

Chess Horizons



14th annual **OPEN at FOXWOODS**

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Open Section: April 8-12, 2020

Under 2200 through Under 1400: April 8-12 or 9-12, 2020

Under 1200, Under 900 Sections: April 10-12, 2020

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14th annual Open at Foxwoods

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Under 1200, Under 900 Sections, Apr 10-12: 9SS, G/60 d10.

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Half point byes OK all rounds; limit 4 (limit 2 in last 4 rounds), must commit before round 4.

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

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Cover: MACA's mascot, the minuteman king, is the work of Dave Monroe, MSCA VP in 1971-1972. The design was created in 1969, but sent in too late to make the very first Chess Horizons issue. To make up for that, we're giving it some extra shine in this issue.

Chess Horizons

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Note from the Editor

Nathan Smolensky

Dear Readers,

And now, the end is near, and so I face my final curtain as *Chess Horizons* editor. It has been an incredible run, and I have more people to thank than can fit here. But I would like to highlight three groups. First, the members of the past and present MACA board and the organizers of Massachusetts Chess, for creating this magazine and putting me in the position to run it. Second, to the amazing contributors, who have given me content over the years far beyond my own chess comprehension. And third, to you, the readers, who make it all possible. Your support these past five years has been tremendous, and for that I am forever grateful.

As to the future of *Chess Horizons*, that is now in the hands of the new MACA board. But if you have any ideas, anything you might want to offer, please reach out. The incredible work that we do for the love of chess begins from the ground up, and passion and commitment can make anything possible.

- Nathan Smolensky, Editor

Annotation / Player Title Key

! – Strong move	!! – Brilliant move
? – Weak move	?? – Blunder
!? – Interesting move	?! – Dubious move
NM – National Master, any player over 2200 USCF	
FM – FIDE Master. 2300+ FIDE.	
SM – Senior Master. 2400+ USCF.	
IM – International Master. Norm-based FIDE title.	
GM – Grandmaster. Norm-based FIDE title.	

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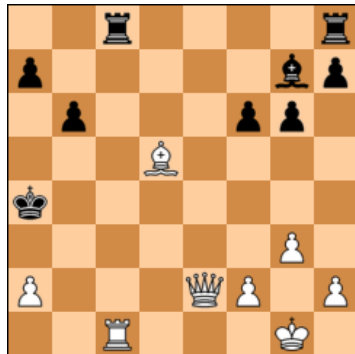


The Challenge Page

Nathan Smolensky

Find the best move! Solutions on p. 22. And for one more absolute doozy, turn to page 7!

1.



White to move and win

2.



White to move and win

3.



Black to move and win

4.



Black to move and win

5.



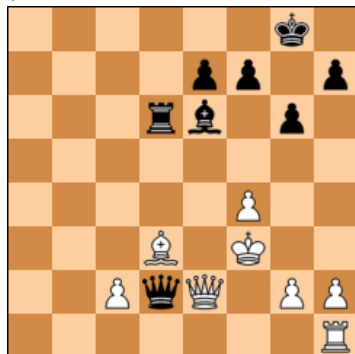
White to move and win

6.



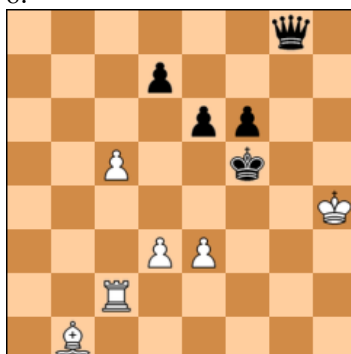
Black to move and win

7.



Black to play

8.



White to play

9.



White to move and win



The Postal Hub

A Place for Those in Search of Correspondence Play

As demand has increased, the time has come to take this popular new Chess Horizons to the next level. If you are currently featured on the Postal Hub, or if you would like to be, please send a sentence or two describing yourself as a player to P.O. Box 381396, Cambridge, MA, 02138.

You can include the following:

- Your approximate strength (either your own estimation, or if you have a USCF tournament record)

- Your experience / how long you have been playing

- How frequently you intend to play

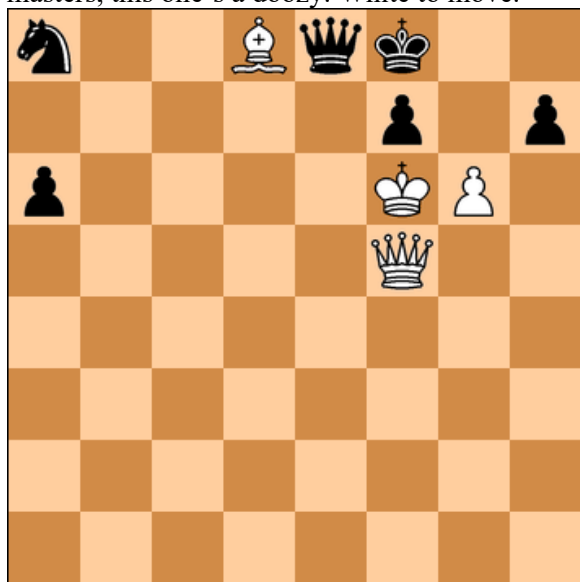
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All the Good That Chess Can Do **The Perfect Chess Problem**

Nathan Smolensky

High praise, I know. But take a look at this. Just don't spend too long, unless you're willing to stare at this puzzle for days – even for strong masters, this one's a doozy. White to move.



Having fun yet? Again, if you don't want to be spoiled, you're welcome to spend as much time as you'd like. The solution is not simple, and it requires finding a number of exceptional moves and ideas for both sides. Otherwise, you can join me as we explore the madness that's about to ensue.

1. Qc8!!

The first idea on display in this problem is already a wild one, and it touches on one of the overarching themes we'll see – that of discovery.

The threat, of course, is Be7+!, forcing the black king to move to g8, after which Qxe8# ends the game.

1... Nc7? doesn't adequately address the issue, running into 2. Be7+ Kg8 3. gxf7+ +-.

1... Qe6+ is simply losing, driving the game into a far less exciting finish after 2. Qxe6 fxe6

3. gxh7, leaving Black powerless to prevent another queen from appearing.

And in a lesser problem, that'd be it. The brilliant idea would be without an answer, and

our work would be over. But this is not that problem.

1... Kg8

The threat is answered, and, frustratingly, the pawn checks do nothing to break this defense. There will be no mate with the white queen.

2. Bc7!!

To hell with the white queen. White sacrifices precious royalty without an immediate checkmate, because the threat of discovery that follows is just that powerful.

2... Qxc8

Black can't not take, even if they see everything that's coming.

2... Qf8 encounters 3. gxh7+!, winning the queen.

