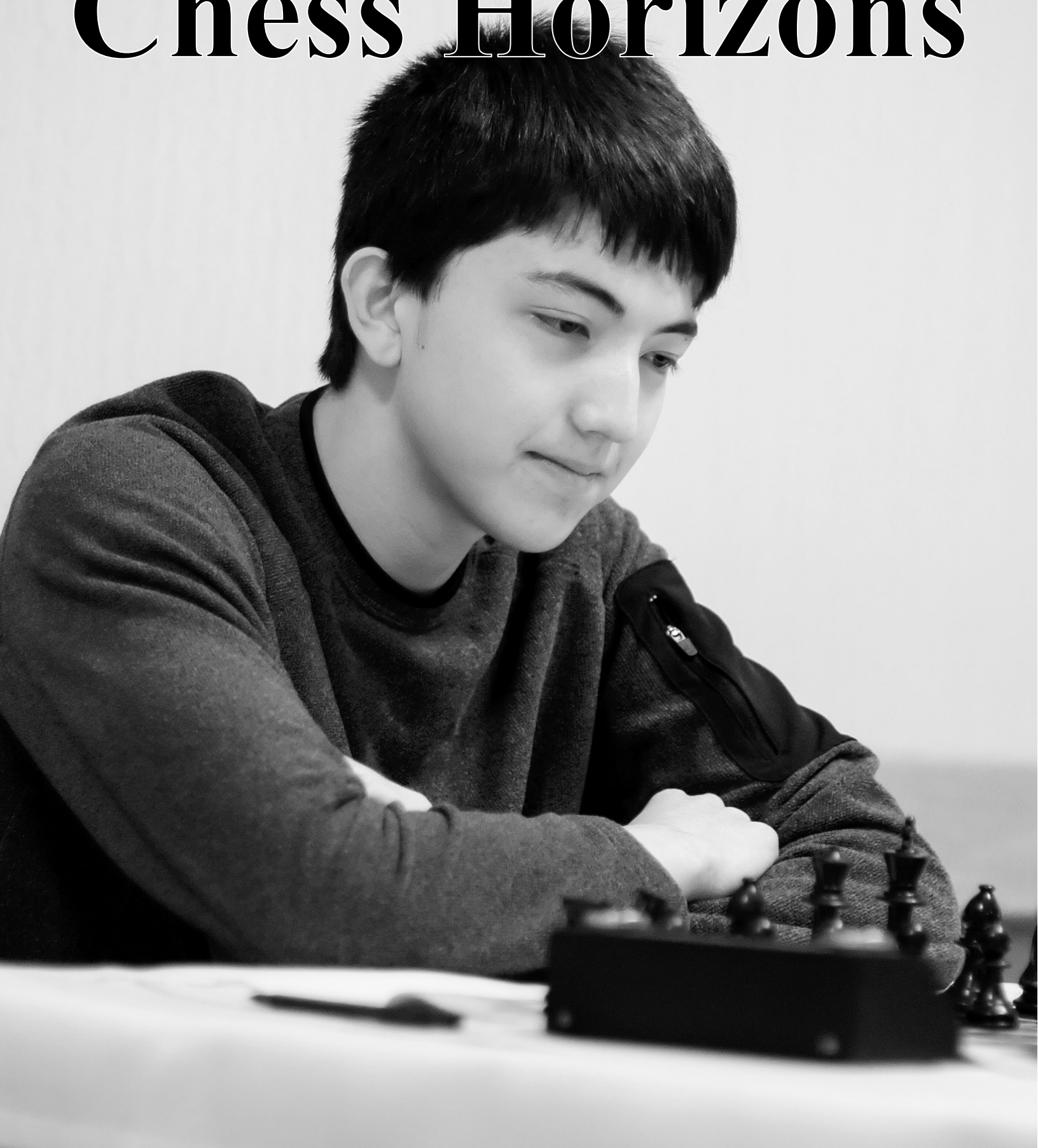


SUMMER 2014

DOUBLE ISSUE!

