

DOUBLE ISSUE!

Holidays 2016

Chess Horizons



5th annual **BOSTON CHESS CONGRESS**

January 6-8 or 7-8, 2017

Hyatt Boston Harbor

Luxurious hotel, free parking, free airport shuttle, \$99 room rates

FREE LECTURE BY GM MICHAEL ROHDE, SUNDAY 9 AM

5SS, 40/100, SD/30, d10 (2-day option, rds 1-2 G/60, d10).

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Sections: Premier (Open to 1900/ over), U2100, U1900, U1700, U1500, U1250

Unrated may enter any section except Premier – see site for prize limitations

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All: Online EF \$5 less to MACA members; may join/renew at masschess.org. Re-entry \$50, not available in Premier. No checks at site, credit cards OK.

USCF membership required. Special 1 year USCF dues with magazine if paid with entry. Online at chessaction.com, Adult \$35, Young Adult \$22, Scholastic \$15. Mailed, phoned or at site, Adult \$40, Young Adult \$25, Scholastic \$17.

3-Day Schedule: Reg. ends Fri 6 pm. Rds. Fri 7, Sat 11 & 5, Sun 10 & 3:15.

2-Day Schedule: Reg. ends Sat 10 am. Rds. Sat 11, 2 & 5, Sun 10 & 3:15.

Half point byes available all rounds, limit 2, Premier must commit by rd. 2, others rd 3.

Hotel rates: \$99-99, [reserve room online](#) or call 888-421-1442 or 617-568-1234, request chess rate, reserve by 12/23 or rate may increase.

Bring set, board, clock if possible - none supplied.

Entry: www.chessaction.com or Continental Chess, PO Box 249, Salisbury Mills, NY 12577. \$15 service charge for refunds. Advance entries posted at www.chessaction.com (online entries posted instantly).



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Chess Horizons

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*Cover photo: IM Denys Shmelov,
76th New England Open Champion*

*All photos courtesy Tony Cortizas
unless otherwise specified.*



Note from the Editor

Nathan Smolensky

Dear Readers,

I didn't think I would have this issue for you. I didn't think I could fulfill my promise of four issues' worth of content in the year 2016. Life was busy, and contributions were slow.

And then, a Christmas Miracle happened. The contributions started piling in. Writers – good writers, the best chess minds in the state – started sending great articles. And boy, was there a lot to write about – from Ryan and Tianna Wang representing the U.S. at the World Cadets', to Carissa Yip continuing to tear up the record books, to Mika Brattain winning the Denker, to Alexander Ivanov running roughshod in Reno, it is an exciting time to be a chess fan in Massachusetts.

So Happy Holidays, everyone. Enjoy!

- Nathan Smolensky, Editor

Annotation / Player Title Key

! – Strong move	!! – Brilliant move
? – Weak move	?? – Blunder
!? – Interesting move	?! – Dubious move
± (♣) – White (Black) is slightly better	
± (♣) – White (Black) is significantly better	
+ - (-+) – White (Black) is winning	
∞ - Unclear	⊙ - Zugzwang
NM – National Master, any player over 2200 USCF	
FM – FIDE Master. 2300+ FIDE.	
SM – Senior Master. 2400+ USCF.	
IM – International Master. Norm-based FIDE title.	
GM – Grandmaster. Norm-based FIDE title.	

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The Challenge Page

Nathan Smolensky

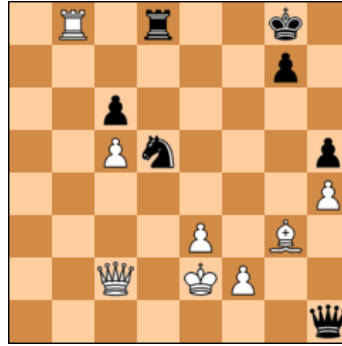
Find the best move! Solutions on p. 22

1.



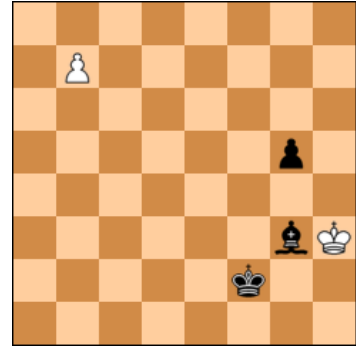
White to move

2.



Black to move

3.



Black to move

4.



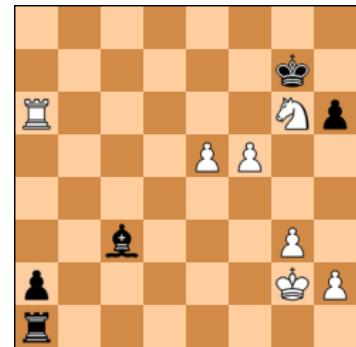
White to move

5.



White to move

6.



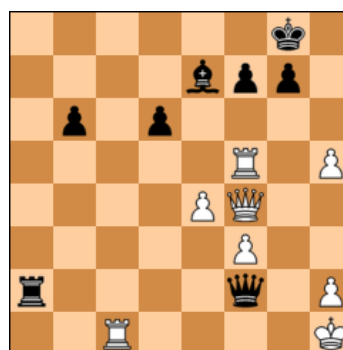
White to move

7.



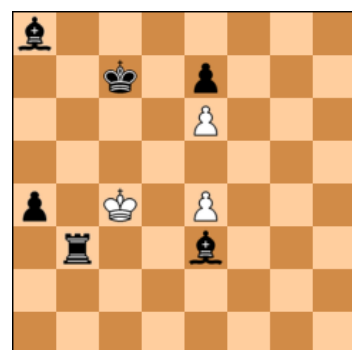
White to move

8.



White to move

9.



Black to mate in 3

*Obituary***Alfred G. Ward, 1938 - 2016**

George Mirijanian



Alfred G. "Al" Ward, one of the most active players in Massachusetts chess history, died in his home in Framingham on Oct. 17, 2016. He was 78. Al was a life member of both the USCF and MACA as well as a longtime member of the Metrowest Chess Club in Natick and its predecessor, the Framingham Chess Club.

In the past 25 years, Al had played in 355 USCF-rated events. While competing mostly in Massachusetts, he had played also in all the other New England states, New York, Pennsylvania, Maryland, District of Columbia, and Nevada. He was a solid Class A player, gaining the title of 1st Category from the USCF on April 19, 1992. He took part in all of MACA's major tournaments: the Mass. Open, Greater Boston Open and the Harry Nelson Pillsbury Memorial. In addition, he played in numerous New England Opens. His only "time-out" from chess was a 5-year period from late October 2009 until mid-December 2014.

Alfred Giffin Ward was born on Sept. 11, 1938 in Cambridge, the son of Alfred F. and Blanche (Giffin) Ward. He grew up in Watertown and graduated in 1958 from Watertown High School, where he was a stand-out football player and member of the track & field team. It was there where he developed his love of chess. Besides chess, Al had many

diversified interests. He became a pilot and parachuted for sport. He also built his own car from the frame up! He became a skilled machinist at the Watertown Arsenal. In addition, he bought and read the entire Great Books collection.

Ten years out of high school, Al decided to go to college. He enrolled in Tufts University in Medford and graduated from there in 1972. After Tufts and for the rest of his life, Al Ward worked at any job that would sustain his frugal lifestyle and leave him free to pursue his interests, including caring and sheltering any animal in need, especially the many stray cats that came to his door, until his health began to fail two years ago.

News in Brief

Nathan Smolensky

The 76th New England Open was held from September 3rd through the 5th in Burlington, MA. Congratulations to the following section winners:

Championship – **IM Denys Shmelov**

U2000 – **Paul Godin, Alan Sikarov, Derek Zhao**

U1800 – **Kevork Haddad, Robert Sawdey**

U1600 – **Zubin Baliga**

The first ever Massachusetts Junior Open was held on October 23rd in Boxborough. The following teams took home top section prizes:

Open – “Patriots” (**Vineeth Nareddy, Arjun Girish, Adithya Sharma**)

U1200 – “The Kings” (**Vishnu Mandepudi, Sujith Yeruva, Sravan Mandepudi**)

U800 – “Chess Kids” (**Nicole Zermani, Jason Zermani, Derek Moeller**)

U400 – “Polgars” (**Suhavi Tiruveedhula, Anna Katsman, Reann Zhou**)



The Return of MIT Chess

IM Alexander Katz



Last spring, the MIT Chess Club revived after a period of relative inactivity. It quickly expanded to over 50 members, and continues growing steadily!

The MIT Winter Open, held at the MIT Media Lab on December 11th, marked our third USCF-event, and our last of 2016. The turnout of 40 players was solid, but more importantly two were new players! This marks a half-dozen players who have become (or renewed) members thanks to our tournaments, which is of course the best kind of reward.

In the Open section, top seed Christopher Chase suffered an early upset, losing a very interesting rook ending in which his 7th-rank pawn couldn't compensate for a pawn deficit. This opened the door for a number of near-masters to fight for the top spots, and Nithin Kavi -- who had actually made master a week before -- ended up winning the tournament with a perfect 4-0 score. Sherif Khater took clear second with 3.5 points (missing the first round), and third place was split between Richard Yi (whose only loss was in the final round, to Kavi) and Alan Song.



Andrew Trattner (white) faces NM Nithin Kavi (foreground), while Jerry Li stands up in his game against Richard Yi (background)

In the U1800 section, Linh Nyugen won with a perfect 4-0 score, made more impressive by the fact that he played three blacks in the tournament (!). John Martin, who lost only his final round encounter with Nyugen, and Jeremy Rosenholtz, whose loss came from Martin after the latter found the correct breakthrough in a pawn ending, split 2nd and 3rd with 3 points apiece.



Finally, in the U1400 section Isaac Chen, Hoyin Chu, and Jason Wyckoff split the top three places with three points apiece. Of special note is Sophia Rosenholtz (pictured, playing white against Chu), who played each of the top three finishers in the first three rounds (winning one)! The Wyckoff - Rosenholtz game was particularly exciting, in which Wyckoff offered his queen to set up a deadly mating net.



Chief TD (and article author) IM Alexander Katz

Our next tournaments will be in the spring, so stay tuned! Additionally, our club meetings (Wednesdays, 7-9 pm) are open to the public, so feel free to stop by and check us out at chess.mit.edu!



The MIT Media Lab



The Journey So Far: Update

NM Carissa "SheWin" Yip

It's almost 2017! Another year has come and gone, and it has been an eventful one.

I've been very fortunate to have had so many opportunities this year. Playing in the US Women's Championship for the first time, I got off to a great start at 2-0 but then lost my way in the middle to finish with 4.5/11. My second to last game was against GM Irina Krush. I was lost in the beginning, but with just one mistake by GM Krush, I was able to equalize. With luck on my side, she made some inaccuracies and I was able to defeat her.

NM Carissa Yip (2318)

GM Irina Krush (2533)

U.S. Women's Championship (10)

04.24.2016

Sicilian, Kan [B43]

1. e4 c5 2. Nf3 e6 3. d4 cxd4 4. Nxd4 a6 5. Nc3 Qc7 6. Bd3 Nf6 7. O-O d6 8. f4 Nbd7 9. Kh1 Be7 10. Qe2 White plays for the e5 break O-O 11. Bd2 Nc5 12. Rae1

12. Rac1 is more precise.

12... Nxd3 13. cxd3 b5 14. Rc1 Qd7 15. g4

This is an attack that shouldn't work because Black has the two bishops and can counter by way of the a8-h1 diagonal. But I wanted to put the pressure on my opponent so she might make a mistake - higher rated players tend not to like being attacked by lower rated ones.

15... Bb7 16. g5 Ne8 17. f5 b4 18. Nd1 e5

19. Nf3 d5 20. Nf2

The knight going to g4 to support the f6 pawn break and attacking the e5 pawn f6

21. gxf6?

21. g6 and now White actually has a legitimate attack with a pawn structure that looks like a King's Indian Defence.

21... Nxf6



21... gxf6 was the only move I looked at for Black, because I thought Black would want to keep the pawn on e5. I had calculated the following lines:

a) 22. Rg1 Kh8 23. Bh6 Rg8 (23... Rf7 24. Nxe5 fxe5 25. Qg4) 24. Nxe5 fxe5 25. Rxc8+ Kxc8 26. Qg4+ Kh8 27. Rg1

b) 22. Rg1 Ng7 23. Bh6 Rf7 24. Ng4 and Black has no good way to stop Nxe5, leaving White with a devastating attack.

22. Nxe5?

Greedy. I thought I should be able to defend in the coming moves.

22... Qb5 23. Neg4 dxe4 24. Nxf6+ Bxf6

25. Nxe4 Rfe8 26. Rce1 Rad8 27. Rf3 Rxd3??



Losing all the advantage. Now, the position is equal.

28. Qxd3 Qxd3?

Another mistake, but it's not over yet.



28... Rxe4 29. Qxb5 Rxe1+ 30. Kg2 Bxf3+ 31. Kxf3 axb5 32. Bxe1 Bxb2 33. Bxb4 would have been an equal position.

29. Rxd3 Rxe4??

And here Black is much worse. Her last chance was 29... Bh4 30. Kg1 Bxe1 31. Nd6 Re2 32. Bxe1 Rxe1+ 33. Kf2 Re7.

30. Kg1 Rg4+ 31. Rg3 Rd4 32. Bg5

Forcing the exchange of bishops

32. Re8+ Kf7 33. Rb8 Rxd2 34. Rxb7+ Ke8 35. Rg2 Rd1+ 36. Kf2 Bxb2 37. Rxb4 Bf6 38. Ra4 is also good.

32... Bxg5 33. Rxd5 Kf7 34. Kf2 Bd5 35. b3 a5 36. Ke3 Re4+ 37. Kd2 Rd4+ 38. Ke3 Re4+ 39. Kd2

Repeating moves to get more time on the clock

39... Rd4+ 40. Kc1 Kf6 41. Reg1 Rh4 42. Rxd7 Rxd7 43. Kb1 a4 44. Rd7 Be4+ 45. Ka1 axb3 46. axb3 h5

46... Bc2 47. Rg3

47. Rf1 Rh1 48. Rd6+ Kg7 49. f6+ Kf7 50. Rd7+ Kg6 51. Rg7+ Kh6 52. Rxh1 Bxh1 53. Rg5

1-0

At the end of the tournament, I was approached by Kasparov Chess Foundation and selected to join its Young Stars Team USA program.

In June I joined the training and evaluation camp organized by world chess legend, Garry Kasparov. I was the youngest and lowest rated student in a gathering of the best juniors in the country. The camp included GM Jeffery Xiong, GM Sam Sevian, GM Kayden Troff, and IM John Burke. I was the only one without any title and the only girl in the group.

The entire camp was three days. We were supposed to annotate and analyze six of our games to share with the "class." It was an eye-opening experience for me. I met some of the best juniors in the country and was awed by them and the level of their games. On the last day of the camp, we were given a set of puzzles to test our chess abilities. I had never seen such difficult puzzles. Each puzzle took me around

half an hour to solve. Kasparov provided us with individual hints and guidance on each puzzle if needed. After the test, Kasparov met with each student along with their parents individually. He provided his assessment, and suggested next steps.



Photo courtesy Percy Yip

I was nervous, waiting for the final judgement. Finally, it was my turn. I passed! I was invited to winter session and given some instructions on how to prepare.

After an exciting spring and summer, the school started, I had very little time to study chess. The workload was heavy, perhaps 3 or 4 times heavier than it was last year. I tried to play some tournaments in the hope of improving my rating before the December training session for Kasparov. One of the tournaments I played in was the Boylston Chess Club (BCC) championship, which I ended up winning, becoming the youngest and first female BCC Champion in the club's history.

It didn't come as a surprise to me that I was the top seed in the field. Most strong players don't play regularly in MA, and it isn't easy to find many high quality games in the New England area. The frequency of quick time controls doesn't help. For example, I have only played GM Alexander Ivanov twice this year, once in Greater Boston tournament, and again in BCF Fall FIDE Festival.

CHESS HORIZONS



Holidays 2016

GM Alexander Ivanov (2554)

NM Carissa Yip (2296)

Greater Boston Open (3)

10.30.2016

Sicilian, Dragon – Yugoslav Attack [B76]

1. e4 c5 2. Nf3 d6 3. d4 cxd4 4. Nxd4 Nf6
5. Nc3 g6 6. Be3 Bg7 7. f3 O-O 8. Qd2
Nc6 9. O-O-O d5 10. exd5 Nxd5 11. Nxc6
bxc6 12. Bd4 e5 13. Bc5 Be6 14. Ne4 Re8
15. h4 h6 16. g4 Qc7 17. g5 h5 18. Bc4 Rd8
19. Qe1



This is a new move, it's usually Qf2.