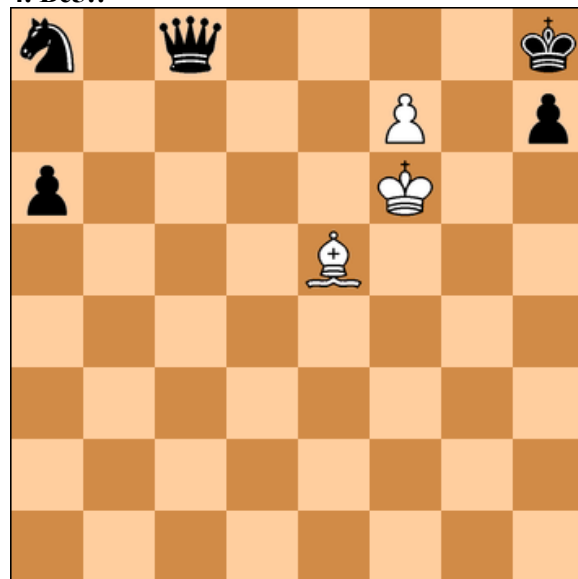
2... Nxc7 leaves the queen pinned, allowing 3. gxh7+! to seal the deal.

And 2... Kf8 is tomfoolery, giving White a mate in two in 3. g7+ Kg8 4. Qxe8#.

3. gxf7+ Kh8

3... Kf8 4. Bd6#

4. Be5!!



The big payoff, and the crux of White's winning sequence. But even now, there's work to be done.

4... Qc5!

Covering both the queening square on f8 and the bishop at the center of White's mating threat. A king move to e6 or f5 will now fall to 5... Qxe5+ 6. Kxe5 Kg7 - +.

White *would* have had a winning trick in Kg6, intending to queen with mate when the bishop is taken, but that move happens to be illegal, by virtue



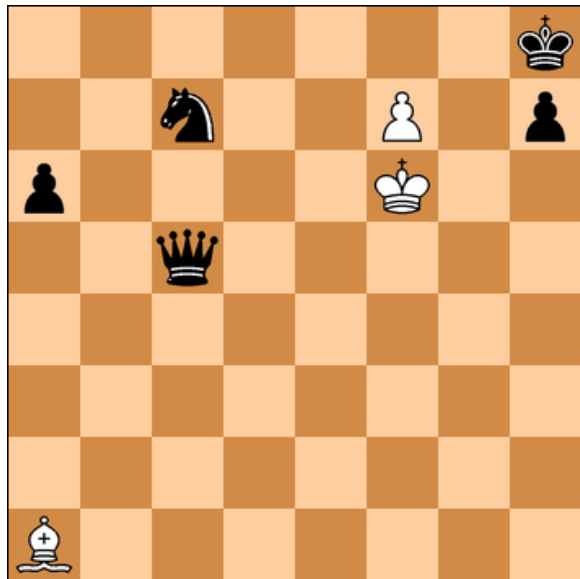
of a pawn on h7 that factors surprisingly into the final calculus of the attack.

5. Ba1!!

And not 5. Bb2??, which loses. But we'll get to that later.

The idea here is that Black can't pursue the white bishop without losing sight of the f-pawn, and any king move by White discovers checkmate. The defense seems hopeless, but the final ingredient in White's victory – making *any* king move – is shockingly elusive.

5... Nc7!



The knight finally jumps in, and it almost saves the day. The white king is left without a move, with the knight controlling e6, the queen e7 and the fifth rank, and the pawn on h7 - that pesky pawn on h7 - controlling g6.

The position that has resulted is mutual zugzwang, where White has nothing left to do but shuffle the bishop between a1 and b2 and wait, and Black has every one of its pieces frozen except for the a-pawn. White will still prevail, but just barely.

6. Bb2 a5 7. Ba1 a4 8. Bb2 a3 9. Ba1 a2

Had White opted instead for 5. Bb2 all those moves ago, this finish would have looked *very* different: 5... Nc7!! 6. Ba1 a5 7. Bb2 a4 8. Ba1 a3, and White is firmly in zugzwang.

This problem is the stuff of composition, of course, but can you imagine running into this in a game? Finding Qc8, finding Bc7, and then *losing the game* because you chose Bb2 over Ba1? The very thought makes one shudder.

10. Bb2 a1=Q 11. Bxa1

The work is finally done. Black is in a good-old-fashioned zugzwang. The closest thing to a defense left is probably 11... Qf8 12. Kf5+ Qg7 13. f8=R# - and yes, it's correct to promote to a rook here. You've put in a lot of hard work, and you deserve to be a little cheeky.

So there you have it, the perfect chess problem. Every one of the ten pieces in the original position is critical; every single one plays into the incredible solution.

Consider that the entire plan would fall apart if the black a-pawn were on a7. The option of moving one square or two would be enough to tip the delicate balance, setting up White for zugzwang as soon as the bishop commits to either b2 or a1.

The *perfection* lies in just how exact every consideration needs to be. This is not a matter of simply trusting that the checks will work – they often don't, starting with the immediate duds possible on move one. Instead, the precise idea of sacrificing a queen on c8 to set up a discovered attack is the one that prevails, and it needs to account for every check Black has in response. And the most robust defense it meets is not a reckless running around in search of a perpetual, but a methodical denial of every single square around the white king.

I wish I knew to whom to give credit for this gorgeous problem. I can certainly thank FM Vadim Martirosov, who first showed it to me some years ago, but he did not invent it.

A problem like this encapsulates the power of chess to spark wonder and challenge the mind, of the inspiring beauty of which the game is capable. Simple principles and rules of thumb would not be enough to find the solution, and instead the puzzle demands the methodical precision of a physicist making a grand discovery. You rack your brain, you observe the geometries of all the pieces and how they interact. When you're done, you sit back, take a deep breath, and just say:

Wow.



Rocketing Up

WGM Carissa Yip*

Coming off a big success from Washington International, where I clinched an IM norm-level performance by a point and a half (though no norm due to the lack of foreigners), I had a good feeling about US Masters. Hopefully Washington was my big break, the proof that my work after being stuck for a few years was finally paying off.

I was no longer so optimistic after the first round, having gotten completely demolished by GM Kamil Dragun (2601) right out of the opening in two hours. What a life I led.

After playing down a round and winning a fairly easy game, I managed to get paired up in the third round against the top seed, Dariusz Swiercz, and this is where the real fun begins.

GM Dariusz Swiercz (2670)

WGM Carissa Yip (2300)

U. S. Masters (3)

08.23.2019

King's Indian [E70]

1. d4 Nf6 2. c4 g6 3. Nc3 Bg7 4. e4 O-O
5. Bd3 d6 6. Nge2 c6 7. O-O e5 8. d5 Nbd7
9. Bc2 cxd5 10. cxd5 a6 11. a4 a5

Losing a tempo, but now my knight has the c5 square, while it's not so easy for White to get his knight to c4.



12. Bg5

During the game, I thought that 12. Nb5 was the best continuation to untangle White's knights.

Now the useless knight on e2 gets a future on c3 and possibly b5, while the original knight on c3 and go to a3-c4: 12... Nc5 13. Nec3 Ne8. I planned to try to exchange one of the knights, as otherwise the pressure on d6 becomes too much. White also has to be careful about a possible f5 break, a la 14. Na3 b6 15. Ncb5 Nc7.

