Community Center, a beautiful modern two story building with a basketball gym that can accommodate up to 275 chess players if needed. There is also a spacious cafeteria for families to enjoy their lunch. The building is surrounded by playgrounds and grass fields, an ideal setting for a scholastic chess tournament. ACA has been organizing chess tournaments at Maple Park since 2011.



Shyam Gandhi K12 Open Champ

A challenge for this event was having more than one time control so that it could also accommodate higher rated players who prefer more time on their clocks. The solution? The two K-12 sections had 6 rounds with a time control of game in 60 and the three JV sections had 5 rounds with a time control of game in 30 in a double Swiss format. This allowed for the tournament and award ceremony to conclude after 5 rounds for the three JV sections just before the start of round 6 for the two K-12 sections. The plan looked good on paper at least...

Vedant Shah K12 under 1500 Champ

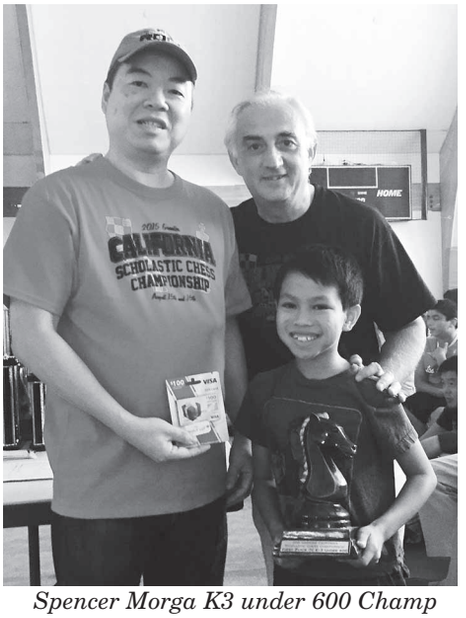
The event ran smoothly in Day 1, but experienced two unforeseen power outages due to a local electrical transformer exploding in the neighborhood on a very warm Day 2. In the middle of the second power outage, the JV final standings were calculated manually and the JV award ceremony took place in the basketball gym's sweltering heat in what felt like sauna like conditions at 2:30pm in the afternoon. The second outage lasted for most of the final three hours of the event. When power and air conditioning was finally restored around 5p.m., round 6 was concluding. It was time for the K-12 award ceremony to begin as things concluded in a festive, happier atmosphere and a much cooler gymnasium!

The event's chief TD was yours truly and even with my extensive experience, many thanks have to go to WGM Tatev Abrahamyan and IM Sarah Lu for their efforts in dealing

Jennifer Lee K6 under 900 Champ

with the manual calculation of pairings and standings during the power outages. Special thanks also go out to KCF President Michael Khodarkovsky for approving the sponsorship of this event. The Kasparov Chess Foundation's continuing support of scholastic events like this throughout the country help give children in the U.S. the opportunity to compete in chess tournaments with larger turnouts.

While there may have been some bumps along the way, it was still a great and very memorable summer weekend of competitive scholastic chess in Los Angeles and the organizers are already looking forward to this event again in the summer of 2016!



Spencer Morga K3 under 600 Champ

2016 SUPER STATES
REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

The Southern California Chess Federation is seeking proposals from individuals interested in organizing the 2016 Super States, Southern California's largest and most prestigious scholastic event. All proposals must be received no later than October 14, 2015.
The criteria for selecting the winning proposal and submission directions are available for review on the website for the Southern California Chess Federation: www.scchess.com.

Feng -Eswaran game continued from Page 27

white has to fight on with two rooks vs three pieces, and imbalance which is always very unclear.

54...Nge3 55.Ra7 Bd6+ 56.Kf2 Nd1+ 57.Kf1 Nde3+ 58.Kg1 Nc4 59.Ra6 Nb4 60.Ra8 Nd3 61.Rc8 Nde5 62.g5+ Ke6 63.h4 Kd7 64.Rh8 a4 65.Ra8 a3 66.Rb7+ Ke6 67.Ra6 Nf3+ 68.Kf2 Nxh4 69.Ra4? ....
White should take the chance to draw now with 69.Rb4! Kd5 70.Rxc4 Kxc4 71.Rxd6 a2 72.Ra6 Kb3 73.Rb6+ Ka3 74.Ra6+ +=. Instead, the advantage swings to black.

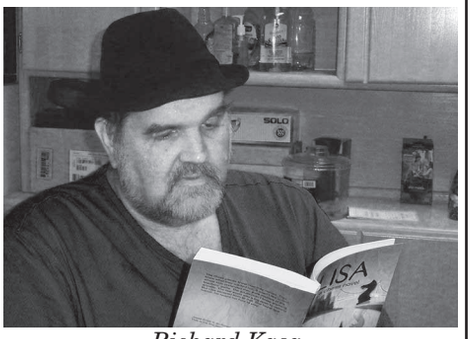
69...Kd5 70.Rb1 Bc5+ -/+ 71.Ke2 Nf5 72.Rc1 Nd4+ 73.Ke1 Nb2
Winning the exchange.

74.Rxa3 ....
Desperation, because if 4.Rxc5+ Kxc5 75.Rxa3 Nc2+ -+.

74...Bxa3 75.Rc8 Nc4 76.Rg8 Ne5 77.Kf2 Ndf3 78.Kg3 Nxg5 79.Ra8 Ne4+ 80.Kg2 Bd6 81.Ra5+ Ke6 82.Ra6 Kf5 83.Ra1 Nd3 84.Ra5+ Be5 85.Ra8 Nf4+ 86.Kg1 g5 87.Rf8+ Kg4 88.Re8 Bd4+ 89.Kf1 Kf3 90.Ke1 g4 91.Rg8 g3 92.Kd1 Nf2+ 93.Kc2 Ng4 94.Ra8 g2 95.Kb3 g1=Q 96.Re8 Qb1+ 97.Kc4 Qd3+ 98.Kb4 Nd5+ 99.Ka5 Bb6+ 100.Ka4 Qc4+ 101.Ka3 Qb4+ 102.Ka2 Nc3+ 103.Ka1 Qb1# 0-1

Obituary - *by Adam Brody*

Richard Kasa was a devoted chess teacher, community organizer, bridge player, scrabble player, and so much more. Richard taught for Academic Chess as an after school teacher starting in 2011. He was always excited to teach children about the game he loved. He was also very active in the community, running a free chess tournament for kids at the library, free lessons on chess.com and more.



Richard Kasa

He passed away of a heart attack and I found him in his car on Sunday July 6. We believe he passed away on Thursday July 3. He is survived by three younger sisters whom he helped raise, his dad, and lots of friends. He was always super giving, never expecting anything in return. He was my room mate for four years, my co-worker for five, and became a dear friend. For more information you can email me at unicyclechess@gmail.com.

Globe Trotting

By WGM Tatev Abrahamyan

I was back from my first, but sadly disastrous, tournament of the year and was planning the annual preparations for the US Women's Championship when I got a call from Franc Guadalupe informing me that the Women's World Championship has been scheduled just a couple of weeks before the US Championship.

The Women's World Championship, overall, has a very silly format which makes little sense. The reason I say that is because on even years the Women's World Championship is a 64 player knock out tournament (similar to the world cup), and on odd years it's a match where the winner of the knock out challenges the winner of the previous match. It seems as if FIDE didn't put the effort into coming up with a more logical and sophisticated system to select contenders for the Women's World Championship title like they do with the candidates tournament for men. Perhaps it's just a way to have more women's tournaments and give incentive to players, as the knock out format can be quite random.

I qualified for the Women's World Championship during the 2014 US Women's Championship where I tied for first place but lost the tiebreak match to Irina Krush. The 2014 Women's World Championship was scheduled to take place sometime in October 2014, but due to lack of sponsorship was postponed indefinitely. Rumors started swirling around about a potential location and dates. I was told that during the closing ceremony of the Carlsen-Anand match in November it was announced that it would take place in Russia in March, but there was nothing official. Around the time the rumors were getting louder, I was planning on returning to the Reykjavik Open, where I got my 4th IM norm in 2014 and had a huge rating gain. Everyone likes returning to events where they had a good result and even though the weather was about 40 degrees lower to what I am now accustomed to, I was more than happy to return to snowy Reykjavik.

I decided to skip Reykjavik Open and wait to see what happens with the World Championship. I am still not sure how I feel about this decision. I never thought of myself as someone who is only motivated by women's events or cares too much about them. I have always believed in choosing the strongest tournament to play in to keep improving and to be challenged. Yet when it came down to it, I did the opposite. I am not even sure why I turned down Reykjavik Open for the World Championship. Was it the big, fancy name of the tournament? The guaranteed money? At least I can finally put my psychology degree to use and call it cognitive dissonance.

As all this uncertainty was going on, I received an invitation as expected to the US Women's Championship scheduled March 31-April 14 in St. Louis. Of course, I accepted the invitation without waiting for the World Championship. There was no way I was going to turn down the US Championship. Two weeks later, I got the call from Franc informing me the official announcement for the World Championship was made. It was to be held in Sochi, Russia from March 15 until April 7. This meant that if any of the US participants (Krush, Zatonskih and myself) were to go through three stages of the knock out, we would have to miss the US Championship. He said that he had already discussed this with the organizers in St. Louis and asked me if I was going to play in Sochi. My first instinct was to skip Sochi. It was too close to the US Championship, a tournament I've been trying to win for years. I would have to take the long journey to Russia and risk coming home just two days later. It reminded me of my first World Championship in 2012 in Khanty-Mansiysk, where I was cold, lonely and generally miserable without my close friends. I discussed it with several of my friends as well as my coach, Josh Friedel, and got mixed replies. Some said it's just too much work. Others thought it was a good opportunity to shine. As with most of my decisions, I am not sure why or how it was made. I think it was just a spur of the moment thing. This meant that I was going three major tournaments consecutively: Women's World Championship, US Women's Championship and Women's World Team Championship. I had never played in so many women's-only events in one year. I thought it would be interesting to experience how the top-ranked women in the world play chess. And so, I accepted.

On March 1st, the official FIDE rating list came out as well as the official round 1 pairings. I was paired against Indian GM Harika Dronavalli, who was ranked #16 in the world for women. Before this tournament, I had two draws and two losses against her, so historically she wasn't the easiest opponent for me. Josh worked tirelessly to come up with some good prep against her, and so I embarked on my long journey feeling pretty good about my chances.

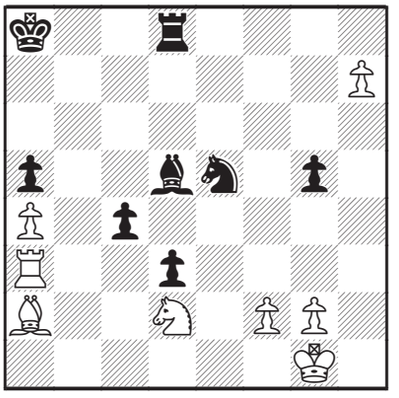
Women's World Championship

I arrived in Sochi a day early, tired but ready to fight. Growing up in Armenia, I had always heard about the beauty and greatness of Sochi, but I had a feeling that the tournament wasn't going to be anywhere near the sea, the Olympic Village, or at a big, fancy hotel. Of course, being an experienced and pretty well-traveled chess player, my hunches were correct. Chess tournaments rarely find home in elegant, fancy hotels next to pretty beaches. The hotel and the playing hall were fine, but they were

very isolated up in the mountains and a 20-30 minute walk from the closest store. This time around I had more friends to keep me company, but all in all it doesn't have the same social atmosphere that I enjoy. Everyone seems to keep to themselves more or less. It's probably hard to get too attached to anyone, as every 3 days half of the tournament goes home. The first day was nice and slow, with just the opening ceremony and other formalities. At the technical meeting there was a complaint about the lack of transportation from the hotel to the playing hall (a 5-10 minute walk). Women don't like to walk in high heels. The organizers were slightly blindsided by this problem and promised shuttles. The ambiance of the tournament was nice and friendly, but things were about to get competitive. I was to play white in the first game against Harika.

