

Holidays 2017

Double Issue

# Chess Horizons





6th annual  
**BOSTON CHESS CONGRESS**  
**January 5-7 or 6-7, 2018**

**Hyatt Boston Harbor**

*US Chess Grand Prix Points: 50 (enhanced)*  
5SS, 40/100, SD/30, d10 (2-day option, rds 1-2 G/60, d10).

**Hyatt Boston Harbor at Logan Airport**, 101 Harborside Dr, Boston MA 02128. Free parking. **Prizes \$12,000** based on 220 paid entries (U1250 & re-entries count 60%), minimum \$8000 (2/3 each prize) guaranteed. In 6 sections.

**Premier Section:** Open to 1900/over. Prizes \$1200-600-400, clear or tiebreak 1st \$100 bonus, top Under 2300 \$500-250.

**Under 2100 Section:** Prizes \$1000-500-300.

**Under 1900 Section:** Prizes \$1000-500-300.

**Under 1700 Section:** Prizes \$900-500-300.

**Under 1500 Section:** Prizes \$800-400-300.

**Under 1250 Section:** Prizes \$400-200-150.

**Unrated** may enter any section except Premier, with prize limit \$100 in U1250, \$200 in U1500, \$300 in U1700.

**Top 5 sections entry fees:** \$87 online at [chessaction.com](http://chessaction.com) by 1/3, 3-day \$93, 2-day \$92 if check mailed by 12/26, all \$100 at site, or online until 2 hours before round 1. GMs free; \$80 deducted from prize.

**Under 1250 entry fee:** All \$40 less than above.

**All:** Online EF \$5 less to MACA members; may join/renew at [masschess.org](http://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](http://chessaction.com), Adult \$35, Young Adult \$22, Scholastic \$15. Mailed, phoned or at site, Adult \$40, Young Adult \$25, Scholastic \$17. US Chess Junior Grand Prix points available.

**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.

**½-point byes** available all rounds, limit 2 byes, Premier must commit before rd. 2, others before rd 3.

**Hotel rates:** \$99-99, [reserve room online](#) or call 617-568-1234, request chess rate

**Car rental:** Avis, 800-331-1600, use AWD #D657633, or [reserve car online](#) through [chesstour.com](http://chesstour.com).

**Ratings:** January official USCF rating list used. Unofficial [uschess.org](http://uschess.org) ratings usually used if otherwise unrated.

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

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



## What's in this Issue

---

- 4**     **Note from the Editor**
- 5**     **The Challenge Page**  
*GM Larry Christiansen*
- 6**     **Interview: Nadezhda Kosintseva**
- 7**     **Lenderman-Isakov**  
*NM Michael Isakov*
- 10**    **Roundtable: Luck in Chess**  
*Nathan Smolensky*
- 11**    ***My Road to Master: Pt. II***  
*NM Rob King*
- 17**    **2017 N.E. Open Report**  
*FM Chris Chase*
- 23**    **2017 BCF Championship Report**  
*IM Alexander Katz*
- 27**    ***On the Nature of Error, Pt. II***  
*FM Steven Winer*
- 30**    ***Hidden Depths***  
*FM Jacob Chudnovsky*
- 37**    ***Running Wild and Free***  
*Nathan Smolensky*
- 39**    ***Meet the Massachusetts GMs***  
*Nathan Smolensky*
- 46**    **Solutions**
- 47**    **Places to Play**

## Chess Horizons

Holidays 2017  
Volume 49, #3-4

### EDITOR

Nathan Smolensky  
P.O. Box 381396  
Cambridge, MA  
02138-1396  
editor@masschess.org

ISSN 0147-2569. Published by the  
Massachusetts Chess Association (MACA),  
www.masschess.org. Entire contents  
copyright 2017 by MACA and by the  
individual authors. The opinions expressed  
are those of the authors, and do  
not necessarily reflect those of MACA, its  
board, or its membership.

Single-copy price, \$3.95.  
MACA membership: Adult: \$20 with Chess  
Horizons, \$12 without. Junior (under 18):  
\$14 with Chess Horizons, \$6 without.  
Subscription rates without membership: \$12  
within US (first-class mail \$9 additional).  
Air mail rates: \$18 Canada and Mexico,  
\$22 Central and South America,  
\$25 Europe, \$28 Asia, Africa and the  
Pacific Rim.

Send renewals, address changes, and all  
money (in US funds, payable to MACA), to  
Membership Secretary Bob Messenger, 4  
Hamlett Dr. Apt. 12, Nashua, NH  
03062, USA. Include USCF ID number, e-  
mail and ZIP+4 if known. Or join/renew at  
masschess.org. No refunds.

*Cover photo: FM Chris Chase,  
76<sup>th</sup> New England Open Co-Champion  
Photo Credit: Tony Cortizas*



## Note from the Editor

Nathan Smolensky

Dear Readers,

I hate to repeat myself, but it behooves me here to repeat myself.

I love *Chess Horizons*. I love creating content, bringing together writing and analysis from the greatest minds in Massachusetts chess, and delivering it all to you wonderful readers. But I cannot do it alone.

I'm currently looking for an Assistant Editor, and any other support for this magazine would be greatly encouraged. As my life becomes more and more consumed with the other work I do, I want to ensure that you, the readers, do not miss out on the content that we have promised you as a result.

So please, if you think you might be interested in helping out, email me or send me a letter (addresses in sidebar). In the meantime, enjoy, and Happy Holidays.

- Nathan Smolensky, Editor

### Annotation 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

### Postal Hub

A place for those in search of correspondence play

**Damion Coppedge**

#98B1779

Elmira Correctional Facility

P.O. Box 500

Elmira, NY 14902-0500

## MACA

Massachusetts Chess Association  
www.masschess.org

### OFFICERS

#### PRESIDENT

Nathan Smolensky  
P.O Box 381396  
Cambridge, MA  
02138-1396  
nathan.smolensky@gmail.com

#### VICE PRESIDENT

John Sadoff  
108 Central St., 1R, Somerville, MA  
02143  
(202) 725-5465  
sadoff\_john@yahoo.com

#### TREASURER

Bob Messenger  
4 Hamlett Dr. Apt. 12, Nashua, NH  
03062  
(603) 891-2484  
treasurer@masschess.org

#### CLERK

Andrew Hoy  
clerk@masschess.org

### COMMITTEE CHAIRMEN

LMCF, Prison Chess: Steve Frymer

Scholastic: Dmitry Barash

Budget, Tournament, Bylaws,  
Asst. Clerk, Membership Secretary:  
Bob Messenger

Investments, Parliamentarian:  
Jeff Caruso

Promotions, Web Coordinator:  
Oleg Poliannikov

Webmaster: Tiffany Wang

Education, Publications:  
Nathan Smolensky

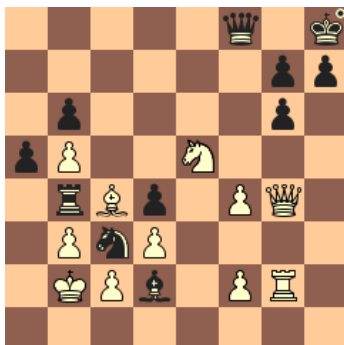


## The Challenge Page

GM Larry Christiansen

*Can you handle the Grandmaster's potent puzzles? Find the best move. Solutions on p. 46*

1.



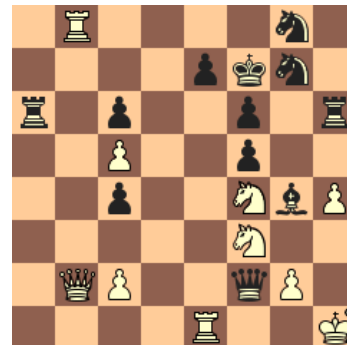
Black to play

2.



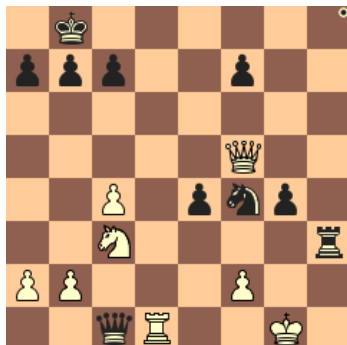
White to play

3.



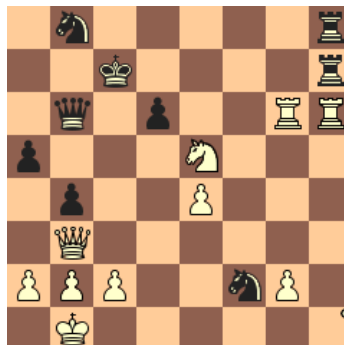
White to play

4.



Black to play

5.



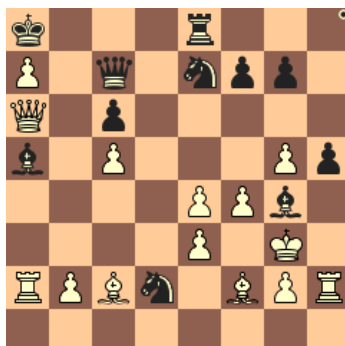
White to play

6.



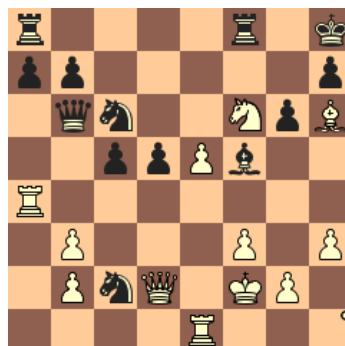
Black to play

7.



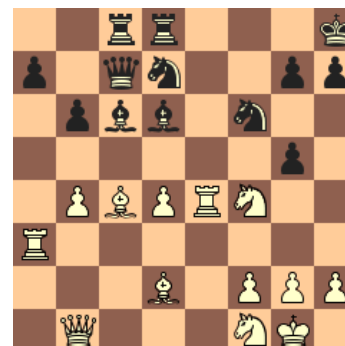
Black to play

8.



White to play

9.



White to play.



## Interview

## GM Nadezhda Kosintseva

*GM Nadezhda Kosintseva (Nadya for short) is one of the titans of women's chess, with a peak FIDE rating close to 2600 and a frequent seat at first board of numerous Olympiad-winning Russian teams. She now resides in Swampscott.*

**Nathan Smolensky:** What brings you to Massachusetts? How do you like it so far?

**Nadya Kosintseva:** I came to MA because my husband got a job here. I like it a lot – there is a great chess community here. Also, we live close to the ocean and enjoy the nature here.

**NS:** What is your current involvement with the game of chess? What are your plans? Do you see yourself returning to competitive play soon?

**NK:** Currently, I am not participating in chess tournaments. I focus on coaching young players. At this point it is difficult to say if I ever return to professional chess, but I do not completely exclude this possibility.

**NS:** Let's rewind a bit. You and your sister, Tatiana, were two of the brightest stars in Russian chess from your early youth through your back-to-back gold medals in 2010 and 2012 as part of the Russian team in the Women's Chess Olympiad. To what do you credit your incredible success in the game?

**NK:** I think many aspects contributed to our success. First of all, the support of my family who has helped Tatiana and me from the childhood and provided us with opportunities to participate in various tournaments and have good coaches played the major role. Later, I think that our long-term coach Yury Dokhoian had a big impact on our development as chess players. Last but not least, chess is extremely popular in Russia, and the environment as a whole creates many good development opportunities. So, all those factors contributed to our success.

**NS:** There is a rumor, supported by Wikipedia and the like, that you and Tatiana stumbled upon the game of chess by chance, walking by a chess

club as children on the way home from a dance lesson. Is this true?

**NK:** Yes, this is true. Neither we, nor our parents had any plan for us to learn chess. It happened purely by chance, and turned out to be a long and fascinating journey.

**NS:** At what point did you realize that you could compete among the most elite players?

**NK:** This happened after I became international chess grandmaster among men. This was a very important achievement for me that marked the beginning of new era. It provided me with motivation to study even harder and helped to become #3 in the world at some point.

**NS:** Could you describe the experience of winning five gold medals in six years for the Russian national team [world championships in 2010 and 2012, with European championships in 2007, 2009, and 2011]? Was there any sense, after that run, that there wasn't anything left to accomplish?

**NK:** To be honest, it was a very nice feeling, but after all chess is an individual game. Team success is good, but I put much more value on individual achievements. However, when I played for the team I always approached it with great responsibility – representing your country is important in any case. So, even though we won many team competitions, every new start was independent from the past. A professional always wants to win, even if he has a long history of success, and that was the case with our team.

**NS:** Do you ever miss tournament chess?

**NK:** Having played chess for almost 25 years, it is impossible to get rid of the desire to play again. So, even though my life has undergone many changes, I must admit that occasionally I do miss playing chess tournaments. This is why I do not exclude the possibility of my return to professional chess.

**NS:** Thank you for your time.

**NK:** Thank you for the questions. I am glad to be in Massachusetts and hope can contribute in development and growth of the local chess community.

*Northeast Open***Lenderman - Isakov**

NM Michael Isakov

GM Aleksandr Lenderman (2663)

NM Michael Isakov (2251)

23<sup>rd</sup> Annual Northeast Open

Stamford, CT

06.09.2017

Catalan, Closed [E09]

Entering the first round of the Northeast Open 2017, I knew that this would be my toughest one. Playing the top seed with the black pieces is never easy, and things did not look good with a 400-point rating gap between me and my grandmaster opponent. Naturally, I knew he would play for a win - I remember a tournament a few years back where GM Lenderman went 5-0 to try to prove that his bad performance at the US Open was a fluke.

I didn't have any grand strategy to take down my opponent; I simply wanted to play a good game with some interesting chess. But with a bit of luck, I was able to put a 1 next to my name on the pairing sheet.

**1. d4 d5 2. c4 e6 3. Nf3 Nf6 4. g3 Be7 5. Bg2 0-0 6. 0-0 Nbd7 7. Qc2 c6**

Entering a Closed Catalan

**8. Nbd2 b6 9. e4 dxc4**

The main line goes 9... Bb7 10. e5 Ne8, where white has a space advantage but black is extremely solid. White will press in a closed positional game for a while.

**10. Nxc4 Ba6 11. Rd1**

11. Re1 is a reasonable alternative. That said, 11. Rd1 is principled with the idea of meeting c5 with d5. Notably, 11... Nxe4 is not possible, since 12. Nfe5 completely eviscerates Black's position.

**11... c5 12. d5**

Following up Rd1. Here I must be very careful not to allow d6, which would not only box in my bishop, but also create a monster bishop on g2. I

follow up with a forced series of moves to stop this pawn in its tracks.

**12... exd5 13. exd5 Bxc4 14. Qxc4 Bd6****15. b3!?**

There are too many alternatives here to go into all of them. This is one of the critical moments in the game, and it makes sense to take a look at this position further. Lenderman gauged that my position was too solid to play for constriction with moves like 15. Bg5 or 15. Re1, since the knight on d7 protects the knight on f6, and I always have the annoying plan of placing my queen on c7, trading off both rooks on e8, and asking white how he is going to win this position. 15. b3 plans to place the bishop on b2, eyeing both e5 and f6. In the long run, this innocent-looking pawn move also stops c4, which I could potentially play if my knight ever got to e5, or if my pawn got to b5. This strives to keep the position complicated for the foreseeable future, with no trades in sight.

**15... Re8!?**

The computer shows 15... Ne5 is best. However, this simplifies in White's favor, leaving me with a slightly worse position and little hope of counterplay. I feel like 15... Re8 is combative and ultimately correct, considering that White has no immediate threats and still has to figure out a plan of prying open my position.

**16. Bb2 Qc7 17. Rd2**

Of course, Lenderman understands that as soon as the rook lands on e1, I'm simply going to



trade and the game might very well end in a draw, simply because I have no serious weaknesses and zugzwang is never really a possibility. This move simply improves White's rook a little bit, and since my rook isn't really doing anything on the e-file, white can safely claim an advantage.

**17... Re4 18. Qf1 Re7 19. Ne1!**

An incredible plan. Simple and brutally effective, it is easy to understand but nearly impossible to recreate. I sat at the board, staring at the looming 4–5 move knight maneuver, and began to wonder how I was going to stop it.

**19... Ng4!? 20. Nc2 Rae8 21. Na3**

The knight completes his tour. It looks like the d6 bishop is going to fall, my knight will be pushed back, and White will slowly infiltrate my position with moves like f4. I decide to act now.



**21... a6!?**

Objectively, this move deserves a question mark. Looking back, I probably overestimated the threats posed by the knight on a3, but in the moment I thought this was my chance at counterplay. Paradoxically, this move is both a losing one, and the one that ultimately won me the game. Sacrificing a pawn for the initiative, I judged that it would be more unpleasant for my grandmaster opponent to play here than in a slightly better position with no risk.

**22. Qxa6!**

Calling out my bluff. The game turns into a mess from here.

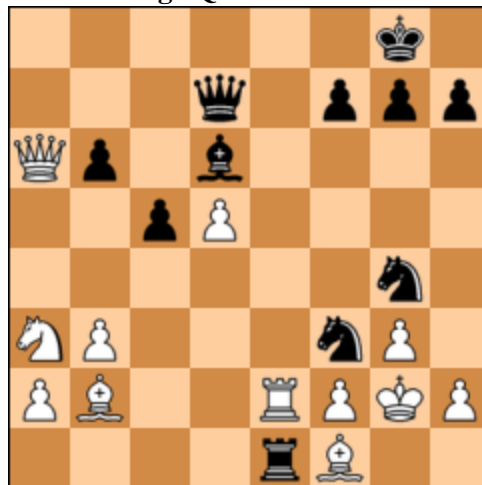
**22... Re1+ 23. Rxe1 Rxe1+ 24. Bf1 Nde5**

For a computer this position is very easy to play. Over the board however, I felt (erroneously) confident that my position had enough crazy shots that I wasn't that much worse.

**25. Re2?**

White is still much better, but Lenderman misses the key resource he has to suppress the complications. White's woes stem from the fact that the queen is completely out of the game; as I mentioned after the game, white should try 25. Qa8+! Bf8 26. d6! Qd7 27. h3, with some potential craziness after 27... Nf3+!? 28. Qf3 Rxf1+ 29. Kg2 +-. I must have overlooked something during the game, because I say the line up to 27. h3 when I played a6, but believed up to this point that I might be ok somewhere. It's hard to blame Lenderman for the somewhat obvious move Re2, because the position is so full of variations that appear easily winning.