Chess Horizons





74th New England Open

August 30 or 31 to September 1, 2014

Leominster, Massachusetts

\$3000 in Projected Prizes, \$2250 Guaranteed

- Where:** Doubletree by Hilton (formerly Four Points by Sheraton) Hotel, 99 Erdman Way, Leominster. 978-534-9000. Hotel rate \$95 per night for 1-4 people, **reserve by 8/16**.
- What:** 6-round Swiss. 4 sections: Open, U2000, U1750, U1500, with 3-day and 2-day schedules.
- Time Control:** 30/90, SD/60; d5. Rounds 1-3 in the 2-day schedule are G/45; d5.
- Registration:** 3-day: Sat. 8/30 from 8:30 to 9:30 a.m. 2-day: Sun. 8/31 from 8:30 to 9:30 a.m.
- Rounds:** 3-day: Sat. 10:00 and 4:00. Sun. 10:00 and 4:00. Mon. 9:30 and 3:30.
2-day: Sun. 10:00, 12:00, 2:00 and 4:00. Mon. 9:30 and 3:30. **No 2-day Open.**
- Entry Fee:** \$69 for 3-day, \$68 for 2-day if mailed by **8/25** or online (PayPal) at www.masschess.org by **8/28**, \$80 at site. GMs and IMs free. \$30 discount to players in the U1500 section rated under 1000 or unrated. Official Sept. ratings used. Unofficial used if otherwise unrated.
- Unrated and** Unrated prize limits: \$200 in U2000, \$150 in U1750, \$100 in U1500, can't win title except in the
- Byes:** Open section. Byes 1-5 in Open, else 1-6, limit 2, rds 4-6 must commit before rd 2.
- Prizes:** Prizes are 75% guaranteed based on 80 fully paid entries (players rated under 1000 or unrated in the U1500 section count half). New England Champion title to the top-scoring New England resident or student in each section.
- | | | | | |
|---------------|-----------|-------------|-------------|------------------------------|
| Open: | \$500-300 | U2300 \$200 | U2200 \$200 | 20 Grand Prix Points. |
| U2000: | \$300-150 | U1850 \$125 | | |
| U1750: | \$300-150 | U1600 \$125 | | |
| U1500: | \$250-150 | U1350 \$125 | U1200 \$125 | |
- USCF membership required for all players, plus state membership for Mass. & N.H. residents. Mass.: MACA \$12 adult, \$6 under 18; add \$8 (optional) for a subscription to *Chess Horizons*), WMCA O.K. N.H.: NHCA \$8 adult, \$6 under 19, \$10 for membership with a printed *N.H. Chess Journal* subscription.
- Questions:** Bob Messenger. Phone (603) 891-2484 or send email to info@masschess.org.



What's in this Issue

News and Notes

- 4 Letter from the Editor**
- 5 Letter from the President**
- 6 83rd Mass Open Recap**
- 9 The Hurvitz Cup in (Many) Photos**
- 10 News in Brief**

Features and Spotlights

- 11 Bullet Points with GM Christiansen**
- 13 Vigorito on Chess**
- 19 Yip Wins WCC Championship**
- 20 Mike Hart on the Value of White**
- 21 BCC Tony Miles Recap**

83rd Mass Open Coverage

- 25 Top Games from 83rd Mass Open**
- 31 Grant X. on Honorable Mentions**
- 36 An Interview with Mika Brattain**
- 37 *They Were Kings:* Ulf Andersson**
- 41 Stepak on Chess Photography**
- 46 Bullet Points Solutions**
- 47 Club Directory**

Chess Horizons

Summer 2014
Volume 46, # 3 – 4

EDITOR

Nathan Smolensky
15 Adams St.
Medford, MA 02155
editor@masschess.org

GAMES EDITOR

Grant Xu

ISSN 0147-2569. Published by the Massachusetts Chess Association (MACA), www.masschess.org. Entire contents copyright 2014 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: Mika Brattain
Credit: Tony Cortizas



Letter from the Editor

Nathan Smolensky

Dear Readers,

Well, here we are. After a hectic few months, another double issue has caught us up to where we need to be in terms of content produced. I have been fortunate to get contributions from all around the chess community, which have made this production possible.

So, now what? With Chess Horizons back, the focus shifts to how we can make it better. My first issue was not perfect (see inset) and it's important for me to look closely at my mistakes and learn from them.

And that's something that I can't do without your help. Feedback is more than welcome, it is necessary, and I want to hear your thoughts on this magazine at every level. More than just what content should go into Chess Horizons, I want to know how you want it to be presented. Formatting and minutiae matter to me – I believe in professionalism, and I want to deliver a consistent and reliable product. You may notice some variations in formatting with this issue and the previous one – for the most part, this is intentional. See what you prefer, and let me know.