Everything went according to the plan. We were able to predict her opening. I think she was a little surprised by this, and I was very comfortable with my position. On move 17, she offered me a draw. I would have never thought about agreeing to a draw in that position had she not offered, but all of a sudden doubts started to enter my mind. Was it better to try to draw the regular time control games and go into a tiebreak? Could I beat her in this position? I think GM's are very good at offering draws just to mess with their lower rated opponents' heads. Maybe she evaluated the position as equal. I thought my position was nice and I was playing white, so I had no right to take the draw. We kept playing and things got complicated. I was better, then much worse, then winning. At the critical moment I missed a nice tactical shot which would have netted me a winning position. The position afterwards was objectively drawn, but I panicked and the draw slowly slipped out of my hand.

When I got back to my room and checked the game with the computer, I was devastated and really mad at myself. Chances like that don't present themselves every day. Not only did I have the chance to beat a higher rated opponent, but I went from guaranteeing that I'd at least play a tiebreak to having to beat a GM with the black pieces or go home. My friends tried to make me feel better, but there was no point. I had already lost the match.



Women's World Championship 2015
03.17.2015 Rd.1
Abrahamyan - Dronavalli

43.Rc3 ....
I missed a beautiful shot 43.Bxc4 Bxc4 (43...Nxc4 44.Rxd3 Nb6 45.Nc4 Nxc4 46.Rxd5) 44.Nxc4 Nxc4 45.Rxd3 Rh8 46.Rd7 - Rg7 and Rg8 is coming.

43...Ka7
This move made me panic. Initially, I thought that my opponent can't improve her king because if she goes on the c file, I take the c pawn with a check. I realized that the king is going to c5, which wasn't too hard to see.

44.Nxc4 ....
44.f3 Kb6 45.Kf2 Kc5 46.Ke3 Kb4 (46...Rh8 47.Nxc4 Bxc4 48.Bxc4 Nxc4+ 49.Kxd3 Rd8+ 50.Ke4 Rh8 51.Kd3 =) 47.Rc1 and Black can't make progress.

44...Bxc4 45.Bxc4 Nxc4 46.h8=Q ....
46.Rxd3 Rh8 47.Rd7+ Kb6 48.Rg7 was better.

46...Rxh8 47.Rxc4 Rd8 48.Rc1 Rd4 49.Rd1 Kb6 50.f3 Kc5 51.Kf2 Kc4 52.Ke3 Rd5 53.Kd2 Re5 54.Rc1+ ?? ....
Costing me the game. 54.Re1 with little time this was hard to calculate . 54...Rxe1 55.Kxe1 Kb3 56.Kd2 Kxa4 57.Kc3! Ka3 (57...d2 58.Kxd2 Kb3 59.Kc1 a4 60.g3 a3 61.Kb1 Kc4 62.f4 =) 58.g4 a4 (58...d2 59.Kxd2 Kb2 60.f4 gxf4 61.g5 f3 62.g6 f2 63.Ke2 a4 64.g7 a3 65.g8=Q a2) 59.f4 gxf4 60.g5 f3 61.Kxd3 Kb2 62.g6 = a3 63.g7 a2 64.g8=Q a1=Q 65.Qg7+ Ka2 66.Qxa1+ Kxa1 67.Ke3 =.

54...Kd4 55.Rc8 Re2+ 56.Kd1 Rxg2 57.Re8 Rf2 0-1

Game two was just painful. It was an unpleasant combination of my opponent having the white pieces, getting a position where I had no chances and just simply playing better than me. I kept on playing because I couldn't take a draw and go home, but I ended up in a lost position. At some point I offered her a draw thinking that she might just want to end the match. She declined and made a move. Right away I felt really embarrassed, like I had insulted her. Not too many moves after, I resigned. It was time to go home. I did stay for the next round and watched the playoffs. It was one of the most nerve-wracking experiences ever, and I wasn't even playing.

Women's U.S. Championship

I returned home about a week before the US Championship. It was time to fight off the jet lag and recover, both mentally and chess wise. Time flew by, and next thing I knew I was on a plane on my way to St. Louis. I couldn't have been happier to be going there next. The US Championship is home. There is no loneliness, as plenty of my close friends are at the event. I arrived a day early to relax and get ready for the tournament. I couldn't wait to see my friends I hadn't seen in months, and I even looked forward to playing chess. I had my coach there with me to help me prepare. I had come so close to winning the year before so maybe it was finally going to be my year.

The U.S. Championship is a tournament like no other. It's where chess

players get treated like royalty. We actually get to stay in a fancy hotel in the nicest part of town. Everyone at the chess club goes out of their way to make the players happy.

The first day before the tournament is probably my favorite day. It's the day of the reunions, hair and makeup, wine and taking photos...everything that the men hate and the women love. The opening ceremony was a nice cocktail reception. The players mingled and caught up with their friends. Each player picked a book with a number hidden in it. I picked number 2, which meant that I was going to get 3 whites in the first 4 games, as it happens against the lowest rated players in the field. It seemed like things were going to go well for me.

Unlike in previous years, this year's tournament was a 12 player round robin. There were a lot of new faces such as IM Nazi Paikidze who had recently moved to the US from Georgia and switched federations. Another Georgian player and my very good friend, IM Rusa Goletiani, had returned after few years of being away from the chess world and focusing on her studies.

There were also a lot of young players: Apurva Virkud, Jennifer Yu,the winner of U12 World Youth Championship, and Southern California's own Annie Wang. One notable absence was Anna Zatonskih, who was on maternity leave, so to speak. I wasn't too thrilled about playing 11 rounds right before another tournament instead of 9 rounds and 3 days off like in the previous year, but it was time to play chess and not worry about the next event.

Round 1

In the first round I got paired against Annie Wang. My troubles began right away. She repeated a line that I did badly against in the past. I deviated, and she made a slight inaccuracy. I decided that I needed to punish her immediately and went into deep thought. I calculated nonsense for 20 minutes and ended up simply castling. Essentially, I spent 20 minutes to castle on move 7. 20 minutes! Completely inexplicable decision. I made even stranger decisions later on, such as making things complicated when I was low on time. My opponent also made some mistakes, and I ended up with a strong attack. At some point I hallucinated and blundered. Annie didn't waste her chances. And just like that, I lost game 1.

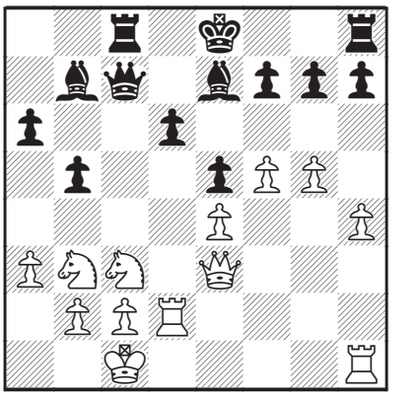
Round 2

I was black against Alisa Melekhina, a regular at the US Championship. She played the Exchange French and was very well prepared. I was uncomfortable and spent a lot of time in the opening. She could have pressed a little better, but eventually position became equal and at some point I won a pawn, but my pieces became passive. I had the choice to either take a perpetual or keep playing. Once again, with no time on my clock, I chose the latter. Two moves later I resigned. In the post-game interview she mentioned that she left the decision up to me as she thought that after losing my first round game I might feel the pressure to win and make the incorrect decision of declining the repetition. She was absolutely right.

I was in complete disbelief. Last year, I almost won the event. This year I couldn't win a single game. I started to doubt my ability to play decent chess. That night I just went out for drinks with my friends and decided to prepare the next morning. It was time to once again recover and save face. The pressure needed to come off.

Round 3

I was white against another young player, Apurva Virkud. I was more than happy to face her Sicilian. I got a nice attack and an overwhelming position. My opponent struggled to find counterplay. I made an incorrect and rushed pawn sacrifice, but being under pressure the whole game she did not find her best defensive resources. I finally managed to win a game.



USA-ch (Women)
Saint Louis 04.03.2015 Rd. 3
Abrahamyan, Tatev -
Virkud, Apurva

White's position is much better and there is no reason to give up a pawn. Black has no counterplay, so White can simply improve.

22.f6? ....
22.Rhd1 Bc6 23.Kb1 Black is just paralyzed.

22...gxf6 23.gxf6 Bf8
23...Bxf6 Black has to go for it. 24.Rf2 Bd8 25.Rhf1 Rf8 still looks unpleasant, but at least Black has a pawn to show for it.

24.h5 ....
Now Black is just getting crushed.

24...Rg8 25.Kb1 Bc6 26.Rg1 Rxg1+ 27.Qxg1 a5 28.Rg2 Qd8 29.Qf1 b4 30.axb4 axb4 31.Nd5 Bxd5 32.exd5 Qb6 33.Rg8 Kd7 34.Qf5+ Kc7 35.Qxh7 Kb8 36.Qxf7 Bh6 37.Qg6 Bf8 38.h6 Qe3 39.h7 1-0

Round 4

This was the last game for me against the youngsters. I got a nice edge out of the opening and pressed on. I won a pawn with a nice tactic, but my opponent could have found more resources to keep the game complicated. After she let me consolidate my position, the rest was pretty straight forward. After this game, I actually felt that I had been making general improvements both in my game and my attitude. After the

game I told Josh that I don't think I would have accepted a slightly better endgame out of the opening in the past, and instead tried for a more double-edged position in which I had chances to play tactically. I know this sounds absurd to most players. Who doesn't like a slightly better position out of the opening? But I think I was much more set in my ways and was only willing to play certain types of positions. I felt like I was becoming a more versatile player. I felt positive after the game. Things could still turn around for me.

Round 5

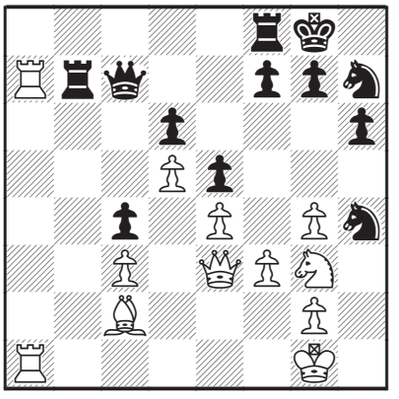
I was black against Katerina Nemcova. I had played her last year and was a little lucky to win. Since then, she had improved a lot. I decided to play the Najdorf against her as a surprise, but she surprised me in return by taking on d4 with the queen on move 3 in the Open Sicilian. In the middlegame she had a chance to put more pressure on my position, but we ended up exchanging a lot of pieces and the position became very equal. Not a result to be unhappy about.

The first half of the tournament was over. We got a well-deserved rest day. I was asked to do community service, so I visited a school along with Apurva, my third round opponent. The rest of the day I just relaxed and prepared for my next game.