**25... Nf3+ 26. Kg2 Qd7!**



Creating serious problems for White. This position is just bizarre. Lenderman said he missed this move, and things begin to go downhill for White from here.

**27. h3?**

White relinquishes his advantage. The queen is simply out of the game, white should have again tried Qa8 and d6, but it is no longer crushing for white. When playing a position like this from either side, the variations begin to blur because of the complexity, and over the board I began to





realize that this is what was happening to my opponent.

**27... h5?!**

With only five minutes on my clock, I err. Frankly, I believed that I was perfectly fine here, and that white had to be careful not to get checkmated somewhere. I was correct about the second part, but the computer is able to secure an advantage with a few precise moves here. Although Lenderman praised this move as tenacious, objectively best was 27... Qf5!, which leads to a perpetual after white eventually takes on g4.

**28. Qa4?**

The computer notices that better was 28. Qa8+ followed by 29. Qa4, with the temporary displacement of my pieces making all the difference. Such intricacies are ridiculously hard to notice over the board in a position like this, especially when Qa4 looks so enticing.

**28... Qf5 29. hxc4?**

GM Lenderman cracks. To avoid defeat, it was necessary to bail out with Qe8+ and Qe4, but White would still be under a bit of pressure. Black is better after this move.

**29... hxc4 30. Qe8+**

Not much to discuss here. White is simply getting mated in most lines. There is a tiny sliver of hope after 30. Nc2! Qh5 31. Qxc4!!, but white is still much worse. It is understandable that we both missed this queen sacrifice.

**30... Bf8**

I'm not sure exactly what he missed playing Qe8+, but this is when he realized that it was all over. With 20 minutes to my three, in a position that looks like it should be chock full of tactical nuances, White is getting mated. Qh5 and Qh3# are impossible to stop.

**31. Qd8 Qh5 32. Qh4 Nxh4+ 33. gxc4 Qxd5+** White resigned. I know that Lenderman sometimes plays out pretty checkmates on the board, and I was secretly hoping for 34. Kg1 Rxf1+ 35. Kf1 Qh1++. Nonetheless, I was ecstatic with this upset. Although my tournament mostly went sour after this game, it

was nice knowing that I had beaten one of the best players in the country.

And with the black pieces, no less!

**0-1**

### About the Author



Michael Isakov has been storming up the ranks of Massachusetts chess since claiming his first provisional rating, an impressive 941 from four games at the 8 & under section of the last Spiegel Cup Qualifier of the 2008-2009 season.

Playing relatively few events, the young Isakov demonstrated a rapid upward trajectory, attaining the rank of master at the 2016 Eastern Class Championships with fewer than 100 tournaments logged.

Now in 12<sup>th</sup> grade, the young master is one of the top scholastic players in the Commonwealth, a force to be reckoned with for even grandmasters like Lenderman and Alexander Ivanov (background), whom Isakov bested at the 85<sup>th</sup> Mass Open in 2016.



## Roundtable Luck in Chess

---

*The roundtable is a new Chess Horizons feature where I ask our regular contributors their thoughts on a particular topic.*

**The Question:** *"To what extent do you feel luck factors into chess success, and in what ways? Is it sometimes correct to call a result, either of a game or a tournament, lucky or unlucky?"*

### FM Jacob Chudnovsky:

I think luck plays a very minor role in chess. Players talk about luck in their chess games very often, but in all honesty, this is more of an excuse than an accurate assessment. Unlike, for example, poker or other card games, in which chance is embedded into the game, chess is a game of complete information and has no such element. At every point, both you and your opponent are aware of the exact position on the board, the time remaining on the clocks, and the available moves. What happens in the game is entirely up to you and your opponent, with no aspect of randomness.

Usually luck is called upon as a factor to explain an unexpected result. For example, if you have a winning position but lose due to a blunder or your time expiring, you might say you were unlucky, or your opponent was lucky. But in reality, time management is part of the game and something you can and should control. The same goes for avoiding blunders that ruin an otherwise well-played game and derail the logical outcome. It's not bad luck that caused you to blunder, it's your own bad play. We train to see the board and spot tactics for the purpose of avoiding such "unlucky" occurrences.

The only time luck can truly be said to play a role in a game is when factors outside chess interfere with one's play. If, for instance, you fall ill during a tournament, or you receive traumatic news from home just before starting a game, you are not going to play optimally due to factors outside your control. However, within chess

itself, every game's outcome hinges only on the skill of the two players.

### GM Leonid Kritz:

My strong opinion is that in chess luck plays almost no role at all. As compared to many other strategic games, e.g. Poker, where players do not have full information about the current situation, in chess everything is there to make the correct decision. So, by looking at the games of strong players, you rarely see the position flipping from won to lost. Most of the time, and this is about 95-99%, the games end in the predictable manner. Occasionally, of course, strange things happen, and they can be attributed to luck, but this is approximately in 1-2% of cases. So, overall, the role of luck is minimal.

### Nathan Smolensky, *Chess Horizons* Editor:

As FM Chudnovsky has alluded, the most prominent role luck plays in chess, at least at a high level, is outside the game itself – how sharp you happen to find yourself on a particular day, a fortuitous pairing, an opponent being careless. But within the game, there is at least one element of luck that I think is quite fascinating, and it lies in tactical uncertainty.

Is perfect information available to players within the game of chess? Yes. Can they use it perfectly? No, no human being can, and as of this writing neither can any computer. We can only calculate lines so deeply. Beyond that, it's guessing – educated guessing, certainly, helped by our experience and positional understanding, but guessing nonetheless.

What is most notable to me about this element of chess is that the magnitude of the luck factor, the degree of variance, can be controlled to a degree. By creating more complicated positions, we can increase the uncertainty of the game's outcome. This takes its own measure of skill, of course, and as such it becomes a game within the game of one player (typically the weaker one, or the more tactical) trying to create chaos and uncertainty, and I find that aspect of chess very, very interesting.



## *My Road to Master* **Part II: One Step at a Time**

NM Robert J. King

A few years ago, when I was rated 2000, I thought that I was “underrated” and that I was master strength and just hadn’t achieved the rating yet. Looking back, I realize how bad I really was and that I was not this “wolf in sheep’s clothing”. This delusion of grandeur is not unique to me. Whether it is the player like myself or a parent who think’s their child is the next Magnus Carlsen, many players are playing up a section or two because thinking that it’s where they belong. They think that playing (and getting crushed by) way strong players will accelerate their inevitable coronation as an expert or master. They might even hope to win rating points by nicking a stronger player for a draw or a win.

The purpose of this article is present an analysis of my personal journey to 2200 and show that my big rating gains were accomplished by overperforming against equal and lesser players. I will present some of my theories as to why this is and my hope is to inspire players to play within their own sections and learn how to win against their peers before taking their chances against much stronger players.

### **How does this rating thing work anyway?**

Here is a common scenario that unfolds every month at the local chess clubs. An 1800 player decides to play in the Open section with all experts and masters and manages to take half a point from a 2200 player. They get demolished in their other 3 games against experts, but hey, if they can draw a 2200 then they must be that strong, right? *“If only I could simply avoid 1 or 2 bad moves against these ‘weaker players’ I would easily be a master”* is what they say. This

false notion suggests that players really don’t understand how the rating system works.

For the next several paragraphs, we are going to get a bit “mathy”. Readers who cringe at the idea of mathematical detail can skip this section and take my advice to stop playing up a section.

The rating system is based on a formula that tells you what the expected result of the game should be based on the rating difference between the two opponents. The expected score for Player A with Rating  $R_A$  beating Player B with rating  $R_B$  is:

$$E_A = \frac{1}{1 + 10^{\frac{(R_B - R_A)}{400}}}$$

The graph of this function looks like this:

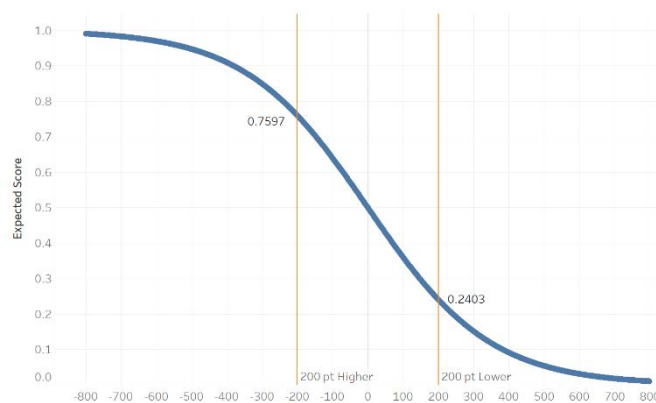


Figure 1: Expected Score by Rating Difference

The number of rating points a player wins or loses is based on the difference between expected results and actual results. The specific formula is given by:

$K(S_A - E_A)$  where  $S_A$  is the actual score achieved,  $E_A$  is the expected score, and K is the mysterious K-factor that you’ve probably heard of but never understood.

For simplicity, we are ignoring the way that the K-factor is determined and the concept of bonus points. This is a bit more complicated than we need here. Let’s assume that  $K=24$  for our purposes.





Let's use this graph to understand our adventurous 1800 player:

- Round 1 draw against a 2200
  - Rating difference is 400 points
  - The graph tells us that the 1800 expects to score .1 points (1 draw in every 5 games)
  - Based on our rating change formula, they would gain  $24*(.5-.1) = 9.6$  points.
- Rounds 2,3,4 losses against 2000's
  - Rating difference is 200 points
  - The graph says they are expected to score .24 points per game, so .72 for all 3.
  - Based on our formula, we would lose  $24*(0-.72) = -17.28$
- Therefore, our hero loses 7.68 points for the tournament.

Maybe playing up isn't such a good idea after all...

### The Long Road Up

Enough of the theoretical discussions, let's look at what this looks like for my games.

The orange line in Figure 2 shows my end of year rating each year and the blue lines show the difference in my expected scores and my actual scores that year.

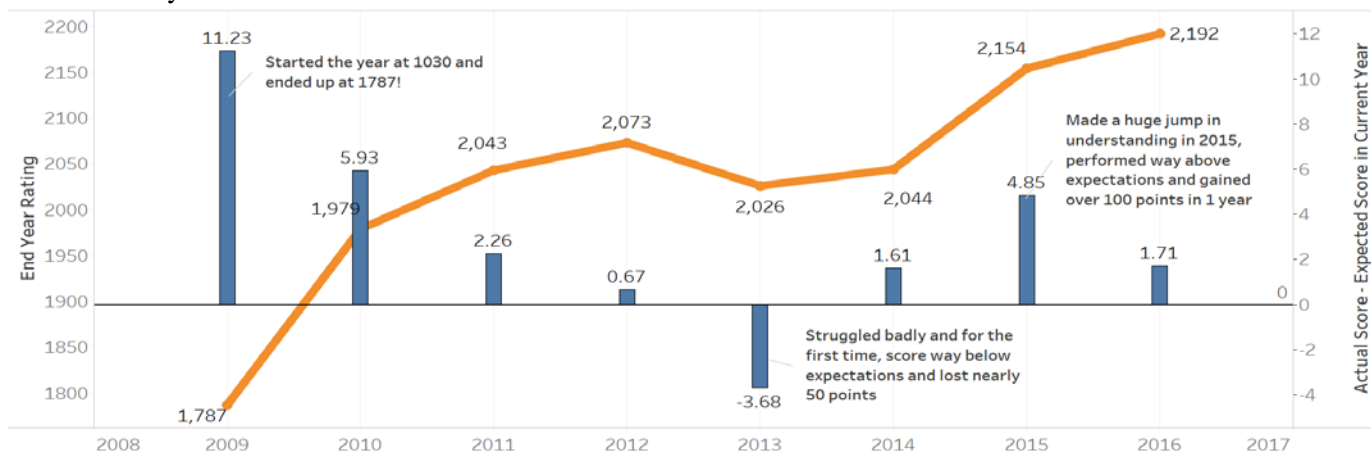


Figure 2: Rob King End of Year Rating vs Difference in Actual & Expected Score

As I've stressed throughout the article, the biggest rating gains occurred when you significantly outperform expectations. There are three instructive periods of my chess career to examine: my early years 2009-2011, stagnation from 2011-2015, and another rating explosion in 2015. Understanding how I performed during these periods helps shed light on when exactly I made significant improvements and against who.

Here are some key observations:

- Gains of several hundred points is rare as you need to score 10-11 points higher than expectations. This is a lot, as it could mean an extra 20 wins against equally rated opponents. This is not typical! The reason that I could do this was because I was rated 1083 as a child and came back many years later as a much stronger player.
- Small differences in expectation can lead to big results. Note that in 2015 I scored only an extra 5 points but gained over 100 rating points.
- It gets much harder to outperform expectations as your rating increases.

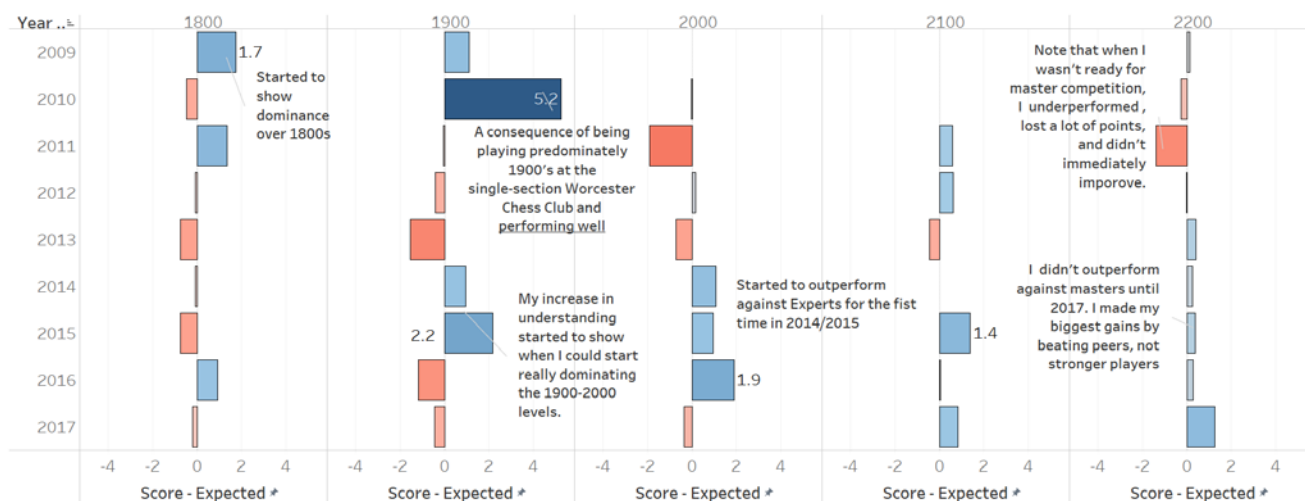


Figure 3: Actual vs Expected Score by Year and Rating Level

Now we know when I scored big, but who did I score big against? Figure 3 shows my difference in expectation by year and rating level. Blue means that I scored higher than expectation and red means below. What can we learn from this?

- My large jump in 2009 was due to a very large score against 1900s. Even though this can be considered “playing up” at the time, it was due to the club I played at. The Worcester Chess Club is filled with a large number of 1900’s (and the legend John Curdo) so I was forced to play them. I performed very well against them but notice that I underperformed against much stronger players at that time. I was simply not ready for that caliber of chess.
- In the period that my rating stagnated, I didn’t show any spectacular results against any different rating groups. I performed roughly around expectation, so it was silly for me to think that I was a “2200 in waiting”. I was exactly where I should have been.

- In 2015, I “woke up” (and also graduated from business school). Notice that I didn’t make my gains by outperforming against masters. What I did was dominate “weaker” players in the 1900 range and started to score better against 2000’s and 2100’s. My chess understanding increased to the point where I could consistently beat my lower rated opposition, but I couldn’t crack masters yet. It wasn’t until 2017 that I started to score much better against 2200’s and reach my peak rating of around 2230.
- The point I would like you to take away from this is that I didn’t become a master by beating stronger players. I became a master by consistently performing against my peers and weaker players. A master is someone who wins 74% of their games against 2000’s, not a few lucky ones against strong players.

### Be Scrappy, Be Resilient

No matter how good you are, you are going to get bad positions. Many of these positions will be against lower rated and potentially



inferior opponents. What I have I credited a lot of my rating gains to is trying to make my opponents' job as difficult as possible and salvaging an extra .5 -1 points from bad positions.

Psychology plays a large part in chess and you need to remember that your weaker opponents will be feeling the pressure to finish you off and may react poorly to any changing tides in the game. This is a skill and was one that took time and experience to develop and you need to learn it against your peers and weaker players first. It is incredibly difficult to learn this against much stronger players.

After all this technical stuff, how about some chess? This game is against local expert Roger Cappallo at the Wachusett Chess Club in Fitchburg. I was losing miserably in this game but I kept trying to find ways to make the game go a bit longer and salvage a draw and I even managed a win. Enjoy!

**Roger Capallo (1951)**

**Robert J. King (2173)**

**George Sturgis Memorial (5)**

**12.28.2016**

**1.d4 d5 2.c4 e6 3.Nc3 Nf6 4.Bf4 c6 5.e3 Nbd7 6.Nf3 Be7 7.cxd5 exd5 8.Bd3 Nf8 9.h3 Ng6 10.Bh2 0-0 11.0-0 Bd6 12.Ne5 Re8 13.f4**



### **13...c5!**

A scary move to make, but also absolutely necessary. Black must try and challenge the center or he will be completely run over on the kingside. The downside of this move is that it leaves d5 very vulnerable. It turns out that this position has been reached several times.

### **14.Kh1**

This was unexpected but it is a very logical and practical attempt. Before embarking on aggressive expansion, White ensures that any combinations in the center will not result in a capture on d4 with check. the downside is that it spends a bit of time and places it on another potentially exposed diagonal. This move has been chosen by very strong players in the past and is one of Stockfish's top choices.

### **14...a6 15.Qf3 cxd4N 16.exd4 Bc7 17.Rae1!**

This move was not on my radar. I had expected 17. Rad1 to support d4, but White has more aggressive intentions. Only here did I feel that I was in some trouble and I lashed out incorrectly.

### **17...b5?**





My opponent said that he expected Nh4 in this position. I rejected it immediately after seeing g4, but I shouldn't have stopped calculating so quickly. 18.Qf2 Nf5 (18...Ne4 19.Nxe4 dxe4 20.Bxe4 Nf5 21.g4 Nxd4 22.Rd1 Bb6 23.Bg1 Qe7 is interesting - I had explored ideas similar to this one, but I just didn't see how to step out of all of the pins that are going on in the position.) 19.g4 Nd6 and Black is hanging in there.