12... Nc5 13. h3 Bd7 14. Rb1 Qb6 15. Be3 Rfc8 16. Nc1 Qd8

My queen is better placed on e8 to support the b5 break and dissuade White's b4 plans. White's pieces are too cramped.

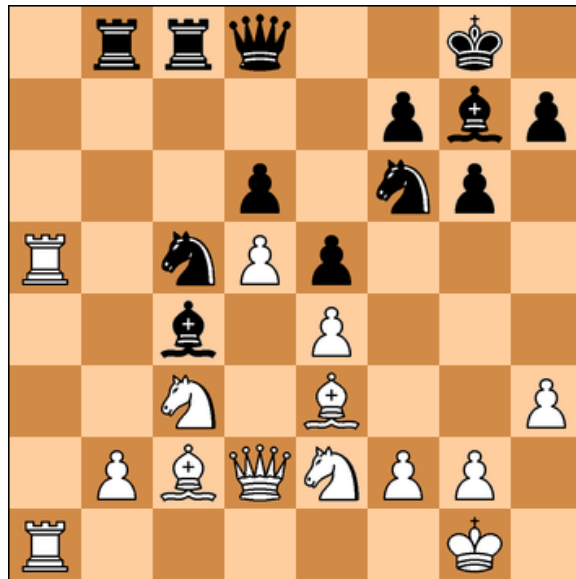
17. Qd2 Qe8 18. Ra1 b5 19. axb5 Bxb5

20. N1e2

Though White could get the bishop pair by way of 20. Nxb5 Qxb5, the knight on c3 is holding his position together. White's pieces are too badly placed and Black can inflict serious damage, starting by winning a pawn.

20... Bc4 21. Ra3 Qd8 22. Rfa1 Rab8

23. Rxa5?!



Allowing my rook to the second rank wasn't the best choice. Even though White gets a passed d-pawn, my own c-pawn can be pretty strong and my pieces get activated rather quickly.

23... Rxb2 24. Bxc5 Rxc5 25. Rxc5 dxc5

26. Qc1 Rb4 27. Qe3 Bf8

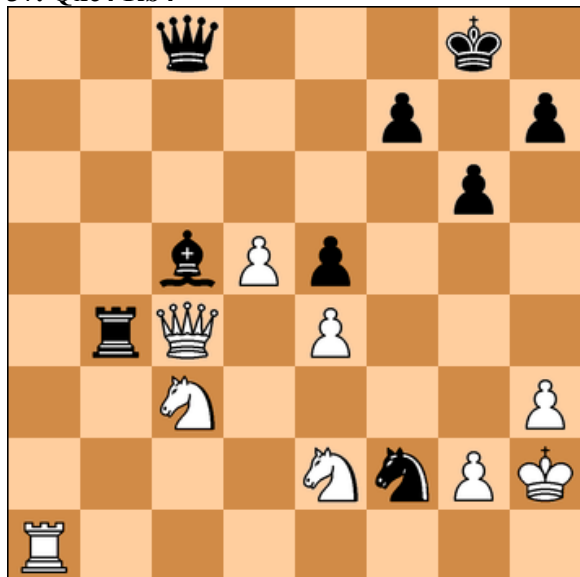
Bringing my bishop back into the game, hoping to get c4 in and then my bishop or knight can be well placed on c5.



28. Bd3 Bxd3 29. Qxd3 c4 30. Qe3 Nd7
31. Qa7 Nc5 32. Qa8 Rb8 33. Qa5 Qc8
34. Qa7

Swiercz plays a few dubious moves randomly in an attempt to reach time control, but now I'm winning material by force.

34... Nd3 35. Kh2 Bc5 36. Qa4 Nxf2
37. Qxc4 Rb4



37... Nxh3 was better: 38. Qa6 Ng5
39. Qxc8+ Rxc8 -, winning thanks to the superior bishop.

38. Qa6

38. Qa2 Nxe4 39. Nxe4 Rxe4 40. Rc1 and now White has some chances: 40... Qf8 41.

Qc2 forcing an exchange of minor pieces into a drawn endgame. 41... Re3 42. Qxc5 Qxc5 43. Rxc5 Rxe2 44. d6 Rd2 45. Rxe5 Rxd6 is easily drawn.

38... Qxa6 39. Rxa6 Nxe4

Now the endgame is winning.

40. Rc6 Bf8 41. g4 Nxc3 42. Nxc3 Rd4
43. Rc8 Kg7 44. Rd8 Rd2+ 45. Kg1 Rd3
46. Ne4 Re3 47. Nf2 Bc5 48. Rc8 Rg3+
49. Kf1 Bxf2 50. Kxf2 Rxh3 51. Ke2 e4
52. d6 Rd3 53. Rd8 Kf6 54. Rd7 h6
55. Kf2 Rf3+ 56. Kg2 Ke6 57. Re7+ Kxd6
58. Rxe4 Ra3 59. Re8 Ra5 60. Kg3 h5
61. gxh5 Rxh5 62. Kf4 Rf5+ 63. Kg4 Re5
64. Ra8 Ke7 65. Ra7+ Kf6 66. Ra6+ Re6
67. Ra4 Kg7 68. Kg5 Re5+ 69. Kf4 Rf5+
70. Kg4 Rf1 71. Ra7 Kh6 72. Ra6 f5+
73. Kh4 Rh1+ 74. Kg3 Kg5 75. Ra5 Rb1
76. Ra3 f4+ 77. Kf3 Rb5 78. Ra6 Rb3+
79. Kf2 Kf5 80. Rc6 g5 81. Ra6 Rb2+

82. Kf1 f3 83. Ra4 g4 84. Kg1 g3
85. Ra1 Kg4 86. Rf1 Rg2+ 87. Kh1 Rh2+
88. Kg1 f2+ 89. Rxf2 Rxf2

0-1

Swiercz was the highest rated player I'd ever beaten, and my friend Praveen Balakrishnan claimed he'd never seen anyone beat a 2670 and not get a norm (foreshadowing!). Still though, I laughed it off and didn't try to get my hopes up. Too many times I've thought a norm was guaranteed and missed it.

In round four, I was paired White against a 2400 FIDE who played a theoretical line. I was unfamiliar with the opening, but figured it out along the way and my opponent ended up going for a perpetual.

Fifth round, I was playing a 2390 as black. The game was interesting, as I ended up sacrificing an exchange and a pawn for good piece play. Eventually I won the exchange back, then another pawn too, and, well...

IM Farai Mandizha (2390)

WGM Carissa Yip (2300)

U. S. Masters (5)

08.23.2019

English [A16]

1. c4 Nf6 2. Nc3 g6 3. e4 Bg7 4. e5 Ng8 5. f4?!
5. d4 d6 6. f4 Nh6 7. Nf3 dxe5 8. fxe5 Bg4
9. Bf4 c5 and Black has counterplay.
5... c5!

Getting ahold of the d4 square for Black's pieces

6. b3 d6 7. Bb2

7. exd6 Qxd6 and now the f4 pawn is weak thanks to White's previous weakening of the a1-h8 diagonal.