19... Kh8 20. Rh2 Nf4 21. Bxe6 Nxe6 22. Rhd2
Rxd2 23. Qxd2

23. Rxd2?! Nxc5 24. Nxc5 Qa5

23... Rd8 24. Bd6 Qb6 25. c3 Nf4 26. b3 a5

26... Nd5 27. Bc5 Qc7 28. c4 was the trick
Ivanov had prepared for me.

27. c4 Ne6 28. c5Qa7 29. Qb2 Qa6 30. Bxe5?!



30... Rxd1+ 31. Kxd1 Qf1+ 32. Kc2 Qe2+
33. Kc1 Qe1+ 34. Kc2 Qe2+ 35. Kc1

1/2-1/2

NM Carissa Yip (2303)

GM Alexander Ivanov (2554)

BCF Fall FIDE Festival (5)

11.12.2016

Pirc [B07]

1. e4 d6 2. d4 Nf6 3. Nc3 c6 4. Bc4



I saw a line in the Modern like this, but
it's different in the Pirc as the e4 pawn is being
attacked by the knight on f6.

4... b5

And this shows the crucial difference between
the Pirc and the Modern, since White's bishop
has to go back to protect the e4 pawn

5. Bd3

I think Black is fine now.

5... e5 6. Nf3 Nbd7 7. Bg5 Bb7 8. O-O Be7

9. a4

I want to provoke Black to play b4 so that I can
then play c3 and open up the c file.

9... a6 10. Ne2

Heading to g3 and then f5

10... h6 11. Be3 O-O 12. axb5 cxb5 13. Ng3
Re8

13... d5 was an option for Black that I was
considering: 14. exd5 (14. dxe5 dxe4 15. exf6
Nxf6 16. Nxe4 Nxe4; 14. Nxe5 dxe4 15. Be2



Nd5=) Nxd5 15. Nxe5 Nxe5 16. dxe5 Nxe3
17. fxe3 Bg5 18. e4 Qd4+±

14. d5

Closing the center. Now that the center is closed, I want to get my knight to a5 and dominate the queenside, or I could try to play f4 and open up the kingside.

14... Ng4 15. Bd2 Nc5 16. Ba5 Qd7 17. Nd2

Starting my maneuver

17... Nxd3 18. cxd3

This only solidifies my center

18... g6 19. h3 Nf6 20. Nb3 h5 21. Bc3 h4 22.

Ne2 Nh5 23. Na5 Bg5 24. Bd2 Bd8

This was better than exchanging: after

24... Bxd2 25. Qxd2, I can get my queen to g5 to collect the h4 pawn.

25. Ra3 Rc8 26. b4 Ba8 27. Be3

To stop Black from playing Bb6

27... f5 28. f4?



A big mistake. I wanted to open up my opponent's kingside, but there were some tactics I missed and I ended up losing a pawn.

28... exf4 29. Nxf4 Nxf4 30. Bxf4

I had missed 30. Rxf4 Bxd5 in my earlier calculations, so I could only take back the knight with my bishop and lose the e4 pawn.

30... fxe4 31. dxe4 Rxe4 32. Qd3

32. Nc6 was my only hope. I had to exchange off the potentially powerful bishop Bxc6:

33. dxc6 Qxc6 34. Rxa6 Bb6+ 35. Kh1 Rce8
36. Qd3=

32... Bb6+ 33. Kh2 Qf5

Attacking the f4 bishop and the d5 pawn at the same time. There is no good discovered attack,

and now it's all over.

34. Bh6 Qxd5 35. Qb1 Qh5 36. Bf4 Re2

37. Ra2 Be4

0-1

Now the second Kasparov training camp came, and I was nervous. However, it was not as bad as the first time because I already knew what to expect. This time GM Ruifeng Li and IM Awonder Liang were there also. Awonder is super-talented with a rating over 2600. And he's only a few months older than me!

To my surprise, I passed the assessment! Kasparov suggested I focus on tournaments as to improve my FIDE rating. I would go back in six months for another evaluation.

Unfortunately, there are not many FIDE rated tournaments in the New England area. I hope that that will soon change.

With the year winding down, I would like to offer my sincere thanks to the chess community. I really appreciate that the Boylston Chess Club has started to organize some FIDE rated tournaments. It was not easy as they don't have many eligible directors. However, they have been trying very hard to meet the need of the chess community. I would also like to thank MACA for providing some financial support for me to play in the North American Junior U20 tournament where I got second place and was awarded my WFM title. And, last but not least, I thank all my chess fans. They have been with me during my highs and lows of my chess journey.



Interview Yi Wang

Young Ryan and Tianna Wang have been storming up the ranks of Massachusetts chess the past few years, their rapid ascent highlighted by Ryan's clear victory in the K-1 section of the Elementary National Championships. Both represented the United States at the recent World Cadets Championships in the Republic of Georgia, so I thought it was due time to catch up with their father, Yi Wang.

Nathan Smolensky: How did Ryan and Tianna find the game of chess? Did you introduce them to it?

Yi Wang: Tianna and Ryan received their initial chess exposure at Westwood Chinese School back in Fall 2013. The school met every Sunday, and chess was one of the extra-curricular classes offered in addition to regular Chinese class. I knew very little chess myself, not much more than moving the pieces. Ryan showed a particular interest in the game, and always asked for my cell phone so that he could play chess on it. NM Farzad Abdi was the chess teacher there, and he talked me into supporting the kids to study chess more seriously, and took them to BCC for their first tournament. Later they joined an online Chinese chess school, 128chess.com, and started to play online games more often. In 2015, they met their current coach Jorge Sammour-Hasbun, and have been going to his club, Chess Master Connections, in Providence regularly since then.

NS: You decided to attend the USCF National Elementary Championships in 2016. Not that many parents from Massachusetts travel to these events. What compelled you to?

YW: Yeah, it's true that chess kids from MA are not very well represented in national scholastic events, even though the state has top scholastic players like Carissa Yip. There were more than 2000 kids playing in the 2016 National Elementary Championships, and only five came from MA, compared to 600+ from New York state. I think kids from MA are actually very strong in terms of ratings, but they might not

have the information or motivation to go to out-of-state or national events. Before going to the tournament, I didn't personally know anyone in Massachusetts who had done so.

Ryan's first coach Farzad Abdi had mentioned his expectation for Ryan to compete nationally and internationally in the future when we just started. Although that was quite a long time ago, those early ideas did influence my decision, and I was very intrigued to find out what a national scholastic chess tournament look like. I got the tournament information from a social media chess group, and checked the crosstables of previous events, and realized that Ryan could be in the top 10 seeds. I thought he could have a chance, and that that would be a good experience for both kids at an early age. Their performance in state scholastic tournaments was also an important factor for my decision: both Tianna and Ryan qualified for and played in the Spiegel Cup Finals in the 8 and Under section, and Ryan won the the 1st Grade section at the [Gus Gosselin Grade Championships] earlier in the year.



NS: How did you react to Ryan winning his section at the event? Did you think about the possibility going into the event?

YW: I did think it was possible for Ryan to win before we set out. That was a dream far away, but I talked with Ryan about trying to win the tournament.

Going into the final round, Ryan had gradually moved from table 6 to table 1, and was the only player with 6 points out of 6 rounds. And I realized we were very close to that dream. I was extremely nervous sitting in the waiting room. Thankfully, the final game was relatively short, and I was extremely happy when I saw Ryan come out of the playing room with a smile on his face. We got a bit carried away and showed our excitement in the waiting room.



NS: What did you feel were the keys to Ryan's success at that event?

YW: Personally, I think the MACA scholastic tournaments prepared Ryan and Tianna well. A year ago, their main goals were to qualify for Spiegel Cup Finals. They've played in six qualifiers, and every one of them was a very memorable experience for us. Going through the process of competing, failing, and coming back to fight again is the key to build a strong chess character. They are used to going into a tournament with a mission to win, and of course they've learned to handle the failure and disappointment along the way.

NS: Did that event change your approach to chess, and how it fit in to your, Ryan, and Tianna's life?

YW: I can't deny that the championship win affected my expectations for them at the time. It also reassured us that if we work hard, dreams may not be that far. But now, half a year later, I realized that chess is rather a long-term commitment, like running a Marathon. You can't let an early lead affect your pace or cause you to lose sight of long-term goals.

NS: Could you talk about your travel to the World Cadets? How was the event?



YW: World Cadets was quite a journey for the whole family. We took two flight segments with a long layover, followed by a seven-hour freezing bus ride, and finally arrived at the hotel in Batumi, Georgia after 36 hours of travel. The chess competition was extremely tough. A passive move would get punished immediately, and blunders were often downright fatal. They had a rough start, and then came back into the

competition very strongly before finally facing the reality of the competition level closer to the top boards. Both kids ended up scoring about 50%. That said, I cannot complain much about their performance, as they did fight hard. They probably could have done slightly better if we had more experience and were able to better adjust. But there were many things that could have gone worse.



There was as much for parents to learn as for the kids from that experience. I certainly understand the top-level competition more, and always reflect how I should guide and support kids to continue engaging in this highly competitive mental sport. Ryan and Tianna were fortunate enough to be in the same training group with Rochelle Wu, who won the U10 girl's world champion, and they were coached by GM Miroslav Miljkovic at the event. The interactions with teammates, coaches, and parents were extremely helpful. For example, I thought I was quite committed in supporting kids. But after finding out Rochelle's father, who lives in Alabama, drives every weekend on average five hours one way to bring Rochelle to a tournament, I feel the chess parents in MA are actually very lucky.

NS: Do Ryan and Tianna have a coach (or coaches)? Do they study together?

YW: They've been going to classes and tournaments (except all-girls tournaments) together from day one. The two kids have drastically different playing styles, and I think they learn from each other a lot. We plan to continue this way of training. I do want to take the opportunity to thank the coaches that worked with Ryan and Tianna-- Coaches Adbi, Jia, Miljkovic, and Sammour-Hasbun. They are all



great coaches, and they've been mentors for me as well.

NS: Would you say that Ryan and Tianna have a rivalry? Do they play each other at home often?

YW: Maybe to some extent. Usually they do not play chess with each other. But recently they started to play games against each other at home. They had a six-game match this summer, and they might have another match this winter break. They are better in handling games between each other now.



NS: What's next for your family, chess-wise? What are the plans and goals for 2017 and beyond?

MB: They've played a lot of tournaments lately, so we might reduce the number of tournaments we go to in the near future so that they have time to do more training. In terms of tournaments, success in the Spiegel Cup is still the immediate goal. The US Amateur Team East, Super-nationals, and All-Girls National Championships are on our radar in early 2017. They also hope to qualify for World Cadets again.

Ryan Wang (1474)

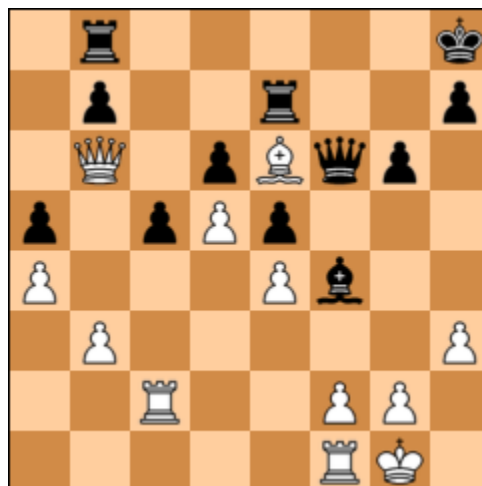
Sebastian Prestia (1346)

National Elementary Championships (7)

07.16.2016

King's Indian Defence [E90]

1. d4 Nf6 2. c4 g6 3. Nc3 Bg7 4. Nf3 O-O 5. e4 d6 6. Bg5 Na6 7. a3 c5 8. d5 e6 9. Be2 exd5 10. cxd5 Nc7 11. O-O Qe8 12. Bd3 Bg4 13. h3 Bxf3 14. Qxf3 Nd7 15. Rac1 Ne5 16. Qe3 Qd7 17. Bf4 f6 18. Bxe5 fxe5 19. Be2 a5 20. a4 Rab8 21. Nb5 Rfc8 22. Nxc7 Rxc7 23. b3 Qf7 24. Bg4 Qf8 25. Be6+ Kh8 26. Qd3 Bh6 27. Rc2 Bf4 28. Qb5 Qf6 29. Qb6 Re7



30. Qxd6 Rbe8 31. Rxc5 Rf8 32. Rc7 Rxc7 33. Qxc7 Be3 34. Kh1 Qh4 35. Qxe5+ Qf6 36. Qxf6+ Rxf6 37. Kg1 Bb6 38. g4 Bc7 39. g5 Rf4 40. Rc1 Rxe4 41. Rxc7 Rf4 42. Rc8+ Rf8 43. Rxf8+ Kg7 44. Rg8#

1-0

Ryan Wang

Stepan Tetyuev

World Cadets Championship (4)

10.19.2016

Grunfeld [D87]

1. d4 Nf6 2. c4 g6 3. Nc3 d5 4. cxd5 Nxd5 5. e4 Nxc3 6. bxc3 Bg7 7. Bc4 c5 8. Ne2 O-O 9. O-O Nc6 10. Be3 Qc7 11. Rc1 Rd8 12. Qa4 Qa5 13. Qb3 Rf8 14. e5 cxd4 15. cxd4 e6 16. Ng3 Rd8 17. Rfd1 Bf8 18. Ne4 Be7 19. Bb5 Rd7 20. Rxc6 Rd5 21. Rxc8+ Rxc8 22. Bc4 Rdd8 23. Bxe6

1-0

Photos Courtesy Yi Wang



Cover Story

Denys the Menys

Nathan Smolensky

Denys Shmelov is having a moment. The International Master, who earned his title in 2014, has leveraged his long-renowned relentless maneuvering and positional prowess into some major tournament victories, including the 2016 New England Open. Highlighting these wins are multiple victories over GM Alexander Ivanov with the black pieces (!). I asked IM Shmelov to share a few of his big wins with *Chess Horizons*.