This was a very unusual tournament. In the past, after 5 rounds, if Irina and Anna hadn't played each other they would each have either 5 or 4.5 points and I would be trailing behind trying to catch up. After 5 rounds, Katerina was leading with 4 points, Irina had 3.5; Nazi, Rusa and Sabina had 3. The competition was getting interesting.

Round 6

I was white against Sabina Foisor, a player I have a very good score against. I played the Ruy Lopez for the first time in my life, an opening I had been preparing for months. She didn't seem too phased by it and the game was quite balanced for a long time. She made one critical mistake and right away I got a winning position.



USA-ch (Women)
Saint Louis 04.07.2015 Rd. 6
Abrahamyan, Tatev -
Foisor, Sabina Francesca

33...Qb6??

Going into an endgame isn't always a good idea. 33...Rfb8.

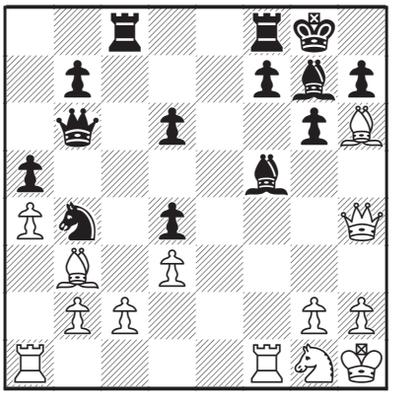
34.Qxb6 Rxb6

Now Black's pieces make no sense and the d6 and c4 weaknesses are an easy target. The rest is simple.

35.Nf1 Rb2 36.Ne3 h5 37.gxh5 Nf6 38.R1a2 Rxa2 39.Rxa2 Nxh5 40.Ra6 Rd8 41.Nxc4 Ng3 42.Nxd6 Ne2+ 43.Kf2 Nxc3 44.g3 Ng6 45.Ke3 Ne7 46.Kd2 Ncxd5 47.exd5 Nxd5 48.Bb3 Nc7 49.Rb6 Kf8 50.Ke2 f6 51.Nf5 Nd5 52.Bxd5 Rxd5 53.Rb8+ Kf7 54.Rb7+ Kf8 55.Rb8+ Kf7 56.Rb7+ Kf8 57.Nxg7 Ra5 58.Ke3 Ra4 59.Nf5 Kg8 60.Nh6+ Kh8 61.Ng4 Ra3+ 62.Ke4 f5+ 63.Kxf5 Rxf3+ 64.Kg6 1-0

Round 7

I was Black against Viktorija Ni. She surprised me on move one by playing 1. e4. Keeping in mind that her husband, Yuri Shulman, is an expert in the French Defense I decided to play the Sicilian. She played the Grand Prix Attack and I am pretty sure I am speaking for both of us when I say that neither one of us knew what we were doing. I had an advantage at some point, but at the critical moment I did not find the correct defense and allowed her to sacrifice an exchange which resulted in a perpetual.



USA-ch (Women)
Saint Louis 04.08.2015 Rd. 7
Ni, Viktorija -
Abrahamyan, Tatev

19...Nxc2

19...Qd8! finding defensive resources is important. Now the White queen has to go away 20.Qxd8 Rfxd8 21.Bxg7 Kxg7 22.Nf3 this is the line that worried me, but... 22...Be6! (22...Nxc2 23.Bxc2 Rxc2 24.Nxd4 Rxb2 25.Nxf5+ gxf5 26.Rxf5 d5 also possible) 23.Nxd4 (23.Bxe6 fxe6 24.Nxd4 Re8) 23...Bxb3 24.cxb3 Nxd3.

20.Bxg7 Kxg7 21.Bxc2 Rxc2 22.Rxf5 gxf5 23.Qg5+ Kh8 24.Qf6+ Kg8 25.Qg5+ Kh8 26.Qf6+ Kg8 27.Qg5+ 1/2-1/2

Round 8

I was white against one of the newcomers, IM Nazi Paikidze. As a true Georgian, she played the Caro Kann. We played a long, theoretical line where she surprised me a little. I decided to revert back to my "go-for-the-throat" approach and started a very dubious attack. The lines were complicated to calculate and she ended up picking the wrong one. I was up a piece but she had some kind compensation. After simplifying the position, I was not able to convert my seemingly easy win. Definitely not the highlight of my chess career.

USA-ch (Women)
Saint Louis 04.08.2015 Rd. 8 B19
Abrahamyan, Tatev -
Paikidze, Nazi

1.e4 c6 2.d4 d5 3.Nc3 dxe4 4.Nxe4 Bf5 5.Ng3 Bg6 6.h4 h6 7.Nf3 Nd7 8.h5 Bh7 9.Bd3 Bxd3 10.Qxd3 e6 11.Bd2 a5!?
A relatively new move.

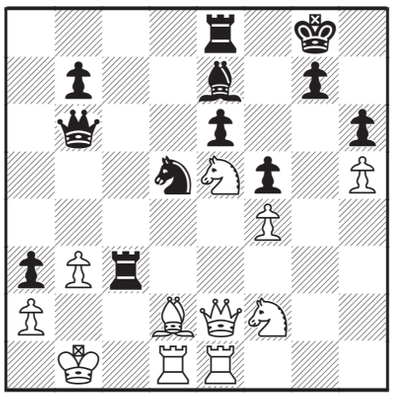
12.O-O-O Bb4 13.c3 ....
A little weakening. Provoking this move was the idea behind Black's last two moves. 13.Ne4 is more normal.

13...Be7 14.Qe2 Ngf6 15.Ne5 O-O 16.f4 Re8 17.Kb1 a4 18.Nf1 ....
So far my moves have been very commital and this one is no different. 18.Ne4 still keeping the g4 ideas in mind but not putting my knight on a bad square.

18...a3 19.b3 c5 20.g4 ....
I thought I had to go for it.

20...cxd4 21.g5 dxc3?
21...hxg5 22.fxg5 Nxe5 (22...Nd5 23.Nxf7 Kxf7 24.g6+ Kf8 25.h6 23.gxf6 gxf6! counterintuitive. I did not consider this move but Black's king is surprisingly safe as my pieces are uncoordinated.

22.gxf6 c2+ 23.Kxc2 Nxf6 24.Kb1 Rc8 25.Ng3 Nd5 26.Rhe1 Qb6 27.Ne4?! f5 28.Nf2 Rc3?



28...Bh4 and all of a sudden I can't move my pieces. Qd4 is always an annoying threat.

29.Nfd3 Rec8 30.Rc1 Rxc1+ 31.Rxc1 Rxc1+ 32.Kxc1 Qg1+ 33.Kc2 Qa1 34.Nc1 Bf6 35.Ned3 Nc7 36.Bb4 Bb2 37.Bd6 Bxc1 38.Nxc1 Qb2+ 39.Kd1 Qd4+ 40.Qd2 Qg1+ 41.Kc2 Nd5 42.Bxa3 ....
Time trouble is over, a lot of pieces have come off and now it's time to show off my technique.

42...Qh1 43.Nd3 Qxh5 44.Bb2 Qf3 45.a4 h5 46.Bd4 h4 47.Qf2 Qh5 48.Qg1 Qf7 49.Kb2 Nf6 50.Qg5 h3 51.Nf2 ....
51.Qg3 completely winning as Black cannot move her pieces due to the g7 checkmate threat.

51...h2 52.Qh4 ....
52.Qg2 winning the pawn and still tying down Black's pieces.

52...Qd7 53.Bxf6?? ....
53.Bc3.

53...Qd2+ 54.Ka3 Qd6+?
54...gxf6 55.Qxh2 Qc1+ 56.Kb4 Qd2+ with a perpetual.

55.b4 gxf6 56.Qxh2 Qd4 57.Qg3+ Kh8 58.Nd3 Qc3+ 59.Ka2 b6 60.Qe3 Kh7 61.Qe2 Kg6 62.Qd1 e5 63.Qg1+ Kf7 64.Qd1 Kg6 65.Qg1+ Kf7 66.Qd1 Kg6 67.Qg1+ 1/2-1/2
Here I had no time and took the draw. Of course, I'm still winning with my extra piece.

Round 9

This was the most critical round of the tournament, as I was Black against Krush. I have a very bad score against her, especially with Black, and given that she was in second place (only half a point behind Katerina) I knew she needed a win. I was in 5th place, so winning this game would have really helped me in the standings. Even though I lost, this was probably the highest quality game I played in the entire event. The game was pretty equal throughout until I decided to get adventurous with my queen at the end of the game, which abandoned my weakened king. For this, of course, I was punished.

Round 10

My loss against Irina put me in 7th place, so there wasn't much to play for at this point. I was white against Rusa, so at least I got to face a Sicilian. I got a nice attack, but failed to calculate properly and ended up in a very strange endgame. After I made time control, I was really upset about not finding a decisive win. I thought I must be getting really bad at chess if I can't even do what I am best at. Luckily for me, my opponent found herself in time pressure and made a decisive mistake on move 40. I won the endgame quite nicely, and actually got an award for best endgame. It's never a good feeling to beat one of your good friends, but at this point I think we were both just looking forward to finishing the event.

Round 11

I was back in 5th place before the last round. Irina had 8 points and was in first place, a full point ahead of Nazi and Katerina. She was white against Katerina, so it was not surprise that she managed to get the draw she needed to win the event. I was facing Anna Sharevich, yet another newcomer. I had nice prep in the Benoni, but messed up the move order. She didn't react well so I got a comfortable position. I made a simple blunder and lost an exchange, and with that the game.

And so yet another US Championship came to an end. I finished in disappointing 7th place, my worst result since 2009. There was nothing left to do but collect my prize money and dance the night away with my friends at the closing ceremony. There was no time for reflection or sulking. I was home the next day for a full 24 hours until my next journey. I used the day to do laundry, pack and celebrate a friend's birthday. The next day I found myself on the other side of the Pacific.

Women's World Team Championship

I arrived at Chengdu, China with our team captain Melikset Khachiyan on the night of April 17th. This was my third time playing in China and third time at the Women's World

Team Championship. This is a very tough tournament for the US team, because unlike at the Olympiad, only the top teams in the world are invited. Also unlike at the Olympiad, this is a round robin, which means there are no easy opponents or breaks after a tough loss. At the Olympiad, we played up once. In China, we played down once.

The next day the rest of our team arrived. Our team consisted of Katerina Nemcova on board 2, Sabina Foisor on board 3, Viktorija Ni on board 4, Alisa Melekhina as the reserve and myself on board 1. Our team coach was Yuri Shulman. Irina and Anna both declined their invitations, so that put me on board 1 by rating. I thought this would be a great experience for me to play all the top women in the world, but at the same time I wish our top players had accepted the invitation so we could have some chances. We were ranked #9 out of 10 teams and all of us were tired after the US Championship, so the goal was just do our best and learn some lessons for future team events.

Generally I like team events and having people to root for, but what I don't particularly like about the World Team is that the World Team Championship and the Women's World Team Championship are never held at the same location. This year's events were initially scheduled to be held at the same location, but I wasn't thrilled to find out that our event was moved. I especially wasn't thrilled about the fact that it was originally to be held in Armenia.

However, I do have to give China a lot of credit of always going out of their way to organize these events in the best way possible. Their hospitality and conditions are always top notch. We settled into a very nice hotel a little outside of the city next to a big park. As much as I did enjoy our nightly walks with the team, I usually find these kind of isolated locations kind of depressing and would much prefer tournaments in big cities. But it was what it was, and we had to make the best of it.