7... dxe5 8. Ne4 Nd7 8... Nf6 9. Bxe5 Nc6
10. Nxf6+ (10. Bc3 O-O 11. Nxc5 Qd6
12. Nd3 Bf5) 10... exf6 11. Bc3 O-O and Black is almost winning thanks to the lead in development and White's weak central squares on d4 and e4.

9. Qe2 Qc7 10. Nf3 Nh6 11. Nc3 Qb8

11... O-O 12. Nd5 Qd8 13. fxe5 e6 14. Nc3 Ng4
12. Na4 O-O 13. fxe5 e6 14. O-O-O b6

The plan is to take on f3 with the bishop and win



the pawn.

15. d4 cxd4 16. Ba3

16. Bxd4 Bb7

16... Nxe5!



White probably overlooked this move. The dark squares on the kingside are too weak, and White really can't afford to give up his dark squared bishop.

17. Bxf8 Kxf8 18. Nxd4 Bb7

White has to take a lot of time in coordinating his pieces, especially developing the kingside bishop and rook. Meanwhile, almost all of Black's pieces are already in the game.

19. h3 Nc6

19... Kg8! could free the f8 square for the queen: 20. Kb1 Qf8.

20. Nc2 Nf5 21. Qf2 Ne5 22. Rg1 Bh6+

23. Kb2 Be4 24. Re1 Bxc2

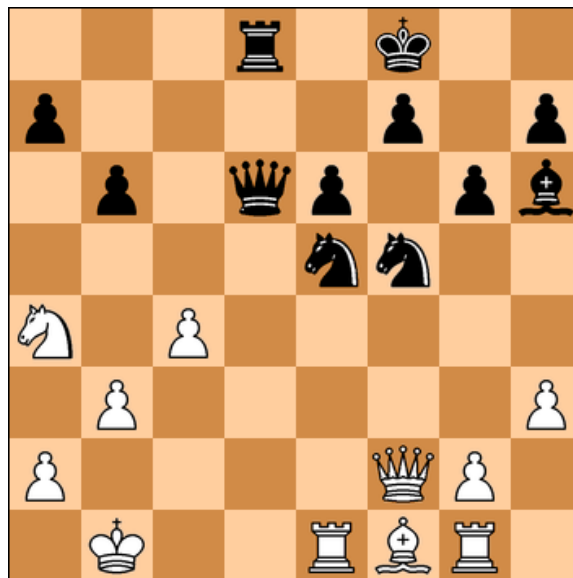
Ridding White of one of his most important defenders. Now the dark squares, especially d4 and e3, are very weak.

25. Kxc2

25. Qxc2 Ne3 26. Qf2 Qd8

White's pieces are too uncoordinated.

25... Qd6 26. Kb1 Rd8



26... Be3 was the immediate win that I missed 27. Rxe3 Qd1+ 28. Kb2 Qd4+ 29.

Kb1 Nxe3

27. g4 Be3 28. Qe2 Bxg1 29. gxf5 gxf5

I didn't want to give White the d5 square, and the kingside can be protected easily with Ng6. The rest is easy.

30. Nc3

30. Qxe5 Qxe5 31. Rxe5 Rd1+ 32. Kc2 Rxf1

30... Ng6 31. Rd1 Qe7 32. Rxd8+ Qxd8

33. Kc2 Be5 34. Qf3 Bb4 35. Nb1 Qd4

36. a3 Be7 37. b4 Bf6 38. Qd3 Qb2+

39. Kd1 Bg5 40. Qd6+ Kg7 41. Bd3 Qc1+

42. Ke2 Nf4+ 43. Kf2 Nxe3+ 44. Kg2 Qg1+

45. Kxe3 Qg4+ 46. Kh2 Bf4+

0-1

At this point, I was fairly certain of my IM norm; I only needed 1/4. The only question was: could I get a GM norm too?

The sixth round, I was White against GM Steven Zierk. I wasn't about to go all out, since I still wanted to play it safe and clinch my IM norm. I played a bland Catalan, and after I reached a slightly better position, Zierk and I shook hands and agreed to a draw.

Surprisingly, with that game, it turned out I crossed 2400 in FIDE live rating. The IM title has that rating requirement, and there are quite a few who have achieved their norms but failed to reach the rating. Though my official rating was 2300, I gained some 50+ points from Washington, some 10 points from North



American Youth, and after six games at US Masters, I'd gained around 40 points. And thus, another milestone was broken.

Going into the seventh round, I needed a draw for the IM norm. Paired Black against GM Joel Benjamin, what ensued was a surprisingly sharp game.

GM Joel Benjamin (2523)

WGM Carissa Yip (2300)

U. S. Masters (5)

08.23.2019

Sicilian [B50]



22. Qe3

Now is the key moment: f5 or h5?

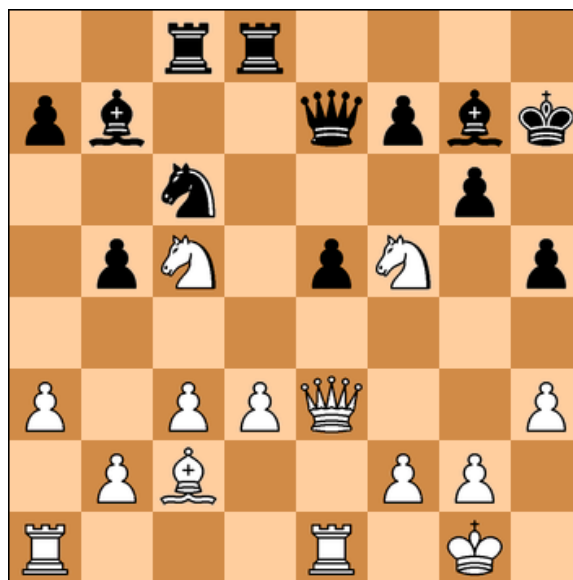
22... h5

22... f5! 23. Nxf6+ Kh7 24. Nxf5
(24. Nf7 fxe4 25. Nxd8 Nxd8 26. dxe4 Ne6;
24. Ng5+ Kxh6 no good discoveries)

24... gxf5 25. Nxc5 Bh6, with this last move possible thanks to the king being on h7.

23. Nh6+ Kh8 24. Nxc5 Kh7. Bb2 25. Nf5!

I completely overlooked this move. Even though White is just sacrificing a piece for no compensation, Black can't stop White from winning the pawns back.