### 18.g4?!

18.Nc6! was an incredible concept that both players missed. Black's position collapses immediately. 18...Qd7 19.Nxd5!! Bb7 (19...Nxd5 20.Qxd5 Qxd5 21.Rxe8+ Nf8 22.Ne7+ Kh8 23.Rxf8#) 20.Nxf6+ gxf6 21.d5+— **18...Bb7 19.f5 Nf8?!**

19...Nxe5 20.dxe5 Nd7 21.f6 g6 22.e6 I had reached this position in my calculations and hallucinated that I can't take on e6 because f7+ would be devastating. I forgot that my rook is no longer on e8. 22...Rxe6 23.Rxe6 fxe6 24.f7+ Kh8

### 20.g5 Ne4

Let's take stock of the position here. Black is CLEARLY worse. White has a massive initiative and Black is passive. It is conceivable that I could lose this game in the next 5 moves. How can we be resilient and salvage this position against a player who is more than 200 points below me? I viewed it this way:



1) Trade Queens to avoid getting mated immediately, even at the cost of a pawn.  
2) Try and active my pieces to their maximum potential. My knight on f8 is unimpressive, but perhaps it could move through h7 to g5 and cause some problems. My dark squared bishop can reroute to f6 through d8 and maybe my rooks can become active.

3) Continue to pose problems! My position is worse but my opponent is not an engine, if I continue to have him solve problems he could potentially make a mistake.

### 21.Nxe4 dxe4 22.Bxe4 Bxe4 23.Rxe4 Qd5!

Black needs to try and relieve the pressure and this x ray to the White king allows for an annoying pin or a queen trade. Black is down a pawn but I judged this position to still be salvageable.

### 24.Rh4 Qxf3+ 25.Rxf3 Bd8 26.Rg4 f6 27.gxf6 Bxf6

I feel that I have achieved something here as the White pawn structure is very bad with 3 isolated pawns. My position is still bad, but I am holding.

### 28.Rc3 h5!? 29.Rg2 Rad8 30.Rc6 Nh7 31.Rxa6 Rxd4 32.Ng6 Ng5 33.h4 Nf3 34.Rf2 Rd1+

The wrong rook check. I was afraid of back rank mates but totally forgot that if I take on h4 that



the knight is removed from g6, whoops! These things happen after being under constant pressure and being relatively low on time.

(34...Re1+ 35.Kg2 Nxb4+ 36.Nxb4 Rxb4 37.Bg3 Rg4 38.Kh2 h4 39.Bb8)

**35.Kg2 Ne1+ 36.Kh3 Nd3?**

After finally feeling that I had a good position and was putting pressure on White, I make a serious error. As soon as I released the piece I immediately was horrified to notice White's saving resource.



**37.Re2!!**

A punch in the gut. Clearly the rook is taboo and how Black has to make a difficult choice.

**37...Rd8?**

37...Re1 38.Rxe1 Nxe1 39.Rb6 b4 40.Rxb4 Nd3 41.Rb5 Nxb2 I had seen this line but I thought that the a-pawn was too strong.

**38.Rae6?**

38.Bc7!+- wins on the spot

**38...Kf7**

38...Nxb2?? 39.Re8+ Kf7 (39...Kh7 40.Bc7+-) 40.Nh8#!!

**39.Rb6 Nxb2 40.Rxb5 R1d3+ 41.Kg2 Nc4**

**42.Bf4 Nd6 43.Bxd6 R3xd6 44.Rb7+ Kg8**

**45.Ne7+ Kh7 46.Ng6 Rd5 47.Rc2?? Rxf5**

0-1

Not all games of chess are beautiful! This is one of my best examples of resilience. I was much worse and potentially losing at several points in this game, but I kept fighting and fighting until my opponent made some mistakes. Instead of losing a bunch of rating points, I turned this into a small gain.

Those small gains add up.

## Chess Ed Academy

Chess Lessons for Kids and Adults

**Eduard Duchovny**

**FIDE Master, FIDE Trainer**

Lessons at your home and convenience

Children of any age welcome

Lessons by Skype also available

857.363.0596

educhovny@msn.com



## 2017 New England Open Cutting to the Chase

FM Christopher Chase

Labor Day 2016 found me in Portland, Oregon, of all places, playing in the Oregon Open. It was a long trip but well worth it as I ended up clear first with 5.5/6, winning \$2,000. I then went up the coast to Seattle to see what was left of my childhood homes and schools on Mercer Island, right next to Seattle; I lived there to the 5th grade. The answer is not much.

I expected to go back this year as I liked Portland and the \$10,000 guaranteed prize fund (at which the Portland CC still makes money), much greater than that offered at the New England Open, with lighter competition no less. However, my form was in rather dubious condition, especially after the Mass. Open and a disastrous Eastern Class, so I decided to stay home and play the N.E. Open in nearby Waltham. At least if I crashed out, it would be just a few miles from home.

In the first round I was black vs. Tony Wang. I struggled trying to convert a small opening edge but, just when Tony could have secured a draw, his flag fell. Luckily for me the TD was right there, avoiding any lengthy discussions. It should be mentioned that Tony had a great tournament, finishing clear 4th and gaining 89 rating points.

In the second, I was paired with young Danila Poliannikov. Possibly confused by my rather modest approach in the Four Knights, Danila made a couple of glaring tactical oversights and was quickly dispatched. Entering the 3rd round I thought it was far too early to see either Denys or Alexander on the other side of the board. Wrong! At the early hour of 11 a.m. (my best, if I have a best, can be found no earlier than 5 p.m.), I sat down opposite Alexander Ivanov with black. My record against Alexander, at least according to USCF, was rather poor - 19

losses, 2 draws and 0 wins. I repeat, zero wins. I was actually startled by that figure of 19 losses, as it felt to me to be more like 100+.

There must be a pairing rule in the USCF rule book, then hard-coded into SwissSys, that says I must be black versus Ivanov. True, I had white against him at the Mass. Open, but I can't remember the last time I had white against him before that. So, with black, we once again argued over the Modern Defense, an argument we have had for years. This time, shockingly, I won! Alexander missed a very surprising "trick" and was forced to resign shortly thereafter. This just proves that every dog does get their day, you just have to last long enough!

**GM Alexander Ivanov (2564)**

**FM Chris Chase (2372)**

**77<sup>th</sup> New England Open (3)**

**09.03.2017**

**Modern Defense [B06]**

**1.e4 g6 2.d4 Bg7 3.Nc3 d6 4.Be3 a6 5.Nf3 Nd7  
6.Bc4 e6 7.a4 b6**

I was almost on the verge of saying "Behold the Hippo" but got short circuited by White's next.

**8.d5!?**

Long thought not to be so dangerous but after White's next maybe that thought has to be revised.

**8...e5 9.g4!?**







Alexander's "new" idea. He played it once before against me and I sank without a trace. It was a while ago and I couldn't remember what I thought was the right approach based on post-game analysis. The idea is, of course, to make Black think twice about f5 as it means opening the g-file on his king.

**9...Ndf6!? 10.h3 Ne7 11.Qe2!**

Tying my bishop to the a-pawn., I would like the bishop on d7 to help a b5 break but now I would just lose the a-pawn.

**11...h6 12.Nh4 Nh7 13.0-0 0-0 14.Ng2 g5?!**

Got swept up in the notion of putting a knight on f4 and, at the same time, trying to keep lines closed on the king side. I think that 14...f5 is better with a computer line like this. Its double-edged but at least Black has play: 14...f5

15.exf5 gxf5 16.f4 b5 17.axb5 axb5 18.Bxb5 Ra1+ 19.Kd2 Rxd1+ 20.Rxd1 Nf6 21.fxe5 dxe5 22.Qc4 fxg4 23.hxg4 Bxg4 24.d6+ Kh8 25.Qxc7 Bxd1 26.Qxe7 Bh5 with a dynamic equality.

**15.h4 Ng6 16.hxg5 Nxc5!?**

Activity at the cost of structure.

**17.f3 17...Qf6 18.Rdf1 b5!?**

Necessary now to at least generate some play and this move order sets up the forthcoming big trick.

**19.axb5 axb5 20.Bxb5 Nf4**



**21.Nxf4??**

I was absolutely shocked by this. I fully expected 21.Qf2 with a long and rather one-sided struggle where I try to prove some

compensation for the lost pawn. Alexander was right to reject 21.Qd2 due to 21...Bxg4! After 21.Qf2 a computer line 22.Kd2 Ra5 23.Qg3 Ng6 24.Bxg5 Qxg5+ 25.Ne3 Bf6 26.Bc6 Ne7 with a definite plus for White. Which is clear to an engine but perhaps not to a person.

**21...exf4 22.Bf2**



Not 22.Bd2 Ra1+ 23.Nb1 Qxb2+ 24.Kd1 Rxb1+ 25.Bc1 Qxc1#

**22...Qxc3!!**

I must say I saw this idea a while ago, probably when I played Qf6. It's not every day that a move like this works, but here it does.

**23.bxc3 Bxc3**

And amazingly enough there is no good defense to Ra1 mate.

**24.Ba6 Rxa6**

24...Bxa6 also wins but I didn't want to give up my dark square bishop after 25.Qe1. 24...Bxa6 25.Kd1 (25.Qe1 Bxe1 26.Rxe1 Nxf3 27.Rxh6 Nxe1 28.Bd4 f6 29.Bxf6 Ng2; 25.Be1 Bxe2 26.Bxc3 Bxf1 27.Rxf1 Rfb8 28.Kd2 Ra3 29.Rf2 Rb5 30.Rf1 Kh7 31.Rf2 Rc5 32.Bb4 Rxc2+! wins ) 25...Rfb8 should be winning.

**25.Qxa6**

Or 25.Qb5 Ra1+ 26.Qb1 Rxb1+ 27.Kxb1 Nxf3 28.Ka2 Bxg4 29.Kb3 Bg7 30.Be1 Nd4+ 31.Kb4 Nxc2+ 32.Kb5 Be2+ winning.

**25...Bxa6 26.Be1**

26.Rd1 Be2 27.Bd4 Bxd4 28.Rxd4 Nxf3 29.Ra4 Kg7 30.Rh5 Ng5 31.Ra7 f3

**26...Bxe1 27.Rxe1 Nxf3 28.Rd1**



As 28...Be2 will leave Black up a piece, Alexander resigned.

### 0-1

I must admit that, now, things were looking up a bit for me; however, with three rounds still to go, there was plenty of time for things to fall apart.

In the 4th round, it was Denys Shmelov with another black. After getting a plus from the opening, I turned down a draw offer, ran a much better position into the ground, and lost. Well, I was quite upset about this but Monday was another day.

In the 5th round, I was white versus rapidly improving Michael Isakov, who recently beat Alex Lenderman. The benefit of having two blacks on Sunday was having two whites on Monday. Against Michael, I essayed a line against the Sicilian that I played close to 30 years ago involving a rather unusual piece sacrifice. In a topsy-turvy affair, I managed to win in his time pressure.

**FM Chris Chase (2372)**  
**NM Michael Isakov (2267)**  
**77<sup>th</sup> New England Open (5)**  
**09.04.2017**  
**Sicilian, Chekhover Variation [B53]**

**1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 d6 3.d4 cxd4 4.Qxd4**

Passing on main lines, particularly the Dragon.

**4...Nc6 5.Bb5 Bd7 6.Bxc6 Bxc6 7.Nc3 Nf6**  
**8.Bg5 e6 9.0-0-0 Be7 10.Rhe1 0-0 11.Qd2**  
**Qc7 12.Nd4 Rfd8 13.f4**

Perhaps next best here. One game went 13.f3 Rab8 14.g4 b5 15.Nce2 Be8 16.Ng3 b4 17.Rg1 Qa5 18.Kb1 Rb6 19.Nb3 Qb5 20.h4 a5 21.Nd4 Qa6 22.Nh5 b3 23.cxb3 a4 24.Bxf6 axb3 25.a3 Bxf6 26.Nxf6+ gxf6 27.Qh6 and there is no defense to Nf5, Marinovic v Rajevic, 2003. After 13.f4 White is pretty much forced to sac a piece.

**13...h6 14.h4!?**



I played this a long time ago v. Sandi Joshi. If White wants anything here, it is pretty much forced. Sandi took the piece and lost. Michael shows better judgment and declines it. The problem for White is that 14.Bh4 is not good because of 14...Nxe4 and 14.Bxf6 offers White nothing but a slight disadvantage due to Black's two Bishops.

### 14...a6

14...hxg5 15.hxg5 A strange computer thing happens now - at first the engines call the sac crazy. Then, after more time to think, White has a slight advantage. A few moves later and with more 'thinking,' White is virtually winning. It is very strange and perhaps an indication of the complexity of the sacrifice. White's idea is simple: Rh1, g4, Qh2, Qh8 mate. Seems slow but the defense isn't easy. Here are few computer lines. 15...Ne8 (15...Nd7 16.Rh1 (16.g4 Nc5 17.Qh2 Bxg5 18.fxg5 Qa5 19.Rh1 Kf8 20.Qh8+ Ke7 21.Qxg7 Nb3+ 22.cxb3 Qe5 23.Qxe5 dxe5 24.Nf3 Rxd1+ 25.Kxd1 Rg8 26.Ke2 Kd6 +-) 16...d5 (16...Nf8 17.g4 f6 18.Qh2 fxg5 19.Qh8+ Kf7 20.Rdf1 Qb6 21.fxg5+ Ke8 22.Nxe6 Kd7 23.Nxd8 Rxd8 24.Qxg7 Ne6 25.Qh7 Nxe5 26.Qf5+ Kc7 27.Nd5+ Bxd5 28.exd5 Rf8 29.Qd3+-) 17.Qe3 (17.g4 Bd6 18.e5) 17...Bb4 18.Qh3 Qxf4+ 19.Kb1 Kf8 20.Nxe6+ fxe6 21.Qe6 +-) 16.Rh1 d5 17.Qe3 dxe4 18.Qh3 Qxf4+ 19.Kb1 f5 20.gxf6 Qxf6 21.Rdf1 Qh6 22.Qg4 22.Nxc6 bxc6 23.Qg4 +-  
**15.Bxf6 Bxf6 16.g4 b5**



16...Bxh4 may work but it's an idea that only a computer would make.

**17.g5 Bxd4 18.Qxd4 h5 19.f5 e5 20.Qf2 b4 21.Nd5 Bxd5 22.Rxd5**



I thought I was much better, even winning, but after Black's next it is not so clear as his counter play of a4,a3, is very fast.

**22...a5! 23.g6 Rdc8 24.Rd2**

I went crazy here trying to make Qe2 work but I couldn't see it clearly. The engine shows the way: 24.gxf7+ Qxf7 25.Qb6! A move that I didn't see 25...b3 26.Qxb3 Rab8 27.Qd3 Qb7 28.b3 Qb4 29.Qd2 should be winning as Black doesn't have enough play for the lost material.

**24...b3 25.a3 bxc2 26.Rxc2 Qb7?**

It was necessary to enter the endgame with 26...Qxc2 which is somewhat to White's advantage but it will take a lot of technique to win it: 27.Qxc2 Rxc2+ 28.Kxc2 Rc8+ 29.Kb3 *with a very small advantage.*

**27.Kb1 d5?!**

Of course, Black is running out of the time, so why not complicate the position.

**28.exd5 Qxd5 29.Rd2 Qc6 30.gxf7+ Kxf7 31.Qe2**

Finally I get to play the move that I've been dreaming about for many moves.

**31...Re8 32.Rc1 Qb7**

Black's life is very difficult here: 32...Qf6 33.Qxh5+ Kg8 34.Rg2 Qf7 35.Rg6 Ra6 36.Qg4 Rf6 37.Rg1 Rxc6 38.fxc6 Qf6 39.Rc1 Qf4 40.Rc8 Rxc8 41.Qxc8+ Qf8 42.Qxf8+ Kxf8

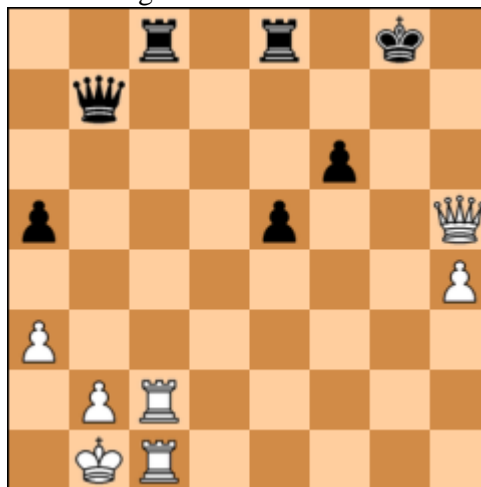
43.b4 is a winning endgame for White. Or 32...Qh6 33.Rd7+ Kg8 34.Rg1 Rad8 35.Rxd8 Rxd8 36.Qxe5 a4 37.Rg6 Qh7 38.Re6 Rf8 39.Re8 g5 40.Rxf8+ Kxf8 41.hxg5 should be winning

**33.Rdc2 Rac8**

33...Re7 34.Rg1 Rf8 35.Qc4+ Ke8 36.Rg6 Rff7 37.Rc6 Kf8 38.Rc8+ Re8 39.Rxe8+ Kxe8 40.Qe6+

**34.Qxh5+ Kg8 35.f6 gxf6**

35...Rcd8 36.Rg1



**36.Qg6+**

It's all over now, for example 36...Kh8 37.Rg1 Rg8 38.Rxc8 Qxc8 39.Qh6#

**1-0**

In the same round Ivanov drew Shmelov, so there was still hope as Denys had to play Steve Winer and I 'only' had to face young Miss Yip. My hopes were buoyed early on as Denys and Steve agreed to a draw and now I 'only' had to win to be a co-champ. After a tense struggle, win I did, and for the 4th time finished the New England Open as either champ or co-champ.





FM Chris Chase (2372)

FM Carissa Yip (2367)

77<sup>th</sup> New England Open (6)

09.04.2017

King's Indian Attack [A06]

1.Nf3

No Dragon today! Last time I played Carissa I allowed a Dragon and lost rather ignominiously.

1...Nf6 2.g3 g6 3.Bg2 Bg7 4.0-0 d5 5.d3 0-0  
6.Nbd2 c5 7.c3 Nc6 8.e4 e5 9.Re1 Re8 10.a4  
b6 11.exd5 Nxd5 12.Nc4



I was very happy here. White has a modest but still nagging plus and Black isn't very active.