GOOFS!

Pg. 6 – The game is Fishbein – Aaron, not Ivanov – Aaron as listed.

Pg. 7 – Martha Samadashvili was 9, not 11, at the time of writing.

Pg. 18-19 – the header is wrong.

Pg. 32 – There is a typo in the author line.
Find more? Email editor@masschess.org

As I mentioned, there's a great deal of content lined up for this issue. We welcome back long-time contributor and International Master David Vigorito, and for the second issue

running, local GM Larry Christiansen has also pitched in to the effort. There's plenty to discuss – including fifteen pages of coverage of the Mass Open and the triumph of young Mika Brattain. So please, read, enjoy, and tell me what you think. I wrote it for you, after all.

- Nathan Smolensky, Chess Horizons Editor

MACA

Massachusetts Chess Association
www.masschess.org

OFFICERS

PRESIDENT

Nathan Smolensky
15 Adams St., Medford, MA, 02155
(617) 733 - 6371
nathan.smolensky@gmail.com

VICE PRESIDENT

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

TREASURER

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

CLERK

Nicholas Sterling
60 Webster Street, Needham MA 02494
(781) 733-0849
clerk@masschess.org

COMMITTEE CHAIRMEN

LMCF, Prison Chess: Steve Frymer

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

Education, Web Coordinator: Nicholas Sterling

Fundraising, Promotions, Club Coordinator – Ed Chiu

Webmaster: Tiffany Wang

Publications, Volunteers: Nathan Smolensky



A Letter from the MACA President (Who Happens to be the Editor)

Nathan Smolensky

*A state of affairs in the Massachusetts
Chess Association*

For all the work that goes into the campaign process, it is important to keep in mind that seeking election is a pursuit of means, not ends. My own reelection to the post of MACA president was not my ultimate goal, but a golden opportunity for me to help the organization pursue its goals, and a resonant mandate from the voters to do just that.

What Can MACA Do For You?

And what are MACA's goals? Simply put, to promote the game of chess within the commonwealth, and to meet the demands of this chess community. But the game exists in many forms and places, and the community has many faces, from the child just learning the rules to the professional in pursuit of an international title.

Historically, the most important resource provided by MACA is the tournament, at any level of chess. In regard to our traditional adult and scholastic events, the greatest onus placed upon the board is that of maintaining these events to suit the players, providing the best possible venue and conditions while keeping entries reasonable and incentivizing new participants.

New tournaments are a limited space for growth, as we only have so many directors, and there is a point of saturation for the demands of players. If we offer a new event, it needs to have distinct reason and purpose.

I was pleased with the success of the Spiegel Cup Series, then, as I do feel it does something of worth. By working through our affiliates, it not only avoids placing additional burden on our directing group, but promotes the local clubs and offers players a wider geographic selection of events.

There are adult tournaments worth pursuing as well. The unfortunate state of the campus tournament, a once-proud local institution at schools like B.U. and Harvard, may signify a time for MACA to try to come in and help organize events where the clubs are active, and we certainly have no lack of healthy college chess clubs. We are also looking into the viability of norm events in our state.

Beyond the tournament halls, MACA seeks to promote chess through a variety of other programs, not the least of which is the exciting Early Education Initiative. By providing the resources schools need to create chess programs they can run themselves for the youngest learners – equipment, demo boards, textbooks, supplemental guides, and a support forum – we not only make it easier for after-school clubs to sprout, but we open the door to chess in local schools as a curricular.

What Can You Do For MACA?

The Early Education Initiative also offers those interested the most direct opportunity to get involved. It only takes a few local passionate people to get started,

Beyond that, of course, the best way to support MACA is to give us your feedback and ideas. Let us know what changes you'd like to see – the responsiveness of the organization, and its success, begins in hearing what you have to say. □



Tournament News

Brattain Triumphant at 83rd Mass Open

Nathan Smolensky



GM Alexander Ivanov (above) did not attend the 77th Mass Open, held in 2008. Since missing that tournament, though, the Grandmaster went on to have at least a share of first place in five consecutive iterations of the tournament, an outright domination.