25... gxf5 26. d4 7... Kg8

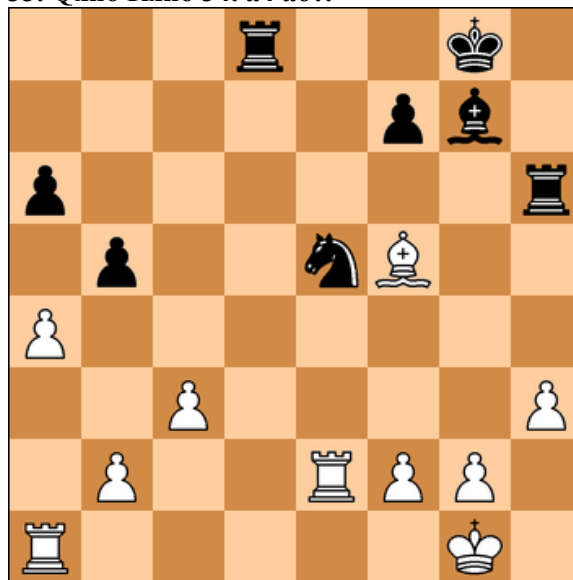
26... e4 Looked risky to me but the engine said it was the best move: 27. Qf4 Rd5 28. Nxe4. This is where my calculations ended, since my kingside looked too weak for me to contemplate any further. But the engine says 28...Bh6, and surprisingly there are no good discoveries for White. 29. Qf3 Nxd4 30. cxd4 Rxc2

27. Bxf5 Rc7 28. Nxb7 Rxb7 29. Qf3 Rb6

30. Qxh5 Qf6 31. dxe5 Nxe5 32. Re2 Qh6

32... Rbd6 was the other move I was considering. It was probably better for playing for a win 33. Rae1 Rd1 34. Rxd1 Rxd1+ 35. Kh2 Qd6 White doesn't have enough pieces to launch a successful attempt on my king.

33. Qxh6 Rxh6 34. a4 a6?!





The last chance of playing for a win died with this move.

34... Ra6! 35. Rae1 bxa4 36. Rxe5 Bxe5
37. Rxe5 Rd2 38. Rb5 Rb6 39. Ra5 Rxb2
40. Rxa4 Rxf2 41. Be4 Ra2

**35. axb5 axb5 36. Rae1 Nc4 37. Re8+ Rxe8
38. Rxe8+ Bf8 39. Bd3 Rd6 40. Bxc4 bxc4
41. Rc8 Rd1+ 42. Kh2 Rd2 43. Kg3 Rxb2
44. Rxc4 Bg7 45. Kf3 Rc2**

45... Rb3 46. g4 Bxc3 Would've given me more chances to play on since the exchange of rooks isn't forced. But of course, it's probably still a draw.

46. h4 Rxc3+ 47. Rxc3 Bxc3 48. g4 Kg7

½-½

Though the draw clinched me my IM norm, I was a bit upset since I thought I should have been winning at some point. Nonetheless, though White only had a pawn for the piece, the engine showed him to be equal due to my weak king.

In round eight, I was paired against Julio Becerra. Needing 1.5/2 for the GM norm, I reverted to my classic 1. e4. Unfortunately, in a sharp Sicilian, I lost my way and was quickly outplayed from the opening. Alas, the GM norm was not to be.

At this point, I was actually fairly concerned about my IM norm. I'd only clinch it if I played someone 2360+, otherwise I would need a draw. However, it turned out I had nothing to be worried about, getting paired against Erik Santarius (2380 FIDE). I managed to outplay him, getting a clear advantage barely using any time, while Erik was left with some 10 minutes left. The trap of playing fast while your opponent has no time is a classic one, so I decided to give the position a good hard think. Forty minutes later, I played my move with confidence, only to have Erik blitz out his next move and go into a complex endgame from the one-sided middlegame. But it was still dangerous for Erik, and after misplaying a few moves, I quickly won significant material and converted.

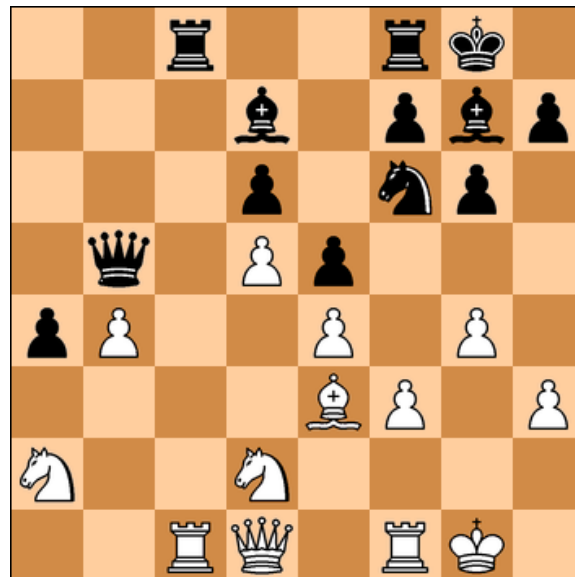
IM Erik Santarius (2407)

WGM Carissa Yip (2300)

U. S. Masters (5)

08.23.2019

Sicilian [B50]



21... Qd3??

A complete blunder, and now White gets good play.

21... Rxc1 22. Qxc1 Rc8 23. Qb1 Ne8
24. Rc1 Rxc1+ 25. Nxc1 f5 was best, taking advantage of White's exposed kingside

22. Nc4

I completely missed this move

22. Re1 Qa3 23. Rc2 Rxc2 24. Qxc2 Rc8
25. Nc4 Qb3 26. Qxb3 axb3 27. Nxd6 Rc2
28. Nc1 b2 29. Nd3 Re2 was what I calculated, wasting nearly half of my time advantage

22... Qb3 23. Qxb3 axb3 24. Nxd6 Rb8

25. Nc3 Rxb4 26. Bc5 Rbb8

It's still dangerous for White, with the knight on d6 being possibly trapped and the b-pawn running.

27. Rf2 Rfd8

Planning Bf8

28. Nc4?

28. Nd1 Bf8 29. Rb2 Ba4 30. Rc4!

This is probably what we both missed, and now the knight escapes

28... Rbc8?!

28... Rdc8 29. Bd6 Rb7 30. Na5

(30. Nb2 Rb6 31. Ba3 Bh6)

(30. Nd1 Bb5 31. Ndb2 Ne8 32. Ba3 Ra7 and White's pieces are too tangled up)



30... Rb6

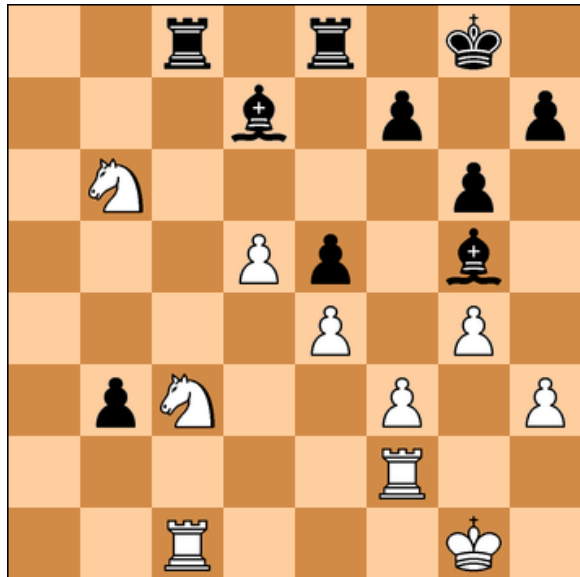
29. Be7 Re8 30. Bxf6?