First came the team meeting and deciding our lineup. Yuri and Melik together create a unique and fun environment. What I enjoy the most is that they are willing to go out of their way to do anything we want, like chocolate runs or wake up calls. We only take advantage of it a little. I thought the team had good chemistry and was looking forward to the games. After the opening ceremony and drawing of numbers, it was time to start preparing. The teams were Ukraine, Russia, China, Georgia, India, Poland, Kazakhstan, Armenia, India, Egypt and the US. Basically, all the powerhouses in chess.

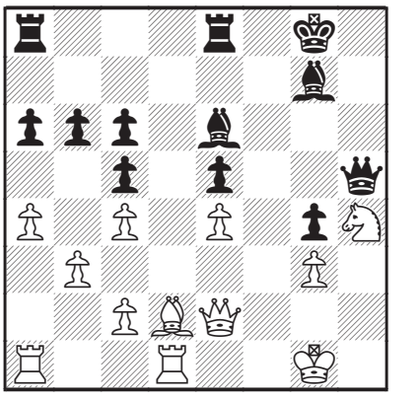
Round 1

In the first round we were white against Egypt (meaning white on boards 1 and 3), the only team ranked lower than us. I think it was quite lucky for us not to be paired up in the first round as it gave us a chance to start the tournament on a good note. Katerina had still some school work to do, so she was given the day to catch up with her work before the big battles begun. We had a little mishap on board 2, but we won the match convincingly with 3-1.

Round 2

We had black against Poland, a team ranked only a little higher than us and definitely one that we could take on. We had draws on boards 1 and 2, a loss on board 3 and a beautiful win on board 4 by Alisa. This was the beginning of Alisa's good tournament and a comeback from a subpar US Championship. I got a questionable position out of the opening against GM Socko but managed to hold a draw. The final result was 2-2.

Women's World Team Championships
Chengdu, China
04.20.2015 Rd. 2.4
Melekhina, Alisa (2235) - Kulon, Klaudia (2310)



28.Kg2 ....
The h file is begging to be used.

28...Rad8 29.Rh1 Bh6 30.Be3 ....
Nice and simple. Nf5 is going to be unstoppable.

30...Bxe3 31.Qxe3 Qf7 32.Raf1 Qd7 33.Qg5+ Qg7 34.Ng6 Rd2+ 35.Kg1 ....
Checkmate is better than grabbing material.

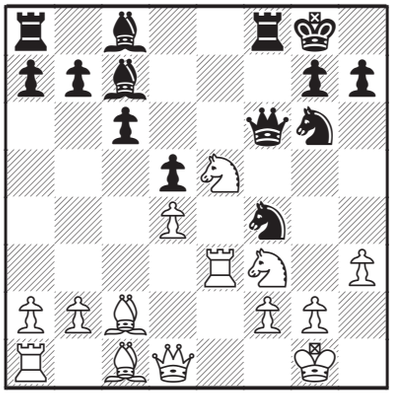
35...Rdd8 36.Rh8+ Qxh8 37.Ne7+ 1-0

Round 3

Our round 3 opponent was Kazakhstan, a young, talented and dangerous team. They also weren't much higher rated than us, but they were definitely a team not to be taken lightly.

I was white against the 14 year old Zhansaya Abdumalik, one of the up and comers in women's chess. Once again I decided to play the Ruy Lopez and felt very uncomfortable out of the opening. She missed a nice shot and it seemed like didn't know what to do with her great position. I managed to consolidate and win. Sabina lost; Alisa and Katerina drew, so we drew yet again. At this point we were doing really well with 2/3. I had a nice 2.5/3, a result I was not expecting. I was even interviewed and asked if I am maybe starting to think about medal chances. Of course, I thought it was unrealistic and I knew what was about to come.

Women's World Team Championships
Chengdu, China
04.21.2015 Rd. 3.2
Abrahamyan, Tatev (2322) - Abdumalik, Zhansaya (2379)

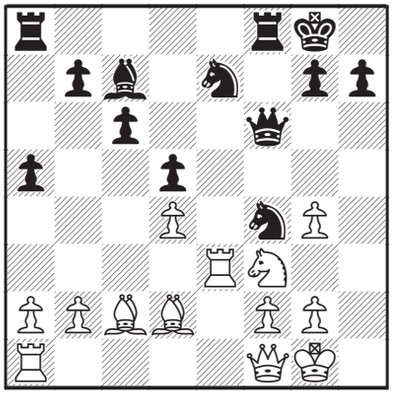


19...Be6
19...Nxg2! luckily for me, my opponent missed this. 20.Kxg2 Nf4+ 21.Kh1 (21.Kh2 Bxh3 22.Bd2 Qh6 the king is just too weak) 21...Nxh3 22.Qf1 Qh6 23.Qg2 Nxf2+ 24.Kg1 Nh3+ Black has enough material compensation for the piece in addition to the very weak White king.

20.Bd2 a5?
At this point I got the sense that my opponent is not too sure what to do with her advantage. 20...Nxg2 21.Kxg2 Nf4+ is still possible.

21.Qf1 ....
A quiet move, protecting h3 and bringing my other rook into the game.

21...Ne7? 22.Ng4 Bxg4 23.hxg4 .... +/-



Now my c2 bishop is a monster, my rooks will double on the e-file and g3 will chase away that annoying knight.

23...Nfg6 24.Rae1 Qd6 25.Re6 Qd7 26.Qd3 .... +-
All of a sudden my pieces land on perfect squares. Black is unable to stop all the threats.

26...Rae8 27.Ng5 Rf6 28.Qh3 h6 29.Rxf6 hxg5 30.Rfe6 Nf8 31.R6e2 Bf4 32.Bxf4 gxf4 33.Re5 Qd6 34.Qh5 g6 35.Qg5 Kf7 36.Qxf4+ Kg8 37.Qe3 Kf7 38.f4 Qf6 39.g5 Qd6 40.f5 gxf5 41.Bxf5 b6 42.g6+ Kf6 43.Bd3 1-0

Round 4

We couldn't have been happier about our result, but with the "easy" teams out of the way, it was time for the big matches. We got paired against Ukraine, the winners of the 2013 Women's World Team Championship, a team with 4 Grandmasters. Boards one and two were the famous Muzychuk sisters. I got an awful position against Anna and lost. Katerina had excellent winning chances against Mariya, who had just won the Women's World Cup and is the current Women's World Champion. Unfortunately, with little time left, she could not convert her advantage and drew. With Viktorija's loss on board 3 and Alisa's draw, came our first loss. Unfortunately, this was just the beginning.

Round 5

Our next opponent was India with a surprising lineup. It was the first time I can remember that their top player, Humpy Koneru, was playing for the team. I prepared 2. b3 against her Sicilian and could tell she was uncomfortable. I had a nice advantage but gave everything away in time trouble and lost the game. Alisa also lost and we had draws on boards 2 and 3 by Katerina and Sabina. The score was once again 1-3.

I was very upset after the game because I lost a position that I shouldn't have lost. Personally, this game was a turning point for me in my attempt to overcome the disease that is time trouble. Yuri tried to console me and explained that the incorrect exchanges I made are instinctual in time trouble (as we saw in Caruana-Carlsen). Josh pointed out that my time trouble is so severe in every game that it's hard to tell if my mistakes are a result of that or not understanding certain positions. It's hard to break habits during a tournament, but this was a starting point.

The next day was a much needed day off. Almost every team went on the field trip to see the pandas. It was nice and relaxing, and everyone gushed over the cuteness of the animals. In the evening, the organizers had another event planned in a museum, but I decided to skip out on that. At this point the tournament was becoming a drag.

The traditional Chinese food wasn't easy to deal with for the Westerners. It didn't help that they served the same dishes and didn't have many vegetarian options. Several of our players didn't acclimate well and were getting sick. Thankfully, the Russian team had brought a doctor with them who was kind enough to tend to all teams. I was getting really tired of the same routine every day and being away from the city. I was especially getting tired of losing. Yuri and I spent a lot of time talking about time trouble and how I could overcome it. I did not manage to put this to use during the event, but now I can really make good use of his input. After everyone came back from their evening activities, it was time to get back to work.

Round 6

We were facing off against a real powerhouse in women's chess and the eventual winners of the tournament, Georgia. I believe it was their first time winning this tournament, which is quite surprising as they have such a strong team, even without their #1 players, Nana Dzagnidze.

I was once again trying out my Ruy Lopez against GM Khotenashvili and yet again struggling with it. My op-

ponent played a very nice technical game and simply outplayed me. I can't feel too bad about this loss as she ended up getting a gold medal on board 1. Viktorija also lost; Alisa and Katerina drew, which meant another 1-3 score. At this point Katerina and Alisa were our main hopes. The joke was that we were expecting to start each match with half a point as Katerina was drawing every game. Alisa was in good standing to medal on her board if she kept up the same level of play. At least there was something to be happy about.

Round 7

This was my 4th time facing Armenia since I became part of the team in 2008. For some people it is weird facing their home country, but personally I find it interesting to play the people I grew up with. This was my second time playing GM Elina Danielian. The first time I played her I think I was either 10 or 12. Needless to say, that game didn't go well for me. This one wasn't going well for me either until she allowed a queen trade into a very drawn endgame. We drew on all boards. Finally, we managed not to lose. Sadly, this was the last time in the tournament.

Round 8

In the penultimate round, we got China with White. Even without Hou Yifan, they are a monster team. They even rested their board 2, as she was having a mediocre tournament. I got white against GM Ju Wenjun. In the friendly USA-China match in 2012, I had done really well against her, winning one game and drawing two. We played a very bizarre game; I was too optimistic about my attack and completely panicked when I realized that her counterplay was just as good.

Women's World Team Championships
Chengdu, China
04.27.2015 Rd. 8.3 B47
Abrahamyan, Tatev (2322) - Ju, Wenjun (2557)

1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 e6 3.d4 cxd4 4.Nxd4 Nc6 5.Nc3 Qc7 6.f4 Nxd4 7.Qxd4 a6 8.Be3 b5 9.O-O-O Bb7 10.Bd3 Rc8 11.Kb1 ....
So far all of this is normal.

11...b4
A new move that was unexpected .

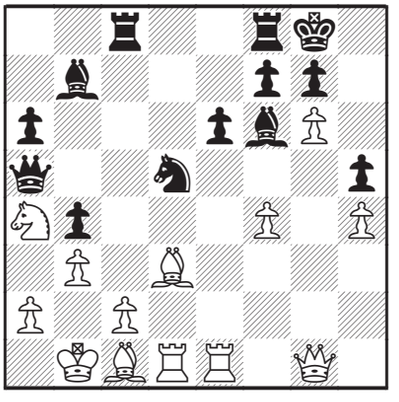
12.Na4 Nf6 13.Rhe1 Be7 14.g4 ....
14.Nb6 is typical in these positions 14...Rd8 (14...Bc5 15.Qxc5 Qxc5 16.Bxc5 Rxc5 17.e5 Nd5 18.Nc4mI prefer white here) 15.e5 Ng4 16.Nc4)

14...h6 15.h4 ....
I decide to go for the throat. 15.Nb6 is still possible.

15...d5 16.exd5 Nxd5 17.g5 O-O 18.Bc1 h5 19.g6 ....
I had this fantasy of playing Qg1-g6. Unfortunately, I'm weakening my position too much.