GM Alexander Ivanov (2530)

IM Denys Shmelov (2497)

76th New England Open (3)

09.04.2016

Caro-Kann [B12]

1. e4 c6 2. d4 d5 3. e5 Bf5 4. h4 h6 5. g4 Bd7 6. Nd2 c5 7. dxc5 Nc6 8. Nb3 h5 9. gxh5 e6 10. Bf4 Bxc5 11. Nxc5 Qa5+ 12. Qd2 Qxc5 13. O-O-O O-O-O 14. Nf3 Rxb5 15. Be2 f6 16. Be3 Qe7 17. exf6 Nxf6 18. Nd4 Rhh8 19. Nxc6 Bxc6 20. Bxa7



20... d4 21. f3 e5 22. Bb6 Rde8 23. Qa5 Nd5 24. Bc5 Qc7 25. Qa3 Rh6 26. Rhg1 Nf4 27. Bd3 Rf6 28. Qa8+ Qb8 29. Qxb8+ Kxb8 30. Rxb7 Bxf3 31. Bb5 Rc8 32. Be7 Rb6 33. a4

Bxd1 34. Kxd1 Nd5 35. Bg5 Ne3+ 36. Bxe3 dxe3 37. c4 Rh6 38. Rg5 Rxb4 39. Rxe5 Rh2 40. Rxe3 Rxb2 41. Kc1 Rf2 42. Rc3 Rg8 43. Rc2 Rxc2+ 44. Kxc2 Rg3 45. Kb2 b6 46. Kc2 Kc7 47. Kb2 Kd6 48. Kc2 Kc5 49. Kb2 Kb4 50. Kc2 Rh3 51. Kd2 Kb3 52. Ke2 Kc3 53. Ba6 Rh5 54. Bb5 Re5+ 55. Kd1 Rh5 56. Ke2 Rh1 57. Ba6 Rb1 58. Bb5 Ra1 59. Kf2 Kd2 60. Kf3 Re1 61. Kf2 Re5 62. Kf3 Kc3

0-1

GM Alexander Ivanov (2564)

IM Denys Shmelov (2511)

H.N. Pillsbury Memorial (3)

12.04.2016

Caro-Kann, Classical [B18]

1. e4 c6 2. d4 d5 3. Nc3 dxe4 4. Nxe4 Bf5 5. Ng3 Bg6 6. Nh3 e6 7. Nf4 Bd6 8. Ngh5 Bxh5 9. Nxh5 g6 10. Nf4 Ne7 11. g3 Nd7 12. Bg2 Nd5 13. Nd3 b5 14. O-O O-O 15. c3 Re8 16. a4 a6 17. Bd2 Bf8 18. Qe2 Bg7 19. Ne5 Nxe5 20. dxe5 Qc7 21. Rfe1 Red8 22. Kh1 Rab8 23. axb5 axb5 24. f4 c5 25. b3 c4 26. bxc4 bxc4 27. Ra2 Rb3 28. Rc1 Bf8 29. Qe1



29... Ba3 30. Rb1 Qc5 31. Be4 Rdb8 32. Rd1 Bb2 33. Bc2 Bxc3 34. Bxb3 cxb3 35. Ra6 Qc4 36. Rd6 Bxd2 37. Qxd2 Qe4+ 38. Kg1 b2

0-1

Interestingly, despite the magnitude of these wins – they led to IM Shmelov taking first in almost half of MACA’s adult tournaments in 2016 – the IM highlighted another victory, against a young expert at the Boylston Club’s Fall FIDE Festival, as his favorite of recent memory:

Danila Poliannikov (2062)
IM Denys Shmelov (2512)
BCF Fall FIDE Festival (4)
11.12.2016
Caro-Kann [B11]

1. e4 c6 2. Nc3 d5 3. Nf3 Bg4 4. h3 Bxf3
5. Qxf3 e6 6. d4 dxe4 7. Nxe4 Qxd4 8. Bd3
Nd7 9. Be3 Qd5 10. Rd1 Ne5 11. Qf4 Qa5+
12. Ke2 Rd8?
12... Ng6 13. Nd6+ Bxd6 14. Qxd6
13. Nc5! Nxd3 14. Rxd3 Rxd3 15. Nxd3
15. Kxd3 Bxc5 16. Qb8+ Qd8+ 17. Qxd8+
Kxd8 18. Bxc5 b6 19. Bf8 Ne7 20. Bxg7 Rg8
21. Be5 Rxc2 22. Bg3 Nf5 23. Rd1 Nxc3 24.
Ke3+ Ke7 25. Kf3 Rxf2+ 26. Kxf2 Ne4+
15... Qd8
15... e5 16. Nxe5 Nf6 17. Rd1 Be7 18. Nc4
16. Bxa7



16. Rd1 Nf6 17. Ne5 Qc7 was my initial intention, but it is answered with a stunning 18. Nxc6!! After which Black can resign. 18. Rd7 Nxd7 19. Qxf7+ Kd8 20. Bg5+ Nf6 21. Bxf6+ Be7 also looks dodgy for Black, but at least he is not losing by force.

16... Nf6 17. Qb8 Qxb8 18. Bxb8 Nd7 19. Bc7
Be7 20. Rd1 O-O 21. Ne5 Nf6 22. Nd7 Rc8
23. Nxf6+Bxf6 24. Bg3 Kf8 25. b3
25. Rd7

25... Ke8 26. Bd6

26. a4 denies Black his only counterplay.

26... b5

Now Black can put some pressure on the a-file.

27. Bc5 Ra8 28. a3 Be5

28... Bb2 comes with no threat, since white will pin the bishop with Rd1-a1.

29. Bd6

Another impatient move

29... Bxd6 30. Rxd6 Ra6

30... Rxa3?! 31. Rxc6 gives White advantage

31. a4

31. b4 Ke7 32. Rd3 makes it very hard for Black to make any progress

31... bxa4 32. bxa4 Ke7 33. Rd4 c5 34. Rc4

Kd6 35. Kd3 Kd5 36. Rh4 h6 37. Rf4 f5 38. h4

g5 39. hxg5 hxg5 40. Rc4 e5 41. f3 Re6

42. Rc3 e4+ 43. fxe4+ Rxe4 44. Ra3 Rg4

45. c4+

45. Ra2 Rg3+ 46. Ke2 Rxg2+ 47. Kf3 Rg4 48.

a5 Rh4 49. a6 Rh3+ 50. Kf2 Rh8 51. a7 Ra8 52.

Ra5 Kc6 53. c4 Kb6 54. Rb5+ Kxa7 55. Rxc5

Rf8 56. Rb5

45... Rxc4 46. a5

46. g3

46... Rg4 47. Ra1 Rg3+ 48. Ke2 Rxc2+ 49. Kf3

Rb2 50. a6 Rb3+ 51. Ke2 Rb8 52. Rg1 g4

53. Rf1 Ke4 54. Ra1 Ra8 55. Ra4+ Kd5

56. Rf4 Ke5 57. Rc4 Rxa6 58. Rxc5+ Kf4

59. Kf1 g3 60. Rc4+ Kf3 61. Rc3+ Kg4

62. Rb3 f4 63. Rb8 Ra1+ 64. Ke2 f3+ 65. Ke3

Re1+

0-1



The Boylston Goes Bona FIDE

Andrew Hoy

In its 97 year history, the Boylston Chess Club has always prided itself on offering tournaments for players of all levels. My personal believe has always been that there is a strong trickle-down effect when it comes to chess tournaments. If more masters and experts play, they will draw many more Class A players and Class B players that want a chance to play games against the strongest possible opposition. In 2016, the Boylston Chess Club had 354 different players, including 36 masters and 41 experts. This is a marked increase from 2015 when there were 308 different players featuring 22 masters and 31 experts. With the stronger players at the top, total tournament attendance increased 25% year over year.



In the last year, in addition to the some 70 tournaments that happen regularly, the club has started offering events for the most serious players in the state. Most notably, the recently concluded Fall FIDE Festival and the New England Masters held in March have both attracted many of the top talents in the region.



The New England Masters and the Fall FIDE Festival were both FIDE-rated, and they featured large prize funds for top-finishers: both things that are not available in the Northeast on a regular basis. With the cash prizes and USCF Grand Prix points up for

grabs, there was naturally a fierce fight for the top spots. In the November Fall FIDE Festival, when the dust had settled, GM Alexander Ivanov had claimed clear first in the Open section, a full point ahead of IM Denys Shmelov. Zubin Baliga (pictured) won the U2200 section with 6.0/7 with key wins over David Katsman and Mark Neale.

Zubin Baliga (1877)

David Katsman (1649)

BCF Fall FIDE Festival (5)

11.12.2016

Ruy Lopez [C79]

1. e4 e5 2. Nf3 Nc6 3. Bb5 a6 4. Ba4 Nf6 5. O-O d6 6. Re1 b5 7. Bb3 Na5

7...Na5 is a sideline that attempts to make use of the two bishops in exchange for ceding the center to White. Far more common is 7...Be7, transposing back to main lines of the Ruy Lopez.
8. d3

White chooses to keep the center closed, acknowledging that Black has the bishop pair. However, 8.d4 offers White the chance to claim an edge - 8. d4 Nxb3 9. axb3 Bb7 (9... exd4 10. Nxd4 Bb7 11. Nc3 Be7 12. Nf5 O-O 13. Bg5 Re8 14. Qd2 is a clear edge for White with the dominating position of the knights.) 10. Nc3! (10. Bg5 h6 11. Bxf6 Qxf6 12. Nc3 c6 13. d5 c5 14. Qd3 Qd8 15. Nxb5 axb5 16. Qxb5+ Qd7 17. Rxa8+ Bxa8 18. Qb8+ Qd8 was a draw in Lasker-Rubinstein, played in 1923) 10... Be7 11. dxe5 dxe5 12. Qxd8+ Rxd8 13. Nxe5 b4 14. Nd5 Nxd5 15. exd5 Rxd5 16. Bf4 and White went on to win in Georgiev-Hector 1-0, Haifa 1989.

8... Nxb3 9. axb3 Be7 10. Nbd2 O-O 11. Nf1 Re8 12. Ng3 Bf8

Both sides have continued with normal development plans - White plans to move the knights to the kingside in order to attack the king, and Black will attempt to defend via a kingside fianchetto after g6 and Bg7.

13. h3 c5 14. Bd2 Bb7 15. Nf5



This knight almost always comes to f5 at some point, but here Black has a chance to dramatically change the nature of the game with the break d5!

15... Qc7

15... d5! 16. Ba5 Qd7 17. Qd2 dxe4 18. dxe4 g6 19. Ng3 Qxd2 20. Nxd2

With the bishop pair and the queens off the board, Black can claim at least equality, and it is much easier to play the black side of this position.

16. Bg5

White immediately threatens to open the g-file with devastating effect. Black must avoid this. The best attempt is probably Nd7 when Black's king is safe despite the lack of black pieces on the kingside.

16... Qd8

16... Nd7 17. N3h4 d5 18. Qg4 Kh8 and surprisingly, despite the preponderance of kingside forces, White has no good way to continue the attack.

17. Nh2!

Opening the diagonal for the queen to join the attack and rerouting the knight to the powerful g4 square. h6

18. Bh4 Be7 19. Nxe7+ Qxe7 20. Ng4

Black is in serious trouble now, and must play the move Qe6 to have any chance of defending.

20... Qd8

20... Qe6 21. Bxf6 h5! 22. Bg5 (22. Ne3!? Qxf6 23. Qxh5 Re6 and Black has a very interesting defense along the third rank. White has a pawn advantage and can clearly claim an edge, but

Black will hope to defend by way of a well-timed d5 break and a strong rook on g6) 22... hxg4 23. Qxg4 Qxg4 24. hxg4 a5. With the queens off the board and opposite color bishops, Black has some chances to hold.

21. Bxf6 gxf6 22. Nxh6+ Kg7 23. Qh5

Qh5 is quite clearly winning on the spot, but Nf5+ would also have led to a forced mate in 4: 23. Nf5+ Kf8 24. Qh5 Kg8 25. Qg4+ Kh8 26. Qg7#

23... Qd7 24. Nf5+ Kg8 25. Qg4+

A very nice attacking game from the winner of the U2200 section!

1-0

Several other interesting games that helped determine the final standings of the tournament:

GM Alexander Ivanov (2554)

Brandon Wu (2176)

BCF Fall FIDE Festival (2)

11.11.2016

Ruy Lopez, Closed [C95]

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 10. d4 Nbd7 11. Nbd2 Bb7 12. Bc2 Re8 13. Nf1 Bf8 14. Ng3 g6 15. a4 c5 16. d5 c4 17. Bg5 h6 18. Be3 Nc5 19. Qd2 h5 20. Bxc5 dxc5 21. Reb1 Qd6 22. b3 cxb3 23. Rxb3 Qd7 24. Rb2 c4 25. Qc1 Bc5 26. axb5 axb5 27. Rxa8 Bxa8 28. Qb1 Rb8 29. Ba4



CHESS HORIZONS



Holidays 2016

29... Qa7 30. Bxb5 Bxf2+ 31. Rxf2 Qc5 32. Qa2 Qxb5 33. Nxe5 Qb1+ 34. Qxb1 Rxb1+ 35. Kh2 Kg7 36. Rf4 Rc1 37. Nxc4 g5 38. Rf3 Nxe4 39. Nxe4 Bxd5 40. Ncd6 Re1 41. Rf5 Bxe4 42. Rxf7+ Kg6 43. Re7 Rd1 44. Re6+ Kg7 45. Nxe4

1 – 0



The playing room. (Clockwise, from top left) Nithin Kavi, NM Lawyer Times (standing), Paul Hodgden, NM Carissa Yip, Maxwell Chen, Jerry Li, Logan Boucher

NM Lawyer Times (2235)

IM Denys Shmelov (2512)

BCF Fall FIDE Festival (7)

11.13.2016

Ruy Lopez [C79]

1. d4 Nf6 2. Nf3 g6 3. g3 Bg7 4. Bg2 O-O
5. O-O d6 6. c4 c6 7. Nc3 Qa5 8. Bd2 Qh5
9. Qb3 e5 10. dxe5 dxe5 11. h3 Bxh3 12. Qxb7
Nbd7 13. Qxc6 Rac8 14. Qa6 Be6 15. b3 Nc5
16. Qa5 Ng4 17. Nh4 g5 18. f3 Nf6 19. Nf5
Bxf5 20. g4



20... Bxg4 21. fxe4 Nxe4 22. Rf5 Ne6 23. Nd5 Qh2+ 24. Kf1 Nf4 25. Bxf4 gxf4 26. Rd1 Qh4 27. Qe1 Qh2 28. Rd3 Ne3+ 29. Nxe3 fxe3 30. Rxe3 Qh6 31. Rh3 Qe6 32. Be4 Rfd8 33. Qf2 Rd4 34. Qf3 Rcd8 35. Bd5 Qxf5 36. Qxf5 Rf4+ 37. Qxf4 exf4 38. Rd3 Rc8 39. Kf2 Bf8 40. Kf3 Bb4 41. Kxf4 Kg7 42. Kf5 Re8 43. Rg3+ Kf8 44. e4 Bd6 45. Rf3 Kg7 46. Rd3 Re5+ 47. Kg4 h5+ 48. Kh3 Be7 49. Rf3 f6 50. Rc3 Bb4 51. Rc2 Bc5 52. Kh4 Kg6 53. b4 Bxb4 54. c5 Be1+ 55. Kh3 Ba5 56. c6 Bc7 57. Rb2 f5 58. Rg2+ Kh6 59. Re2

1/2-1/2

Boylston Chess Club

<https://boylstonchess.org>

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Cambridge, MA 02139

(617) 714-3022

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full schedule and more details





On the Nature of Error

FM Steven Winer

I. You Evaluated Wrong!

As a chess trainer who has worked from players from beginner to master I am interested in what players of a given level need to improve on to progress to the next one. This article is the beginning of a series on various characteristic errors and how to improve in the situations where they occur.

Anyone trying to get better at chess is trying to make fewer mistakes. Generally speaking, any improvement begins with identifying the deficiencies and the sources of error. It is hard to try to correct a problem if a player is unaware of it. Certainly, it is easy to make mistakes in chess. As Tartakower said “The blunders are all there on the board, waiting to be made.” Which mistakes are made tend to have patterns that are influenced by the level of the player in question. By studying the errors that are typically made by players of a given level it can help a player progress without having to make all the mistakes themselves. Learning from the play of other players is one of the key ways to improve without having to learn everything from direct trial and error.

Chess is a game that has so many options that one must use good pattern recognition to be able to play well. A typical position will have 30 or more options, so giving each one deep consideration is simply not viable. One useful result of this reliance on patterns is that the mistakes made in chess games themselves have patterns that can be studied. Being more conscious of types of errors is helpful both in avoiding the errors and in exploiting those types of errors when an opponent makes them. Knowing about error patterns will not prevent errors completely, but being able to search for mistakes in a more systematic way should reduce the time and energy spent on that process considerably.

The concept I want to address in this article can manifest in two ways which I view as two sides of the same coin. The first one is the tendency to underestimate moves that appear to be serve a particular purpose, often a reactive one, but can create subtle or incidental threats. This sort of mistake is easy to make because the purpose for the opposing move has seemingly already been accounted for. An example would be 1. e4 e5 2. Nf3 Nc6 3. Bc4 Be7 4. d4 d6 5. d5 Na5?! 6. Bd3.



Bd3 seems to be simply a response to a piece being *en prise* and needing a safeguard. But if Black continues with the casual 6... Nf6?? then 7. b4! Wins a piece. The key is that is that Bd3 has also left the knight on a5 with nowhere to go *in addition* to responding to its threat. Generally that sort of threat is harder to see than the threat earlier in the sequence 1. e4 e5 2. Nf3. In that case, one naturally looks at the knight that has just moved, making it easier to notice its attack on e5. Bd3 setting up a strong pawn move is far more of an implicit threat than a direct one, and thus it is much harder to see.

Moves that are retreating moves can be particularly hard to properly evaluate. In the prior example, Bd3 is not only a move that responds to the opponent's threat, but is also a retreating move, making it natural to overlook. We tend to think of threats being created when pieces move forward, when in fact this is not an absolute rule.



I managed to use an unexpected retreating move to win a piece against a grandmaster in a blitz game right out of the opening. That game began 1. Nf3 Nf6 2. c4 c5 3. Nc3 b6 4. e4 Bb7 5. e5 Ne4.