30. Nd6! Rxe7 31. Nxc8 Bxc8 32. Na4 Bd7

33. Nc5 =

30... Bxf6 31. Nb6 Bg5!

Now it's all over.



32. Rb1 Rxc3 33. Nxd7 Re7

33... Be3 34. Nf6+ Kf8 35. Nxe8 Rc2

36. Nd6 b2 37. Kh1 Bxf2 38. Nb5 Rc1+

34. Nxe5 Be3 35. Nc6 Rb7

0-1

With the win, I ended my tournament with 5.5/9, clinching my second IM norm by a full point. I wasn't the only one who achieved the norm: my friends Praveen Balakrishnan and David Brodsky both got a GM norm (funnily enough, the only other players who defeated Swiercz), and Kapil Chandran and Olivier Kenta Chika-Ratte achieved IM norms as well.

**- Although Ms. Yip was listed as a WGM at tournament's end, and as of this article's writing, she has since broken through to receive her 3rd and final IM norm, and the official International Master title, at the 2019 SPICE Cup.*

The young champion has come a long way since adorning the Chess Horizons cover in 2013 (when she became the youngest female expert in USCF history) and we at the magazine, in MACA, and throughout the Massachusetts chess community congratulate her!



Photo credit: above, Steve Stepak (2013); below, IM Eric Rosen



All the Good That Chess Can Do **The Boylston Turns 100**

Nathan Smolensky

On August 27th, 1919, at the Boston Young Men's Christian Union on 48 Boylston St., the Boylston Chess Club was officially formed. The nascent club featured 22 charter members, led by their first president, Augustus Seaver.

To put this into perspective, when the Boylston was founded, Woodrow Wilson was serving his second term as president. The country had just come out of its involvement in the Great War (later rechristened World War I), Harry Lyman was a small child who presumably had not yet learned the rules of chess, and the venerable Harold Dondis was several years away from being born.



Harry Nelson Pillsbury

Notably absent from the founding of the Boylston Chess Club was Somerville native Harry Nelson Pillsbury, the winner of the 1895 Hastings International Tournament

(over names such as Lasker, Tarrasch, and Chigorin), and perhaps the greatest player ever to come out of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. Tragically, the chess wonder had fallen into ill health not long after his rise to international fame, and died in 1906, aged 33.

It was Pillsbury, in fact, who helped pave the way for the Boylston Chess Club's formation, when he, John F. Barry, Franklin K. Young, C.F. Burille, and others began frequenting a chess-designated room at the YMCU in the late 19th century.

The club remained seventy years at its original location, but it could not stay there forever. Facing increasing rent, the club opted to remain in Boston, moving to the Clarendon St.

YWCA in 1989. 2003 saw the club move again, this time to Davis Square in Pillsbury's hometown of Somerville. In recent years, the club would make its third move, to its current location on Norris St. in Cambridge.

The road may have been somewhat tumultuous, but the club made it. Given that only New York's Marshall Club and San Francisco's Mechanics' are older, not many clubs have turned a hundred, and neither of the older clubs faced such uncertainty about space. Thus, it was time to celebrate!

The Centennial moniker made its way into a number of Boylston events throughout 2019, most prevalent during the summer, when the proper birthday was. At the Centennial Celebration on August 24th, IM Denys Shmelov and Professor J. Timothy Sage shared first place, while GM Fidel Corrales Jimenez made a rare Bay State appearance to claim top honors at the Centennial Blitz on July 27th.



Jimenez wasn't the only GM to stop by. Local legends Larry Christiansen and Roman Dzindzichashvili collaborated for a simultaneous exhibition on August 23rd, making a memorable night for attendees young and old.





The Boylston received something of a birthday present later in the year when one of its most esteemed members of recent years, Carissa Yip, became the youngest female IM in US history - an achievement you can read more about throughout this journal.

Of course, Ms. Yip is not the first great young player to gain early experience at the Boylston, and she will certainly not be the last. Some of the strongest players in Massachusetts scholastic chess are Saturday regulars, joining tournaments that feature club lifers, rank beginners, and, if the prize money is right, the Ivanovs and Shmelovs of the world.

The club continues to boast a wide range of adult and scholastic tournaments throughout the year, with regular events several days a week. Simuls, blitz tournaments, lectures, and camps are also a mainstay of the Boylston's offerings, and have helped it to remain at the center of the New England chess universe into its advanced age. The continued excellence is perhaps best summed up by this anonymous letter, shared at the Boylston Chess Foundation's annual meeting in October:

"October 14, 2019

I wanted to thank you and the Boylston Chess Club for an enjoyable visit this past Saturday, October 12th, during your National Chess Day Open. It was a real pleasure to be able to play in such a fine facility - your club has a wonderful atmosphere, created not just from years of tradition, but clearly from the hard work of many members and the Boylston Chess Foundation. It was particularly memorable to celebrate your centenary during National Chess Day.

Here's to another hundred years of great chess!"

Sincerely,

A visiting Master

Special thanks to Robert Oresick and Tony Cortizas, who have compiled the information and images used in this article on the BCF blog, which you can find at <http://boylston-chess-club.blogspot.com/>

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All the Good That Chess Can Do **Keeping the Celebration Going**

Nathan Smolensky

When the first Collins Cup was added to the Chess Weekend schedule in 2018, to celebrate the return of chess to the former Holyoke Center Plaza in Harvard Square, the idea was originally to have a closed, invitational event. But more and more, a clamor arose that people wanted in, and at the eleventh hour a way for them to get in was born.

This was the Collins Cup Qualifier, and this last-minute addition quickly became one of the weekend's major points of interest. 43 people showed up, 40 got the chance to play – that was all the space we had – and expert Joe Perl was crowned champion, and given his ticket to the Masters' Tournament, some time after sundown. The proceeds from the event, meanwhile, would be used as a prize fund for the Sunday Finals, helping to entice some of the Bay State's finest players to participate in the event.

That we would bring the CCQ back in 2019 was a no-brainer, but we were not content to simply repeat it. We wanted bigger, we wanted more, and we planned a whole four tournaments to give the general public a chance to qualify for the big money Fall Finals, spread throughout the spring, summer, and autumn months.



Sadly, the warm, outdoor-chess weather did not arrive in time for the first qualifier, held indoors at Harvard's Smith Campus Center on April 27th. There, young Alex Yu (above, left)

emerged triumphant after a thrilling final against Harvard University undergraduate Ella Papanek. With the win, Yu's became the first ticket punched to the Collins Cup Finals in September.

The Second 2019 Collins Cup Qualifier was a bit different, for a few reasons. First, the departure of the Massachusetts collegiate student body for Summer vacation meant a smaller player pool. Second, the more open scheduling meant players might be able to spend more time enjoying chess in the summer sun, so an experimental "Double" schedule was introduced for the June 15th event, featuring 18 (!) rounds of blitz play before playoff. One would think the grueling format would favor youth, and that another junior would inevitably win the event. One would be wrong.