19...Qa5 20.b3? ....
20.gxf7+ Rxf7 21.Qe5 Qxa4 22.Bg6 Rf6 (22...Rff8 23.Qxe6+ Kh8 24.Re5) 23.Qxh5 Rxg6 24.Qxg6 Bf6 25.Rxe6 a computer line that's not easy to evaluate over the board.

20...Bf6 21.Qg1? ....



21.Re5 another computer move that I'm not sure is possible to find at the board 21...Bxe5 22.Qxe5 Nc3+ 23.Nxc3 Qxe5 24.fxe5 Rxc3 25.Bd2 is apparently ok for White.

21...Bc6 22.Qd4 Bb7 23.Qg1 Bc6
Now White's position is falling apart.

24.gxf7+ Rxf7 25.Bb2 Bxa4 26.bxa4 Nxf4 27.Bxf6 Rxf6 28.Be4 Rf7 29.Bd3 Rf6 30.Be4 Qxa4 31.Bd3 Rf7 32.Be4 Rf6 33.Rd6 Qa5 34.Rdd1 Qa4 35.Rd6 Nd5 36.Rxd5 exd5 37.Bxd5+ Kh8 38.Qg2 Re8 39.Rg1 Qd7 40.Bf3 Rfe6 41.Qg3 Qe7 42.Bd1 Re1 43.Rxe1 Qxe1 44.Qf3 Rd8 0-1

It was equally painful watching Katerina lose her first game in the event. They took down our most solid player. Unfortunately, Alisa lost her game and any chances to medal. Sabina drew helping us avoid an embarrassing 0-4 loss. Yes, .5-3.5 does feel much better.

Round 9

There was only one team left to face: Russia. I was facing my 7th GM of the tournament, Valentina Gunina. Yuri convinced me to play the Benoni and we got into a strange position where she walked into a line we had prepared. My opponent spent all of her time in the opening and went for a very critical line where I had two extra pawns but was very underdeveloped. I didn't handle the critical moment well and let her have the initiative and later the game. Once again, Katerina was the only savior of our team. We lost .5-3.5.

We finished in 9th place, just where we started. Overall, we were a little disappointed about our result but happy to have finished the tournament. At the final team meeting Melik and Yuri praised our fighting spirit. They reassured us that we did the best we could and the tournament was a great learning experience for us. We decided to get dressed up for the closing ceremony and have some fun. Just like the opening ceremony, the closing ceremony consisted of very traditional Chinese round table dinner. This time there was no pressure of an upcoming tournament. After the closing ceremony, Yuri, Viktorija, Katerina and I headed to the city to celebrate Yuri's birthday. Our first stop was, of course, a Starbucks. We walked around the city and got couple of drinks. I really liked downtown Chengdu and how full of life it was. I really wish our hotel was a little closer to the action, but somehow chess tournaments end up in these isolated

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So Who's Keeping Score?

E-SCOREKEEPING DEVICES UPDATE

By James DuBois

Begs the question from a popular song; my answer: "I am!" with one of those winking emoticons tossed in for the sake of brevity! Pretty much since Mon Roi's introduction circa 2005 I have been regularly recording the moves of my tournament games aided by the first - and even today, the only USCF *and* FIDE approved (2005 FIDE Congress, Dresden) electronic chess scorekeeping device (ESD) available.

PlyCounter

Until very recently Mon Roi had 99% ownership of the ESD market (excluding of course the DGT e-boards that are a FIDE standard) even though many players feel this Montreal based company's offering is (still) simply too expensive for it to really flourish; read an interesting discussion at: http://www.chess.com/forum/view/chess-equipment/any-competitor-to-monroi-chess . The "Personal Chess Manager" retails on their site at $359.00 USD; my original cost was slightly higher by fifty bucks, so not much of a price point reduction in almost a decade. Truth is I enjoy using it, which certainly includes my longest rated game of 121 moves - a win, so I have never regretted spending the money. But of course the marketplace being what it is in regards to forging ahead with newer, improved, cheaper, etcetera has created as coined by Tim Just, a new "e-wonderkin" (his must visit site for TDs: http://www.chessiq.com/) which is reluctant to share the spotlight in this article...

However, I would be remiss if I did not at least mention one other participant that is of a slightly different breed since it is not a dedicated machine and is software based, this is the eNotate program that operates on Windows mobile devices, which by the way this writer has some previous knowledge of: http://en.chessbase.com/post/little-monsters- but I confess that since the iPhone I've been negligent on staying current with the latest platform developments that have been derived from this lineage. According to their user guide located at http://www.nachess.org/enotate/enotate_user_guide.pdf "eNotate is NOT certified by chess federations for use on Smart-phones* operating Windows Mobile." But it does state that eNotate has met the requirements of the USCF for certification. **

At the recently completed SCCF Senior-Junior Open and the Western Pacific Open I conducted a casual survey to see how many ESDs were in use. Both tournaments combined had just over a 150 players total, and for the sake of my investigation I did not count reoccurring participates. I consider this a very accurate evaluation that 5 percent kept score using a Mon Roi while only 2 percent of players used a device running eNotate; yet another demographic has started using the new, aforementioned e-wonderkin marketed by the name of PlyCounter which figured in just below the leader by perhaps a single percentage point. It will be interesting to see how these figures realign by the end of the year.

Everything you need to know about PlyCounter can be found at their Website: http://www.plycount.com/ which includes a brief link to a YouTube video: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RSzTuSimTGE. Outside of their Facebook page the Dallas founded company has a relatively low profile much like its forerunner including very limited supply channels. Perhaps the big attraction(s) for this ESD is its retail price of $169.00 which has been reduced from the original $199.00 and they proudly display that it is made in the USA. Their price-point is now more scholastic friendly, even though I have seen a fair share of Mon Roi users in the same age bracket. Perhaps this serves nothing more than a side note at this time; however the PlyCounter is not approved or certified by FIDE - which they state this is in progress, conversely if was USCF certified dated July 21, 2013.

Here is my uncompromising review, which is of course subjective, but nonetheless contains valid points buyers should consider before ordering.

Like:

- Straight forward interface.
- Users are able to change profiles.
- User selectable chess pieces.
- Cables to computer via USB for charging (as well as using an iPhone wall adapter) and game transfer in pgn format.
- Software downloads easily from their Website for PC, Mac OS X and Linux, but as a caveat please check system compatibility.
- Online user guide and Website is very helpful.
- Rugged case.
- Choice of white or black cases.
- Metal stylus.
- Inexpensive USPS shipping rate.

Dislike:

- The 2.8-inch (diagonal) display might be too small for some personal preferences.
- PC connectivity is slightly quirky; overall the PlyCounter has a very small learning curve.
- Games cannot be deleted from the device, but only from the computer.
- No brightness control.
- No provided screen cover; case sold separately.
- Customer support fell below expectations in responsiveness.
- Utilitarian hardware, software and packaging by design - which there is absolutely nothing wrong with this concept and it works for me - just don't expect a Mon Roi clone regarding their enterprise.

In summary the PlyCounter is a compact, SUV style contender that meets all of this writer's expectations in what is still a fledgling market for lower priced ESDs and I definitely see it emerging on top especially if they adopt more sales avenues and gaining FIDE certification wouldn't hurt.

A couple of final thoughts on electronic scorekeeping in general:

1. With the advent of these devices the most recent rule for the method of recording a move has changed and is no longer a gray area. USCF Rule 15A states, "The player must first make the move, then record it on the scoresheet." *The Official Rules of Chess*, 6th Edition, page 59. The TD Tip following this rule also gives additional insight concerning "the fears surrounding electronic scoresheets" that consequently make it procedure that all scoresheets remain visible throughout the course of the game. However, TDs are encouraged to exercise leniency for offenders.

2. Scorekeeping with a paper sheet could be in danger of becoming a lost art such as those beautifully maintained by IM John Bartholomew: http://www.chess.com/blog/Fins0905/open-trifecta-twin-ports-skelton-bloomington.

* Electronic scoresheets are permitted if approved by USCF, but they must not be powered by devices capable of communication or operating chessplaying programs - Continental Chess Electronic Devices Policy: http://www.chesstour.com/devices.htm

**http://www.uschess.org/docs/gov/reports/eScoresheets/CertificationGuidelines.pdf

Pacific Southwest Open

By Dylan Quercia

Over the 4th of July weekend, the 2015 Pacific Southwest Open was held in Irvine, California. Players from all over the West coast attended this tournament hosted by Metropolitan Chess, Inc. Players showed their patriotism by playing six rounds of exciting tournament chess, though many took a bye in Round 4 to watch the fireworks on Saturday night. The tournament featured three sections: Open, Premier (U2000) and Reserve (U1600).

In the Open section, two players, IM Niccolo Ronchetti and WIM Annie Wang, went undefeated with a score of 5/6. Both of these players had a perfect score when they met going into round 4. They drew an exciting back and forth struggle. Tying for 3rd and 4th was IM Jack Peters and WGM Tatev Abrahamyan with a score of 4½/6. In the U2200, five players tied for 1st – 5th with a score of 4/6: Austin Hughes, Gabriel Sam, Raoul Crisologo, Aaron Chang, and Hamlet Tovmasyan.

In the Premier section, local player Buddy Morris won with a score of 5½/6. The one draw he gave up in round 2 was to young Rianne Ke. Stephanie Shao, Angel Adona, Naollin Olguin, Gordan McNeill, and Renato Dikit tied for 2nd – 6th with a score of 4½/6. Dikat also won the

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Solutions to Outside Shots!

From the back cover.

1. 1...Rxf1+ 2. Qxf1 Ne2+ picks the queen. Arnason, J - Steingrimsson, H., Islandsmot 2015.

2. 1...Ne1+ 2. Re1 Rb2 wins the queen. Hejazipour, M - Alattar, G., Asian Continental Women's Championship 2015.

3. Position after 22. a3.
Is it safe to play 22.... Qxb3?
It appears that after 22. a3 the Black Queen has to retreat. After 22... Qxb3, white plays 23. Rfb1, forcing the Queen to her only safe square 23... Qxc4. Then 24. Bf1, traps the Queen?
Well, no! Black has the saving and winning move 24...Nf3+!!
My opponent (a Danube Riverboat captain) played 25. Qxf3 (Fritz 13 says best), but this allows 25...Qxc3 since now Black's guarding knight is pinned. Note that had Black left the knight of f3 and played either 25. Kh1 or Kg2, Black still wins with the equally incredible 25.... Rd3! -Wes White (see whole game next month)

4. 1...Ng5! 2. Rxe8+ Bf8 3. Rxf8+ Kxf8 4. Ne6+ fxe6 5. hxg5 Qh5+ 6. Kg1 Qh1+ mate. Liu, Chang - Salem, A.R. Saleh, Asian Continental Chess Championsip 2015.

5. 1...Bh6! Deflecting the white queen. If 2. Rxg6+ hxg6, the black queen has access to h1, or 2. Qxh6 Rc2+ 3. Kd1 Qf3+ 4. Ke1 Qe2+ mate. Onischuk,Vladamir - Pascua,Haridas, 22nd Abu Dhabi International Chess Festival.

6. 1. Qxd6+! Kxd6 2. Bf4+ Kd7 3. Be6#.