Black presumably expected that either I would trade off on e4 or that he would get a chance to trade off on c3. Instead I played 6. Nb1! Then it turns out that the knight on e4 has nowhere to go and after 6... h6 7. h4 (to prevent Ng5 when Black would only lose a pawn) Black lost a piece to d3 and soon resigned. 6... f6 would have at least prevented losing a piece but would still lead to a very bad position for black after 7. d3 winning a pawn.

In both examples, there is also the problem of making an apparently forceful knight move that just leaves the knight in danger of being trapped, creating an opposing threat that did not need to be there. One way to try to limit this kind of mistake is to think about what options the piece will have once the opponent responds to the move's assertions. The main takeaway is mindset. Carefully considering the potential downside to seemingly aggressive moves and realizing a move an opponent makes in response to a threat can also contain a threat will help limit this kind of error.

The flip side of this is that noticing a strong move can be harder if there are many natural moves available that seem good. An example of a situation where a powerful move can easily be

missed is 1. e4 e5 2. Nf3 Nc6 3. Nc3 Nf6 4. d4 exd4 5. Nxd4 Nxd4?! 6. Qxd4 Be7.



White has many natural developing moves available and it is easy to just make one without too much thought. That would miss a chance to seize a large advantage by playing 7. e5! In that case Nh5 loses a piece to g4 so Black winds up needing to play Ng8. Losing so much time in the opening like that though leads to a position that is already winning for White. Conversely, some tactics that are objectively much more complicated can be easier to notice if it's clear there is no real choice.



Magnus Carlsen just concluded the World Championship tiebreaker with a striking queen sacrifice to force checkmate (above). It came in a position where Karjakin was threatening several checkmates of his own. The result is that the difficult move is the one deciding to enter



the line at all because once you are in the line the only way to avoid checkmate is to give checks yourself. Therefore, there are relatively few moves that are even worth analyzing. If you had the same position but with Black having no threat at all, it would be harder to see the mate because more moves would look ‘good’.

This idea has often been expressed as “If you see a good move, look for a better one.” Again, the main point is to have the mindset of questioning if there are better moves available. No one is going to see all the tactics all the time, but one will see many more tactics they at least attempt to find. The key is to think about what sort of weaknesses cause tactics to appear. This is where analyzing with an engine can be instructive. The engine will find many ideas that were not played. The way that is most useful is when the user thinks about why moves suggested by the engine work. By developing pattern recognition of the sorts of positions where unexpected tactics occur, we can spot them better going forward. This will make it easier (still not easy) to figure out when one should go beyond the routine move, and how to spot seemingly routine moves on the opposing side that are more dangerous than they appear.

Here is a short game that illustrates the dangers of being too quick to decide what the purpose of an opposing move is. 1. e4 c5 2. Nc3 d6 3. Nf3 a6 4. g3 g6 5. Bg2 Bg7 6. d3 Nc6 7. Be3 e5 8. Qd2 Nd4.



It seems like both sides are still developing and that Black simply played 8... Nd4 to place his knight in a strong square in the center. Because of this, White continued 9. Nd5? - but after Bh3! - he resigned because he cannot avoid losing material, one key line being 10. Nxd4 Bxg2 11. Rg1 cxd4 12. Rxg2 dxe3. (although the resignation is somewhat early since Black is only winning the exchange after 10. 0-0 Nxf3+ 11. Bxf3 Bxf1 12. Rxf1). The key was that White should have noticed that a potential Nxf3 forks the king and queen and that the knight is only protected by the bishop on g2. If White had noticed this, he would have been more likely to notice the potential danger and play something like Bxd4 or 0-0 (which does work because then Bh3 can be met by Bxd4 and then Bxg2 Kxg2).

In summary, it is important to be able to notice if there is more to a position than appears at first glance. Many moves that seem to do something simple like develop a piece also do more subtle things as well. This is especially true if one notices potential tactical weaknesses such as a badly defended piece or a piece that is vulnerable to being trapped. The very act of asking oneself what hidden resources could be present in the position can be helpful at uncovering hidden dangers. This also applies to the other side of this mistake which is making a routine move which overlooks a strong hidden resource in the position.

The basic rules that help us determine what moves to make and how to evaluate the moves our opponents make are not *bad* rules. They are just simple pattern associations which hold a slew of exceptions. But we do not need to handle these exceptions by verifying through absolute calculation every time – in fact, doing so would be impossible. We must simply understand that there are themes and trends to the exceptions to these broad rules, a next layer of pattern recognition that we must strive to understand if we want to improve as players.



Going Out in Style

FM Mika Brattain

After claiming his fifth consecutive Spiegel Cup championship (and completing a sweep for his high school years), MACA superstar FM Mika Brattain graduated from high school, ending his eligibility for future scholastic play. But the summer would offer one final tournament – the Denker Tournament of High School Champions – and Mika was invited.

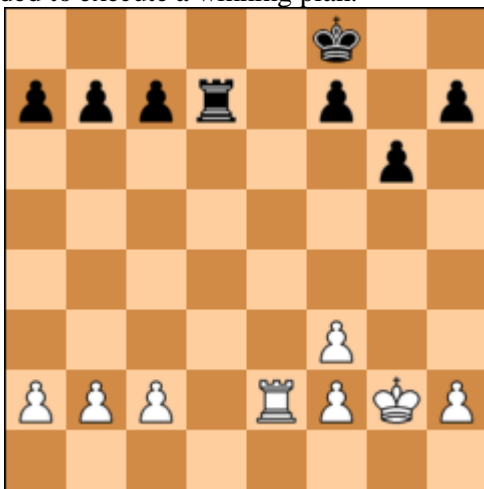
Alexander Davydov (2125)

FM Mika Brattain (2465)

Denker Tournament of H.S. Champions (1)
07.30.2016

Neo-Grinfeld [D76]

I made the decision to play in the Denker Tournament of High School Champions shortly after winning this year's Spiegel Cup. With a pair of encouraging results at the MA Open and the Columbus Open preceding this event, combined with the fact that Denker would be the last scholastic tournament of my career, I had everything to play for. My first game was an exercise of technique. Earlier on, I had saddled my opponent with doubled isolated pawns at the expense of allowing mass exchanges, and now needed to execute a winning plan.



26... Kg7 27. Kg3 Kf6 28. f4 Rd5

One of Black's advantages is complete access to the f5 and h5 squares, from where the rook can harass the White kingside. Additionally, since Black controls the d-file instead of the e-file, the Black king can prevent an invasion on the 7th

rank from f6 while White's rook is stuck passively on e2 to prevent an invasion along on his 2nd rank.

29. Kf3 a5

Attempting to create more weaknesses on the queenside, after which White's position will be sure to collapse.

30. a4 Rc5 31. c3 Rh5!

31... Rc4 32. Re4 and the pawn ending is not winning.

32. Kg3 Rd5 33. Kf3 Rd3+!

White is forced into a concession.

34. Re3

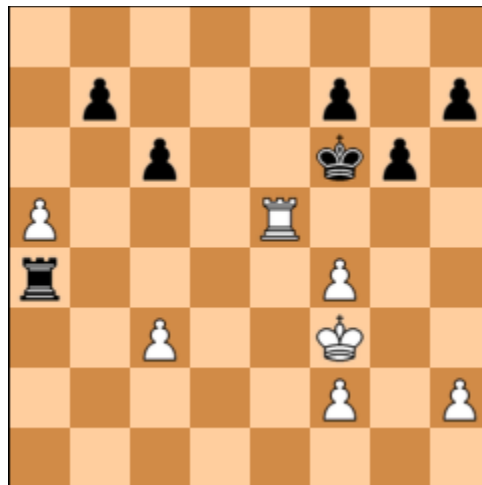
34. Ke4 Rd1-+

34. Kg2 and White's king is separated from the action

34... Rd2 35. b4?

35. b3 h5 36. c4 was White's only chance.

35... Ra2! 36. bxa5 Rxa4 37. Re5 c6!-+



After this solidifying move, White can't defend anything. Crucially, it prevents Rb5, which was White's only source of counterplay.

38. Ke3 Rc4 39. Re4 Rxc3+ 40. Kd2 Rc5 41. Rb4 Rxa5 42. Rxb7 Rh5 43. Rb6 Rc5 44. Ke3 Ke6 45. Kd4 Kd6 46. Rb7 Rf5 47. Ke4 Kc5 48. h4 h5

The kingside is completely secure and now the c-pawn marches down the board.

49. Re7 Kc4 50. f3 c5 51. Rc7 Kc3 52. Rc8 c4 53. Rc7 Kb3 54. Rb7+ Kc2 55. Rc7 c3 56. Rc6 Kd2 57. Rd6+ Kc1 58. Rc6 c2 59. Kd3 Rd5+

0-1



FM Mika Brattain (2465)

FM Alexander Velikanov (2439)

Denker Tournament of H.S. Champions (4)
08.01.2016

Queen's Pawn Game [D02]

After a draw in the previous night's round, I was a half point behind a trio of perfect scores, and was paired with "the odd man out." This man happened to be Alex Velikanov, the clear winner of last year's Denker.

1. Nf3 d5 2. d4 a6!?

My opponent is a well known adherent of off-beat openings. This game proved no exception.

3. g3

3. Bg5!? is an interesting try, while 3. c4 dxc4

4. e4 b5 is probably Black's "point"

3... e6 4. Bg2 c5 5. c4!

It is best to play this before Black has a chance to capture on d4.

5... dxc4 6. O-O



This is similar to a theoretical position of the Catalan, the only difference being that Black would have played ...Nf6 instead of ...a6. Since Black is still lagging in development in the main line, I find it hard to believe that this replacement helps his cause.

6... b5?

6... cxd4 is more prudent

7. dxc5 Qxd1 8. Rxd1 Bb7

8... Bxc5? 9. Ng5 Ra7 10. Ne4 is very dangerous for Black

9. Be3 Nf6 10. a4! Nbd7

10... Nd5 11. Nd4 and White is not afraid of ... Nxe3 because Black's queenside is falling apart.

11. Nd4!

Trading off one of Black's only queenside defenders.

11... Bxg2 12. Kxg2 Nxc5?

12... b4 was Black's only chance

13. axb5+- Nd5 14. Nd2



Black can't hold his queenside together

14... Nb6 15. bxa6 Nca4 16. Nb5 Rc8 17. a7 Bb4 18. Bxb6 Nxb6 19. Nxc4

1-0

FM Advait Patel (2456)

FM Mika Brattain (2465)

Denker Tournament of H.S. Champions (5)
08.01.2016

Ruy Lopez [C62]

After knocking off the reigning champion, my task got no easier. The very next round I played Black against the tournament's only perfect score and really needed a win to have a decent shot at the title.

1. e4 e5 2. Nf3 Nc6 3. Bb5 Nge7!?

An interesting sideline I had prepared for this tournament.

4. Nc3 d6 5. d4 Bd7 6. Be3 Ng6 7. Qd2!?

White takes an aggressive approach based on castling long.



7... Be7 8. O-O-O a6 9. Be2 exd4 10. Nxd4 Nxd4 11. Bxd4 Bg5 12. Be3 Bxe3 13. Qxe3 O-O

Black has a decent position, having exchanged two pairs of minor pieces.

14. g4 Bc6 15. f4 Qh4 16. Rdf1 h6?

This was my first real mistake of the game. I was concerned of White playing g4-g5 locking my queen out of the game, but my move turns my kingside into a serious target.

16... Rae8 and Black is at least equal – it seems White may have overextended.

17. Rhg1! Qf6 18. f5?!

18. g5 hxg5 19. Rxg5 and it is hard to stop White from doubling on the g-file and kicking my knight away.

18... Ne5 19. h4 g5!



Black was about to get crushed on the kingside; this was the only move to fight against the simple g4-g5.

20. fxe6 Qxh4 21. g7! Kxg7 22. g5 Ng6 23. Qd4+ Ne5 24. Qe3 Ng6 25. Qf3?

With a simple improving move like 25. Bc4 or 25. Kb1, White's attack is decisive

25... f5!

This was the only adequate defence, and it takes away most of White's advantage. Now the rook on f8 plays an active role in defending the kingside.

26. Nd5!



My opponent reacts well to the unpleasant surprise and finds the most challenging continuation. Black is still in a little trouble.

26... Bxd5 27. Qc3+ Kg8 28. exd5 hxg5?

29. Qxc7?

29. Rh1! Qe4 30. Rh6! Ne5 31. Qh3!! is a surprising winning continuation that only a computer will see.

29... Qd4 30. Bd3 Qe5 31. Re1 Qf4+ 32. Kb1 Rf7





Black has avoided an immediate disaster on the kingside, but still has serious positional problems due to poor king safety, White piece activity, and the weakness of the g5, f5, and d6 pawns. The silver lining is that the f5 and g5 pawn duo could prove dangerous in an endgame as advanced connected passed pawns.

33. Qb6± Raf8?

(33... Nh4)

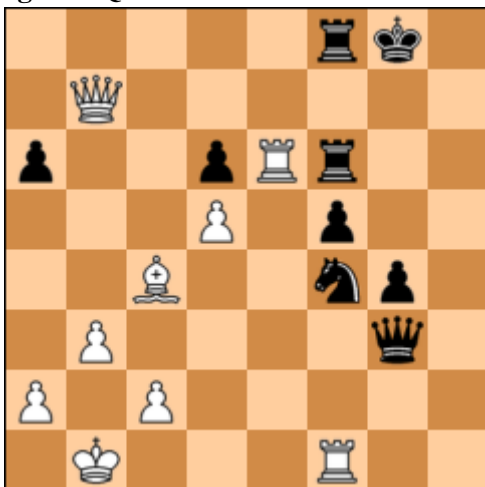
34. Rgf1?

34. Ref1!+- forces the separation of the queen from defence of the d6 pawn, after which White is winning.

34... Qg3 35. Re6 Rf6 36. b3!

A very mature decision, creating luft for the king and inviting Black to find a plan.

36... g4 37. Qxb7 Nf4? 38. Bc4?



38. Rxf6!, surprisingly, wins a piece by means of 38... Rxf6 39. Qe7!+- Rf7 (39... Nh5 40. Qe8+) 40. Qg5+

38... R6f7 39. Re7 Rxe7?!

39... Ng6 defuses all of White's activity with an equal position at the very least.

40. Qxe7 Ng6 41. Qe6+?

41. Qg5! maintains serious pressure.

41... Kg7 42. Bd3 Qe5±

Black has completely consolidated and is ready to take over with the passed pawns.

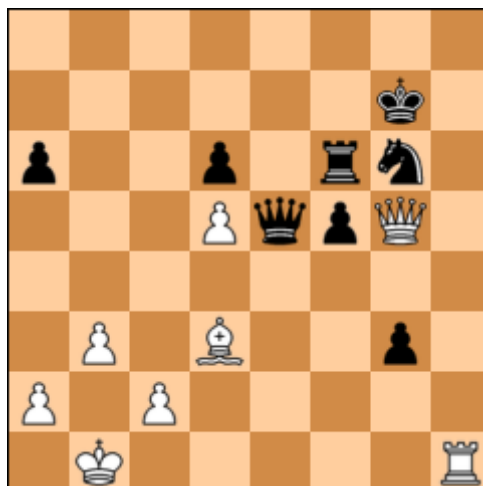
43. Qd7+ Rf7 44. Qd8 g3?

Allowing White another breath of activity

45. Qg5! Rf6 46. Rh1?

The last mistake of the game.

46. Rxf5! Rxf5 47. Bxf5 Qf6 48. Qxg3 Qxf5 49. Qxd6 and the game peters out to a draw.



46... Qf4!-+ 47. Qh5 g2

The passed pawns decide the day.

48. Rd1 Qg4!

Simplest. The pawns don't need to be connected to be strong.

49. Qxg4 fxg4 50. Rg1 Nh4 51. Kc1 Rf2

0-1

After the dust settled from this crazy encounter I emerged with a half point lead over the entire field and only needed a draw with White in round 6, which I attained, to earn clear first with a score of 5/6. It was my honor to represent MA one last time at Denker, and I couldn't be happier with this ending to my scholastic career.



*FM Brattain with USCF Board member Mike Nietman
Photo Anne Buskirk, uschess.org*

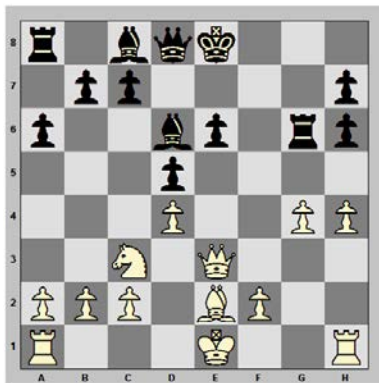


Sneak Peek!