Instead, Anatoly Levin (above, seated, left, playing expert Adrian Cozma), one of the most seasoned veterans of Harvard Square chess, showed his skill and experience by weaving through an expert-laden field, culminating in an Armageddon playoff victory against 2018 CCQ winner Joe Perl. Levin would be the only player officially rated below 2000 to claim a Finals berth in 2019, making his feat even more impressive.



CHESS HORIZONS



50th Anniversary

No such Cinderella story would come out of the third qualifier, held on July 28th (the lone Sunday event of the season). Here, the playoff featured two perennial CCQ contenders in strong experts Michael Minkin (above, left) and Brian Salomon (above, right). Salomon prevailed after a tense match, and now there was only one spot left to be handed out.



That last spot would be handed out the day before the Masters' Tournament, to Joe Perl (above, right, playing Anton Barash in the playoff). This was the very same Joe Perl who won the 2018 Collins Cup Qualifier one day before *that* main event happened. With his return, and a handful of emails from 2200+ confirming their interest in playing, the Masters' lineup was set.



The main event – the second annual Collins Cup – was held on the afternoon of September 29th, at the Moise Safra Welcome Pavilion outside of Harvard University's Smith Center. The four triumphant qualifiers joined 18 Massachusetts masters, each one eager to get a piece of the \$1,000 guaranteed prize fund.

Alex Yu ended up finishing highest of the qualifiers with 6.5 points out of a possible 12 – a plus score in a field where 13 of the 22 players were rated over 2250 – and claimed the tournament's U2200 prize as a result.



The U2350 prize was claimed by state co-champion and Harvard sophomore NM Michael Isakov (above), with a score of 8/12. Three players tied for second in this category at 7 points apiece in NM Ilya Krasik (a Harvard Square mainstay), NM Danila Poliannikov (one of the state's top current scholastic players), and NM Richard Yi (an MIT undergrad).

3rd place overall would go to the lone titled player in the group, IM Michael Perelshteyn (GM Eugene's father), who scored 8.5 points out of 12. He finished just behind Massachusetts newcomer and FM Aaron Jacobson, a Harvard freshman who claimed 9 points on the day.



And in sole first, with nine and a half points, was NM Jason Altschuler (above, being crowned by tournament namesake William Collins), an MIT graduate student who once graced the Mass scholastic scene as a youngster.

What will become of this event remains to be seen, but the energy and enthusiasm on display make it clear that the last Collins Cup has not been held. My own time as organizer is likely up, but the opportunity to be a part of creating a wholly new tradition, bringing together a community in a way it has never been brought together before, is one I will cherish forever.

All photos courtesy Steve Stepak



All the Good That Chess Can Do **The Story of MACA in Prisons**

Nathan Smolensky

1969 was a big year for MACA. It was the organization's reconstitution, five years after the dissolution of the old Massachusetts State Chess Association (MSCA). It was the beginning of *Chess Horizons*, as this 50th anniversary issue should make clear in its other pages. But there was one other major milestone for the organization in that year, that would shape its programming and place in the world of chess for decades to come, and that was the birth of its prison chess program.

The story begins with Ben Landey (1912 – 1981), one of the state's preeminent chess organizers at the time, and a former president of the MSCA and the Boylston Chess Club. Landey had been making visits to Walpole State Prison, now called Cedar Junction, and decided in the fall of 1969 to bring along young Steve Frymer, a member of the young MACA and expert chess player.

Frymer played first board in a match against some inmates, trotting out a King's Gambit. Though his game was unresolved, and adjudicated as a draw, when visit time expired, the score still found its way into Harold Dondis' *Boston Globe* chess column later that year.

This would mark the beginning of Mr. Frymer's involvement in prison chess. In the decades that follows, he credits the inspiration of Warren Pinches in growing his outreach. The number of visits, and the number of prisons visited, grew. Inmates received free *Chess Horizons* subscriptions, with the help of tireless MACA organizer and treasurer Bob Messenger. The USCF even got involved, and by the early 21st century there were rated tournaments being held, organized in prisons by Frymer and co.

The prison chess programming took another leap some years ago, when Mr. Frymer began doing outreach via email, offering bulk *Chess Horizons* mailings to institutions around the nation. Some states did not respond, but others were receptive, and he was able to unload his inventory of thousands of chess magazines

around the country, including to eighty facilities in the state of Texas alone.

Steve Frymer's commitment to prison chess continues to this day. Over 400 chess books have been mailed since 2015, finding their way to facility libraries and incarcerated individuals around the country.

Though many who participate in MACA events are still unaware of the organization's prison programming, it has become a major part of the nonprofit's activity and identity. It is at the heart of what has kept printed *Chess Horizons* going, and at the crux of some controversy about what the magazine should contain, and how it can best serve its readership.

The good that has been done in the process cannot be overstated. The ages-old game in nourishment for the mind, allowing its players to channel their energy positively, and to exercise their brains. More than simply a way to improve behavior, it paves a way, in its stimulation of the mind, towards education and employment, and has been shown to reduce recidivism, according to a 2018 U.K. study. The benefits of prison chess are known worldwide, and we are proud to have one of the most active programs in the nation based right here in Massachusetts.

Steve Frymer has been at the heart of MACA's prison chess for fifty years, but he is not the only hero of this story. The efforts of MACA treasurer Bob Messenger in sustaining and growing prison chess programming throughout the years have been tremendous, and he and Mr. Frymer have been buoyed repeatedly by many of the volunteers to come through MACA's ranks.

Visits have continued, organized in Massachusetts not only by Frymer and Messenger, but by eager chess aficionados around the state. Recently, GM Eugene Perelshteyn even made his way to one of the state's facilities, where he offered a simul.

And then there is you. Chess in prisons is not a money-making venture, but one built on the love and kindness of those who understand the good it can do. You too can join the effort, by reaching out to MACA (all the necessary contacts can be found on page 3) today.

You'll be glad you did.



All the Good That Chess Can Do **A Chess Journey Continues**

Nathan Smolensky

In the previous issue of *Chess Horizons*, as I was on the eve of the end of my presidential tenure at MACA, I let loose the reins of my decorum and indulged in a six-page, self-indulgent retelling of all the chess related things which I had done. In looking back upon it, rather than feel any sort of remorse in the brazen display of ego that it was, I have determined that it is time for a sequel.

First, having been basically inactive in Massachusetts chess for the better part of a year, I should probably address the question of where I went. And the answer is... I went professional!

After years of working in rather dull business-related functions, enjoying chess work on a volunteer basis in my spare time, I finally realized my passion skewed far more towards the latter. It also became readily apparent that my most ambitious projects, namely those dealing with getting more chess into Massachusetts schools, would be served well by both improving my connections in the chess education sphere, and in getting some hands-on experience for myself. So I became a teacher.

Now, I find myself living and working in New York City, teaching at a K-4 charter elementary school. Some of my students are competitive within the city and state scholastic scene, 8- and 9-year-olds rated over 1000 USCF. Others are rank beginners, and some, tragically, don't seem to like chess very much at all.