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 Chess Club
With an undefeated score of 6-1, Dayron Huertas won La Palma Chess Club's 26th Club Championship. Second at 5½-1½ was David Bassett. Tied for third place at 5-2 were Wan Kim, Joseph Bellinger and Eren Karadayi. Other prizewinners were Bryan Hu, best under 1700; and newcomer Steve Acevedo, best under 1500. Acevedo also won the biggest rating gain prize for his bump of 219 points. Dayron Huertas won the best game prize as judged by IM Jack Peters. The 52-player event held at La Palma's Central Park ended May 12.

La Palma Club Ch.
5.01.2015
Rd 5 B23
Dayron Huertas (2403)
Robert Hutchinson (2030)
Annotated by Jack Peters

Huertas won the tournament's best game prize for this effort.

1.e4 c5 2.Nc3 e6 3.Nge2 a6 4.g3 Nc6 5.Bg2 g6
Playable, although Black accepts a lot of weak dark squares. Safer is 5... Nf6.

6.d4 cxd4 7.Nxd4 Bg7 8.Be3 Nge7 9.O-O O-O 10.Nxc6 Nxc6
Best. Both 10...bxc6?! 11.Qd6 += and 10...dxc6?! 11.Qxd8 Rxd8 12.Rfd1 Re8 13.Na4 += are very awkward for Black.

11.Qd2 Ne5 12.b3 Qa5 13.Bd4 Nc6 14.Bxg7 Kxg7 15.Rad1 Rd8 16.Na4! Qxd2 17.Rxd2 b5
Else Na4-b6 and Rf1-d1 strangles Black.
18.e5! ....
Black would not mind 18.Nb6 Rb8 19.Nxc8 Rbxc8= or 18.Nc5 Ra7 19.Rfd1 Rc7=

18...Re8?
Black's only chance is 18...Ra7 19.Bxc6 Rc7 . Although White gains a pawn by 20.Bxb5 axb5 21.Nb2 Bb7 22.a4 bxa4 23.Nxa4, there is no guarantee he can force a win.

19.Nc5 Ra7 20.Bxc6 dxc6 21.Rfd1 ....
White has a paralyzing bind. Black's pieces have no scope.

21...Rc7
It's logical to challenge the annoying e-pawn by 21...f6 , but 22.Rd8 Rxd8 23.Rxd8 Rc7 24.f4+- keeps Black tied up.

22.Ne4 ....
Ruling out ...f7-f6.

22...Bb7
Even worse is 22...c5 because 23.Nf6 Rf8 24.Rd8 takes aim at Black's King. For example, 24...Rxd8 25.Rxd8 threatens Nf6-e8+, and 25...Rc6 allows mate by 26.Rg8+ Kh6 27.h4 Bb7 28.g4.

23.Rd7 Rec8
Or 23...Re7 24.Rd8+-, planning 25. Nf6.

24.Nc5 1-0
24.Nc5 Rxd7 25.Rxd7 Ba8 , White can capture on e6 or increase the pressure with 26.f4 or 26...Kf8 27.b4 h6 28.Kf2 g5 29.Ra7+-, intending to win the Bishop by Nc5-d7-b6.

La Palma Chess Club's Chess Stress Test
With an undefeated score of 3½-½, Gregg Fritchle won the Upper Section of La Palma Chess Club's **Chess Stress Test**. David Munoz, Brenda Nardi, and Yoshio Dupree tied for second at 3-1. The 50-player event held at La Palma's Central Park ended June 12. In the Lower Section, Cindy Zhang and Alan Whiteman tied for first with a score of 3½-½. Michael Redden won the biggest upset prize (421 points). And, David Munoz won the biggest rating gain prize (108 points).

Joseph Bellinger took clear first place in LPCC's six-month Grand Prix competition, achieving 58 GP points. The event ran from January 1 through June 12, 2015. Yoshio Dupree won top honors in the Under 1850 competition again with 51 GP points; while Alan Whiteman took first Under 1600 with 45 GP points. This six-month competition is meant to reward frequent play combined with good performances. Wins, draws and losses earn 3, 2, and 1 points, respectively.

With an undefeated score of 4-1, Craig Faber won the Vulcan Section of La Palma Chess Club's **Star Trek Check & Mate Swiss**. Robert Hutchinson, Chris Roberts and George Newell tied for second at 3½-½. The 47-player event held at La Palma's Central Park ended July 31. In the Human Section, Peter Holzer and Steve Acevedo tied for first with a score of 4-1. Bert Babb won the Assimilation Executed Prize (most devastating win). And, four players won a Beam Me Up Scotty Award (rating gain raised player to next class): Ryan Schmitt, B to Class A; Steve Acevedo, D to Class C; Kevin Qian, C to Class B; and Brandon Xie, D to Class C.

On August 7, IM Jack Peters gave a lecture and simul at the LPCC. Jack took on 33 players at this annual event, giving up losses to Eren

Karadayi and Chris Roberts, and five draws to Craig Faber, Wan Kim, George Newell, Andrew Oh, and Yoshio Dupree. The simul lasted five hours from 7:30 p.m. until 12:30 a.m. All had a great time and look forward to doing it again next year.

With a perfect score of 3-0, Wan Kim won La Palma Chess Club's **Chess Trifecta**. Luke Cheng was second place with 2-1. The 42-player event held at La Palma's Central Park ended August 28. In the second section, Yoshio Dupree won first place with 2½-½. Tied for 2nd-4th place were Ryan Schmitt, Eric Lu and Peter Holzer with a score of 2-1. Justin Davis won the third section with a perfect 3-0 score. Kevin Qian, Alan Chu, Steve Acevedo and Rohan Nair tied for 2nd-5th with a score of 2-1. Justin Davis also won the biggest rating gain prize with his bump of 58 points. Wan Kim won the quickest checkmate prize with a 31 mover.

See the club's website at www.lapalmachess.com for wall charts, games, pictures and a schedule of events.

- Chris Roberts

San Diego Chess Club
The **May Super Gambito Open (#699)** with 32 players was won by Keaton Kiewra with 3½ points with Dionisio Aldama, Stevan Djordjevic and Peter Hodges trailing with 3.
In the Premier Section (U2000) there was a 4-way tie between Thomas Diem, Ed Lopez, Pejman Sagart and Tony Harbone, all with 3 points. The last two won U1800 prizes. Anthony Liu won U1600.

At the **June Super Gambito (#704)** Cyrus Lakdawala won first, ceding a draw only to Stevan Djordjevic, who is a very strong blitz player. Stevan came in Second Place while Venkat Iyer, Kevin Trujillo and Brandon Xia tied for BU2200. The Premier Section (U2000) was won by the ageless octogenarian Tony Harbone (now rated at 1751). I am guessing he is one of the higher rated 85 year olds in the country who is not on a rating floor. Thomas Diem (1956) was Second Place. Ming Lu and Juvi Allen tied for BU1800.

The big news at the San Diego Chess Club is that our leaky roof that we have been suffering with for over 15 years is finally being completely replaced by the City of San Diego, along with other badly needed upgrades to the interior and exterior of the building in Balboa Park. Many people deserve credit for lighting fires under various officials to finally get this done, so I can't list everyone who chipped in, but here are some of those who tirelessly advocated to get this done: Club Manager Bruce Baker, Board member Bruce Charnov, Balboa Park employee and chess player Morgan Fox, former President Ron Rezendes and current President David Saponara. While the building is being repaired we have has to move to an alternate location, 1717 Morena Blvd. We hope to get back in our newly renovated home sometime in late July, but we don't have a firm date yet. The Gambito Opens are being held at the Consulate Hotel, 2901 Nimitz Blvd.

- Chuck Ensey

SANTA MONICA BAY CHESS CLUB (310) 827-2789
11555 National Blvd. (@ Federal Ave.)
West Los Angeles

Pasadena Chess Club
Like its predecessor Club Championship, the Pasadena City Open drew 84 players. Axel Muller topped the first section with 5½ of 6, a full point ahead of Anthony Ge, Larry Stevens, and John Wright. Mher Mikayelyan, Patrick Giles, Daniel Manahan, and Greg Hall split Under 2000 honors, while Under 1900 saw a huge tie among Cory Chen, Chris Stychinsky, Tadeh Mirzakhanian, Rolando Tenoso, Neil Hultgren, and Brian Cheng. Mathew Ung and Edward Chou split Under 1700 laurels. Section Two also featured a convincing win, with Ryan T. Yang on top. Wayne Chien was best Under 1400; Under 1200 was divided among Alfonso Henry, Stanley Cheng, Jason Zhang, and Charles Brooks; Marissa Li was top Under 1000; and Desmond Weisenberg won Unrated honors. Edmond Wen had the most cumulative upset points.

The Mount Wilson Open, with "only" 68 players, saw another convincing win, as Ray Armagnac tallied a 5-0 sweep. Tony Kukavica and Patrick Giles (top Under 2000) were a point behind. Roberto Queiro was top Under 1900; Arturo Armagnac and Allen Qiu split Under 1800; and Jason McKeen and Cullen O'Neil divided Under 1700 honors. In Section Two, Kendryek Wu's 4½ left him a half point ahead of Brian Sheldon and Payne Chien (best Under 1400). The Under 1300 prize was split among Sean Zheng, Marissa Li, and Alfonso Henry (the cumulative upset point winner), while Aris He and Sophia Manahan tied for Under 1100.

The San Gabriel Valley Championship, with six rounds in two sections, begins September 11. The club meets Friday nights at 7 pm at the Boys and Girls Club, 3230 East Del Mar. For full information about the club and a catalogue of the hundreds of volumes in its lending library, see http://www.tim-thompson.com/pasadena.html.

-Randy Hough

Lancaster
The AV Chess House, 3710 Neola Way, hosts two chess clubs. The Kids Chess Club (for grades K-8) meets 5:15 p.m. to 6:45 p.m. Fridays, and the Check Chess Club (for ages 15 and up) meets 3:30 p.m. to 5:15 p.m. Fridays. Rated and non-rated tournaments on most weekends, instruction, newsletter. Contact Daa Mahowald at daa@mahowald.org.
Website: chess4.us

New Club in SAN DIEGO:
Downtown Chess meets 2:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. Fridays at the new Central Library, 330 Park Blvd. Casual play, quarterly tournaments, blitz tournaments. Free. Call the Central Library at 619.236.5800. All ages welcome!
Website: www.facebook.com/downtownchess.

Globe Trotting
Tatev Abrahamyan
Continued from page 39

places.

The next morning everyone left. As usual, I had no time for reflection as I was literally going around the world: USA-China-Armenia-USA. I did not manage to coordinate my flights with the Armenian team, so it was a long and lonely journey to my homeland. I played in another rapid event there, but mainly I spent my time with my family eating delicious food, visiting pretty places and being spoiled overall...just what I needed after three grueling events.

Now that it's been several months, I've had some time to reflect back on my events. I can honestly say that I am still not sure what exactly went wrong. The event that I am most disappointed about is, of course, the US Championship. I would like to think that it was mainly due to the pressure I put on myself and the eagerness to finally win the event. Partly it was because I "mapped out" my tournament: after seeing the pairings for the tournament, I had this predetermined idea of which games I could win easily and which ones would be a struggle. For this, I was rightfully punished. Chess is hard enough as it is without all these external thoughts and pressures.

As far as the World Championship and the World Team Championship go, I can now say that those were really great learning experiences for me. Losing to Harika, even if I missed a win, is nothing to beat myself up over. Anything can happen in a tournament like that.