12...Rb8?!

12...h6 seems better, preventing...

13.Ng5! Bb7

13...h6 Is a fantasy computer line: 14.Nxf7 Kxf7  
15.Qf3+ Ke6 16.Bxh6 (16.b4 Bb7 17.bxc5 bxc5  
18.d4 cxd4 19.Bh3+ Ke7 20.Ba3+ Ndb4  
21.cxd4 (21.cxb4) 21...Qxd4 (21...a5 22.Qg4  
Kf7 23.Bxb4 axb4 24.dxe5 Nxe5 25.Nxe5+  
Bxe5 26.Rad1) 22.Rad1) 16...Bxh6 17.Bh3+  
Ke7 18.Nxe5 Rf8 19.Nf7+ Ne3 20.Nxd8 Rxf3  
21.Nxc6+ Kf6 22.Nxb8 Bxh3 23.Rxe3 Bxe3  
24.fxe3 Rxe3 25.Nc6 Rxd3 26.Nxa7 Rd2 27.b4  
Rg2+ 28.Kh1 Rd2 29.bxc5 bxc5 30.a5 Bg2+  
31.Kg1 Bd5 32.Ra3 Rg2+ 33.Kf1 Rxh2 with a  
small edge for White.

14.Ne4 Bf8 15.Qf3

With ideas of a knight to d6 or even at some point occupying f6. But the amazing 15.Bg5!!

nearly wins on the spot 15...f6 (15...Be7  
16.Ned6 Bxg5 17.Bxd5 Re7 18.Qf3 e4 19.Rxe4  
Na5 20.Bxf7+ Kg7 21.Nxb7 +-) 16.Ne3! Nxe3  
17.Nxf6+ Qxf6 (necessary was 17...Kh8 18.Rxe3  
with a large advantage) 18.Bxf6 Nxd1 19.Bd5+  
Re6 20.Bxd5#

15...Be7 16.h4

Securing g5 and with h5-h6 in the air. Again  
16.Bg5 right away is interesting 16... Bxg5  
17.Ned6 Nf6 18.Nxb7 Rxb7 19.Qxc6 Rbe7  
20.h4 Re6 21.Qb5 Bh6 22.Bh3 R6e7 23.Qc6  
Kg7 24.a5 with a large plus for White.

16...Qc7

16...f5 17.Ned6 e4 18.Nxb7 exf3 19.Nxd8  
Rbxd8 20.Bxf3

17.Bg5 Rbd8 18.Bxe7

18.Ned6 is no good: 18...Bxd6 19.Qxd5 Na5  
20.Nxd6 Rxd6 and Black is better.

18...Rxe7 19.h5 19...Ba8 20.a5

A bit rash. 20.Qg4 f5 21.Qg5 Rg7 (21...fxe4  
22.dxe4 and Black's knight is trapped) 22.Nf6+  
Nxf6 23.Qxf6 with the advantage.

20...b5?

20...Nxa5 was best - my planned 21.Nxa5 bxa5  
22.c4 really doesn't work after 22...Nb4  
23.Nf6+ Kg7 24.h6+ Kh8 and White doesn't  
have enough for the damaged structure, and has  
to settle for equality after 22.Qe2 f5 23.Nd2

21.Ne3 Nxe3 22.Qxe3 Nxa5

Knights on the rim are grim, here clearly

23.Nf6+ Kg7



**24.Ng4?!**

Missing the very cute and winning 24.h6+ Kxf6 25.Bxa8 Re6 (25...Rxa8 26.Qf3+) 26.Bd5 and, if the rook moves, Black's king comes into trouble 26...Ree8 (26...Ke7 27.Bxe6 Kxe6 (27...fxe6 28.Qg5+ Kf7 29.Rxe5) 28.Rxa5 Qxa5 29.Qxe5+ Kd7 30.Qxc5) 27.Qf3+ Kg5 (27...Ke7 28.Rxa5 Qxa5 29.Rxe5+ Kd6 30.Qf6+ Re6 31.Rxe6+ Kc7 32.Re7+ Kb8 33.Qf4+) and cutest line is 28.Rxa5 Qxa5 29.Rxe5+! Rxe5 30.Qf4 Kh5 31.Qh4#

**24...Re6 25.Qh6+ Kg8**

Originally I thought Kh8 was necessary but, as Carissa pointed out after the game, 26.Bxa8 Rxa8 27.Rxe5 Rxe5 28.Nxe5 Qxe5 29.Rxa5 Kg8 30.Rxb5 a6 31.Rb6 which wins a pawn with a good plus. And then the computer pointed out: 25...Kh8 26.hxg6.fxg6 27.Bxa8 Rxa8 28.d4 cxd4 29.cxd4 Nb3 30.Rad1 with a big plus, bordering on winning.

**26.Bxa8 Rxa8 27.Rxe5**

Now if Rxe5 Nf6+ wins.

**27...Qd6**

27...Nb3 28.Rae1

**28.Rae1 Rxe5 29.Rxe5 f5**

After the game, Hal Terrie suggested that 29...Nb7 might hold but after 30. Rf5!! Black is still lost. 30. Rf5 is the threat and there seems to be no defense to it: 29...Rb8 30.Rf5 Rb6 31.Nf6+ Qxf6 32.Rxf6 Rxf6 33.Qg5 Rb6 34.h6 Nc6 35.Qxc5

**30.Rxf5 Rf8 31.hxg6! hxg6**

31...Rxf5 32.Qxh7+ Kf8 33.g7+ Ke8 (33...Ke7 34.g8Q+ Rf7 35.Qhxf7#) 34.Qxf5 Kd8 35.Nf6 Kc7 36.Ne8+ Kb6 37.Nxd6 Nc6 38.g8Q a6

**32.Rxf8+ Qxf8 33.Qxg6+ Kh8**

33...Qg7 34.Nf6+ Kh8 (34...Kf8 35.Qe8#) 35.Qh5+

**34.Nf6**

And there is no good way to stop mate.

**1-0**

The tournament was ably run by Frank Vogel and Benjamin Swiszczy of Seneca Chess. The hotel was nice enough, certainly a good location right on Rte. 128; the room was small but we got by. I'm not really sure why there are historically low prize funds for the N.E. Open. If the Portland (OR) CC can offer \$10,000 guaranteed (no based-on for them) and still make money, with fewer USCF members to draw from, we certainly should be able to do at least the same, if not better.

## Boylston Chess Club

<https://boylstonchess.org>

40 Norris St, Suite B101  
Cambridge, MA 02139

(617) 714-3022

G/60 4SS on Saturdays  
Slow chess every Thursday night

Many other events – FIDE Rated tournaments, Blitz, Camps and Clinics, Lectures, and more!

See website for full schedule and more details



## Boylston Club Championship Title Bouts

IM Alexander Katz

When I got invited to play in the BCC championship, I wasn't too sure what to expect. I'm not really used to the one-game-a-week model, and beyond that it was actually (perhaps surprisingly) my first serious round robin. Additionally, the field was a bit unusual in its spread: the top seed, IM Shmelov, was nearly 800 points higher rated than the lowest seed! Coming in, I didn't have any real expectations -- mostly, I just wanted to "survive" the tournament and avoid any major upsets.

For the first half of the tournament, results were roughly as expected. My main rivals, IM Shmelov and defending champion Carissa Yip, cruised through the bottom half of the table with relative ease. I, on the other hand, sort of limped along, having to rely on lots of help against NM Nithin Kavi and Zubin Baliga. But points are points! Yip and Shmelov would draw, and with Charles Riordan taking half a point off both me and Shmelov, my games against Yip and Shmelov would essentially decide things (those two having drawn each other mid-tournament).

The game against Yip was scheduled for round 2, but was played much later due to scheduling conflicts. This unintentionally made things much more interesting, as by then many of the key games had already been played. It was clear that I would need at least 1/2 and probably 1.5/2 against Yip and Shmelov to challenge for first, so playing for a win made sense here. While the game itself wasn't the greatest quality (particularly in time pressure towards the end), eventually I managed the win.

FM Carissa Yip (2353)  
IM Alexander Katz (2462)  
BCF Championship (2)

10.27.2017

French Defence – Tarrasch [C07]

1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5 3.Nd2 c5

This line is not so popular anymore, as White is considered to have some chances. But I think the resulting positions are good for playing for a win. I was in a fighting mood :)

3...Be7 is more popular due to flexibility.

4.exd5 Qxd5 5.Ngf3 cxd4 6.Bc4 Qd6 7.0-0 Nf6  
8.Nb3 Nc6 9.Nbxd4 Nxd4 10.Nxd4 a6 11.Re1  
Qc7

So far this is all very well established theory.

White has many choices here.

12.b3!?



A very unusual treatment of this line

12.Bb3 was the main line for some time, but eventually (probably with computer assistance) Black managed to neutralize this: 12...Bd6 13.Nf5 Bxh2+ 14.Kh1 0-0 15.Nxg7 Rd8 16.Qf3 Kxg7 17.Bh6+ Kg6 18.c3 Nh5 19.Bc1 Bf4 20.g4 Ng3+ 21.fxg3 Bxc1 22.Raxc1 b6 23.Bc2+ Kg7 24.Be4 Ra7 25.Rc2 Bb7 26.Rh2 Bxe4 27.Qxe4 Qb7 28.Rxh7+ Kg8 29.Qxb7 Rxb7 30.Rh2 is essentially all forced and leads to a drawn ending;

12.Bf1!? is an interesting try. It seems to be the most popular way to play for a win;



12.Qe2 is the other main line.

### 12...Bd7

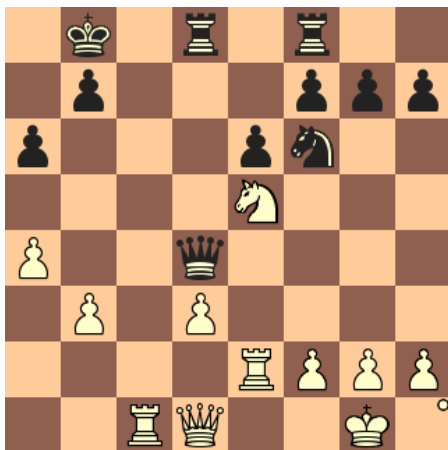
Black can actually get away with Bd6 here, with 12...Bd6 13.Nf5 Bxh2+ 14.Kh1 0-0 15.Nxg7 Be5! (due to b3 opening up the possibility of Be5 in the above long line), but looking to castle queenside is more ambitious.

### 13.Bb2 0-0-0 14.Nf3?!

Aiming for the e5 square, but this feels like a mistake.

14.Qe2 Bc5 15.Rad1 Rhe8 16.Nf3 would reach a similar position without allowing Black's response in the game.

### 14...Bb5 15.Bd3 Bb4 16.Re2 Bc3 17.Bxc3 Qxc3



Here I think Black should be quite happy. There is little risk of an attack forming and Black has a structural advantage.

### 18.Ne5 Rhf8 19.a4 Bxd3 20.cxd3 Kb8 21.Rc1 Qd4

Objectively this position should be fairly equal, but it is much easier for Black to play. The clear plan is to move the knight to d5, play f6 to evict the e5 knight, and play against the isolated pawn. On the other hand, it is not obvious how White should continue. As a result, the game went quietly for a bit.

### 22.Rc4 Qd6 23.Qa1 Nd5 24.a5 f6 25.Nf3 Nf4 26.Re3 g5

After just a few natural moves Black has a clear advantage. The e5 knight has been dislodged while the knight on f4 is beautiful, and the d3 pawn remains weak.

### 27.d4 h5 28.Qf1 h4 29.Nd2

For the last several moves, Black has just been marginally improving the position bit by bit, gaining space on the kingside. Now White finally stops this process and forces Black to demonstrate something concrete, or else the queenside will start to look unsafe. So some concrete measures are necessary to secure the advantage.

### 29...Qd5 30.Ne4 g4 31.Nc5 Rf7 32.Rb4 Ka7?!

The attack looks scary on its surface, but this is an overreaction. It was better to challenge the knight's new position immediately:

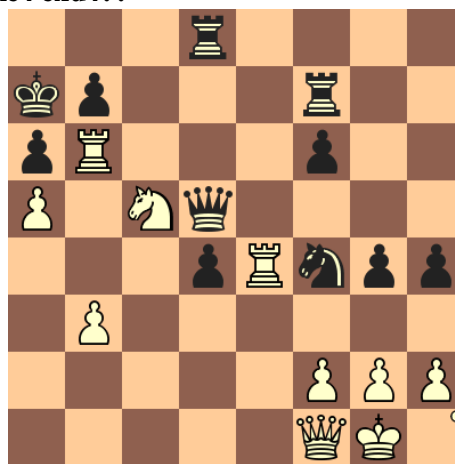
32...e5! and the threat to a6 is not significant.

33.Re4 (33.Nxa6+ Ka7 34.Rb5 Qxg2+ 35.Qxg2 Nxg2 36.Kxg2 Kxa6 should be winning fairly easily) 33...h3 34.g3 Nd3!! would be a beautiful way to finish the game

### 33.Rb6 e5

Still, this is quite good (and was my original plan starting from Qd5)

### 34.Re4 exd4??



This could (but maybe not should, considering the line) have spoiled everything.

34...Rc8 ends the attack and secures a probably winning advantage

### 35.Rxd4

Missing a huge opportunity that the computer of course spots instantly: 35.Nxb7! Only this sacrifice is the correct one 35...Rxb7 36.Qxa6+ Kb8 37.Rxf4 h3 38.Rxg4 d3, and 39.Rg7! was





the move we both missed. Otherwise White has at best a perpetual.

**35...Qxc5 36.Rxd8 Qxa5 37.Rbd6 Re7**

**38.Rd2?**

Up to here, the whole sequence after Rxd4 was essentially forced. But this square is problematic.

38.Rd1 Qc3 39.R8d2, bringing the other rook back, is an interesting option. White is still suffering a bit but can hold with Re1 coming.

**38...Qc3?**

Missing an opportunity to finish the game, though this move is strong too.

38...h3 39.g3 Ne2+! 40.Kh1 Qf5 41.f3 Qxf3+ 42.Qxf3 gxf3 I actually saw this position but wasn't sure if this would be winning. In fact it is, relatively easily.

**39.b4?**

Not finding a productive move, White decides to wait, but this is too much.

39.f3 g3 40.h3 was the last chance to stay in the game, though it remains a bit unpleasant. The computer says White is holding, but for humans Black can put pressure for quite a while yet.

**39...h3 40.g3 Qf3 41.R8d3 Nxd3 42.Rxd3 Re1**

A cute finish. Not the most accurate game, but certainly an exciting one!

**0-1**

This meant that I only needed a last round draw against IM Shmelov to take the title. Fortunately for me, since Chris Williams had dropped out mid-tournament causing a bit of havoc on the pairings, I would be White in this key matchup. This always leads to quite a bit of psychology, with both sides perfectly aware of who needs what result, which changes the game strategy somewhat.

**IM Alexander Katz (2462)**

**IM Denys Shmelov (2526)**

**BCF Championship (9)**

**11.09.2017**

**French Defence – Exchange [C01]**

**1.e4 e6**

Already a surprise. My previous games with Shmelov have begun 1... c6 (which I won) and 1... e5 (where I took a draw in a close-to-winning position to secure the match). This is, of course, a good choice for a must-win situation.

**2.d4 d5 3.exd5**

Normally I would never play this move. But under the circumstances I was well aware that Shmelov would play c5 at some point (otherwise there is not much to play for) so I was ok with playing this.

**3...exd5 4.Bd3 c5**

Of course Black will not play normal moves and take a 15-move draw.

**5.Qe2+?!**

This is already quite silly. I wasn't entirely sure how this opening is supposed to be played, just that it was a little dubious for Black.

5.dxc5 is more normal

**5...Be7 6.dxc5 Nf6 7.Nf3 0-0 8.0-0 Re8**

Something has already gone wrong for White as his development is quite tricky to complete.

**9.Bg5 h6 10.Bh4 g5!?**



The clear choice to play for a win. Otherwise White will consolidate and have a normal position.

10...Nc6 11.Qe3 - this move should not be allowed: 11...Bg4 12.Qf4 Be6 13.Nc3 Bxc5 14.Bxf6 Qxf6 15.Qxf6 gxf6 16.Rfe1 or something similar is likely, where White should be more than ok.

**11.Bg3 Bxc5 12.Qd1 Ne4?!**

I think this is too aggressive. A slower approach seemed to give a slight but solid advantage.

After 12...Nc6, it's quite hard to see how White completes his development.

**13.Nc3!**

This is very important. Normally this move is bad because it breaks up White's structure, but with Black already weakening his kingside the exchange is not dangerous.

13.c4 is another option, aiming for a slightly worse ending to hold: 13...Be6 14.cxd5 Bxd5 15.Bxe4 Bxe4 16.Nc3 Nc6 17.Nxe4 Rxe4, and Black has some edge but White should survive.

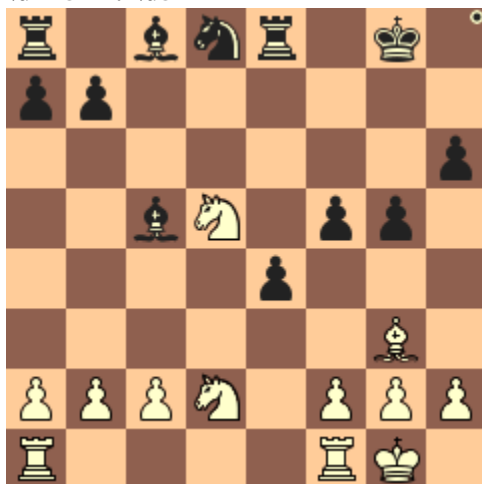
**13...Nc6?!**

Understandably Black tries to complete development. But this fails for tactical reasons.

**14.Bxe4 dxe4 15.Qxd8 Nxd8?**

Surprisingly now White is in the driver's seat.

15...Rxd8 16.Nxe4 Be7 would leave Black with a positional advantage. But White shouldn't have too much trouble.

**16.Nd2 f5 17.Nd5**

Suddenly there are too many threats to defend against.

**17...Kf7?**

Cracking under the pressure, but it goes unpunished. 17...f4 18.Nf6+ Kf7 19.Nxe8 Kxe8 20.Nxe4 Be7 21.Bxf4 gxf4, going for this endgame directly, was objectively the better choice, but White has good winning chances here.

**18.Nb3?**

Returning the favor.