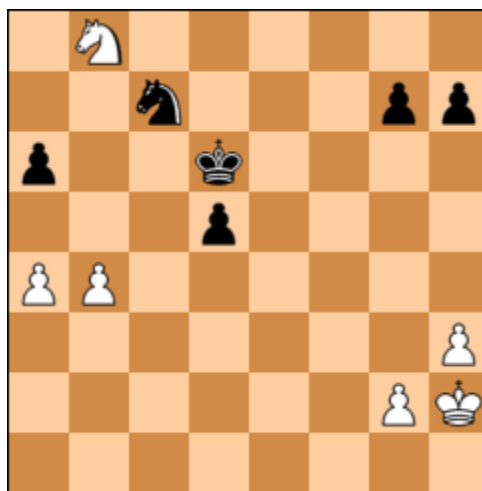
But all reigns must come to an end, and so too did this one, at the climax of one of the more exciting Mass Opens in recent memory. Heading into round 4, GM Ivanov was in the lead as usual after a draw with the second seed in the tournament, IM Igor Foygel. He was due white against the fifteen-year-old Mika Brattain, whom he had beaten in the final round of the 82nd Mass Open to seal that tournament. But this was not to be a successful weekend for the status quo:

GM Alexander Ivanov 2586
Mika Brattain 2415
83rd Mass Open (4)
Caro-Kann [B12]

1. e4 c6 2. d4 d5 3. e5 Bf5 4. Nf3 e6 5. Be2 Nd7 6. O-O Bg6 7. c3 Nh6 8. Bf4 Nf5 9. Nbd2 Be7 10. h3 O-O 11. Nb3 Rc8 12. Qd2 Nh4 13. Nxh4 Bxh4 14. Be3 Be7 15. f4 Nb6 16. Na5 Qc7 17. b4 Be4 18. Bd3 Bxd3 19. Qxd3 f5 20. exf6 Rxf6 21. Rae1 Nd7 22. f5 Qg3 23. Qd2 Bd6



24. Bf4 Bxf4 25. Qxf4 Qxc3 26. Qd6 Nf8 27. fxe6 Nxe6 28. Rxf6 Qxe1+ 29. Rf1 Qe3+ 30. Kh1 Nxd4 31. Nxb7 Re8 32. Nc5 Ne2 33. Kh2 Qe5+ 34. Qxe5 Rxe5 35. Rf3 Nd4 36. Ra3 Re7 37. Rd3 Ne6 38. Nb3 Kf8 39. Na5 Rc7 40. a4 a6 41. Rc3 Ke7 42. Rxc6 Rxc6 43. Nxc6+ Kd6 44. Nb8 Nc7

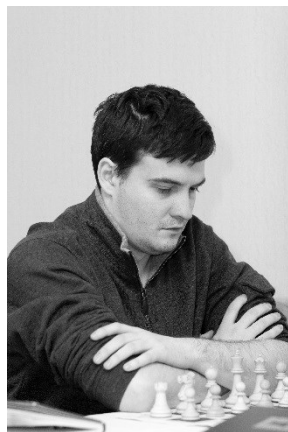


45. Kg3 d4 46. Kf2 Kd5 47. Ke2 Kc4 48. Nc6 Nd5 49. b5 axb5 50. axb5 Nc3+ 51. Kd2 Nxb5 52. Ne5+ Kd5 53. Nf3 Nc7 54.



Ne1 Ke4 55. Nd3 Ne6 56. Nf2+ Kf4 57. Nh1 Nc5 58. Ke2 Ne4 59. Kd3 Ke5 60. Kc4 h6 61. g4 g5 62. Kd3 Kd5 63. Ke2 Kc4 64. Ke1 Kc3

0-1



Brattain's work wasn't done there, of course. But a fifth-round victory over the other reigning co-champion, Robert Perez, left Brattain needing only a draw against Denys Shmelov (left) to guarantee clear first. Shmelov, however,

had taken quite the odd journey to make it to the top board in the last round, having suffered the biggest upset of the championship section in round 1, a loss to Andrew Hoy, whose 2158 rating was 304 points short of Shmelov's.