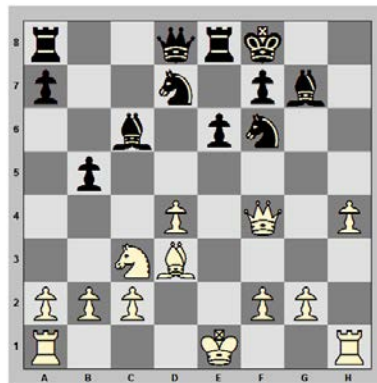
Progressive Tactics: 1002 Progressively Challenging Chess Tactics

Dave Couture

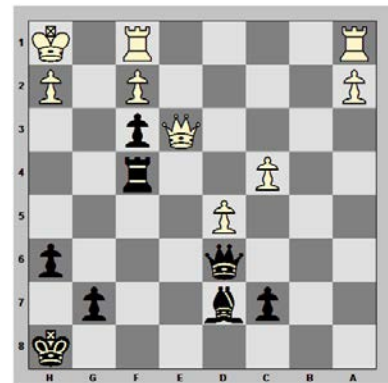
The purpose of my new book is simple: to raise your rating (or just greatly improve your game if you're not a rated player)! Written for players from intermediate to up to 2000, the problems in it are from *real* amateur games, the sort you're most likely to encounter in your own play. Here, I present a sampling from the book featuring tactics of varying levels. See how many you can get! (Solutions on p. 45)



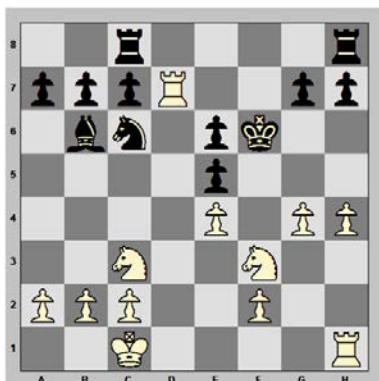
(1) White to move



(2) White to move



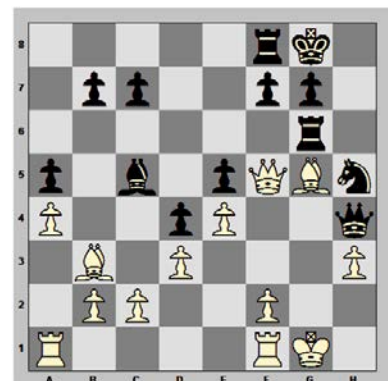
(3) Black to move



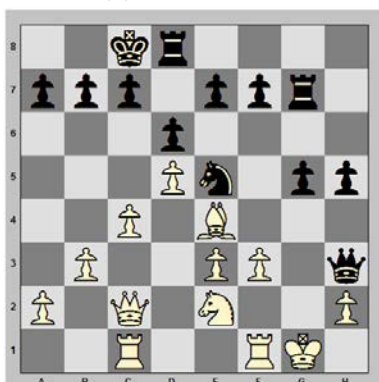
(4) White to move



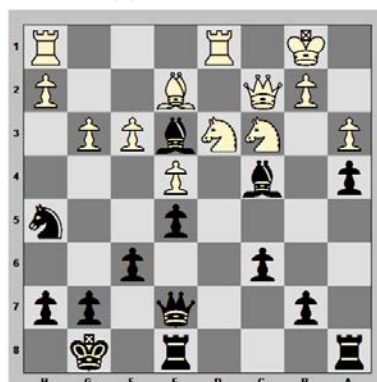
(5) Black to move



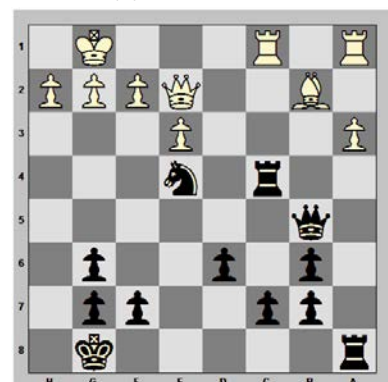
(6) White to move



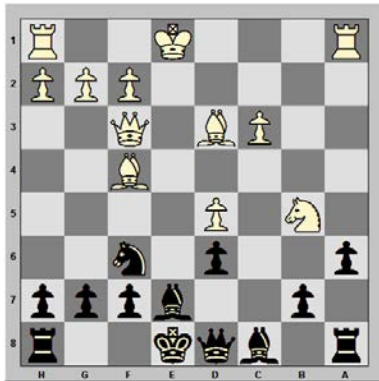
(7) White to move



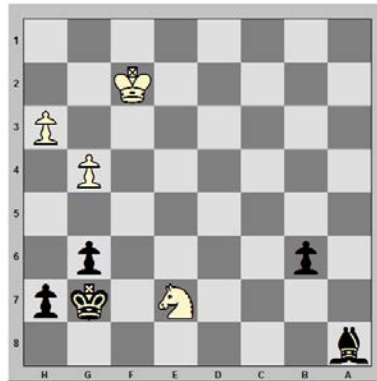
(8) Black to move



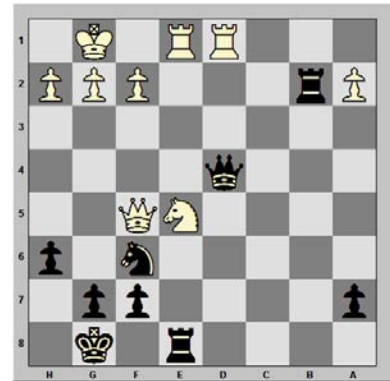
(9) Black to move



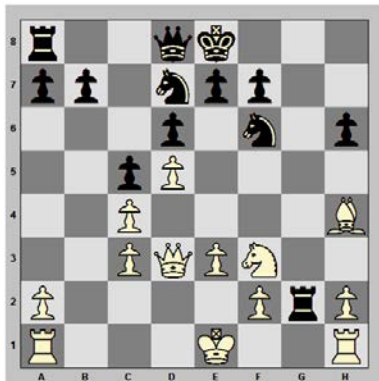
(10) Black to move



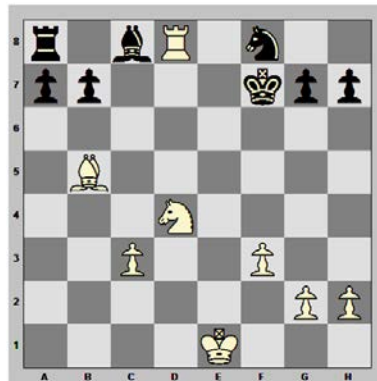
(11) Black to move



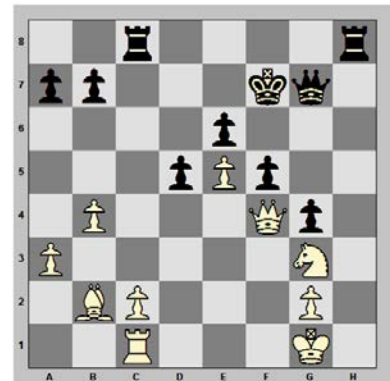
(12) Black to move



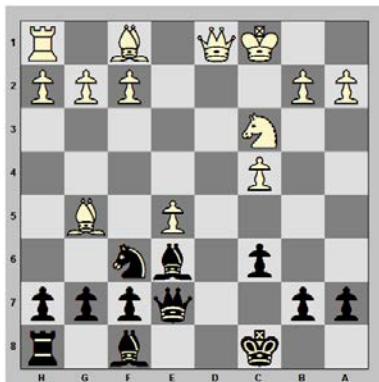
(13) White to move



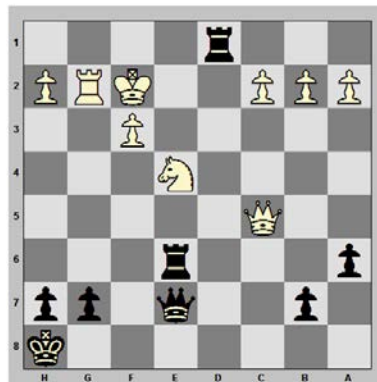
(14) White to move



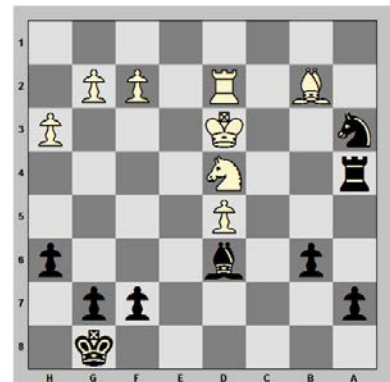
(15) White to move



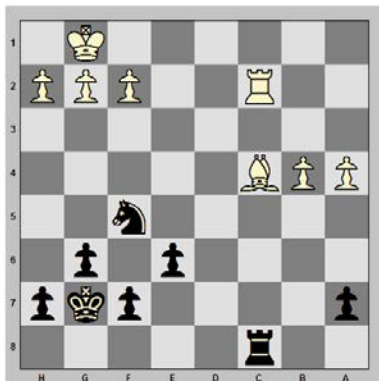
(16) Black to move



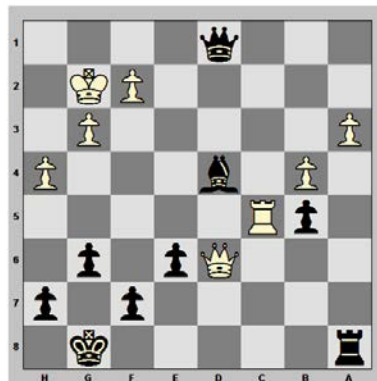
(17) Black to move



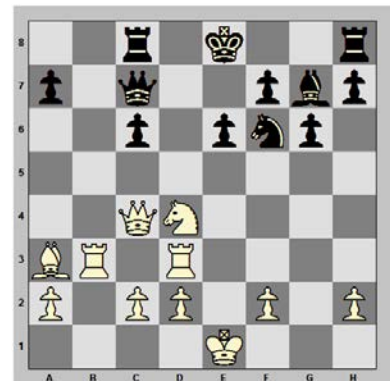
(18) Black to move



(19) Black to move



(20) Black to move



(21) White to move



Kavi, Shmelov Triumphant at Pillsbury

The 2016 edition of the Harry Nelson Pillsbury Memorial tournament saw the event's highest turnout since a two-day version in 1999. 84 players made their way to Marlborough on December 4th, headlined by two of the most active titled players in the Commonwealth.



GM Alexander Ivanov led the way early, winning his first three rounds against an expert and two masters to become the only 3/3. That would set up a climactic top board showdown...



... with man of the hour IM Denys Shmelov, who bested the Grandmaster for a 3.5/4 finish and a share of first place.

That, in turn, set the stage for one of the event's young masters to claim their first top prize at the Pillsbury. Pole position – a 2.5/3 score to seal a spot on the second board, would be determined in a third-round clash between two of the young titans of Massachusetts chess:

Nithin Kavi (2192)

NM Carissa Yip (2319)

H.N. Pillsbury Memorial (3)

12.04.2016

Neo-Grunfeld [D76]

Annotations by N. Kavi

1. Nf3 Nf6 2. c4 g6 3. g3 d5 4. cxd5 Nxd5 5. d4 Bg7 6. Bg2 Nb6 7. Nc3 Nc6 8. e3 0-0 9. 0-0

Re8 10. Nh4 e5 11. d5 Na5 12. e4 Nac4

13. Qe2 Bd7

Now I played a4 to force ... a5. Black is slightly weakened on the queenside, while b4 cannot be exploited.

14. a4 a5 15. Nf3 Nd6 16. b3 Qc8 17. Ba3 Bf8

18. Qe3 Bh3 19. Rac1?!



I noticed the weak a3-f8 diagonal and the idea of Black moving her knight to attack my bishop, but only considered ... Nxe4 and overlooked the rather obvious ... Ndc4 until I took my hand off my rook.

In any case, 19. Rfd1 was more flexible and probably better.

19... Bxg2 20. Kxg2 Ndc4 21. bxc4 Nxc4

22. Qg5 h6

A bit too fancy. 22... Nxa3 is best, allowing me to regain the pawn with 23. Nxe5 and a roughly level game.

23. Qh4 Nxa3 24. d6!

I am down a pawn but my position is still better. Black's knight is sidelined and her king is loose.

24... Bxd6

Allowing me to take on h6.

24... cxd6 25. Nd5 Qd8 26. Qxd8 Rxd8

27. Rc3 and I win a piece.

25. Qxh6 Bf8 26. Qh4 Be7 27. Qh6 Bf8

Now I went for it.

28. Qg5 Be7 29. Qxe5 Bb4?

Natural, but now Black is objectively lost.

29... Nc4 was necessary, and after **30. Qf4 c6**

31. Rfd1± gives me a clear but not yet winning advantage.

30. Qf4 Rf8

30... c6 would've put up a bit more resistance but I am still winning after **31. Nd5+-**.



31. Nd5 c6 32. Nf6+ Kh8?

Allowing mate in one.

32... Kg7 33. Qe5 is completely winning for me, but at least Black can play on for a bit.

33. Qh6#

1-0



(Left to right): GM Alexander Ivanov (edge of frame), FM Charles Riordan, NM Michael Isakov, NM Nithin Kavi, NM Ryan Sowa

With the win, Kavi put himself in strong position going into the last round. Outside of the top board, he was the only player standing with a shot at a share of first, and with Shmelov's win in the top match, Nithin's tournament fate was firmly in his hands.

NM Ryan Sowa (2232)

Nithin Kavi (2192)

H.N. Pillsbury Memorial (4)

12.04.2016

King's Indian, Taimanov [E99]

Annotations by N. Kavi

I'd been White rounds 2 and 3, which meant I would have to play Black round 4. With 2.5 points, I knew I would be facing a tough opponent. And I was right: I was Black against Ryan Sowa, a strong player I've played many times before. Within the first 25 moves, things were going downhill and I accepted that I was unlikely to scrape even half a point. But chess is full of surprises; sometimes easily won games are lost, and sometimes people make incredible comebacks from lost positions. I've been on both sides countless times myself.

1. d4 Nf6 2. c4 g6 3. Nc3 Bg7 4. e4 d6 5. Nf3 0-0 6. Be2 e5 7. 0-0 Nc6 8. d5 Ne7 9. Ne1 Nd7 10. Be3 f5 11. f3 f4 12. Bf2 g5 13. Nd3 Nf6 14. Rc1 Ng6 15. c5 Rf7 16. Kh1 h5 17. cxd6 cxd6 18. Nb5 g4!?

A tactically complicated King's Indian.

19. Qc2 Ne8 20. Nxa7 Bd7 21. Qb3 g3 22. Bg1 Nh4?!?

22... gxh2 was probably better.

23. Ne1!

Expected. 23. Rfd1 can be met by Nxg2!

23... Qg5 24. Bb5 gxh2



The light-squared bishop's fundamental purpose is to sacrifice itself on h3 an appropriate moment. I figured that if White can take on d7 and play h3, my position would become more difficult. So, I took on h2.

Interestingly, maybe I can come up with something after 24... Ng6 25. Bxd7 Rxd7 26. h3 Qh4, but it is probably too slow.

25. Bb6 Bf8 26. Bxd7 Rxd7 27. Rf2 Ng6 28. Nb5 h4

I wasn't thrilled with my opening, but I played on.

29. Rfc2 Nf6 30. Nc7 Nh5

I didn't expect this to work but didn't see better. I'm down less material after 30... Rxc7 31. Rxc7 Nh5 32. Bf2, but it's hard for me to progress further from there.

31. Nxa8 Ng3+ 32. Kxh2 Nf1+

Objectively this isn't best. 32... h3! right away is strong. I was debating between this and ... Nf1 but ultimately chose to play the latter.

33. Kg1 h3 34. Bf2 Rg3 35. Qd3



This annoyed me during the game but wasn't best. 35. Nc7 ends the game quickly.

35... Ng3 36. Bxg3 fxg3

Now I have ... Nf4 available.

37. Qd2 Qh5 38. Rc7 Be7 39. Rxe7 Rxe7

Here I could tell that White was not so confident.

40. gxf3 Nf4 41. Nd3?



A blunder in time pressure, relinquishing control of f3. Something like 41. Rc2 was better, but now White isn't even better anymore.