China was particularly an interesting experience for me for many reasons. First of all, I really enjoyed the team environment. I particularly have to give credit to Katerina who truly carried the team with her solid play. She was the one we relied on. It's always a relief to look to the board next to you and see your teammate doing well. I did not know her well before this event, but I am grateful for her friendship, passion for chess and fighting spirit. We are truly lucky to have her on the team. Second, what I found interesting when preparing against these women is how most of their games were against each other. Every time I prepared, I would stumble upon a game that I've seen when preparing against a previous round opponent.

I understand that it's a comfortable living and kind of an elitist status to be invited to the grand prix series, the World Championship, etc., but I do have to wonder how enjoyable it is to exclusively play against the same opponents over and over. However, the most important lesson came from my preparation and talks with Yuri. At some point we realized that we are terrible at predicting my opponents' openings, so we spent a lot of time talking about my time trouble. He asked me to write down how much time I need for the last 10 moves to feel comfortable and we worked up to move 1 with 5 move intervals. His conclusion that took me aback was: "you are in time trouble before the game even begins". It was a mind blowing revelation for me, and it made me think about how I approach my games in general. I had never felt the pressure before I actually get in time trouble. Now, I go into games thinking about my time from move 1.

In my very next tournament, the candidate's tournament, I decided that I am going to play faster. No more excuses. I did not get in time trouble in any of my games. I never thought I would be able to do this. I felt like I was playing a whole different game. I was watching my opponents be uncomfortable and panicking with no time while I still had plenty left. I still have trouble with time management, but now I no longer find myself in time trouble every game and am working towards curing this disease.

Chess wise this past year has been nothing short of a nightmare: my last great tournament was last year's Reykjavik Open and since then I have lost over a 100 Elo points. I am feeling positive about my chess again and feel as if I'm on my way to full recovery. I hope that this article next year will have a more positive tune and a happier result. Until then, there is always another game to be played.

TLA's
Continued from page 46

Play-offs to determine Top 4 in all sections (except for Unrated/Provisional section): See complete Monday schedule for semi-finals and finals for top 4 in each section on tournament website. Additional anti-cheating policies in effect: No cell phones or other electronic devices allowed. All chess clocks and chess sets, for all sections, will be provided! Electronic notation devices will not be allowed. Security staff on site. DGT boards will be used for a limited number of top boards. Half-Point Byes: Three (3) 1/2-point byes allowed in Rounds 1 – 5 only, if requested before the start of Round 2. Zero-point byes allowed after Round 5 if requested at least an hour before the start of the round. Free GM lectures and simuls for registered players. HR: Planet Hollywood - $116/night. Call 1-866-317-1829. CODE: MC2015. ENTRY: https://millionairechess.com/register . For more information, including tournament policies, prize fund, schedule, registrations, FAQ, hotel info and updates please visit: https://millionairechess.com/ W. FIDE.

Pacific Southwest Open
Continued from page 41

U1800 section a clear point ahead of the rest of the field.

In the Reserve section, 8-year-old Eric Woo won clear 1st with an undefeated score of 5/6. Kevin Golchin finished clear 2nd with a score of 4½/6 and 4 players tied for 3rd-6th place. The U1400 prize went to Tanner Muscarella and David Lacayo with a score of 3½/6. Gokan Akat won the Unrated prize with a score of 3/6.

Upcoming Events in Southern California

***** Please see uschess.org for the latest info and complete TLA for each event. *****
See also adult TLAs at
SCchess.com/calendar.html
and Scholastic TLAs at
SCchess.com/calendar_kids.html

Nov. 26-29, 2015
American Open
GPP: 150
4-day option is Nov. 26 - Nov. 29, 2015
3-day option is Nov. 27 - Nov. 29, 2015

DoubleTree Hotel by Hilton Anaheim-Orange County
100 The City Drive, Orange, CA 92868
Chess Rate $105 until October 21st.
$10 parking per day per car.

Register early and save.
Entry Fee
Register before the following dates:
Oct. 1st - $165
Nov. 1st - $175
Nov. 25th - $185
On site (1hr before 1st round) $200
$50 additional charge for U2000 playing in the Open section.
$100 for Re-entry fee
Mixed Doubles No extra fee

Required Memberships
A U.S. Chess Federation Membership is required of all players. A Southern California Chess Federation (SCCF) Membership is also required for Southern California players. Players will not be allowed to complete the tournament without valid memberships.

Ratings
The November USCF Rating Supplement will be used. Other ratings may be used if higher. If your rating changes in the November supplement you will be moved up or down automatically. For any changes please contact us through the Contact page. The decision of the chief tournament director is final regarding eligibility, rating adjustments, conversions, unofficial ratings, the CCA minimum rating list or other rating issues. Unofficial USCF rating usually used if otherwise unrated. Every effort will be made to start players in the appropriate section, but if an error is discovered late in the tournament it will be corrected. If there is any reason you may not be eligible for the section you entered, be sure to ask for a review before Round 1 is paired.

PRIZES
OPEN SECTION: $5000-2500-1200-800-600-300, Under 2450 $1500-700-500. Under 2350 $800-400 FIDE rated.
U2200 SECTION: $3000-1500-1000-500-400-300.
U2000 SECTION: $3000-1500-1000-500-400-300.
U1800 SECTION: $3000-1500-1000-500-400-300.
U1600 SECTION: $3000-1500-700-500-400-300.
U1400 SECTION: $2000-1000-500-300-200-100. U1200: $1000-500-300. U1400 (Unrated): $300-200-100.* Part of the U1400 Section

Sections:
Open, U2200, U2000, U1800, U1600, U1400
The Open section is open to all players over 2000. For players rated under 2000 who want to play in the Open section, you must first sign-up in your current allowed section, and then send a request to play in the Open through the Contact us page. Under sections are open only to players with ratings lower than the section limit. Open and U2200 are FIDE rated.
Players with provisional rating (under 26 games) as of Nov. 10, 2014 will not be able to win the full money prize. Unrated players (Played zero rated games) will also be imposed a prize limit.

8 Round Swiss System USCF Rated Tournament. There is a 4-day and a 3-day option. Merge on 5th Round.

Time Control
4-days Option -All Rds are 40 moves /2hr + SD/1 hr.
3-days Option - Rds 1-4 are Game/1 hr. Round 5-8 are merged with 4-days.
5 second time delay will be used with no subtraction.

Mixed Doubles
Team up with the opposite sex and be eligible to win Mixed Double Prize. Top 3 best overall scoring (combine two scores of the players) Mixed Double team among all sections get 1st $500 - 2nd $250 - 3rd $125. The following Mixed Double rules apply: *(Please email us to register your Mixed Double Team)*
1) No extra fee for registering a Mixed Double Team
2) Team must be registered before the start of the Rd 2 of the 3-day schedule
3) Team's average rating cannot exceed 2200
4) Players can be from different sections.

4-day	3-day
Rd 1 Thu 12:30pm	Rd 1 Fri 11:00am
Rd 2 Thu 7:30pm	Rd 2 Fri 2:30pm
Rd 3 Fri 12:30pm	Rd 3 Fri 5:00pm
Rd 4 Fri 7:30pm	Rd 4 Fri 8:00pm
MERGE	
Rd 5 Sat 10:30am	Rd 5 Sat 10:30am
Rd 6 Sat 5:00pm	Rd 6 Sat 5:00pm
Rd 7 Sun 10:00am	Rd 7 Sun 10:00am
Rd 8 Sun 4:30pm	Rd 8 Sun 4:30pm

Other Information:
Bye Policy
Maximum of 2 half-point byes. Byes must be requested before round 1.

Equipment
Players are required to bring their own chess clocks and sets. None will be provided. Chess equipment and other chess merchandise will be available for purchase during the event at the ChessPalace Bookstore.

Nov. 21-22, 2015
American Open Scholastic

Booster Saturday - Nov. 21, 2015
Junior Varsity Sunday - Nov. 22, 2015
Varsity (Sat - Sun) Nov. 21 - Nov 22, 2015

DoubleTree Hotel by Hilton Anaheim-Orange County
100 The City Drive, Orange, CA 92868
Chess Rate $105 until October 21st.
$7 Parking fee per car per day.

Register
By September 30th - 20% off
By October 31st - 15% off
By November 19th -10% off
Booster - $40
Junior Varsity (JV) - $60
Varsity - $80
For Varsity and JV Play up Fee +$5

All Varsity and Junior Varsity Sections are USCF rated, therefore all players must have an active USCF membership. You can sign-up or renew your membership here.
All Booster sections are non USCF rated, therefore a USCF membership is not required.

Booster - Nov. 21st
Sections:
Each Grade in K-12 will have its own section.
Rounds: 8-12 Games - non USCF Rated
Time Control: Game/15 mins. (optional)

Junior Varsity - Nov. 23rd
Sections:
K-1
K-3 rated U600 (under 600)
K-6 rated U600
K-6 rated U800
K-8 rated U1000
K-12 rated U1200
(Player's rating must be under the indicated rating)
Rounds:6 Rounds Swiss System - USCF Rated
Time Control: Game/30 minutes

Varsity - Nov 21st - Nov 22nd
Sections:
K-3
K-6
K-12
Rounds:6 Rounds Swiss System - USCF Rated
Time Control: Game/75 minutes

Booster: Saturday - Nov. 21st
All rounds will take place from 9:30am - 2:00pm.
Lunch break from 12pm-1pm
Awards - 3pm

Junior Varsity: Sunday- Nov. 23rd
Round 1 - 9:00 am
Round 2 - 10:45 am
Round 3 - 12:30 pm
Round 4 - 2:00 pm
Round 5 - 3:30 pm
Round 6 - 5:00 pm
Awards - 7:00 pm

Varsity:
Saturday - Nov. 22nd
Round 1 - 9am
Round 2 - 12:15pm
Round 3 - 3:15 pm
Sunday - Nov. 23rd
Round 4 - 9am
Round 5 - 12:15 pm
Round 6 - 3:15 pm
Awards - 6:30pm

Prizes:
Chess Computer for each 1st place winner per section.
Trophies to individuals who place in top 10 and to teams in the top 3.
For the team standings only the scores of the top 4 team members are counted.
Finalist medals to all above-mean scorers.

Other Information:
Bye Policy
Players may request 1 half-point bye before the start of the tournament.

Equipment
Players in all Varsity sections must bring their own sets and clocks, none will be provided.
Chess sets will be provided for the all Junior Varsity and Booster sections, you may bring a chess clock if you have one.
Chess equipment will be available for purchase onsite.

US Chess Junior Grand Prix!
OCT. 8-12 OR 9-12
Trophies plus GPP: 300 (Enhanced)

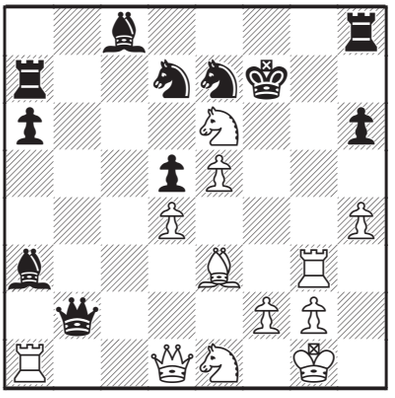
2015 Millionaire Chess Open II
GM MAURICE ASHLEY AND AMY LEE RETURN WITH THE CHESS TOURNAMENT WITH THE BIGGEST PRIZE FUND IN USCF HISTORY!!!
9SS, 40/120, SD/30 d5 for Open; 7SS, 40/90, SD/30 d5 for Under Sections.
4-Day Schedule for Under Sections, G/45 d5 for Rounds 1 – 4.
Planet Hollywood Resort & Casino, 3667 S. Las Vegas Blvd., Las Vegas, NV 89109
$1,000,000 Guaranteed Prize Fund!!!