Positioned firmly behind the 8-ball, Shmelov would have to win his next four games to have a reasonable shot at prizes, but that was exactly what he did, with a victory with the black pieces against a strong master needed along the way (as one would expect):

Charles Riordan 2373

Denys Shmelov 2463

83rd Mass Open (4)

Sicilian, Najdorf [B90]

1. e4 c5 2. Nf3 d6 3. d4 cxd4 4. Nxd4 Nf6 5. Nc3 a6 6. Be3 e5 7. Nb3 Be6 8. h3 Be7 9. Qf3 O-O 10. O-O-O Qc8 11. g4 a5 12. Bb5 Na6 13. g5 Nd7 14. a3 Nc7 15. Bd3 b5 16. Nd5 Bd8 17. Kb1 Qb7 18. h4 a4 19. Nc1 Nc5 20. Nb4 N7a6 21. c3 f5

22. gxf6 Rxf6 23. Qg2 Nxb4 24. cxb4 Nxd3 25. Nxd3 Rg6



26. Bg5 h6 27. f4 hxg5 28. fxg5 Be7 29. Nc1 Rc8 30. Ne2 Bf5 31. Ng3 Bg4 32. Rc1 Rf8 33. Rce1 Bf3 34. Qh3 Rf4 35. Ka1 Bg4 36. Qg2 Qd7 37. Rc1 Bf3 38. Qg1

0-1

With that run and the final-round draw against Brattain, Shmelov would end up sharing 2nd-4th place with GM Ivanov and Christopher Chase.



Elsewhere in the Championship section, eyes were on the talented youth in the building, including visiting New York resident NM David Brodsky (left), one of the top 11-year-olds in the country. Brodsky certainly made his presence

felt at the tournament, earning a draw against the eventual champion in the second round (the only points scored against Brattain in the first five rounds) and against IM Foygel in the eventful fourth round. The



youngster would finish with three points out of six against one of the toughest fields in the tournament, and winning the Most Interesting Game prize in the process, which you can read more about on page 25.

A wild U2100 section ended up being the only adult section without a player earning 5 out of 6 or more. Five players – Luis Baez-Rosario, John Vaughan, Brett Kildahl, Peter Korzeb, and Aashish Welling – finished knotted at the top with 4.5/6. None would reach this finish without going through at least one of the others, leading to a great number of exciting games, including the round 4 showdown between Baez-Rosario and Kildahl, then clamoring for sole control of the three-day section:

Luis Baez-Rosario 2087

Brett Kildahl 2075

83rd Mass Open (4)

Trompowsky Attack [A46]

1. d4 Nf6 2. Bg5 e6 3. Nd2 h6 4. Bh4 c5
5. e3 cxd4 6. exd4 Be7 7. Ngf3 d5 8. Bd3
Nc6 9. c3 O-O 10. Qe2 a6 11. O-O Re8
12. a4 Ng4 13. Bxe7 Qxe7 14. h3 Nf6
15. Ne5 Nxe5 16. dxe5 Nd7 17. f4 Nc5
18. Bc2 a5 19. Rf3 b6 20. Rg3 Ba6 21. Qg4
Qf8 22. h4 Nd7 23. Re1 f5 24. Qg6 Kh8
25. Nf3 Qg8 26. Nd4 Re7 27. Ree3



27... Qe8 28. Nxe6 Nc5 29. Qxf5 Ne4
30. Bxe4 dxe4 31. Rxe7 Rxe7 32. Nxe7
Qe7 33. Nh5 Rf8 34. Nf6 Bb7 35. Qg6 Qg7
36. Qxe7+ Kxe7 37. g4 Rd8 38. Kf2 Rd2+
39. Re2 Rd1 40. Nxe4 Ba6 41. Rd2 Rf1+
42. Ke3 Re1+ 43. Kd4 Bb7 44. Nd6 Bc6
45. Nf5+ Kf8 46. Kc4 Bxa4 47. Rd8+ Kf7
48. Nxe6+ Ke7 49. Rd4 Rb1 50. Nf5+ Ke8
51. Kd5 Bb3+ 52. c4 Rxb2 53. Ke6 a4
54. Ng7+ Kf8 55. Kf6 Kg8 56. g5 Kh7 57.
g6+ Kh6 58. Rd8 a3 59. Rh8#

1-0

The U1800 would have yet another crowded podium, with Sandra Shur, Robert Stewart, Mark David Buckles, and Christopher Estremera sharing tops in the group with 5/6. Impressively, all of these players with the exception of Stewart came in to the tournament with a rating under 1655, and collected over a hundred rating points on their road to victory. A quieter U1500 section was won outright by unrated Rahul Kumar, the only player in the section to garner five points.



As usual, the weekend-long open events were boosted by a series of day-long scholastic sections. Six such tournaments, ranging from K12 U1500 to the K3 U400, were held at the Marlborough Best Western.