In fact, White can take the greedy approach with 18.Nc7. The knight is not easy to collect: 18...f4 19.Nxa8 and there is no easy way to cover the c7 exit. 19...Bd6 (19...Re7 20.Rae1 fxg3 21.hxg3 e3 22.fxe3+ Kg7 23.Nf3) 20.Rad1 Bb8 21.Nxe4 **18...Be6 19.Nc7 Bxb3 20.axb3 Rc8 21.Nxe8 f4 22.Ra4?!**

Now things are more unclear.

22.Rxa7 fxg3 23.hxg3 Kxe8 24.Ra4 was a more accurate version of the same idea, but even here Black is surviving.

22.Bxf4 - again, simple is best - 22...gxf4 23.Ra4 Ne6 24.Rxe4 Rxe8 25.Rfe1 and White should retain some winning chances here.

**22...fxg3**

Here, with time dwindling and virtually no winning chances, Shmelov offered a draw. I considered playing on (since I couldn't see how I could ever lose this position), but accidents are always possible so I decided to secure the tournament.

1/2-1/2

With that, I finished with 8/9 ("giving up" draws to Shmelov and Riordan) which was enough to win the tournament over IM Shmelov's 7.5/9 (who additionally gave up a draw to Carissa). This was definitely a great tournament to participate in, and I'll be back next year to defend my title!



## On the Nature of Error

FM Steven Winer

### II. The Needless Blunder

*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.*

Chess is a game where the large number of options makes it easy to make a mistake. The likelihood of error varies greatly depending on the kind of position. That can be used to reduce the chance of making a game swinging mistake. An error is more likely when there are a large number of plausible choices. The other factor is that in some cases the difference between the best engine move and the second best move is not very big while in other situations the best move might win, but any other move leads to a bad position. Such a position is still winning so it is often correct to reach such positions. In some cases though if one is already winning it is a mistake to go into a line that requires finding a very specific winning sequence if one could pick a line where a wider range moves will be good enough to win.

One of the broadest examples of that is trading pieces while up material. Engines which have near perfect calculation tend not to suggest trading when ahead since in principle attacking with extra material is likely to be effective. However a move can still be open to question in a practical sense even if the move is not a mistake in an analytical sense. One has to be careful with aiming for a brilliant win if other good options are available. A good example of this is from Spassky-Polugaevsky USSR Championship 1961.



After 29... Rf6, White could win with the straightforward 30. e5! Rg6 31. Qh5 intending Rxc2 32. Qxh7+ Kf7 33. g8=Q mate or 31... Rxc7 32. Qxh7+. Instead White played 30. Rxc7 which does win but after Rxf3+ 31. Kxf3 (31 Qxf3? Bg5+) Qd3+ 32. Kf4 Bd6+ 33. Kg5 Kxh7 he missed the winning 34. Kf6! Qxd4+ 35. Kf7! - and instead the game continued 34. Kh5? Qb5+ and after further mistakes White even lost this game. Although White was still winning after Rxc7 the game became much more complex and the chance of a mistake correspondingly increased. After 30. e5 the play would have been much clearer and easier to play in a practical game.

A more local example occurred at the 2017 New England Open between GM Alexander Ivanov and IM Denys Shmelov.



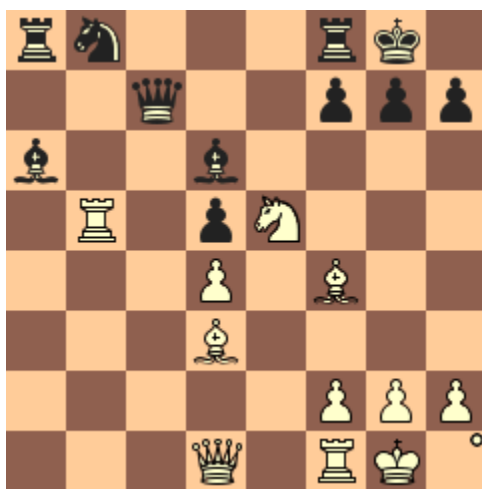


GM Ivanov initiated elaborate complications in a superior position and eventually was forced to take a draw by repetition due to lack of time. IM Shmelov dubbed the idea "perfectionism in chess." As he tells it,

"21. Qg3 allows White to convert his advantage without taking any conceivable risk. Instead, Ivanov unleashes 21. Bxd5, with the idea 21...b4 22. Ne4!? exd5 23. Rhg1!?"

"For those unfamiliar with chess - this is an equivalent of dousing the board with gasoline and setting it on fire while laughing maniacally.

"Ensuing complications ate up all Ivanov's time and he had to force a repetition with only seven seconds on the clock. After the game, to my puzzled inquiry as to why he didn't play 21. Qg3 he replied with an absolute clincher: 'Of course I saw 21. Qg3. But 21. Bxd5 is BETTER!'"



GM Anand had a famous victory over Karpov that involved an extremely complicated sacrifice (Bxh7+ in the position above) partly chosen because of Karpov's lack of time. But in the example from the New England Open, it was GM Ivanov, the instigator, who had limited time when deciding to undertake complications. Time is a factor one must consider, and the decision of whether or not to engage in a complex sacrifice had a significant swing towards settling who won the tournament.

This idea has often been summarized by the quote, "Not to do combinations for their own sake" meaning to only engage in combinations when other moves would not work. Attempting to engage in complex tactical operations can easily lead to blunders. Tactics are still an indispensable part of chess, but one can limit blunders by thinking about whether one needs to enter a tactical variation at all. When training it can be useful to do exercises that are not tactical to help develop that mode of decision making. Although it is certainly desirable to develop tactical ability by solving discrete tactical puzzles, it can lead to the problem of always looking for a tactical solution in any type of position. As the old saying goes, "When all you have is a hammer everything looks like a nail."

In a related point, on a theoretical level the idea of trading when one has a substantial material advantage is largely based on the idea of removing complexity and by extension tactics from the position. A grandmaster could give rook odds to a much lower rated player and have chances to win because there is still a lot of play in the starting position minus one rook. In a situation where the same players played out king and rook vs king then things are different even though the extra rook difference is the same. In king and rook vs king the winning side only has to worry about loss of the rook or stalemate both of which are not hard to avoid when only having to worry about one piece on the other side. Conversely, in a more complicated situation the best move may win, but another plausible move might lead to an equal game or even lose in some cases.

Control of the board can also have an effect in how easy it is to make a mistake. In the opening 1. d4 d5 2. c4 Nf6?! 3. cxd5 Nxd5 4. Nf3 e6?! 5. e4 Nb6, Black is already likely to wind up quite constrained by the white center pawns. While the white player can certainly drop a piece in various ways e.g. Ba6 or Bh6 white is less likely to get into trouble from missing a black tactic because the limited mobility of the black forces make it unlikely that





a good tactical possibility will present itself. Although it is not practical to count up the exact number of moves the other side has, it is valuable to have a general impression of the activity level of the pieces on the board and to monitor changes in that over time. Noticing that the other side is becoming more active can help one start looking for tactical potential in the position ahead of time rather than being surprised by an unexpected resource. Also if one notices one own pieces have achieved great activity that can be a clue to look for tactics for one's own side.

A related concept is the idea of harmony in a position. John Nunn has discussed the acronym LPDO meaning loose pieces drop off (c.f. *Secrets of Practical Chess*). The number of totally unguarded pieces in a position is usually not very high. Therefore, it is actually practical to monitor all unguarded pieces on the board at a given moment. By consciously looking at where the unguarded pieces are and how likely they are to be in danger – even an unguarded rook deep in one's own position could be a problem, as we see in the trap 1. d4 d5 2. c4 dxc4 3. e3 b5?! 4. a4 c6? 5. axb5 cxb5? 6. Qf3!, winning material based on the loose rook on a8. One can more often realize that one has pieces that are in some danger while there is still time to do something about it. Danger can come in many forms and it is hard to account for everything. Many tactics though are based on dangers that are reasonably foreseeable in the position and monitoring for loose pieces is one of the best ways to reduce blunders based on dangers that were largely foreseeable.

In conclusion, most tactical blunders are not based on lightning from a clear sky, but are based on factors that can be noticed in the position. If one enters a highly complex tactical line like the Spassky-Polugaevsky discussed earlier in this article it should be apparent that the chance of blundering in such a complex position is quite high. After all, if former World Champion Boris Spassky can blunder in such a position clearly the rest of us are even more

likely to do so. One should therefore consider if there is a simpler path to the goal. Additionally one should learn to monitor for signs of danger such as unguarded pieces to reduce the frequency that one is surprised by tactical ideas based on vulnerable pieces. By taking these steps to avoid needless blunders, we can convert what would be dubious defeats into nice, clean, easy wins.



**1402 Beacon St., Brookline, MA**

(617) 487-5259

Open 3:00 PM – 11:00 Mon-Thurs.

3:00 PM – 2:00 AM Fri,

11:00 AM – 2:00 AM Sat

11:00 AM – 11:00 PM Sun

**1159 Broadway, Somerville, MA**

(617) 718-0211

Open 3:00 PM – 11:00 PM Mon-Fri

11:00 AM – 11:00 PM Sat & Sun.

[www.knightmovescafe.com](http://www.knightmovescafe.com)



## Hidden Depths

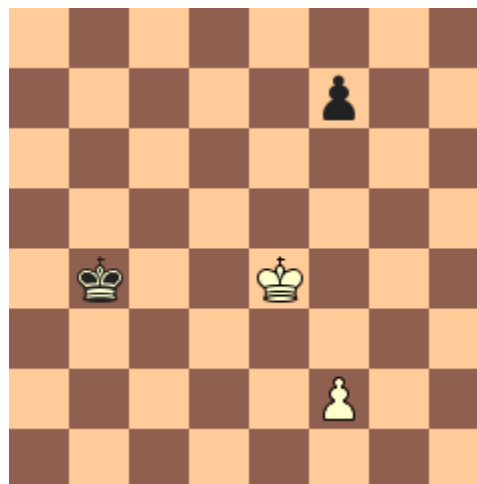
FM Jacob Chudnovsky

*In FM Chudnovsky's ongoing series, he explores the intricacies and complexities of seemingly simple positions, showcasing the subtle beauties of chess.*

Hello again. It's time for a new installment of "Hidden Depths." In the last two issues, we focused on heavy pieces and minor pieces. Now the time has come to discuss pawn endgames. Deceptively simple on the surface but devilishly complex in reality, these are the most tactical of all endgames. Computers nowadays can calculate many pawn endgames all the way through to a conclusion (a clear win or draw), but we, with our inferior carbon-based brains, must rely on a combination of calculation, understanding, and intuition. Pawn endgames provide ample opportunities for beautiful combinations and feelings of elation and glory, but perhaps even more ample opportunities for frustrating oversights, dropped points, and feelings of pain and disappointment. So pour yourself a strong drink, do some yoga breathing, and let's get started. I won't lie to you – this one's going to hurt.

For the first position, we will make a temporary departure from the Hidden Depths tradition and examine a game between two grandmasters. There are two reasons for this: (1) this game provides a great example for learning some finesses of king movement in K+p endgames, and (2) we will feel better about our own chess skills by observing much stronger players making mistakes.

**GM Vladimir Malakhov**  
**GM Evgeniy Najer**  
**Moscow**  
**2007**



This is almost as simple as a position can get. With only a king and pawn for each player, it is white to move and (try to) win.

### 61. Ke5?

White, a 2700+ rated GM, plays the most logical move in the position... and throws away the win. How can such a strong player stumble in such a sparse position? Why is this a mistake? What's going on here?

Before going further, let's summarize both sides' plans. White's winning plan is simple: win black's pawn without losing his own, then promote the pawn. Black, meanwhile, can achieve a draw in one of two ways: (A) maneuver his king behind White's king and reciprocate White winning Black's pawn with collecting White's pawn; (B) move his king in front of White's king, give up the pawn, but achieve a drawn position where Black has the opposition. These two methods require moving the king in opposite directions. Thus, Black's task is to zigzag his king in such a way as to keep both options open until it's clear which one can draw.

Let's see how this plays out in the game.

### 61... Kc5!

This move maintains flexibility. 61... Kc4, committing to method (A), would lose: 62. f4! (not 62. Kf6? Kd4 63. f4 (Kxf7) Ke4 =) Kd3 (62... Kc5 is a move too late: 63. f5! (not 63. Kf6? Kd5 =) Kc6(c4) 64. Kf6 +-) 63. f5! Ke3 64. f6! (not 64. Kf6?? Ke4 =) Kd3(f3) 65. Kd6, and white collects the f7 pawn and promotes.

### 62. f3!?



The best try in the situation. 62. f4 (again, not 62. Kf6?? Kd5 63. f4 (Kxf7) Ke4 =) Kc6 draws in a straightforward way: (a) 63. Kf6 Kd5 64. f5 (Kxf7) Ke4 =; (b) 63. f5 Kd7 64. Kf6 Ke8 65. Kg7 Ke7, and White even has to be careful not to lose by way of 66. f6+?? Ke6 -+; of course, 66. Kg8 Kf6 (Black can stumble at the finish line too: 66... Ke8?? 67. f6 +-, or 66... f6?? 67. Kg7 +-) 67. Kf8 draws. No heroics are required from Black to draw in this line, but notice how 62... Kc6 prepares both 63... Kd5 and 63... Kd7, depending on White's move.

### 62... Kc6

Of course not 63... Kc4?? 64. f4 +-, transposing to the line given after 61... Kc5.

### 63. f4

More challenging than 63. Kf6? Kd5 =, but not quite enough to win.

### 63... Kd7

Black can no longer stay in limbo and must commit to a defensive plan. He correctly picks method (B), as 63... Kc5?? 64. f5 would lose as discussed in the line after 61... Kc5.

### 64. Kf6 Ke8 65. Kg7 f5!

The key to saving the game. Trying to hang on to the pawn by 65... Ke7? would lose after 66. f5 f6 (66... Ke8 67. f6 +-) 67. Kg6 +-. Black's pawn falls, and White's cannot be stopped from queening. After the game move, White also wins Black's pawn, but there is a key difference...

### 66. Kf6 Kf8 67. Kxf5 Kf7

...and that difference is that Black has achieved the opposition, and the game is drawn.

The actual game was drawn by agreement after White's 66th move.

Now let's go back to the starting position. How could White have played better? The correct move was:

61. Kd4!!

Anyone out there still think pawn endgames are simple? And on an unrelated note, why in the world is White moving his king away from Black's pawn? Take a minute to think about it... The correct answer to the second question is: He isn't. You see, chess geometry does not obey the same laws as regular geometry. From either e4 or d4, it would take the white king two moves to

get to f6. With 61. Kd4, he is getting neither closer to nor further away from Black's pawn. What he is doing, however, is cutting off Black's king from approaching the pawns. If it were White to move (again) here, he would play 62. f4, and unlike in the game after 61. Ke5 Kc5 62. f3 Kc6 63. f4, the analysis line 61. Ke5 Kc5 f4 discussed above, or the try 61. f4 (not discussed above, but drawn in much the way after 61... Kc5 62. f5 Kd6 =, 62. Kf5 Kd5 =, or 62. Ke5 Kc6 as above), Black can't reply by moving his king to the c-file. After e.g. 62... Kb5 63. Kd5! Kb6 64. Kd6, Black is not in time to either win White's pawn or gain the opposition: 64... Kb7 65. Ke7 f5 66. Ke6 Kc7 67. Kxf5 Kd7 68. Kg6 +-.

However, as it is Black to move, and White has spent his first move neither advancing his own pawn nor encroaching on Black's, can Black use the tempo to maneuver his king into a defensive position?

61... Kb5

61... Kb3? fails after various replies, even the simple 62. Ke5 Kc4 63. f4, transposing to a winning line discussed earlier.

62. Kd5!

White's king is still not getting closer to Black's pawn, but he is continuing to cut off the Black king. 62. Ke5? Kc5 (62... Kc6 draws too) or 62. f3(f4) Kc6 63. Ke5 would transpose to the main line or one of the analysis lines above from the actual game, and throw away the win. Here again, White threatens 63. f4, subsequently collecting Black's f-pawn without allowing the Black king to approach and achieve opposition. Black has to try to stop this plan.

62... Kb6 63. Kd6

Again, 63. Ke5? Kc5(c6) would spoil everything. But now White's king has crept within one move of attacking Black's pawn, while keeping his adversary fenced off from the action.

63... Kb7 64. f4

At this point, multiple moves win for White, including the straightforward 64. Ke7 Kc6 (64... f5 65. f4 and 66. Ke6 +-) 65. f4 (not 65. Kxf7?? Kd5 and 66... Ke4 =) Kd5 66. f5, the silly 64.



f3, and the entirely unnecessary 64. Kd7. The hard work is done, and White only has to take Black's pawn without blundering into a drawing trick.

64... Kc8 65. Ke7

Also winning is 65. f5 Kd8 66. f6 Ke8 67. Kc7 +-.

65... f5 66. Ke6 +-.

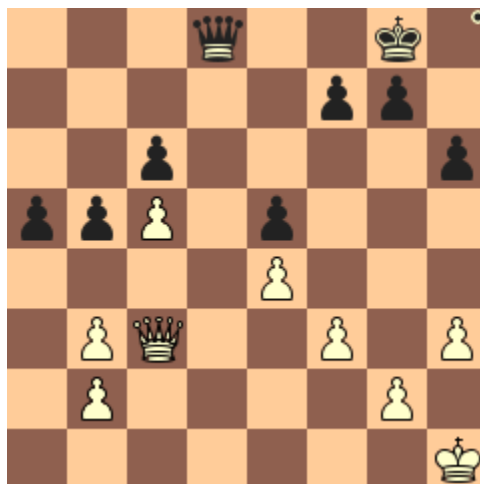
The key to finding the winning plan was seeing two things: (1) There is no hurry to take Black's pawn; it's not going anywhere and cannot be saved. (2) Winning the pawn does not mean winning the game, if Black can achieve one of the two drawing plans discussed above.

For Black to be able to draw here, his king has to be within sight of the f-file, so as to pursue White's pawn or go for the opposition, depending on circumstances. Thus, White could have won the game by preventing Black's king from getting closer to the f-file and then gradually moving to win Black's pawn. Not an easy or intuitive concept, to be sure, but one that can perhaps be learned by studying positions such as these.

Of course, there is also brute-force calculation. It takes the engine about a second to see that 61. Kd4 wins, while 61. Ke5 draws. That heartless monster.