Five Main Sections: OPEN (FIDE rated & FIDE rules; GM, IM, WGM and WIM norms possible): $100,000 – 50,000 – 25,000 – 16,000 – 10,000 – 8,000 – 5,000 ea. (7th – 10th) – 3,500 ea. (11st – 20th), 2400 – 2549: 40,000 – 20,000 – 13,000 – 8,000 – 5,000, U2400: 38,000 – 19,000 – 11,000 – 7,000 – 4,000. U2200 (FIDE rated): $38,000 – 19,000 – 10,000 – 8,000 – 6,000 – 5,000 – 4,000 ea. (7th – 10th) – 3,000 ea. (11st – 20th). U2000: $36,000 – 18,000 – 9,000 – 7,000 – 5,000 – 4,000 – 3,000 ea. (7th – 10th) – 2,500 ea. (11st – 20th). U1800: $34,000 – 17,000 – 8,500 – 6,500 – 5,000 – 4,000 – 3,000 ea. (7th – 10th) – 2,500 ea. (11st – 20th). U1600: $30,000 – 16,000 – 8,000 – 6,000 – 4,000 – 3,000 – 2,500 ea. (7th – 10th) – 2,280 ea. (11st – 20th), U1400: $24,000 – 12,000 – 6,000 – 4,000, U1200: 20,000 – 10,000 – 6,000 – 4,000. Additional Unrated/Provisional Section – 3,000 – 2,000 – 1,000.
$19,200 in Special Prizes, including Mixed Doubles, Upset, Tie-Break Consolation, Best Dressed categories, Top Female, Senior and Child in the five main sections . See website for list.
EF: $1,000 by 3/31, $1,250 by 6/30, $1,500 by 9/30, $2,000 after 9/30 or onsite. Unrated/Provisional players may enter in the Open or Unrated/Provisional Section only; if playing in Unrated/Provisional Section, EF: $100 by 3/31, $125 by 6/30, $150 by 9/30, $200 after 9/30.
For this event, provisionally rated players are those with less than 50 games under a single rating system (USCF, FIDE or other foreign systems). Highest rating between 12/1/2013 and the date the player registers used, but if any time after registration player's rating exceeds the section limit by 50 points, player will be moved into the next higher section.
See FAQ on tournament website for details on ratings and adjustments for section eligibility. The highest of USCF, FIDE, CFC, ECF and other foreign ratings, adjusted accordingly, will be used. Current minimum CCA ratings may also be used. Players must disclose all ratings and Federation IDs. Onsite registration until 3:30 pm, 10/8, no personal checks.
Re-entry (not available in Open section): $400 from 5-Day to 4-Day schedule available by 9am, 10/9. Rounds: 5-Day Schedule: Thu 12 and 7, Fri 11 and 6, Sat 11 and 6, Sun 11. Play-off Qualifying Round on Sunday at 6 for players tied for top 4 positions in all sections, except for Unrated/Provisional section. Rounds 8 & 9 for Open Section players not qualifying for Top 4 Play-off, Mon 11 and 6. 4-Day Schedule (not available for Open section), G/45 d5: Fri 11:30, 2, 4:30 and 7:00 (merges with 5-Day Schedule on Round 4).

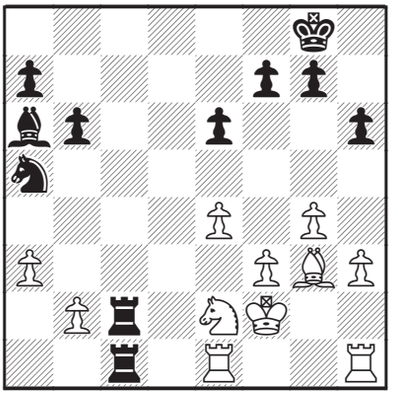
Continued on page 44

Final Points

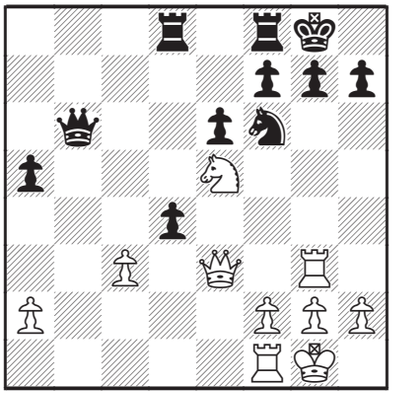
We hope you enjoyed this issue. Until next time, here is another quiz. We went back 50 and 100 years to add positions to those from recent tournaments. So please keep submitting those scoresheets, or take a smartphone photo and email it to RankAndFileEditor@gmail.com. See page 2 for solutions. - Ed.



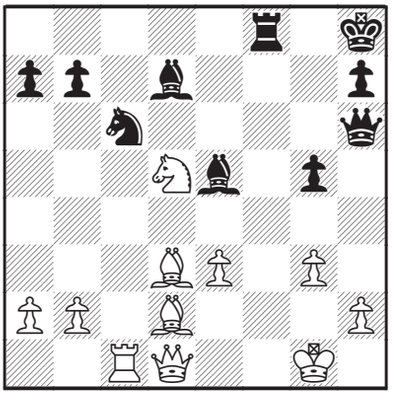
1. White to Play



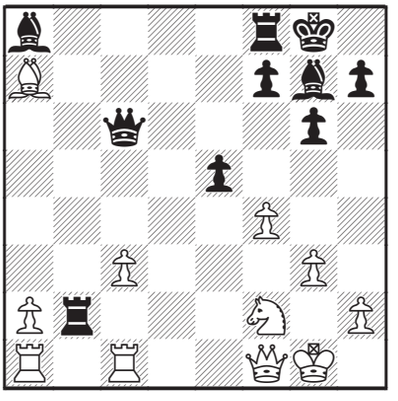
2. Black to Play



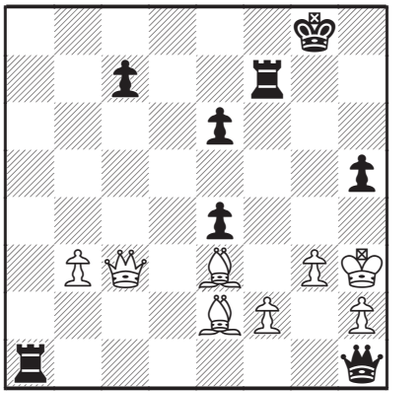
3. White to Play



4. Black to Play



5. Black to Play



6. Black to Play

Solutions to
Inside Moves

From the page 3.

1....Rxg2+ 2. Kh3 Re3 # Wen, Tommy - Wijaya, William, SoCal Open 2015.

2. 1.Rxf7 Rxf7 2.Qg6+ Kf8 3.Qxc2 picks up the rook. Li- Bohan - Leano, Bryan, SoCal Open 2015.

3. 1. Nxd5 cxd5 2. Qxc8 Rxc8 3. Rxc8+ Kh7 4. Rh8+ Kxh8 5. Ng6+ Kg8 6. Ne7+ 1-0 Amodeo, Mario - Kang, Justin, SoCal Open 2015.

4. Black just played 1...Ne5. 2. Nd5! 1-0 Mayo, Scott - Knight, Scott, SoCal Open 2015.

5. 1. Nxg6+ Kg8 2. Ne7+ Kh8 3. Qd8+ Rxd8 4. Rxd8+ Bf8 5. Bh6 Nc3+ Ka1 1-0 Lu, Eric - Chou, Edward, SoCal Open 2015.

6. 1. Bxg7 Kxg7 2. Qg5+ Kh8 3. Nf6 h6 4. Rxh6+ 1-0 Johnson, Andy - Taylor, Arthur, SoCal Open 2015.

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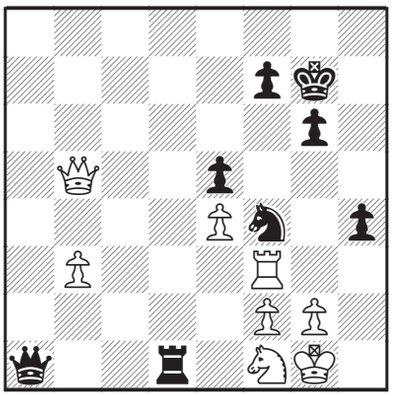
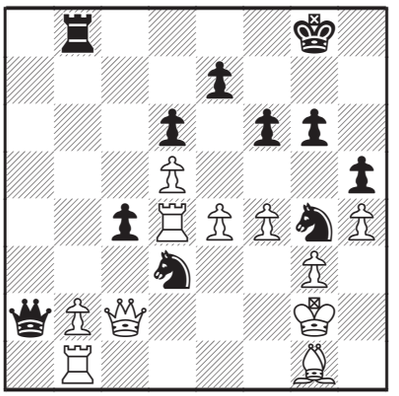
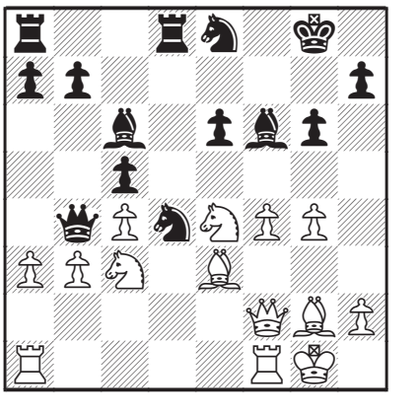


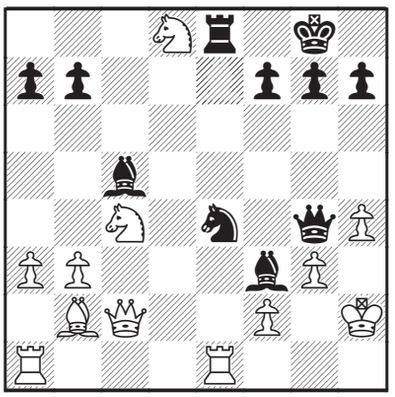
1. Black to Play



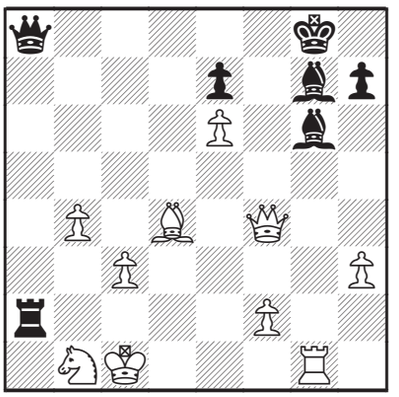
2. Black to Play



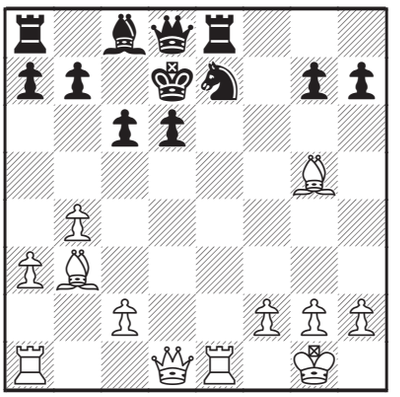
1. Black to Play



4. Black to Play



5. Black to Play



6. White to Play

See page 41 for solutions.