41... Nxh3+ 42. Kf1 Qxf3+- 43. Ke1 g2

Now I get a second queen. We were both very low on time so I didn't win as quickly as I could have, but now White is just playing for tricks.

44. Qh6 g1Q+ 45. Kd2 Qgg2+ 46. Kc3 Qgg3 47. Kb4 Re8 48. Rc7 Qxe4+ 49. Ka3 Qexd3+ 50. b3 Rxa8+ 51. Kb2 Qe2+ 52. Rc2 Rxa2+ 53. Kxa2 Qxc2+ 54. Ka1 Qe1+

0-1



Congratulations to Nithin, whose rating climbed over 2200 with the performance.

And congratulations to Bharath Heggadahalli and Evan MacLure, who shared tops in the U1910 section, to Anjali Toli, who swept the

U1610, and to the formerly unrated Kavita Bhatia (pictured), who cleared the U1310 section in the busy tournament.



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Yip wins 2016 Boylston Chess Club Championship

Andrew Hoy

The annual Boylston Chess Club championship is always ferociously contested. Ten of the strongest club members meet every year in a grueling two month tournament held on Monday evenings. Historically some of the strongest players in New England have competed, and this year was no exception.

Any time that you have ten players closely grouped in terms of playing strength, it is a sure bet that the games will be very entertaining and nobody will run away with the tournament. In fact, the club champion was not crowned until the last game was completed.

Early on in the tournament, it looked like Carissa Yip would win with ease. She and Timothy Sage rushed out to an early lead with 4 straight wins apiece. However, the field caught up when Tim lost to Lawyer Times and Brandon Wu. Carissa also suffered two losses in quick succession – one against me, and the other against Sherif Khater.

This meant that going into the last two rounds, first place was shared between Timothy Sage, Carissa Yip, Lawyer Times, and Sherif Khater, all with 5/7. The penultimate round allowed Carissa to edge ahead of her competitors, as she beat Tim Sage, Sherif Khater lost to Gabriel Birzu, and Lawyer Times could only manage a draw against Soren Pedersen.

With a thin half point lead, Carissa essentially had draw odds in her game with Bryant Vernon. Bryant was certainly up to the challenge, as he played the Dragon Sicilian with black, trying for a win. In one of the oddities that goes along with tournament chess, three of the most crucial games for the tournament standing all featured the Dragon, and more specifically, the Yugoslav attack. My win against Carissa Yip was on the white side of the Yugoslav, and my loss to Bryant Vernon, which dealt a fatal blow to my tournament winning chances, was also on the white side of the Yugoslav.

In this particular game, the players were playing a makeup game after the rest of the

round 10 games were completed. As the TD and sole spectator, I was treated to a dramatic, back and forth affair that lived up to its billing as the capstone of the tournament.

NM Carissa Yip (2297)

Bryant Vernon (2031)

BCC Club Championship (9)

11.14.2016

Sicilian, Dragon – Yugoslav [B78]

1. e4 c5 2. Nf3 d6 3. d4 cxd4 4. Nxd4 Nf6 5. Nc3 g6

Bryant has played the Dragon at a very high level for many years, and he is a dangerous opponent. I had discovered just how well prepared he is when he won our individual championship encounter in an extremely theoretical line of the Yugoslav attack.

6. Be3 Bg7 7. f3 O-O 8. Qd2 Nc6 9. Bc4 Bd7

This is one of the main starting points of the Yugoslav attack in the Dragon. White has several options for the best way to prosecute the attack on the black king.

10. h4 h5 11. O-O-O Rc8 12. Bb3 Ne5 13. Bg5 Rc5



The battle lines have been drawn. White will play g4 soon in order to break open the black king's pawn shield. Meanwhile, Black will play on the half open c-file. Exchange sacrifices on c3 are a thematic idea in order to activate Black's dark square bishop.

14. Kb1

Carissa spent nearly half an hour on this move. White first tried 14. f4 in Ivanchuk-Felgaer 1-0, Barcelona 2005. Since then, White's plan with



Kb1 has become more popular. In most of these opposite side castling games, White wants to play Kb1 at some moment in order to avoid checks that come at an inopportune moment. With the king on b1, Black's idea of Qa5 poses less of a threat and white will be able to play g4 and h5 shortly.

14... b5 15. Rdg1?!

This move seems unnecessary. Most recent games in this line feature an immediate g4 instead.

In that variation, Black rarely captures on g4. In recent practice, black has rushed ahead with a5. If Black does capture on g4, White can open two files leading to Black's king, and meanwhile Black has nothing remotely threatening against the White king: 15... hxg4 (15... a5 16. gxh5 Nxh5 17. Nd5 Re8 18. a3) 16. h5 Nxh5 17. Nd5 Re8 18. Rxh5 gxh5 19. Qh2. While the engines do not initially appreciate White's exchange sacrifice, it is quite clear that White has a tremendous initiative. Indeed, Black is nearly forced to give back the exchange in this position with Rxd5. As an example, after 19... gxf3 20. Qxh5 Bg4 21. Qh4, Black has no way to prevent disaster on e7.

15... Qa5?

This move is a serious inaccuracy. Due to the nice position of White's king, White can immediately jump into d5 with the knight, and black has nothing better than returning to d8 with the queen. The simple 15...a5! would have led to an advantage for Black, threatening to win a piece with a4 and forcing White to respond quickly: 16. a3 Nc4 17. Bxc4 Rxc4 18. g4 and now Black has several plans. 18... hxg4 (18... b4 19. Ncb5 Bxb5 20. Nxb5 Qd7 21. a4 Rfc8 and Black's attack is well ahead of White's) 19. h5 Nxh5 20. Nf5! This pseudo-sacrifice of the knight is thematic in the Yugoslav. White tries to remove the dark square bishop as quickly as possible. 20... Bxc3 21. bxc3 Bxf5 22. exf5 b4 and despite the fact that both kings look to be nearly mated, the "correct" evaluation here is a draw by perpetual check! 23. fxg6 bxc3 24. gxf7+ Rxf7 25. Qd3 Qb6+ 26. Kc1 Qb2+ 27. Kd1 Nf4 28. Bxf4 Rxf4 29. Qg6+ Rg7 and white must force a perpetual, and Black must acquiesce.

16. Nd5!± Qd8 17. Bxf6 exf6 18. g4



White has essentially won two tempi. Rarely in such a sharp opening can one side survive such a misstep. White's attack will be crashing through shortly, and black has nothing to counter-balance against the white king.

18... hxg4

Black attempts to keep the g-file closed, but the h-file is just as bad.

19. h5! Re8 20. hxg6 Nxg6 21. Qh2 Re5

22. fxg4 Rg5

Black has found a creative way to add a defender to the g-file. However, White can simply make use of the d5 and f5 squares, and the attack continues.

23. Nf5 Bxf5 24. gxf5 Nf8 25. Rxd5

White removes Black's best defender, one of the oldest and most reliable themes of attacking.

26... fxg5 26. Qh5 Rxd5

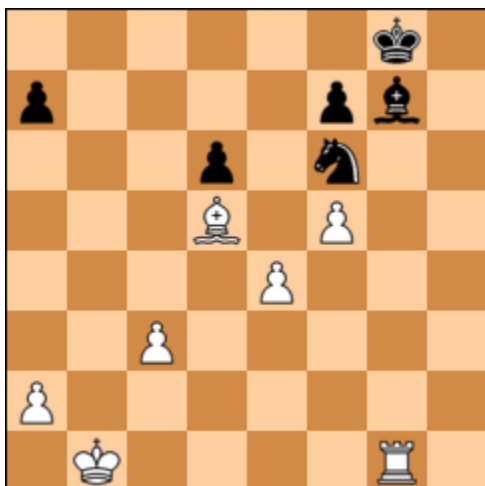
With just a minute left to get to move 30, Black finds the best defense. White was threatening f6 with fatal consequences: 26... a5 27. f6 Bxf6 28. Nxf6+ Qxf6 29. Bxf7+ Qxf7 30. Qh8#

27. Bxd5 Qf6 28. c3

It's always important to notice one move checkmate threats!

28... Nd7 29. Rg1 b4 30. Qxg5 bxc3

The time control has been reached, but black is down an exchange for no compensation. Black now attempts to set up a fortress on the dark squares. 31. Qxf6 Nxf6 32. bxc3



32... Kf8 33. c4 Nd7 34. Kc2 Nc5

Black's pieces coordinate nicely to keep the White king from penetrating. During the game, I thought that White should play Rf1 to threaten f6 and lure Black's bishop to a worse square. With the open b-file, Black has no real chances to defend. The White rook will come to b8 where it can harass the black pawns. In these positions, the stronger side simply has to create a passed pawn, and then the weaker side will be compelled to give up an entire piece to stop it from queening.

35. Rb1

35. Rf1 Bd4 36. Rb1 Ke7 37. Rb8

35... Bd4 36. Rb8+ Ke7 37. Bc6 Kf6 38. Ra8 a6 39. Bd5 Ke5 40. Re8+ Kf4 41. Bxf7 Nxe4

White has now created a passed f-pawn, and the

game becomes a matter of relatively simple technique.

42. Kd3 Be5 43. Be6 Nc5+ 44. Ke2 Ke4

45. Ra8 Bc3 46. Rf8 a5 47. Bd5+ Ke5 48. Rf7 a4 49. Kf3 a3 50. Kg4 Kd4 51. Ra7 Bb2 52. f6 Nd3 53. f7 Ne5+ 54. Kf5 Nxf7 55. Bxf7 Kd3 56. Bd5 Kc2 57. Ke6 Kb1 58. Kxd6 Kxa2 59. c5+ Kb1 60. c6

Since a2 is not possible, black gives up.

1-0

With her victory, Carissa becomes the youngest club champion and improves her rating back over 2300. Additionally, she is the first female club champion in the club's 97 year history.

At the same time as the Club Championship, the annual Hauptturnier, a round robin tournament at a slow time control, is also hosted. This year it was a double round robin featuring six strong A and B players. Johannes Lindvall won the Hauptturnier with the phenomenal score of 6.5/7. For his efforts, he gained nearly 90 rating points.

For more information about the Boylston Chess Club or to see upcoming events, please visit <https://boylstonchess.org>.

2016 BCC Championship Crosstable

#	Name	Rating	Score	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1	Carissa Yip	2294	7	x	1	0	0	1	1	1	1	1	1
2	Lawyer Times	2225	6	0	x	1	0	1	1	1	½	½	1
3	Sherif Khater	2265	6	1	0	x	1	½	1	½	0	1	1
4	Andrew Hoy	2246	5.5	1	1	0	x	½	0	0	1	1	1
5	Brandon Wu	2167	5.5	0	0	½	½	x	1	1X	½	1	1
6	Timothy Sage	2125	5	0	0	0	1	0	x	1	1	1	1
7	Bryant Vernon	2031	4	0	0	½	1	0F	0	x	½	1	1
8	Gabriel Birzu	1944	4	0	½	1	0	½	0	½	x	½	1
9	Søren Pedersen	1965	2	0	½	0	0	0	0	0	½	x	1
10	Charles Bing	1560	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	x



Games

Ivanov to the Races

GM Alexander Ivanov

Not to be outdone by the wunderkinds and local upsetters of the moment, GM Alexander Ivanov has been keeping busy of late, and he showed us exactly why he's the rightful top dog by taking a share of first at the Reno Western States Open, battling through a field that included four other Grandmasters and multiple IMs. He analyzes a key victory here.

GM Alexander Ivanov (2535)

GM Aleksandr Lenderman (2664)

Reno Western States Open (3)

10.21.2016

Sicilian, Kan [B42]

1. e4 c5

A bit of a surprise. I was expecting a Caro-Kann or French.

2. Nf3 e6 3. d4 cxd4 4. Nxd4 a6

5. Bd3 Nf6 6. O-O Qc7 7. Qe2 d6 8. c4 Nbd7

In this version of Hedgehog moves like 8...g6 or 8...Be7 are more common, but Lenderman decides to trade Nd7 for Bd3. It's unclear who benefits from the exchange: Black two Bishops can become active once the position opens up, on the other hand, White doesn't have to bother about finding work for his light squared bishop restricted by the pawns on c4 and e4. On the whole, White stands slightly better.

9. Nc3 Ne5 10. h3

10. f4 Qb6 11. Be3 Neg4

10... Bd7 11. Bd2

11. a4!? Be7 12. b3 Nxd3 13. Qxd3 O-O

14. Be3 Rac8

11... Be7 12. b3 Nxd3 13. Qxd3 O-O 14. Rac1

Rac8 15. a4

15. f4 Rfe8

15... Rfd8

15... Rfe8!?

16. Kh1 Qb6 17. Be3

17. a5 Qc5 18. Nce2 b6!?

17... Qa5 18. f4 Bf8



Now that the forces have come into contact, Black has to be careful to defend against the threats Bg5, Qg3 with a Kingside attack. Still, Hedgehog positions are not easy to crack.

19. f5 Re8 20. Bd2

20. fxe6!? fxe6 21. Nf3 Qh5!? (21... Bc6?!)

22. Ng5 h6 23. e5! dxe5 24. Rxf6 hxg5

25. Qg6± 22. Bg5 Qg6 23. Bxf6!? gxf6

24. Rcd1

20... Qb6 21. Rb1

21. fxe6!? fxe6 22. Be3 Qa5 (22... Qd8)

23. Rcd1± 23. Nf3±

21... Bc6

(21... Be7)

22. Be3 Qc7 23. Bg5 Nd7 24. Qg3 Nc5

25. Rbe1



Now Black can win a pawn on b3 at the cost of giving up a d5 square, though I felt White's



compensation would be more than sufficient. There was a quieter way to handle the position: 25. fxe6!? fxe6 26. Qf3 Be7!? 27. Qf7+ Kh8 28. Bxe7 Qxe7 29. Qxe7 Rxe7 30. Nxc6 bxc6 31. b4 Nb7±

25... e5

Black decides to take the pawn. If he doesn't accept the offer, White's attack is quite strong as the following computer-generated line shows: 25... Kh8 26. f6 g6 27. Qh4 Nd3 (27... Qa5!? 28. Bd2!±) 28. Rd1 Ne5 29. Rf4!? Nd7 30. Nxc6 Qxc6 31. Bh6 Qc5 32. Bxf8 Rxf8 33. Qh6 Rg8 34. e5! Qxe5 35. Ne4! g5 36. Rg4 Rg6 37. Nxc5! Qxc5 38. Qxc5 Rxc5 39. Rxc5±

26. Nc2

Getting the knight to d5 is my plan. According to the computer, White is better without the sacrifice: 26. Nxc6!? bxc6 27. b4 Nb3 28. f6 g6 29. Rb1 Nd4 30. Rfc1. Another Knight retreat looked unclear: 26. Nf3 Nxb3 27. f6 g6 and now Houdini gives 28. Qh4 Nd4 29. Bh6 Nxf3 30. Rxf3 Kh8 31. Rg3 Bxh6 32. Qxh6 Rg8 33. Rg4 g5 34. Rxc5 Rxc5 35. Qxc5 Rg8=

26... f6?!

I was expecting the simple 26... Nxb3 27. Nb4!? (27. f6 g6 28. Qh4? Qa5 29. Bh6 Qxc3 30. Bxf8 Nc5! 31. Bxd6)± 27... Kh8 28. Nbd5 Bxd5 29. Nxd5 with compensation, although in this position Black is doing better than in the game, e.g., 29... Qxc4 30. f6 g6 31. Nb6 Qc2 32. Nxc8 Rxc8 33. Rc1 Nxc1 34. Rxc1 Qxc1+ 35. Bxc1 Rxc1+ 36. Kh2=

27. Bxf6 Qf7 28. Bg5 Nxb3 29. Nb4±

Now the material is even and White is simply better. However, I had less than 15 minutes left on my clock, so for the next ten moves I'm in no rush to play f5-f6 which makes the e6 square available for the Black knight.

29... Nd4

29... Nc5 30. Nbd5 Nxa4 31. Nxa4 Bxa4 32. f6 g6 33. Ne7+ Bxe7 34. fxe7 Qxc4 (34... Qe6 35. Rf6+-) 35. Qf2 Qe6 36. Bh6 Qxe7 37. Qa2+!+-

29... Qxc4? 30. Nbd5 +-

30. Qd3

Short on time, I try to play solidly.