Now let's examine a game more typical of this column. This is one of my own games – not one of which I'm proud, but one which I hope can help others learn (from my mistakes). In the immortal words of Alice Cooper, welcome to my nightmare.

**Jacob Chudnovsky**  
**Allan Bennett**  
**Massachusetts Open**  
**1997**



**26... Qd4?**

Black has a minimal advantage due to his superior pawn structure, and here he decides to clarify the situation via a queen trade. During the game, I judged this decision to be a mistake and the resulting endgame to be winning for white. Here is why:

Black's d-pawn, although passed, will be essentially isolated (the c-pawn is cut off). Additionally, after playing f3-f4 in the near future (...g7-g5 by Black, to prevent this, can be met by g2-g3), White will create a wall that prevents Black's king from getting to the 5th rank. Thus, White should be able to win a pawn. As it turned out, the position was far more complicated than this, and additional factors I did not consider came to play a role. Nonetheless, my evaluation of the endgame holds up. The execution, on the other hand...

**27. Qxd4 exd4 28. Kg1 Kf8 29. Kf2**

29. Kf1 would have been equivalent, and 29. f4 Ke7 30. Kf2 Ke6 31. Ke2 would have transposed. This series of moves is essentially forced.

**29... Ke7 30. Ke2 Ke6 31. f4**

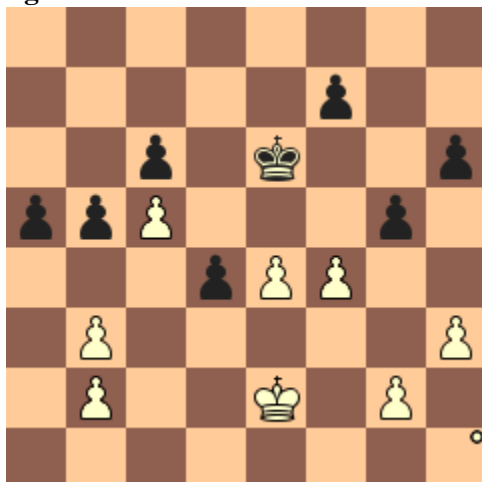
This is where the adventures start. First, 31. Kd3 was not appealing due to 31... Ke5 32. g3 g5. Second, this is as far as I had calculated before playing 27. Qxd4, thinking that I was simply winning at this point, with 32. Kd3 and 33. Kxd4 coming next. However, white's e4 pawn is not as stable as it might look, and the c5 pawn is vulnerable as well. White does get close to a winning advantage with best play from both





sides, as we will see. We will also see that the actual play from both sides was as far from “best” as Boston from Timbuktu. Here comes the pain.

**31... g5??**



This should have been the losing move. I hope everyone sees why, and if not, we will get to it shortly. Before we do, however, let’s look at how the game should have played out. The thing is, 31... g5 was actually played with the right idea in mind, although implemented incorrectly. The right move was:

**31... f5!**

Black challenges White’s e-pawn, in order to pry open the d5 square and win the c5 pawn.

**32. Kd3**

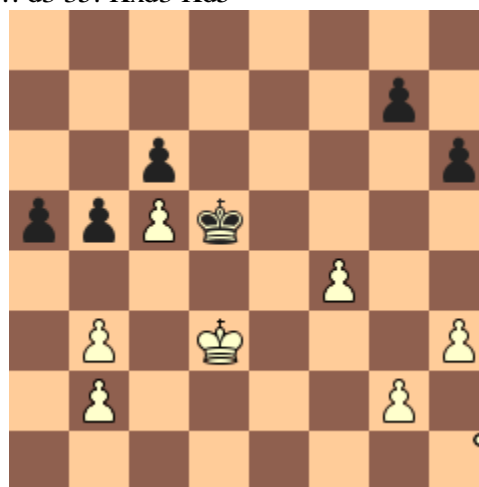
32. exf5+ Kxf5 33. Kf3 Ke6 34. Ke4 d3 transposes to the main line. 32. e5? (based on the general principle that protected passed pawns are extremely strong in pawn endgames) loses beautifully: 32... Kd5 33. Kd3 Kxc5 34. Kd2 (34. e6 Kd6 35. Kxd4 c5+ -+) Kd5 35. Kd3 c5 36. Kd2 c4 37. bxc4+ (37. Kc2 cxb3+ 38. Kxb3 a4+ 39. Kb4 Ke6! -+ (zugzwang!)), or 39. Kc2 b4 and 40... a3, promoting the a- or d-pawn) bxc4 38. Kc2 a4 39. Kd2 (39. Kc1 c3 40. bxc3 d3 -+; marking time by moving kingside pawns will fail quickly, as Black has an infinite number of extra tempi due to being able to shuffle the king between d5 and e6) c3+! 40. bxc3 a3!, and one of Black’s pawns will promote.

**32... fxe4+ 33. Kxe4**

In a practical game, 33. Kxd4 would actually be slightly preferred, as it offers Black the chance

to go astray: 33... Kf5? 34. Ke3 h5 35. g4+! hxd4 36. hxd4+ Kxd4 37. Kxe4, and after White collects all of Black’s queenside pawns and promotes the c-pawn, while Black takes the f-pawn and queens the g-pawn, White will end up with a winning queen endgame, ahead by two pawns. Feel free to work out the variations on your own. However, after the correct 33... e3! 34. Kxe3 Kd5, this variation is equivalent to the main line.

**34... d3 35. Kxd3 Kd5**



The key position for evaluating the entire pawn endgame. White is temporarily up a pawn, but Black is about to take the weak c5 pawn. With majorities on opposite sides, a pawn race must ensue. As it turns out, White’s doubled pawns are surprisingly useful for stopping Black’s queenside majority, and White’s kingside majority moves forward faster, ultimately leading to a winning queen endgame.

**36. g4 Kxc5**

Trying to be fancy with 36... b4 is a bad idea.

After 37. f5 Kxc5 38. Ke4, it’s evident that Black has immobilized his own queenside majority, and White is going to win in a routine manner by advancing his kingside pawns and making a passed pawn: 39. h4, 40. g5, etc.

**37. Ke4**

Black had to give up his king’s optimal d5 outpost to take the c5 pawn, and White’s king has now occupied the superior position and eyes both sides of the board. White threatens to invade with the king by Ke4-f5-g6xg7, as well



as to make a passed pawn as fast as possible, starting with 38. g5!

37... a4!?

The best try. The passive defense 37... Kd6 will be defeated without excitement after 38. Kf5 Ke7 39. Ke5, due to the white king's vastly better placement. The straightforward 37... Kb4 turns out to be too slow: 38. g5! (as we will see, it is crucial to aim to queen with check; after 38. f5? Kxb3 39. h4 Kxb2 40. g5, White queens first but can only muster a draw: 40... hxg5 41. hxg5 a4 42. f6 gxf6 43. gxf6 a3 44. f7 a2 45. f8=Q a1=Q 46. Qg7+ Ka2 47. Qa7+ Kb1 48. Qg1+=) hxg5 (38... Kxb3? 39. gxh6 gxh6 40. f5 +-) 39. fxg5 Kxb3 40. h4 Kxb2 41. h5 a4 42. h6 gxh6 (42... a3 also loses after 43. hxg7 a2 44. g8=Q a1=Q 45. Qg7+) 43. gxh6 a3 44. h7 a2 45. h8=Q+! The key point: white queens with check and wins. In pawn races, it's important to calculate not just how many moves it will take to promote, but what options exist for promoting on different files, and what file could allow for promotion with check. This nuance often makes the difference between a win and a draw.

38. bxa4 bxa4 39. Kf5

39. g5 works here too, although Black can fall back to defend with 39... Kd6. I leave analysis of the resulting variations to the readers. The lines are a little too computer-esque for my taste but may offer interesting food for thought.

39... Kb4 40. Kg6 Kb3 41. Kxg7 Kxb2 42. f5 a3 43. f6 a2 44. f7 a1=Q 45. f8=Q.

And here we have the position that would have been reached after optimal play from both sides. Although material is equal, White has a large advantage in the queen endgame. The h6 pawn is about to fall, and the c6 pawn is somewhat irrelevant. Play might continue 45... Qa7+ 46. Kxh6 Qe3+ 47. Kg7 Qxh3 48. g5. White will try to avoid perpetual check and gradually move the pawn forward. However, the game is far from over, and Black can keep fighting for a long time.

And now let's leave this nice fantasy and go back to the ugliness of the actual game. As a reminder, instead of playing 31... f5, Black just blundered with 31... g5.

### 32. g3??

Twenty years later, this still makes me cringe.

To win, White only had to accept the gift he was just given: an outside passed pawn. After the correct 32. fxg5 hxg5 33. g3, with h3-h4 to follow, Black can simply resign.

How did I miss this simple exchange, based on one of the most basic concepts in pawn endings? I have no excuses, and while I may have been in time pressure, a move like 32. fxg5 should only take seconds to see. The most likely explanation I have is a psychological one. My plan for the endgame was so focused on maintaining the e4-f4 pawn tandem and keeping away the black king that I defended the attacked f-pawn automatically, without pausing to evaluate other options. One cannot overstate the importance of maintaining flexibility of thought at every move of a chess game. Unanticipated opportunities knock on everyone's doors, but only open-minded players are able to let them in.

**32... gxf4 33. gxf4 f5! 34. Kd3 fxe4+ 35. Kxe4 d3 36. Kxd3 Kd5**

After a mutual exchange of blunders and then a series of correct moves, we have arrived at a position much like the one in the analysis diagram, but without the g-pawns. With the g-pawns gone, so is White's advantage. Although the f-pawn is now passed, it is also isolated and in need of protection. Additionally, the absence of the g-pawn deprives White of certain options. Although Black can no longer engage in a direct pawn race as in the analysis above, he has new options available to him.

With accurate play from both sides, the game should now end in a draw, for example as follows: 37. Ke3 Kxc5 38. Ke4 Kd6! (unlike in the analysis above, 38... a4? (38... Kb4? 39. f5 +-) 39. bxa4 bxa4 40. Ke5 loses, as White's f-pawn is too fast; in contrast, 38... Kd6, which was only a way to lose passively in the analysis, is now good enough to draw) 39. Kf5 c5! (Note that this move was not available to Black in the analysis with the g-pawns present: In the analysis diagram above, after 36. g4 Kxc5 37. Ke4 Kd6 38. Kf5 c5, White wins after 39. Kg6 Ke7 (39... c4 is better but only leads to a lost

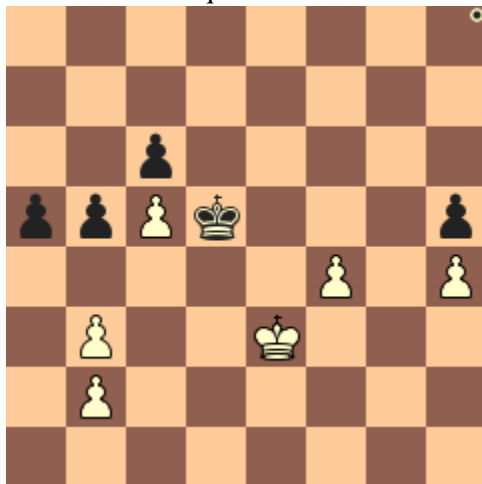


queen endgame in the end) 40. Kxg7 Ke6 41. f5+.) Now after 40. Kg6 Ke7! White has nothing better than repetition: 41. Kf5 Kd6 42. Kg6 Ke7 43. Kg7 Ke6 44. Kg6 Ke7. Without the g-pawn available to help, White cannot make progress in promoting the f-pawn, and if he avoids the repetition and takes Black's h-pawn, Black will carry out a pawn break on the queenside and win. For full disclosure, the computer does find a tricky path for White to reach a better queen endgame, starting with 40. Kf6! instead of 40. Kg6. However, even in that line, which we will not delve into here, White only attains an academic advantage that does not look convertible to a win.

As you may have guessed by now, "accurate play from both sides" is absolutely not what happened in the actual game.

### 37. h4 h5 38. Ke3

Also a reasonable sequence of moves...



### 38... b4??

...until this new blunder by Black...

### 39. Kd3??

...which White again reciprocates. What happened just now?

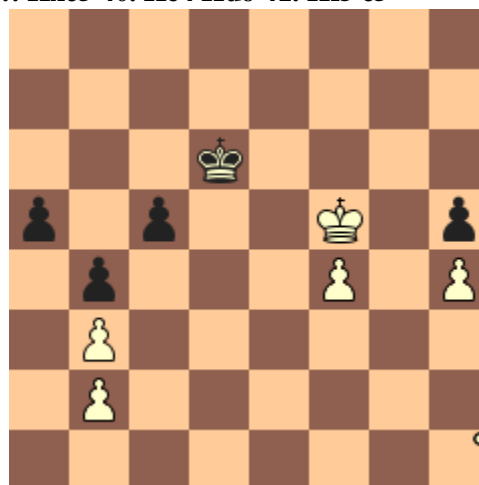
The correct move for Black after 38. Ke3 was 38... Kxc5 =, just like in the line given above. Trying to gain a tempo for advancing his queenside pawns by inserting 38... b4 should have led to Black's loss. Do you see how? Rather than continuing along the path of giving up the c-pawn and trying to promote the f-pawn, White was suddenly given the opportunity to accomplish the opposite. With this in mind, as

well as the realization that 38... b4 has deprived Black of any spare pawn moves to use to avoid zugzwang, White's winning move should be obvious: 39. f5!

Now if 39... Ke5, White wins via 40. f6! Kxf6 41. Kf4, gaining the opposition and forcing Black to give up the c- or h-pawn. 39... Kxc5 is more tenacious but also loses by force: 40. Kf4 Kd6 41. Kg5 Ke7 42. Kg6 Kf8 43. Kf6 c5 44. Ke6!, and after 44... c4 (44... a4 45. bxa4 c4 46. a5 is equivalent; 44... Ke8 45. f6 Kf8 46. f7, and Black must play 46... c4 or 46... a4 anyway) 45. bxc4 a4 46. c5, Black will promote first, but White will promote with check – again, the importance of this nuance! – and quickly give checkmate.

Unfortunately, just like earlier in the game, I failed to notice this unexpected opportunity and continued down the path I was on. After this, White not only has no more winning chances but is actually worse.

### 39... Kxc5 40. Ke4 Kd6 41. Kf5 c5



### 42. Kg6??

And now comes my final, losing blunder, borne of a continued lack of flexibility of thinking coupled with poor calculation. Although deprived of all winning chances, White could have still achieved a draw. The key was to put the king in reverse and back up: 42. Ke4! Even after 42. Ke4, White will have to walk a narrow tightrope to avoid losing. After 42... Ke6, White's problem is this: if he moves the king to the queenside to take Black's pawns, Black's king will be much faster taking White's



kingside pawns, and Black will promote first; if he keeps the king on the kingside, Black will break through on the queenside with the pawn majority. Here is an example of how White could lose this game: 43. Kd3? Kf5 44. Kc4 Kxf4 45. Kxc5 Kg4 46. Kb5 (note how Black's earlier 38...b4 has actually come in useful: it now takes the White king significantly longer to collect Black's pawns than if that pawn had still been on b5) Kxh4 47. Kxa5 Kg4 48. Kxb4 h4 - +.

Therefore, White has to keep the king on the kingside and allow the queenside breakthrough. In order to avoid losing, he will then have to perform some precise acrobatics (if I may mix my circus-related metaphors). Thus, 43. Ke3! Kf5 44. Kf3 c4 (not 44... a4?? 45. bxa4 c4 46. Ke3 +-) 45. bxc4 a4 46. c5 Ke6 (46... a3 47. bxa3 bxa3 48. c6 Ke6 49. f5+! – two pawns located two files apart split the defending king's attention: a technique everyone should know – Kd6 50. f6 a2 51. f7 =), and now 47. Ke4! (not 47. c6?? Kd6 48. f5 Kxc6 49. f6 Kd6, and Black's king catches both pawns) a3 48. bxa3 bxa3 49. f5+ Kd7 (a mirror image variation occurs after 49... Ke7 50. c6 a2 51. f6+! Kxf6 52. c7 a1=Q 53. c8=Q =) 50. f6 a2 51. c6+! Kxc6 52. f7 a1=Q 53. f8=Q. Black can now win the h-pawn but has absolutely no winning chances in this queen endgame.

Every move that White had to make in the drawing line was exact; any change in the sequence of pawn moves, for instance, would have led to a loss. The draw could be achieved by a combination of positional understanding – realizing that White has to retreat the king, keep him on the kingside, allow the queenside breakthrough, and split the black king's defense using the c- and f-pawns – and precise calculation. Both are required for accurate play in pawn endgames.

#### 42... a4!

Only now did it dawn on me what I had done. It's the same issue I have emphasized multiple times: what matters is not only how many moves it takes to promote, but whether the promotion comes with check. The problem is, after 43.

bxa4 c4 44. f5 c3 45. bxc3 (45. f6 cxb2 -+) b3! 46. f6 b2 47. f7 b1=Q+ Black promotes with check, which means White doesn't get to promote at all.

#### 43. f5

Trying to weasel my way out of the loss, but it doesn't work.

#### 43... a3 44. bxa3 bxa3 45. f6 a2 46. f7 Ke7!

And it turns that after 47. Kg7 a1=Q+, Black queens with check anyway. Therefore, white resigned.

#### 0-1

I hope this installment has provided some useful general principles for how to play – and how not to play – K+p endings. Keep the following ideas in mind:

King placement is crucial in these endings. A centralized king can more quickly access either side of the board. Keeping the opponent's king out of key squares may be as important as occupying them with one's own king.

Opposition is a key technique that can be used as either a winning or drawing mechanism, depending on the situation. Look for opportunities to gain the opposition.

When calculating pawn breaks and pawn races, keep in mind not only how many moves each side needs in order to promote, but which files can be used for promotion, and whether either side can promote with check.

Keep an open mind and look for unexpected opportunities that arise due to the opponent's mistakes.

And the most important general principle of all: don't rely on general principles. Always consider the specific situation at hand and calculate concrete variations.

Until next time, best wishes, good luck, and may the force(d wins) be with you.





## Running Wild and Free

Nathan Smolensky

For the longest time, I fancied myself a positional chess player. I idolized Ulf Andersson (still do) and his subtle masterpieces, daydreamt of grinding out 120-move wins through positional nuance.

In practice, though, positional play is a pain, an arduous exercise in patience and precision, punishing brutally any careless blunder or lapse in reason. Though I remained committed to my quiet style, I found myself frustrated with too many games in which I worked hard only to throw things away, that patience I so desperately needed beginning to wear thin.