Teaching on a full-time basis, so far, has been a learning experience, but an immensely rewarding one. Whereas my previous experience has been limited to a small-classroom or private setting, or as a guest instructor with full-time teachers present, my current role faces me with rooms of as many as thirty rowdy youngsters, and this has been a challenge. Moreover, the levels of play and interest in chess among these students varies wildly, particularly in the K-2 classes, where chess is a requirement for the full student body, rather than an opt-in for those who want it.

Being able to deal with this last issue has been a tremendous opportunity in and of itself. For years, I advocated for Chess for Early Educators as a way to get chess into early grades, its reach not limited to those already aware of the game, or to those who might be considered for whatever reason more likely to be interested. I still stand very much by that contention, and have seen more than one child engaged unexpectedly in a chess lesson. But the challenges that come with the chess-for-all approach are not to be ignored. There will be those who do not latch on, and maintaining their engagement, leaving the door open for their own chess passion to kindle, without alienating or boring the rest of the class is not a simple matter.

Whatever the level of the students, be it chess, grade, or otherwise, the greatest thing that I can offer as a teacher is a love of the game. Passion for chess is what drives success – not only success in the competitive ranks of the game, but chess-powered success in all other walks of life. It is the will to drive oneself to challenge the mind, concentrate, calculate, visualize, and imagine that defines chess' power. And never has this been more true than today, with the unprecedented tools available for independent study, on Chesskid, Lichess, Youtube, and so forth.

So that's what I've been up to. In the meantime, MACA has been doing just fine, and I should take this time to acknowledge the people who make that possible, including a few whose immense contributions to MACA far predate any involvement of my own.

To Oleg Poliannikov, who took the reins of the presidency when I stepped down, who has kept the ship running, has scheduled and run the meetings, and who has ensured that the organization's committees have the personnel and resources to do all the good that MACA does. Mr. Poliannikov became involved in chess organization because of his son Danila, a passionate competitor who now ranks as a master at the age of only 15. But Oleg's work on the board since his joining has extended far beyond representing his family's interests, and in fact he has made a number of principled stands in the interest of what he saw as fair and just policy, whether or not it would be in his



own favor. The commitment to effective, efficient, and fair systems for tournament organization has been at the heart of MACA's success for a long time, and he has displayed it in spades.

To Bob Messenger, who puts more work, effort, and passion into his volunteering for MACA than most do into their full-time work. Every Spiegel Cup Qualifier, every Mass Open, every Pillsbury Memorial, he can be found shortly after the crack of dawn starting setup, sifting through emails and calls to make sure every entry and withdrawal is accounted for, so that the event runs as smoothly as possible.

To Steve Frymer, who been a vital part of MACA for half a century, driving scholastic programming through well-established relationships with MACA's venues, an almost encyclopedic knowledge of the player base, and unparalleled experience. It was Frymer, by the way, that I had my very first chess-related job under, assisting him at an elementary school club while I was a 7th grader in the same school, some seventeen-odd years ago. He also has been the pivotal force in MACA's robust prison program, which you can read about elsewhere in this magazine.

To Dmitry Barash, whose dedication to supporting MACA scholastics turned my pipe dream of the Spiegel Cup Series into a reality. A tech pro, he also applied his knowledge of data and analytics to the Spiegel Cup, giving players and their parents an incredible resource.

And to all the other volunteers who serve MACA, and have served MACA through the years. It is not an easy task, and all too often it can be a thankless one. But every so often, there are those among us struck by the wild notion that we can do some good by helping out.

Of course, I haven't relinquished all of my MACA duties. I made a promise when I left that I would see the publication of *Chess Horizons* through to the 50th Anniversary Issue, and you're reading it now.

Sadly, if you've noticed that I'm on a lot of the bylines in this one, it's not just because of my gargantuan ego. Finding contributors has always been difficult, and this was a particularly dry season. Many of the old standbys have busy jobs, growing families, or little time.

Whatever the case, I decided to make the most of the situation, and dedicate the space in this issue to highlight all of the ways in which chess brightens our days. From sparking and fascinating the mind (p. 7), to bringing communities together at clubs (p. 15-16) and tournaments (p. 17-18), to helping prisoners find a positive outlet (p. 19), to teaching children and supporting nonprofits (this article right here), the game that we love is much, much more than just a game, and that's a theme worth dedicating my last issue to.



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Solutions (Problems on p. 5)

1. 1. Qa6+ Kb4 2. a3#
2. 1. Rxh7+ Kxh7 2. f6+ dxe4
(2... Kh6 3. Qh4#)
3. Qxg7+
3. 1... Bb2 2. Kxb2 Qa3+
3. Kb1 Qa1#
4. 1... Qg3+! 2. fxe3 Re1+
3. Kf2 R8e2#
5. 1. Ng6+ Kg8 2. Qg7+! Rxg7
3. Nh6#
6. 1... Qa2+ 2. Kc1 Rxc3+ 3. bxc3
Nd3+ 4. Bxd3 Ba3#
7. 1... Rxd3+! 2. Qxd3 Bd5+
(2. cxd3 Bg4+ 3. Kxg4 Qxe2+)
3. Kg3 Qxg2+ 4. Kh4 Qxh1
8. 1. Rf2+ Ke5 2. Rf5+! exf5
(2... Kxf5 3. d4#)
3. d4+ Ke6 (Kd5) 4. Ba2+
9. 1. Bd3+ Ke1 2. Bc3+! Bxc3
3. Ne3 g1=Q 4. Nc2#

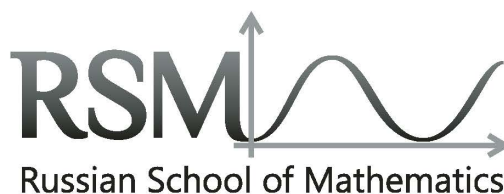
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Places to Play

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. To add a listing for your club in future issues, please contact 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

(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.orgboylstonchess@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

(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

(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

(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**Chess Master Connections** – 201 Wayland Sq., Providence, RI

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

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

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

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MACA ELECTION REGISTRATION NOTICE

In our annual election, MACA offers options for online voting as well as paper-ballot voting. Those who choose to vote online will receive a survey link several weeks prior to the Massachusetts Open in May. Those who would prefer a paper ballot are still able to request one. REGISTRATION IS REQUIRED FOR BOTH VOTING OPTIONS.

If you registered for either an online or paper ballot in 2019 or earlier, you do not need to register again unless your address has changed. New members who joined after March 2019 will need to register to vote in the coming election. To vote, MACA membership must be valid as of the registration deadline.

TO REGISTER FOR AN ONLINE BALLOT:
Email election@masschess.org with your full name and a unique email address by February 28, 2020.

TO REGISTER FOR A PAPER BALLOT: send a letter to Bob Messenger at 4 Hamlett Dr. #12, Nashua, NH 03062, postmarked no later than February 24.



Chess Horizons

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