30. f6!? Ne6 31. Nbd5 Nxc5 32. Qxc5 Kh8 33. a5± Bxd5 34. Nxd5 Rxc4 35. fxg7+ Qxc7 36. Qh5 Qg6 37. Qxc6!? hxc6 38. Rf7±

30... Be7 31. Bxe7?!

This is too impulsive, a typical time trouble move. White's advantage would be bigger after keeping the "good bishop" with 31. Be3!?±

31... Rxe7 32. Nbd5 Bxd5

32... Ree8 33. Nb6 Rc7 34. a5±

33. Nxd5 Ree8 34. Rb1 Rc6 35. Rb4 Kh8**36. Rfb1 Rb8 37. Rb6 Qd7 38. a5 Rxb6****39. Rxb6**

39... Rf8?! Trying to reposition the Rook to a better square, but missing a tactical trick.

40. Qb1 Qa4?

Black was planning 40... Rf7, but noticed that it would lose to 41. Rxa6! More stubborn was 40... Rb8 41. Rxa6 Nc6 42. Rb6 Nxa5±

41. Rxb7 +-

Time control has passed. White is winning.

41... Nc6

41... Qxc4 42. Rb8 +-

41... Qxa5 42. Rb8 Rd8 43. Qb4 Qa1+

44. Kh2+-

42. Qb6 Qxc4 43. Qc7 Rg8 44. f6 gxf6

44... Qc1+ 45. Kh2 Qg5 46. f7 +-

45. Qxh7#

1-0



But Draws are Fun!

Nathan Smolensky

This November, New York City hosted the World Chess Championships. It was an event of great intrigue and spectacle, and when the dust settled, the winner, by a resounding score of 10-2 (2-2 in tiebreaks), was Friendship. Because Friendship, as an old Russian saying goes, is the force that triumphs when two players draw. And Friendship has won every World Championship match for the past fifty years.

The frequency of draws, and particularly quick, seemingly prearranged draws, at the top levels of competitive chess is a sore spot for many. But, as an old American saying goes, it is not the players with which we must take issue over this matter, but rather the game itself.

Draws are an integral part of chess, and they may seem, at times, dull, or anticlimactic or unsportsmanlike, or all of the above. But they give us so much, for which we are seldom grateful.

The drawish nature of chess is perhaps the greatest defense of the soul of chess against the machines which have threatened to take it for the last twenty years. It is the foremost deterrent against players always making the ‘accurate’ and the technically proper move, and the reason chess can continue to be fun and creative and interesting. Because the machines cannot understand the practical considerations of *needing a win*, of needing to escape the massive island of stability in chess. In a world where every miniscule advantage in evaluation were easily converted, imaginative, wild moves could never merit consideration over computer-manufactured ‘best’ moves. But we, fortunately, do not live in that world.

Draws not only keep top players playing creatively, they keep them playing their best. With the sheer amount of effort that can go into a top-level chess game, from the immense volume

preparation to the actual board experience of as many as six hours straining one’s brain to its very limits, giving every game a full effort would be a physical impossibility. But instead of diluting their efforts across all their games and presenting lackluster performances, top grandmasters are instead afforded the luxury of conserving their energy for a select portion of their games by agreeing to some quick draws along the way.

Yes, this practice can go too far, as evidenced by the quick handshake in the twelfth and final round of classical chess at the 2016 Championship. But in such situations, it needs to be countered with reasonable disincentives that take into account *why* the quick draws are so prevalent. Yasser Seirawan had what I consider to be an ingenious solution in the aftermath of the match – a 13-game match structure in which one side would have seven blacks and draw odds, which would ensure that the World Championship of classical chess is determined by playing classical chess, not rapid tiebreaks. But extreme anti-draw measures, such as the Sofia rules of yore, are doomed to fail, for they ignore just how much benefit the option of the grandmaster draw brings, and just how hard it is to force a decisive result when it is in neither player’s interest, and a draw can be reached so easily through natural play.

And in fact, the prevalence of the grandmaster draw incentivizes the very type of play the game’s promoters, and many of its spectators, like to see. New, young players, full of wonder and energy, can forge ahead of the pack by being able to take and make fewer draws, without having to be the most booked-up or the most technically accurate.

Many sports and games – the more barbaric endeavors – would have you believe that there are only two possible results of competition. But chess understands that there is more. Chess, like life, is about more than winning and losing.

It’s about draws.



Hidden Depths

FM Jacob Chudnovsky

Welcome back to my column, Hidden Depths (formerly Everyday Gems). In these articles, I will analyze game fragments from relatively low-stakes tournaments that nonetheless show interesting and useful tactics and strategies. You will learn. You will laugh. You will cry. Especially when I try to make jokes.

Today, we'll take a look at exchanges and transitions in the endgame. While piece exchanges play major roles in the opening and middlegame, they take on special importance in the endgame. With the limited material left on the board, every exchange fundamentally alters the nature of the position and turns it into a different type of endgame. Indeed, in many cases, an exchange takes an endgame from unclear, or better for one side but defensible, to clearly drawn or clearly winning for one side. The more material being traded, and the less there is left over, the more true this becomes.

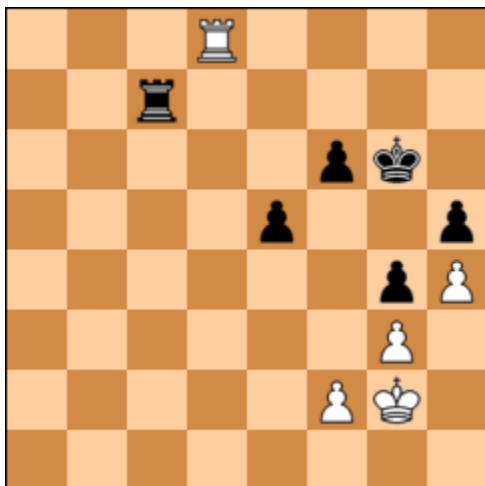
Before deciding whether to exchange pieces, especially if it forces a pawn endgame, one has to consider the resulting new endgame. And then throw those general considerations out the window and calculate it out.

"paulschneider" (ICC Standard 2418)

"chuddog" (ICC Standard 2467)

Internet Chess Club

12.25.2006



51... Re5

Black is trying to squeeze out a win from this objectively drawn rook endgame. The last move prepares 52...f5 with the further plan of f5-f4-f3+ and going after the f2 pawn. However, white can get ready to start checking the black king by playing 52. Ra8, and after 52... f5 53. Ra6+ Kf7 54. Ra7+ (not 54. Rh6 f4, and if 55. Rxf5, 55... f3+ 54. Kg1 Rf1+ 55. Kh2 Rf1 -+) Ke6 55. Ra6+ Kd5 56. Rh6, 56... f4? 57. gxf4 exf4?? 58. Rxf5+ actually loses; 56... Ke4 57. Rxf5 and white is fine.

52. Rg8+ Kf7

52... Kf5 53. Rh8=; 52... Kh7 53. Ra8 as in the analysis above. Instead, Black tries a different approach.

53. Rh8 e4!?

Scrapping the previous plan, Black instead aims to do the following: free the rook from defending the h-pawn, maneuver it to f3, and push through e4-e3 or f6-f5-f4 to disrupt the pawn structure. Of course, white doesn't have to allow this, and even if he does, it shouldn't be enough for Black to win.

Black also sets up a trap based on a tricky endgame transition.

54. Kf1 Kg7 55. Re8?!

White holds easily with 55. Ra8 Rf5 56. Kg2 Rf3 57. Re8 f5 58. Re6, and I don't see how black can make progress. But 55. Re8 is the most obvious move and looks fine too...

55... Re5!

Wait... what? Did black just offer to trade down into a pawn endgame where his extra pawn is doubled and isolated and cannot be turned into a passed pawn? And without even a centralized king to give some semblance of advantage? Is this a tacit draw offer?

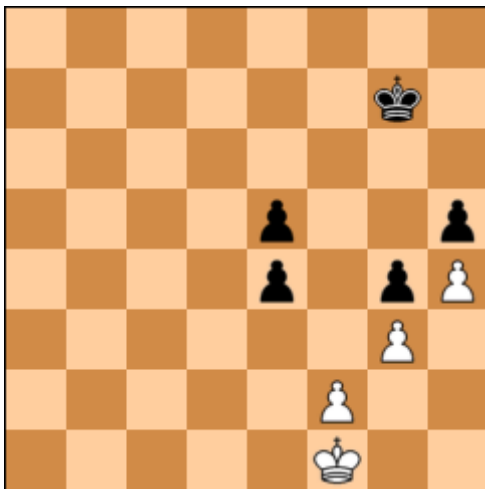
56. Rxe5?

Having evaluated the resulting pawn endgame based on a first impression (probably one much like described above), White takes the rook – and falls into Black's trap. After the correct 56. Ra8 e3 57. fxe3 (other moves lead to the same position) Rxe3 58. Kf2 Rf3+ 59. Kg2, Black has made some progress, and next will work on moving the king up the board, dreaming of



eventually getting it to f3. But White should still hold with correct play.

56... fxe5



Now let's look at what's really going on here. The doubled, isolated pawns on e5 and e4 look weak and helpless, but they are actually superheroes in disguise. Their first superpower is that they control the key squares d3, d4, and f4. This creates an impenetrable fence that keeps the white king out of the center. Using this advantage, Black will win as follows:

(1) Maneuvering around the pawn fence, the black king will make his way to the center, while the white one will only be able to shuffle between the second and third rank.

(2) The black king will push his white counterpart back to the second rank and land on d4.

(3) At that point, the second superpower of the e4-e5 pawns will be revealed...

I hope the discussion of these positional elements is useful for identifying similar patterns in your own games. However, I have to be honest with you: this isn't quite how my thought process went. Before playing 55... Re5, I didn't spend time thinking about the features of the pawn endgame; rather, I calculated it out to the end. It's not that strategy was absent from my thinking, but it was intertwined with specific moves. As alluded to earlier, it's important to understand endgame principles, but calculation always trumps generalities.

So, how does this play out?

57. Ke2 Kf6 58. Kd2

White could have thrown in 58. Ke3 Kf5 – note how the e5 pawn takes the d4 square away from the white king! – 59. Kd2(e2) Ke6, and continued as in the game.

58... Ke6 59. Ke3

And here White could have prolonged the game and tested Black's vigilance by 59. Ke2 Kd6 (not 59... Kd5? 60. Ke3) 60. Kd2 Kc5! (again, not 60... Kd5? 61. Ke3), and after 61. Ke3(c3) (61. Ke2 Kd4) Kd5, the black king will reach d4 on the next move.

59... Kd5

And now the e5 pawn takes the f4 square away from the white king!

60. Ke2 Kd4

Stages 1-2 of Black's plan are complete. Now, as promised, we will witness the revelation of the second superpower of the e4-e5 pawn tandem. That power is...

61. Kd2 e3+!

...that one of them can be sacrificed! Black's move forces a symmetrical pawn structure with the opposition in his favor, winning the game. Note that 60. Kd2 Kd4 61. Ke2 would have also been met with 61... e3! +-.

62. fxe3 Kc4

And here, in view of 63. Kc2 e4 64. Kd2 Kb3, White resigned.

0-1

The reason White lost is that he made the decision to trade down into a pawn endgame based on a superficial evaluation. These are very high-impact decisions and cannot be trusted to first impressions, which, with chess positions as with people, are often misleading. Much lip service is paid to intuition in chess, but let's be honest: unless you're a chess magician like Mikhail Tal, specific variations leading to clear outcomes will serve you much better in making decisions than relying on your intuition. Now let's examine a game featuring two transitions.



FM Jacob Chudnovsky (2416)

Nithin Kavi (2096)

BCF \$15 Open (3)

06.13.2016



With White to move, he has to make a decision. Does he play 42. Rxf8+, keeping the queens on the board, or 42. Qxf8+, exchanging into a rook endgame?

42. Qxf8+!

This is the correct choice. Let's examine both the variations and the thought process that took place.

At first glance, 42. Qxf8+ prolongs the game and complicates the win, whereas 42. Rxf8+ Kc7 43. Ra8 wins instantly. And once again, the first impression is wrong.

At this point, both my opponent and I had very limited time left, and it was no longer possible to calculate as thoroughly as I would have liked.

This is what I saw:

Option 1: 42. Rxf8+ Kc7 43. Ra8 Rf1+ 44. Ka2 Qe1! – and now, due to the threat of mate by black and lack of a forced mate for white, the only way white can win is by queening the pawn with check. I did not see a clear way to do this.

Option 2: 42. Qxf8+ Qxf8 43. Rxf8 Ke7 leads to a rook endgame where white has two extra pawns and should be able to convert.

Based on this limited evaluation, I chose option 2. Deeper calculation validates this choice:

42. Rxf8+ Kc7 43. Ra8 Rf1+ (not 43... Qe1+? 44. Qc1 +-) 44. Ka2 Qe1! At this point, White would be happy to sacrifice his rook and win black's rook for the f-pawn, as the queen

endgame with the extra h-pawn is winning. But Black doesn't have to oblige. Thus, 45. Ra7+ (45. Rc8+ Kb7! 46. Rb8+ Kc7 leads nowhere) Kc6!! (the more tempting 45... Kb6 loses: 46. Qxd6+! Kxa7 47. Qc7+ Ka8 48. f8=Q+! Rxf8 49. Qc6+ Kb8 50. Qd6+, or 49... Ka7 50. Qc5+) 46. Rxa6+ Kb7 47. Rb6+ Ka7 48. Ra6+ Kb7 =, or even 47... Kxb6 48. Qxd6+ Kb7, and White cannot force the black king to the eighth rank and has to take a draw by perpetual check.

As I did not have the time to calculate all of this during the game, my decision was somewhat intuitive. I can already hear the complaints: "You just gave an example to illustrate that intuitive decision-making doesn't work. Now in your second example you are saying it does. What's the point of this article?" Allow me to clarify.

Ideally, one should try to calculate the various possible options to a clear conclusion. If time pressure makes this impossible, intuition has to come into play. However, the decision cannot be based on first impressions, and the intuitive choice must be backed up by at least limited calculation and honest evaluation. This is how it went in the current example:

"After 42. Rxf8+ Kc7 43. Ra8 Rf1+ 44. Ka2 Qe1, I don't see a clear win. Maybe this is winning for white, but I can't be sure. On the other hand, after 42. Qxf8+ Qxf8 43. Rxf8+, I'm confident that the rook endgame is winning. Therefore I choose 42. Qxf8+."

And in the first example we discussed earlier, if White were in time pressure after 55... Rxe5, his thinking could have gone like this:

"After 56. Rxe5 fxe5, the pawn endgame looks drawn, but then why did Black offer the trade? Let's make a few obvious moves. 57. Ke2 Kf6 58. Ke3 Kf5 – interesting, my king has to back up – 59. Ke2 Ke6 60. Ke3 Kd5 – and now my king has to back up again, and he takes a strong central position. I don't know if he can do anything after that, or if I can prevent his centralization somehow, but this is suspicious. On the other hand, if I decline the rook trade, I should be able to hold the rook endgame. I'd better decline to be on safe side."



In one case, the right decision is to trade pieces. In the other case, the right decision is to decline a trade. But in both cases, making the right decision involves digging beyond the first impression, admitting that one of the options leads to an unclear, possibly unfavorable outcome, and choosing a different option that is clearly favorable.

Back to the current game:

42... Qxf8 43. Rxf8+ Ke7 44. Ra8?

Immediately after making a good decision, white spoils his chances with a bad one. 44. Rb8 wins easily, e.g. 44... Kxf7 45. Rxb4 Rf1+ 46. Ka2 Rf2 47. c3! Rxh2 48. Rb6 +-.

44... Kxf7 45. Rxa6 Ke6

And now we see the difference between capturing the a-pawn and the b-pawn. Unlike the a6 pawn, the b4 pawn that White has left on the board can be defended, and it restricts White from moving his queenside pawns (e.g. 46. c4 bxc3 47. bxc3 Rf1+ 48. Kb2 Rf2+ would lose a pawn) and prevents White from developing his king via a2. Objectively, White almost certainly cannot win this endgame now.

By the way, although not a piece trade, the decision to play 44. Ra8 instead of 44. Rb8 was made instantly, without considering the options. Once again, we see that decisions made without any calculation or evaluation get punished.

46. Rb6

White could have played 46. Rc6 aiming for 47. Rc4, and after 46... Rf1+ 47. Ka2 Rf2 48. h4 Rh2 49. Rc4, White has defended everything for the moment. However, after 49... d5 White has to trade pawns, and after 50. Rxb4 Rxc2, Black should be able to hold this endgame thanks to the presence of the d-pawn.