At the same time, tournament chess in general was becoming less and less of a viable reality. Work and other obligations dominated my days and drained my energies, and participation in a serious tournament, let alone the daily practice that real improvement would require, was simply not possible. Already losing patience, I was finding myself suddenly without time at all.

So when I found myself with one point out of four to open the Mass Open blitz tournament, I let out a long sigh. It was clear, as much as I loved and admired quiet play, that it was not a good fit for me, that I was in no position to try to become the patient, methodical player I aspired to be, least of all in a blitz tournament. So I did what I had to do. In the best way possible, I went nuts.

**Nathan Smolensky (1938)**

**Michael Carey (2157)**

**Massachusetts Open Blitz (5)**

**05.28.2017**

**Zukertort, Dutch, Lisitsyn Gambit [A04]**

**1.Nf3 f5 2.e4**

I've enjoyed this gambit line quite a bit in casual play. While enterprising, it's not actually the

sharpest gambit, except in a few odd lines, and my results with it were solid. In tournament settings, though, I would tend to opt for something quieter and calmer, like 2.c4. Not this time.

**2...fxe4 3.Ng5 e5**

3...Nf6 is the usual move here. This is fine but a bit more committal. 4.Nxe4 is interesting but probably dubious from a practical level, since the development Black finds after 4...d5! is a lot to handle in a blitz game, and completely ruins the fun of the gambiteering opening.

**4.d3 e3**

4...exd3 5.Bxd3, most often after the more common 3...Nf6, is one of the main conceits of this opening line. White gets some very serious tactical threats in exchange for the pawn, and a healthy dose of development. There's also a quaint little trap – I've had more than one game online go 1.Nf3 f4 2.e4 fxe4 3.Ng5 Nf6 4.d3 exd3 5.Bxd3 h6 6.Bg6#!

All that said, e3 is not a typical way to decline, and I hadn't recalled seeing it before this game. I was expecting 4...Nf6, which transposed into one of the main lines of the opening (the other, sharper main line was 1.Nf3 f4 2.e4 fxe4 3.Ng5 Nf6 4.d3 d5, which was no longer possible to arrive at).

**5.Bxe3 Nc6**

This move feels fairly natural, taking a firmer hold of the d4 square while continuing Black's normal development. Unfortunately, it does nothing to address potential tactical complications on the kingside, which meant that I might have an opportunity to have a little fun if I played my cards right.

I began to think about the opening, about the light-squared havoc that White can wreak if Black accepts the pawn sacrifice. The choice became clear and tempting, and I spent close to a minute contemplating the fallout.

A younger me might have run from the chaos, might have avoided the complications and just tried to develop. No more.



6.d4!?



Caution had now firmly met the wind. I knew I wanted the light-squared bishop on d3, and I was willing to pay a piece for the privilege if I had to.

6...exd4 7.Bd3 dxe3?

In retrospect, I was quite fortunate to have my opponent play this move. The normal developing 7...Nf6! goes a long way towards quelling the attack, while leaving Black solidly up a pawn. Continuing to offer the sacrifice, which I probably would have done with something like 8.Nxh7?!, seems rather dubious. Of course, this is blitz, it looks like a free piece, and I could easily make a mistake in my attack. Plus, thankfully, I'm not the only one who likes to have a little fun.

8.Qh5+ g6 9.Bxg6+ hxg6??

While I didn't consider 7...Nf6, I was expecting 9...Ke7 here. I didn't mind it – the position is decidedly awkward to play for Black, with the king obstructing bishop, queen, and knight while White's development finishes cleanly – but the game line is much too clean a win to allow.

10.Qxg6+ Ke7 11.Qf7+ Kd6 12.Ne4+ Ke5 13.f4+

This is the key move, forcing Black's king into the fire. It doesn't always work out in these positions that such a move exists, or that it works so neatly, but Caissa was clearly on my side on this day, rewarding me for my enterprising spirit.

13...Kxe4

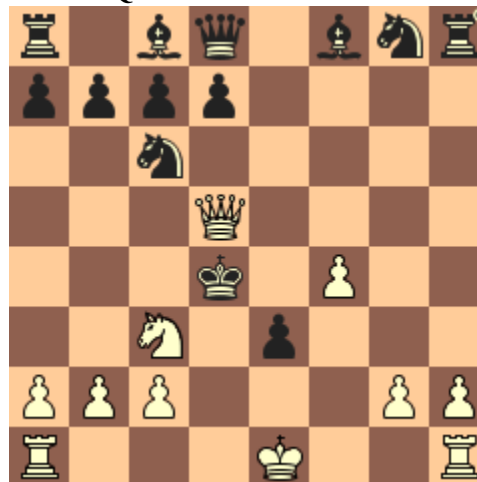
Black can delay the inevitable with 13...Kd4, but after 14.Nbc3 the king has nowhere to go, and it's just a series of spite checks before the misery ends.

14.Nc3+

With my third piece sacrifice out of the way, I developed once more with tempo. By this point, I was getting Opera Game vibes, seeing before my eyes the kind of sleek tactical execution that looked lifted from a textbook, that I never thought was actually possible in a practical game. It was freeing, invigorating to see it all come together so perfectly.

I thought the most poetic might be to castle long next, completing my development while eight black pieces stand idly by watching their king burn. But what followed might be even better.

14...Kd4 15.Qd5#



1-0

I felt alive. Credit to Mr. Carey for being magnanimous and complimentary in defeat, and of course for letting me have my fun.

I finished the tournament 5.5/6 against superior competition. Was I suddenly that much better a player? Not really, but I was a more liberated one. That day, my passion for chess was rekindled, and I never looked back.



## Kings of the Commonwealth

### *Meet the Massachusetts GMs*

In 2017, an astonishing nine Grandmasters have called Massachusetts their home. Only one, *Chess Horizons* stalwart Alexander Ivanov, has been consistently active in Massachusetts tournaments. The rest have been busy playing abroad, busy teaching, or simply in retirement. As we rarely see these figures on the Commonwealth stage, it is worth taking this opportunity to explore the characters and some of their notable games.

### The Mainstays



**Alexander Ivanov**

**Town: Newton**

**b. 1956**

**GM Since 1991**

The most active Grandmaster in the state actually arrived in the US without a title, lacking the international opportunities in his Soviet playing days that he needed to earn norms. That changed quickly, though, with Ivanov securing an IM title in his year of immigration (1988) and the GM title only three years later. Since then, he has been a force to be reckoned with in Massachusetts chess, a winner of too many local tournaments to count. Even his Mass Open titles record is somewhat disputed, made murky by shared championships and old tournament logs. But it is, by all accounts, over twenty.

The following example game is from a New England championship, where Ivanov unleashed an unsavory (but actually quite savory) demolition of a fellow Massachusetts titan:

Alexander Ivanov  
John Curdo  
New England Open  
09.03.1990  
Ruy Lopez [C72]

1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bb5 a6 4.Ba4 d6 5.0-0 Bg4  
6.h3 Bd7 7.d4 exd4 8.Nxd4 Nge7 9.c4 Ng6  
10.Nf5 Nh4 11.Re1 Nxf5 12.exf5+ Ne7 13.Bc2  
Bc6 14.Qh5 Qd7 15.f6 gxf6 16.Bf5 Qd8



17.Be6 Ng6 18.Bd7+ Kxd7 19.Qf5#

1-0



**Larry Christiansen**

**Town: Cambridge**

**b. 1956**

**GM Since 1977**

Christiansen, a three-time U.S. Champion who has called Cambridge home since the mid-90's, can be found most often these days teaching, giving simuls at Boston's South Station, or doing game commentary for international events. But his presence in Massachusetts' tournament scene remains strong, with ardent disciples of his books, *Rocking the Ramparts* and *Storming the Barricades*, among the highest rungs of local players.

## CHESS HORIZONS



## Holidays 2017

Known primarily for his tactical prowess and attacking brilliancies, Christiansen's achievements make it difficult to choose a single game to highlight. He has bested numerous top GMs, numbering among his wins a triumph over Anatoly Karpov in 13 moves (!) when the latter was FIDE World Champion. So instead, I've chosen a game to highlight that is not a win at all, but nonetheless a devious swindle and a rare and coveted chess achievement – the desperado:

**Alexander Beliavsky**

**Larry Christiansen**

**Reggio Emilia**

**12.28.1987**

**Queen's Pawn Game [E00]**

1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e6 3.g3 Bb4+ 4.Bd2 Qe7 5.Bg2 Bxd2+ 6.Qxd2 d6 7.Nc3 0-0 8.Nf3 e5 9.0-0 Re8 10.e4 Bg4 11.d5 Bxf3 12.Bxf3 Nbd7 13.b4 a5 14.a3 Ra6 15.Nb5 Nb6 16.Rac1 axb4 17.axb4 Qd7 18.Qd3 Ra4 19.Qb3 Rea8 20.Rfd1 h5 21.h4 g6 22.Rb1 Ng4 23.Be2 Qe7 24.Rbc1 c6 25.dxc6 bxc6 26.c5 dxc5 27.bxc5 Nd7 28.Nd6 Ndf6 29.Bc4 Nxf2 30.Kxf2 Ra3 31.Bxf7+ Kg7 32.Qe6 Ra2+ 33.Kg1 R8a3 34.Ne8+ Kh6 35.Nxf6



35... Rxc3+ 36.Kh1 Qxf7 37.Rd7 Qxf6 38.Qxf6 Rh2+

1/2-1/2



**Eugene Perelshteyn**

**Town: Swampscott**

**b. 1980**

**GM Since 2006**

Infamously the greatest third board in the history of the U.S. Amateur Team tournament, GM Perelshteyn inherited a love for the game of chess from his father, FIDE Master and prolific chess teacher Mikhail Perelshteyn.

Though the younger Perelshteyn now works as an engineer, he has found some time to play, even making recent appearances at the Boylston Chess Club. But perhaps his biggest contribution to Massachusetts chess has been his penchant to make grandmaster friends, at least two of which, as we will soon see, he has helped attract to the commonwealth.

The following sample game showcases Perelshteyn's patience and technical fortitude as he converts an unusual material imbalance into a win at the U.S. Championship:

**Eugene Perelshteyn**

**Tatev Abrahamyan**

**US Championship**

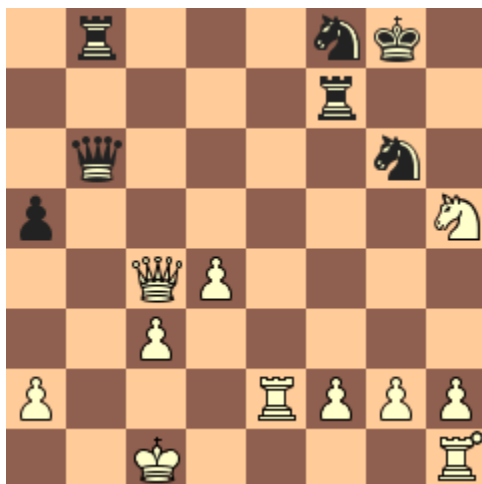
**03.02.2006**

**French Defence, Winawer [C16]**

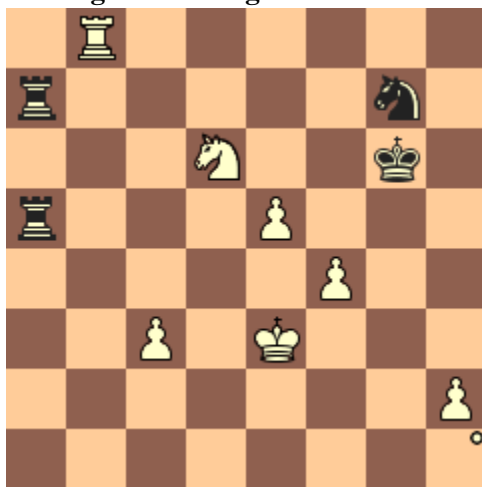
1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5 3.Nc3 Bb4 4.e5 Ne7 5.Bd2 b6 6.Nb5 Bxd2+ 7.Qxd2 Ba6 8.Qc3 Bxb5 9.Bxb5+ c6 10.Bd3 Nd7 11.Qd2 c5 12.c3 0-0 13.Nf3 f6 14.exf6 Rxf6 15.0-0-0 c4 16.Bc2 b5 17.Rde1 a5 18.Bxh7+ Kxh7 19.Ng5+ Kg8 20.Nxe6 Qb6 21.Nxg7 Ng6 22.Nh5 Rf7 23.Qg5 Ndf8 24.Re2 b4 25.Qxd5 Rd8 26.Qxc4 bxc3 27.bxc3 Rb8



## The Newcomers



28.Kc2 Qb2+ 29.Kd3 Qb7 30.f3 Rc8 31.Qb3 Qa6+ 32.Kd2 a4 33.Qd5 Rb8 34.Rhe1 Rb5 35.Qc4 Qb7 36.Nf6+ Kh8 37.Ne4 Nf4 38.Rf2 Rb2+ 39.Ke3 Nxe2+ 40.Rxe2 Rxe2 41.Qxa4 Qd5 42.Qe8 Rxa2 43.Rg1 Ra8 44.Qe5+ Qxe5 45.dxe5 Ra5 46.f4 Ne6 47.Nf6 Rg7 48.Rb1 Rga7 49.Rg1 Rg7 50.Rb1 Rga7 51.Rb8+ Kg7 52.Ne8+ Kg6 53.Nd6 Ng7



54.Ke4 Ra4+ 55.c4 Ra1 56.f5+ Nxf5 57.Nxf5 Re1+ 58.Ne3 Ra3 59.Rg8+ Kf7 60.Rg3 Ke6 61.Rg6+ Ke7 62.Rg3 Ke6 63.Kd4 Rh1 64.Rg6+ Kf7 65.Rf6+ Ke8 66.Nd5 Rd1+ 67.Kc5 Ra5+ 68.Kc6 Ra6+ 69.Nb6 Re1 70.Kb5 Ra2 71.e6 Rxh2 72.Kc5 Rc1 73.Rg6 Rh8 74.Kd5

1-0



**Leonid Kritz**  
**Town: Swampscott**  
**b. 1984**  
**GM Since 2003**

Leonid Kritz moved to Massachusetts in early 2017 with his wife, whom we'll get to shortly. Though he has yet to play in any state tournaments, he has been quick to establish himself as a teacher, running large classes in Newton even while he works by day as a financial analyst in downtown Boston. The following illustrative game sees Kritz in maneuvering his way through a wild ending, and bears a rather atypical final position:

**Arkadi Ereemeevich Vul**

**Leonid Kritz**

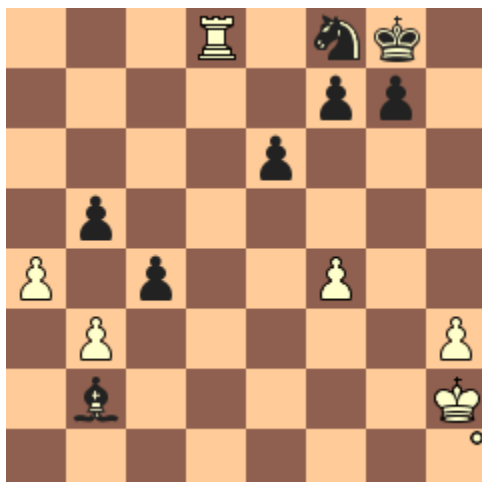
**Gibraltar Chess Festival Gibraltar (7)**

**01.28.2008**

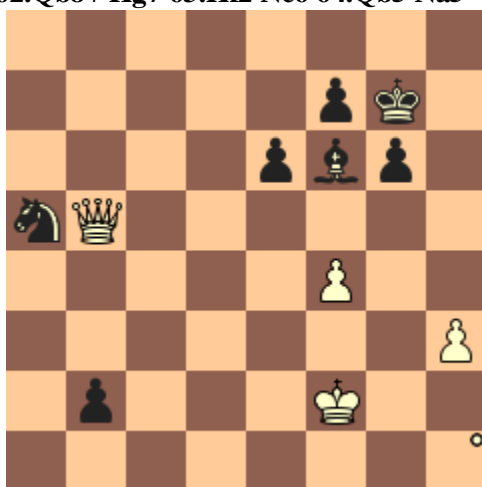
**Hedgehog [A30]**

1.Nf3 c5 2.c4 b6 3.g3 Bb7 4.Bg2 Nf6 5.Nc3 e6 6.0-0 Be7 7.d4 cxd4 8.Qxd4 d6 9.Rd1 a6 10.b3 Nbd7 11.e4 Qc8 12.Bb2 0-0 13.Rac1 Rd8 14.Qe3 Qc7 15.Nd4 Re8 16.h3 Bf8 17.g4 h6 18.Qe2 Ne5 19.Qd2 Rad8 20.g5 hxg5 21.Qxg5 Ng6 22.Nde2 Be7 23.Qg3 Qb8 24.Nf4 Ne5 25.Nd3 Nh5 26.Qe3 Nd7 27.Qe2 Nhf6 28.f4 Nh7 29.Kh1 Qa8 30.Rg1 Bf8 31.Kh2 Qb8 32.Bf3 Nc5 33.Nxc5 dxc5 34.e5 Bxf3 35.Qxf3 Rd2+ 36.Rg2 Red8 37.Ne4 Rxe2+ 38.Qxe2 Rd7 39.Rg1 Qd8 40.Qg4 Rd3 41.Qe2 Rd7 42.Qg4 b5 43.Nd6 Qa5 44.Rg2 Qe1 45.Rg1 Qd2+ 46.Rg2 Qd3 47.Qe2 Qxe2 48.Rxe2 Bxd6 49.Rd2 Bxe5 50.Rxd7 Bxb2 51.Rd8+ Nf8 52.cxb5 axb5 53.a4 c4





54.a5 Bf6 55.a6 Bxd8 56.a7 cxb3 57.a8=Q b2  
58.Qa2 Bf6 59.Qb3 Ng6 60.Kg3 Ne7 61.Qxb5  
g6 62.Qb8+ Kg7 63.Kf2 Nc6 64.Qb5 Na5



0-1



**Nadezhda Kosintseva**  
Town: Swampscott  
b. 1985  
GM Since 2011

Nadya Kosintseva moved to Massachusetts in early 2017 along with her husband Leonid Kritz and their daughter, becoming the first women's

player in Massachusetts history to hold an international (non women-specific) title. Like her husband, Kosintseva has been more focused on teaching chess of late than playing. Though it is not clear when she might return to the board, her list of accomplishments is already spectacular.