46... Rf4

Instead Black could have chosen 46... Rf1+ 47. Ka2 Rf2, forcing a transition to the pawn structure mentioned above. However, White has no productive ideas other than going into that structure anyway.

47. Kc1?

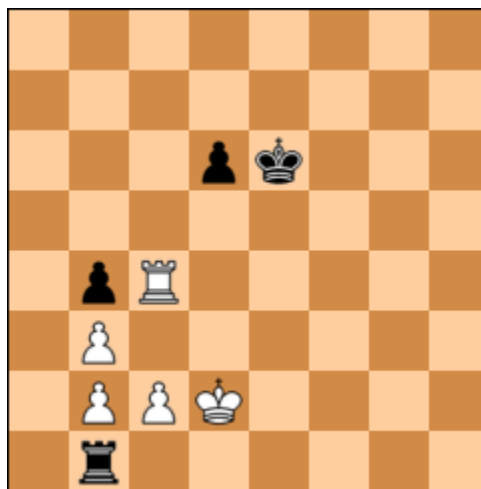
King centralization, unfortunately, does not work in this case, due to the weakness of the h2 and c2 pawns. This should have thrown away

White's last winning chances. 47. Rc6 transposing to the line discussed above was best.

47... Rh4! 48. Rc6

A little too late. However, White didn't have anything better. Black plans to play 48... Kd5 and 49... Kc5 to defend the b4 pawn, followed by collecting White's h-pawn, and White has no way to stop this plan. For example, 48. Rb5 Kd7 49. Rd5!? (otherwise 49... Kc6 50. Rb8 Kc5) Rxh2 50. Rd4 Rh1+ 51. Kd2 Rg2+ 52. Kd3 Rh3+ 53. Kc4 Rh2 =.

48... Rxh2 49. Rc4 Rh1+ 50. Kd2 Rb1??



Within a step of securing a draw, Black stumbles. All he had to do was keep checking the white king and return the rook to h2 once the king is not defending the c-pawn. After, for example. 50... Rh2+ 51. Kd3 Rh3+ 52. Ke2 Rh2+ 53. Kf3, Black can make a neutral move such as 53... Kd7, and there is no way for White to make progress. Instead, Black goes for a forcing line that prevents White from being up two pawns, but in doing so he misses that white can force a second endgame transition, namely trap the Black rook into an exchange and trade down into a pawn endgame. In this case, particularly as we were both in time pressure, I suspect my opponent's error was caused by not calculating far enough, rather than by misevaluation of the pawn endgame.

Additionally, I don't know if my opponent saw that, if he kept checking the white king with the rook, there was no way for White both to escape checks and to protect the c2 pawn with the king. But I do remember that 50... Rb1 was played



instantly, which means it was planned when playing 49... Rh1+. My opponent would have benefited from looking for the best move for White in this line (and thereby likely seeing the rook trade), as well as considering other options besides 50... Rb1. Blunders don't always lead to mate or loss of material. Sometimes what's missed is "only" a trade of pieces that ends the game.

51. Rxb4 Rxb2 52. Kc1! Ra2 53. Ra4 Rxa4 54. bxa4

Due to the extra pawn, the endgame is easily winning for White. The a-pawn will be exchanged for black's d-pawn, and the c-pawn will be promoted.

54... Kd5 55. Kd2

55. c3 or even 55. Kb2 would win as well. 55. Kb2 leads to an entirely unnecessary but amusing line: 55... Kc4 56. c3 d5 57. Kc2 d4 58. a5! Kb5 59. cxd4 Kxa5 60. Kd3 Kb6 61. Ke4 Kc6(c7) 62. Ke5 +-.

55... Kc5

Or 55... Kc4 56. c3 d5 57. a5 Kb5 58. Kd3 Kxa5 59. Kd4 +-.

56. Kc3 d5 57. a5 d4+ 58. Kd3 Kd5 59. a6
And several moves later, Black resigned.

1-0

To summarize what we've learned: Whether offering a piece trade in the endgame, or choosing whether to accept or decline one, a decision made based on first impressions, general considerations, or wishful thinking is likely to lead to disaster. The decision-making must be objective and specific. To the extent possible, it's crucial to calculate variations to compare the merits of trading vs. keeping the pieces on the board. And when it's not possible to calculate out to a clear conclusion, it's important to admit the limitations and consider the potential downside of going into an unclear line. I don't know if Shakespeare was a strong chess player, but the most famous soliloquy he wrote provides some useful guidance here. When evaluating "to be or not to be," Hamlet chooses a known evil – to be – rather than

risking an unknown and possibly worse evil – not to be. The same approach may apply to trading pieces in the endgame. Just please don't recite the soliloquy out loud to your opponent.

Finally, in the last issue of Chess Horizons and in this one, I have focused on my own games in this column. However, I would be more than happy to analyze and discuss the games of other local players. If you've played a game that you consider educational, entertaining, or even edutaining, by all means, submit it to Chess Horizons for consideration.

And I promise never to use the word "edutaining" again.



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Book Review

How Chess Imitates Life

Maryanne Reilly

How Chess Imitates Life: Making the Right Moves, From the Board to the Boardroom

Garry Kasparov

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Glued as I was to the 2016 World Chess Championship (I overheard a family member mumble the word “fanatic” on Thanksgiving), I was struck by the number of commentators whose fame derives from avenues far from chess. An actor, a physicist, the publisher of New York magazine. This was understandable, as the highly focused players often took twenty minutes or more on a move. But what could Woody Harrelson bring to the table? Judit Polgar surely didn’t need his analytical assistance.

Mostly these guests offered corollaries between life and chess. As a chess coach, I liked this. I often point out “life truths” to my students. Own your mistakes; everyone makes them. Be a gracious winner. Accept that you will often not be in the position to be one. Don’t give up. Every move must have a reason behind it, no matter how flawed. And never, ever say “I wanted to lose.” No one will believe you.

But these glib asides only scratch the shiny surface and I wondered what the heavy hitters had to say about the similarities between chess and the fantastically complicated game of life. So I scoured the bookshelves. Turns out there are quite a few treatises on the topic. The first one I will cover, in this series of columns, is Garry Kasparov’s *How Life Imitates Chess*.

I had the good fortune of seeing Mr. Kasparov discuss the book in Cambridge when it was first released in the United States. He opened, counter-intuitively perhaps, by assuring

the audience that life, in fact, does not imitate chess. But he went on to explain, as he writes in the preface, chess “became the lens through which I observed the world and the workings of my own mind. (This) book...is about the tools chess gave me to analyze and improve my thinking and my decisions in all situations.”

Even a casual observer of contemporary social science has seen the pop and fizz of interesting findings in the field of how we think—or, more accurately, how we skim over a complicated mess of conflicting evidence, and choose our responses in a manner that seems predictable at best, and at worst almost random. So any tools that can assist us in our seemingly endless and varied choices in life, or help us to better understand why we make the ones we do, are worth exploring.

Kasparov may have spent his life studying chess, but it is evident that he was also a student of political and military history, as well as of the business decisions that helped shape our era. He brings an impressive array of consultants to the table, quoting, among others, Agatha Christie, Michael Jordan, Winston Churchill and Oscar Wilde. As one would expect, the world champion focuses on the importance of preparation, analysis, strategy, and confidence. But there is a surprising emphasis on creativity and intuition in this book. He quotes Mikhail Tal describing how, in a complicated position rife with ideas, Tal suddenly recalled a children’s poem about the difficulty of dragging a hippopotamus out of the marsh: “Although spectators were convinced that I was continuing to study the position, I was trying (to work this out). ...Jacks figured in my thoughts, as well as levers, helicopters and even a rope ladder. After a lengthy consideration, I admitted defeat as an

“[Kasparov] brings an impressive array of consultants to the table, quoting, among others, Agatha Christie, Michael Jordan, Winston Churchill and Oscar Wilde.”



engineer, and thought spitefully, ‘Well, let it drown!’”

While it is amusing to imagine Tal bent over the chessboard, engaged in this flight of fancy, it’s harder to see how it enabled him to better understand the marsh he was in on the chessboard. Yet Tal seemed convinced that it did. The role of creativity and intuition in any venture is harder to grasp than the tactics Boeing employed to give flight to the Wright brothers’ ideas, or the strategy Ataturk applied to military technique in Turkey, but these are the pages I return to in my mind. There is a wealth of subtle knowledge there to tease out.

The boardroom, of course, is rife with parallels to the chess board. Kasparov compares Jack Welch’s famous divestiture of General Electric to exchanging bad bishops and improving the position of one’s worst placed piece. He gives a fine analysis of competition versus complacency, and he applies his exhortation to constantly scrutinize and push yourself to every facet of life. What metrics, he asks, can you contrive to measure your performance in the arena you want to succeed in? What is important to you? But don’t think these questions pertain only to your professional life. “Every parent says he or she wants to spend more time with his or her kids,” he writes, “but do people actually know, down to the hour, how much time they do spend together each week, each month?” Ouch.

Much of the book details his most challenging matches—how he prepared for them, and how he often had to abruptly change course—and these chapters provide a fascinating peek into the world champion’s mind. What Kasparov advocates, in essence, is self-knowledge, and the training he describes both requires and deepens that state of being. Reconstructing your failures, he reminds us, in order to understand why they happened is crucial. And, he adds slyly, “If you cannot recall a recent crisis in your life, even one successfully averted, you are either lucky, bored, or both.”

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Solutions to *Progressive Tactics*

David Couture

(Problems p. 27-28)

(1) **16. Nxd5** wins the pawn by taking advantage of the pin on the e - pawn. (Vince Premus - DC)

(2) **20. Qd6+** wins the bishop on c6. (DC - Eugene Bedard)

(3) **27...Rh4** threatens mate - in - 1 and **28. h3** only delays mate briefly: **28...Rxh3+ 29. Kg1 Qh2#**. (DC - Larry Gladding)

(4) **15. g5+ Kg6 16. h5#**. (DC - Ernest Fandreyer)

(5) **13...Nf3+** forking the king and rook. (Tom Fratturelli - DC)

(6) **21. Qxg6** wins the rook for free because black's f - pawn is pinned. Note that white couldn't play **Bxh4** because the bishop was pinned. (DC - Richard Gold)

(7) **18. Bf5+** forking the king and queen. (Chrisof - DC)

(8) **21... Bb3!** and the white queen has nowhere to go. (Lester Hutton - DC)

(9) **25... Rxc1+** uncovering an attack on the white queen. (Kevin Wilkinson - DC)

(10) **14... Bg4!**. Black would like to take the knight, but can't because the pawn is pinned. This move breaks the pin and attacks the queen at the same time so that after say, **15. Qe3** black can safely play **15...axb5**. Alternatively, white can give up the knight with **15. Nxd6+ Bxd6**. (DC - Marioaco)

(11) **35... Bb7!** traps the knight and **36...Kf7** wins it. (DC - Alimanu)

(12) **24... Rxe5** and white cannot recapture with either piece. If **25. Rxe5 Qxd1+ 26. Re1 Qxe1#**. If **25. Qxe5 Qxf2+ 26. Kh1 Qxg2#**. (Cervantes - DC)

(13) **13. Bg3** trapping the rook. A possible continuation: **13...h5 14. Kf1 Rxg3 15. hxg3**. (shayo9 - DC)

(14) **28. Nf5** threatening **29. Nd6+** winning the bishop. Nothing that black can do saves the position:

a) **28... Ne6 29. Nd6+ Kf6 30. Rxc8**

b) **28... a6 29. Bc4+ Ne6 30. Nd6+ Kf6 31. Rxc8**

c) **28... Bxf5 29. Rxa8** (played in the actual game) (DC - Carissa Yip)

(15) **28. Nxf5** wins a pawn and the exchange. Black can't recapture with the pawn because white will play **e6+** discovering an attack on the queen from the bishop. The best that black can do is move the queen, after which white has **29. Nd6+** forking the king and rook. (Alan Condon - DC)

(16) **14... Qc5!** The knight is pinned, is being attacked, and seemingly can't be saved, but **Qc5** pins the e - pawn so that **15. exf6 Qxg5+ 16. Qd2 Qxf6**. (Nestle - DC)

(17) **42... Rxe4** removing the defender of the queen. Now white can't recapture the rook because of **43...Qxc5+** and if white captures the queen first with **43. Qxe7 Rxe7** black is a rook ahead. (DC - Bob Mathieu)

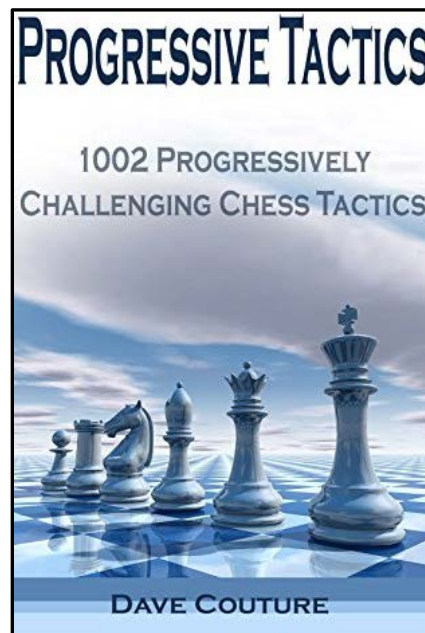
(18) **33... Nc4** forking the rook and the bishop. If white moves the rook to c2 or e2, black plays **34...Nxb2 35. Rxb2 Be5!** winning the knight which is now pinned against the rook.

The best that white has is **34. Nf5** (or **Nb5**) **Nxd2 35. Nxd6 Ra5!** so that if white takes the knight with **36. Kxd2** black has **36... Rxd5+** followed by taking the knight on d6. (DC - Geoff LePoer)

(19) **27... Nd4!** wins the exchange. The white rook has to stay on the c - file to protect the bishop and whether he plays **28. Rc3** or **Rc1**, black plays **28...Ne2+** forking the king and rook. White's best response is **29. BxN** after which black plays **29...RxR**. (DC - Martin Laine)

(20) **41... Qd2** threatens mate starting with **Qxf2+** (while still maintaining the threat on the rook). White will have to give up at least the exchange to stop this. The best he has is **42. Rc2 Qxc2 43. Qxd4** and black is now up a full rook. Gail played this and went on to win easily. (DC - Gail Lingner)

(21) **30. Nxe6** wins immediately by threatening the queen and **Nxg7#** and **30...fxe6** fails to **31. Qxe6+ Qe7 32. Qxe7#**. Black's only way to avoid forced mate is to give up the queen with **30...c5**. (Walter Niemi - DC)



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Solutions (Problems on p. 5)

1. **1. Bxg7+! Nxd7 2. Qxf8+ Rxf8**
3. Rxf8#
2. **1... Nxc3+! 2. Qxc3 Qd1#**
3. **1... Kf3! 2. b8=Q g4#**
4. **1. Qg3! Rg8 2. Qxc7**
5. **1. Qd8+! Rxd8 2. Rxd8+ Kf7**
3. Rf8#
6. **1. Ra7 Kg8 2. f6 Rg1 3. Kh3!** and
Rg7# cannot be stopped.
7. **1. Bd5!!**
1... Ra8 2. Rb8+ Rxb8 3. Qxb8+
1... Re8 2. Bxf7+ Kf8 3. Bxe8+-
1... Rf8 2. Qxf7+! Rxf7 3. Rb8+
8. **1. Rc8 Kh7**
1... Bf8 2. Rxf8+ Kxf8 3. Rxf7+ Ke8
4. Rf8+ Kd7 5. Qf5+ Kc6 6. Rc8+
Kb7 7. Qd7+ Ka6 8. Ra8#
2. Qh6+!!
2... Kxh6 Rh8#
2... gxh6 Rxf7#

From Carlsen – Karjakin 2016, the
final game of the World
Championship tiebreak.

9. **1... Ba7!! 2. e5 Kb6 3. Kd4 Kb5#**

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(Rt. 135) Natick, MA

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www.MetroWestChess.org

(781) 790 - 1033

Boylston Chess Club – 40 Norris St., Cambridge, MA, Suite B101

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www.BoylstonChess.orgboylstonchess@gmail.com**Waltham Chess Club** – 404 Wyman St., Waltham, MA

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www.WachusettChess.org

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www.southeastmasschess.org

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