At one point the #2 ranked woman in the world, she won the Russian Women's championship in 2008, shared first at the Biel Chess Festival with six other grandmasters in 2010, and played top board for Russia for two gold-medal Chess Olympiad teams, in 2010 and 2012.

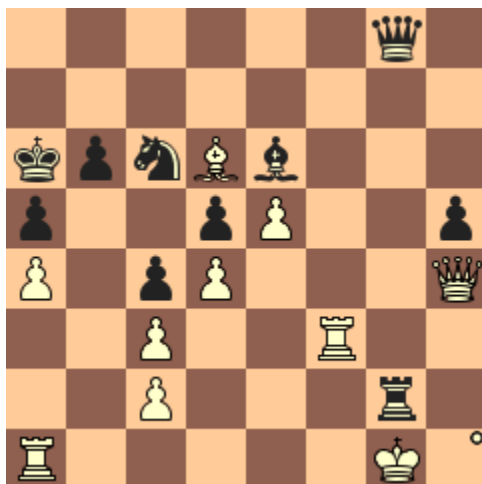
The second board on those teams? Her younger sister and fellow Grandmaster Tatiana, whose own chess career has been inextricably linked to Nadya's. While they two aren't exactly heated rivals, they did have at least one high stakes encounter on the international stage, in 2012's FIDE Women's World Championship, a knockout event:

**Tatiana Kosintseva**

**Nadezhda Kosintseva**

**FIDE Women's World Championship (3)**  
**11.19.2012**

1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5 3.Nc3 Bb4 4.e5 c5 5.a3 Bxc3+  
6.bxc3 Qc7 7.Nf3 b6 8.Bb5+ Bd7 9.Bd3 Ba4  
10.h4 Ne7 11.h5 h6 12.Rh4 c4 13.Be2 Nbc6  
14.Rg4 Rg8 15.Nh4 0-0-0 16.Be3 Kb7 17.Qd2  
Nf5 18.Nxf5 exf5 19.Rh4 Ne7 20.f4 Bd7 21.a4  
a5 22.Bf3 Be6 23.Qe2 Ka7 24.Rh1 Qd7 25.Kf2  
Rb8 26.Rhb1 g5 27.hxg6 fxg6 28.Rh1 h5  
29.Bc1 Rgc8 30.Ba3 Ng8 31.Rhb1 Ne7 32.Kg1  
Rg8 33.Rb5 Nc8 34.Rab1 Ka6 35.Ra1 Na7  
36.Rbb1 Rg7 37.Qe1 g5 38.fxg5 Rxg5 39.Bc5  
Nc6 40.Qc1 f4 41.Bd6 Rb7 42.Qxf4 Qg7  
43.Qf6 Qg8 44.Rf1 Rbg7 45.Rf2 Rf5 46.Qh4  
Rxf3 47.Rxf3 Rxg2+



48.Kh1 Rxc2 49.Rg3 Qh7 50.Rf1 Bf5 51.Kg1 Bd3 52.Rf8 Rc1+ 53.Kh2 Be4 54.Rg1 Rc2+ 55.Rf2 Rxc3 56.Qf6 Qd7 57.Rg3 Rxc3 58.Kxc3 Qg4+ 59.Kh2 Nxd4 60.Bc5 Ne6 61.Be3 d4 62.Bh6 h4 63.Bf4 Qd1 64.Qxh4 Qh1+ 65.Kg3 Qg1+ 66.Kh3 Bf5+

0-1

You can learn more about Nadya in her *Chess Horizons* interview, on page 6 of this issue.



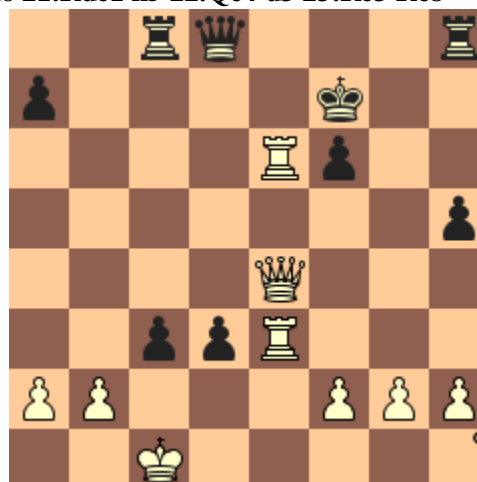
**Darwin Yang**  
**Town: Cambridge**  
**b. 1996**  
**GM Since 2016**

Darwin Yang was lured to the state of Massachusetts, as many are each year, by our fine institutions, of which Yang chose the best known for his studies, beginning his studies at Harvard in 2016. The college life has put a dent in Yang's major tournament activity, but he has made occasional appearances locally, and even ran a camp this past summer at the Boylston Chess Club. Though not the youngest Grandmaster in the state, Yang still has his future well ahead of him, and what he chooses to

do with both the play and promotion of the game in the coming years, and if this state might be fortunate enough to keep him around, will be exciting to see.

**Darwin Yang**  
**Benjamin Finegold**  
**Spice Cup - Group B (3)**  
**10.30.2010**  
**Semi-Slav [D45]**

1.d4 d5 2.c4 c6 3.Nc3 Nf6 4.e3 e6 5.Nf3 Nbd7 6.Qc2 Bd6 7.e4 Nxe4 8.Nxe4 dxe4 9.Qxe4 Nf6 10.Qh4 c5 11.Bg5 cxd4 12.0-0-0 e5 13.Bd3 Be6 14.Rhe1 b5 15.Nxe5 Bxe5 16.Rxe5 bxc4 17.Bf5 c3 18.Bxe6 fxe6 19.Rxe6+ Kf7 20.Bxf6 gxf6 21.Rde1 h5 22.Qe4 d3 23.Re3 Rc8



24.Re7+ Kf8 25.bxc3 Qd6 26.Re8+ Kf7 27.Rxc8

1-0



**Samuel Sevian**  
**Town: Holden**  
**b. 2000**  
**GM Since 2014**

This wunderkind's presence in Massachusetts has been rather quiet – he's lived here since

## CHess HORIZONS



Holidays 2017

2013 – and, to be frank, somewhat trivial: the youngster played his first tournament in Massachusetts just this year, in May’s Eastern Class Championships (it is worth noting that he did represent the Boston Blitz in previous years in the online U.S. Chess League, playing matches for them at the team’s Cambridge playing site).

Nonetheless, he calls the commonwealth home, and by doing so becomes Massachusetts’ top-rated player. At one point the youngest Grandmaster in the world, Sevia’s accomplishments continue to grow as he approaches his 18<sup>th</sup> birthday and the next chapter of his life and chess career. The following gem may not be his biggest win, but it might be one of his prettiest:

**Valentina Gunina**

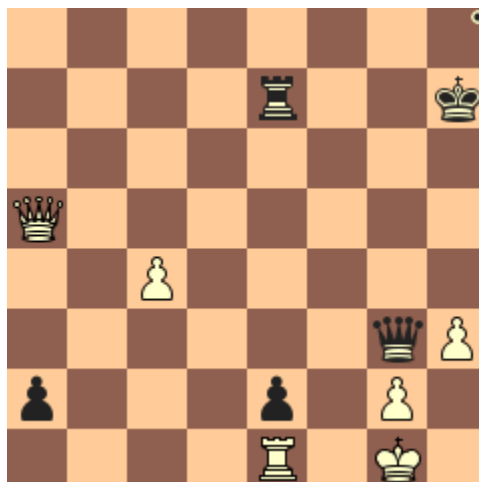
**Samuel Sevia**

**Tata Steel Group (5)**

**01.15.2015**

**Ruy Lopez [C79]**

1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bb5 a6 4.Ba4 Nf6 5.d3 b5  
6.Bb3 Bc5 7.0-0 0-0 8.c3 d6 9.h3 h6 10.Re1  
Bb6 11.Nbd2 Be6 12.Bc2 Re8 13.Nf1 d5  
14.exd5 Bxd5 15.Ng3 Bc5 16.Be3 Bd6 17.Nd2  
Qd7 18.Nde4 Nh7 19.Qh5 Be6 20.Nxd6 cxd6  
21.f4 f5 22.Bb3 Bxb3 23.axb3 Rf8 24.Rf1 g5  
25.fxcg5 f4 26.Ne4 Nxcg5 27.Qg6+ Qg7 28.Qxd6  
fxe3 29.Nxcg5 Qxcg5 30.Qxc6 e2 31.Rf3 e4  
32.Qe6+ Kg7 33.Qxe4 Rxf3 34.Qxf3 Re8  
35.Re1 Qd2 36.Qg3+ Kh7 37.Qf2 Kg8 38.d4  
Qxb2 39.Qg3+ Kf7 40.Qf4+ Kg7 41.Qc7+ Kf8  
42.Qc5+ Re7 43.d5 Qd2 44.Qf2+ Ke8 45.c4  
bxc4 46.bxc4 a5 47.Qg3 a4 48.Kh2 Qe3  
49.Qg6+ Kd8 50.Qd6+ Ke8 51.Qc6+ Kf7  
52.d6 Qf4+ 53.Kg1 Qe4 54.d7 Qd4+ 55.Kh1  
Qxd7 56.Qxh6 Qf5 57.Kh2 a3 58.Qd2 Qe5+  
59.Kh1 Qe3 60.Qd5+ Kg7 61.Qf5 Qg3 62.Qa5  
a2 63.Kg1 Kh6 64.Qb6+ Kh7 65.Qa5



**Qxe1+ 66.Qxe1 a1=Q 67.Qxa1 e1=Q+  
68.Qxe1 Rxe1+ 69.Kf2 Rc1**

**0-1**

## The Old School



**Roman Dzindzichashvili**

**Town: Hull**

**b. 1944**

**GM Since 1977**

The longest-named Grandmaster in the state retired from competitive play some years ago, and now lives quietly on the South Shore. Dzindzi (pronounced ‘jin-jee’), as he is affectionately called, is a titan of both Georgian and attacking chess, well known for a video series released primarily in the 1990’s. His tactics are the stuff of legend, as can be seen in the following game of his against a countryman. Give it a try yourself when you get to the diagrammed position (you may need to use a hand to cover up the answer)!



**Roman Dzindzichashvili**

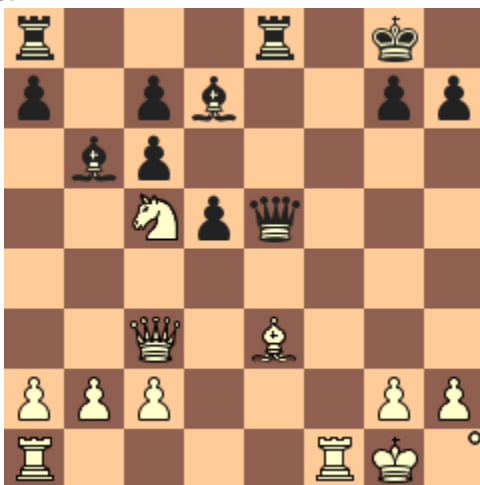
**Kalandazichvili**

**Georgia**

**1967**

**Scotch Gambit [C45]**

1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bc4 Nf6 4.d4 exd4 5.e5 d5  
6.Bb5 Ne4 7.Nxd4 Bc5 8.0-0 Bd7 9.Bxc6 bxc6  
10.Be3 0-0 11.Nd2 Nxd2 12.Qxd2 Qe7 13.Nb3  
Bb6 14.Qc3 f6 15.f4 fxe5 16.fxe5 Rfe8 17.Nc5  
Qxe5



**18.Rf8+!**

**1-0**



**Arthur Bisguier**

**Town: Framingham**

**1929-2017**

**GM Title Awarded 1957**

Lastly, we would be remiss if we did not mention the late Arthur Bisguier, who passed away this April. Like the other members of this list – Californians Christiansen and Sevian, the Texan Yang, and Soviet-born Ivanov, Dzindzi, Kritz, Kosintseva, and Perelshteyn – he was not originally from the state (he came up in New

York city), but he came to call it his home for decades, becoming a fixture at the nearby MetroWest Chess Club.

His quiet demeanor as an octogenarian belied a brash, sharp legend of American chess, one of the top players in the country throughout the late 50's and 60's. Here he is teaching a lesson to a young up-and-comer from the New York scene:

**Arthur Bisguier**

**Robert James Fischer**

**Third Rosenwald Trophy (1)**

**10.07.1956**

1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 g6 3.Nc3 Bg7 4.e4 d6 5.f4 0-0  
6.Nf3 c5 7.Be2 cxd4 8.Nxd4 Nc6 9.Nc2 Bd7  
10.0-0 Rc8 11.Be3 Na5 12.b3 a6 13.e5 dxe5  
14.fxe5 Ne8 15.Nd5 Rc6 16.Nd4 Rc8 17.Nc2  
Rc6 18.Ncb4 Re6 19.Bg4 Rxe5 20.Bb6 Qc8  
21.Bxd7 Qxd7 22.Bxa5 e6 23.Nd3 Rh5  
24.N3f4 Rf5 25.Bb4 exd5 26.Bxf8 Bxa1  
27.Qxa1 Kxf8 28.Qh8+ Ke7 29.Re1+ Kd8  
30.Nxd5 Qc6 31.Qf8 Qd7 32.Rd1 Rf6



**33.Qxe8+**

**1-0**



### Solutions (Problems on p. 5)

1. **1...Rxb3+!! 2. cxb3 (2.Bxb3) Qa3+!  
3.Kxa3 Bc1#**
2. **1.Rxf8+!! Rxf8 2.Qxg7+ Kxg7  
3.Rg4+ Kh8 4.Bf6+! Rxf6 5.Rg8#**
3. **1.Rxe7+!! Nxe7 (1...Kxe7 2.Qb7#)  
2.Qxf6+! Rxf6 (2...Kxf6 3.Rf8#)  
3.Ng5#**
4. **1...Ne2+! 2.Kg2 Rh2+ 3.Kf1 Ng3+  
4.fxg3 Rh1+!**
5. **1.Qg8!!**
6. **1...Bxd3!! 2.Qxd3 Rxa3!**
7. **1...Nf5+!! 2.exf5 Rxe3+! 3.Bxe3  
(3.Kh4 Be2!-) Ne4+! 4.Bxe4  
Qxf4!! 5.Kxf4 (5.Bxf4 Be1#)  
Bc7#**
8. **1.Bg7+! Kxg7 2.Qh6+! Kxh6  
3.Rh4+ Kg5 4.f4+! Kxh4 5.g3+  
Kxh3 6.Rh1#**
9. **1.Re8+!! Rxe8 2.Qxh7+! Kxh7  
(2...Nxh7 3.Ng6#) 3.Rh3+ Nh5  
4.Rxh5#**

## Kids' Spring Chess Classes!

Classes Taught by Chess Masters  
Lou Mercuri and Vadim Martirosov

Summer and School Year Programs  
for Beginner, Intermediate and  
Experienced Players

### Spring and Summer Classes Now Enrolling

Sign up and learn more at  
<http://www.metrowestschool.com/chess.html>



### RSM-MetroWest

5 Auburn Street • Framingham, MA 01701  
(508) 283-1355 • [info@metrowestschool.com](mailto:info@metrowestschool.com)





## Places to Play

*This is a partial overview of active clubs in and around Massachusetts. Most time controls listed feature five second delay. Registration may end as early as 15 minutes prior to event start. For full details and club calendars, please visit club site or [www.masschess.org](http://www.masschess.org). To add a listing for your club in future issues, please contact [info@masschess.org](mailto:info@masschess.org).*

**MetroWest Chess Club** – Natick Community Center, 117 E. Central St.

(Rt. 135) Natick, MA

Regular Events Tuesdays, 6:00 P.M. – 10:00 P.M., G/60 (1 rd / wk)

[www.MetroWestChess.org](http://www.MetroWestChess.org)

(781) 790 - 1033

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

Regular Events:

Thursdays, 7:00 P.M. – 10:30 P.M., 40/90 SD/20 (1 rd / wk)

Saturdays, 10:00 A.M. – 7:00 P.M., G/60

[www.BoylstonChess.org](http://www.BoylstonChess.org)[boylstonchess@gmail.com](mailto:boylstonchess@gmail.com)**Waltham Chess Club** – 404 Wyman St., Waltham, MA

Regular Events Fridays, 7:00 P.M. – 12:00 A.M., Various Controls:

G/5, G/10, G/20, G/30

[www.WalthamChessClub.org](http://www.WalthamChessClub.org)

(781) 790 - 1033

**Wachusett Chess Club** – C159, McKay Campus School,

Fitchburg State Univ., Fitchburg, MA

Regular Events Wednesdays, 7:00 P.M. – 11:00 P.M., G/100 (1 rd / wk)

[www.WachusettChess.org](http://www.WachusettChess.org)

(978) 345 - 5011

**Southeast Mass Chess Club** – 16 E. Bacon St., Plainville, MA

Regular Events Wednesdays, 7:30 P.M. – 11:30 P.M., 40/90, SD/20 (1 rd / wk)

[www.southeastmasschess.org](http://www.southeastmasschess.org)

(508) 339 - 6850

**Billerica Chess Club** – 25 Concord Rd., Billerica, MA

Regular Events Fridays, 7:30 P.M. – 11:00 P.M., G/90 (1 rd / wk)

For further information, contact [arthur978@comcast.net](mailto:arthur978@comcast.net)**Chess Master Connections** – 201 Wayland Sq., Providence, RI

Regular Events Sundays, 10:00 A.M. – 3:30 P.M., G/30

[www.ChessMasterConnections.org](http://www.ChessMasterConnections.org)

(401) 497 - 8366

**Andover Chess Club** – 360 South Main St., Andover, MA

Casual Events Fridays, 7:00 P.M.

For further information, contact [andoverchessclub@gmail.com](mailto:andoverchessclub@gmail.com)

Massachusetts Chess Association  
c/o Robert D. Messenger  
4 Hamlett Dr. Apt. 12  
Nashua, NH 03062

Address Service Requested

## **Join the MACA Chess for Early Educators Initiative!**

A revolutionary new way to get chess in the schools! All the tools to enable K-3 teachers to bring chess into the curriculum!

- Guides and links for chess supplies
- Multimedia support forum
- Specially designed teachers' guide

Learn more today at  
[masschess.org/ChessforEarlyEducators](http://masschess.org/ChessforEarlyEducators)



### **Chess Horizons**

Holidays 2017

Time-Dated Material

Please Expedite!