A total of 225 players of all ages would make this one of the best-attended state championships on MSA record. □

All photos courtesy Tony Cortizas



The 2014 Hurvitz Cup In (Many) Pictures

Nathan Smolensky



The 2014 Hurvitz Cup was held on April 13th in Boxborough. As is the case year in and year out, it was the largest scholastic event of the year, drawing 166 youngsters from all across the state. The winners:

GRADES 9-12

1st: Lexington High School	3.5/4
=2nd: B.U. Academy	3.0
=2nd: Nobles (Dedham)	3.0

GRADES 6-8

1st: Curtis (Sudbury)	3.5
2nd: R.J. Grey (Acton)	3.0
3rd: Boston Latin School	2.5

GRADES K-5

=1st: Hastings (Lexington)	3.5
=1st: Park (Brookline)	3.5
3rd: Cabot (Newton)	3.0

GRADES K-3

1st: Cabot (Newton)	4.0
=2nd: Gates (Acton)	3.0
=2nd: Driscoll (Brookline)	3.0



So why is the Hurvitz so popular? As with the U.S. Amateur Team tournaments, regularly among the largest chess events in the country, the team format plays a tremendous role, offering many players who would otherwise have little opportunity to compete for championships the ability to do exactly that alongside good friends.

There is a certain warmth to team play, a social and emotional element which cannot be found in most tournaments. That this is a welcoming environment is clear to see through the numbers of new and unrated players who come each year, and though the joyful faces of the participants, particularly those sharing a trophy with their comrades at the end of the day. □

Photos courtesy Tiffany Wang



News in Brief

Nathan Smolensky

MACA election results are in!

Congratulations to new board members Chris Chase, Maryanne Reilly, Dmitry Barash, Frida Kuzmin, Ed Chiu, and Tiffany Wang. For full results, go to masschess.org.

Congratulations, Denys Shmelov! The 2008 Mass Open champion earned his final IM norm at this year's World Open, held during the Independence Day weekend, with an impressive score of 5.5 out of 9 in the country's strongest open field. Also earning an IM norm in Virginia was man of the moment Mika Brattain, who held his own against an unrelenting barrage of titled players from around the world. It was his first such norm.

Qibiao Wang, another Massachusetts representative who tied for 3rd in the tough U2400 section, is also on quite the hot streak. Wang had previously won the U2300 section of the 2014 Chicago Open outright, good for a \$5,000 prize haul.

The Massachusetts Game/60 Championship was held April 27th in Marlborough. IM David Vigorito and Steven Winer shared 1st in the open section with 3.5 points out of 4 each. Sharing 3rd-4th with 3 points apiece were Robert Perez and Carissa Yip, whose 44 rating point haul put her over 2100 for the first time.

In the U2000 section, Robert Holmgren, Michael Isakov, and Michael Yu would tie for tops with 3/4. All three reached new peak ratings in the process. The U1800 and U1600 sections were swept by Varun Palnati and Danila Poliannikov, respectively, while a large U1200 section would have twin clean sheets in David Sigman and James Rao.

Michael Isakov's personal rating record would not last long, however, as he shattered the mark while sharing first in the U2010 section at this year's **19th Annual Bradley Open** in Windsor Locks, Connecticut, held July 18th through the 20th. Isakov's 4/5 tied with five other players, including Massachusetts' Jeremy Bader and Ross Eldridge. Alone atop the open section with a perfect 5/5 was none other than GM Alexander Ivanov.

Southbridge's **Samuel Sevian** earned his second GM norm at a St. Louis invitational event held from May 28th through June 1st. Well on his way to breaking Ray Robson's record for youngest American GM, the 13-year-old has been active in norm tournaments all across the country. He is currently ranked #1 in the world in his age group.



Meanwhile, since her success at the G/60, Carissa Yip has been knocking on the door of youngest female master in USCF history. From the 17th through 21st of July, she participated in the **U.S. Girls' Closed Championship**, run by Relyea Chess in Manchester, New Hampshire. Massachusetts' own Ken Ballou directed.

Lastly, we must sadly mention MACA life member **Donald Sampson** of Holden, who passed away April 14th at the age of 89. The piano teacher and church organist had a chess career of over 50 years. He is survived by six nieces and nephews.

Photo credit: Nita Patel



Bullet Points

GM Larry Christiansen

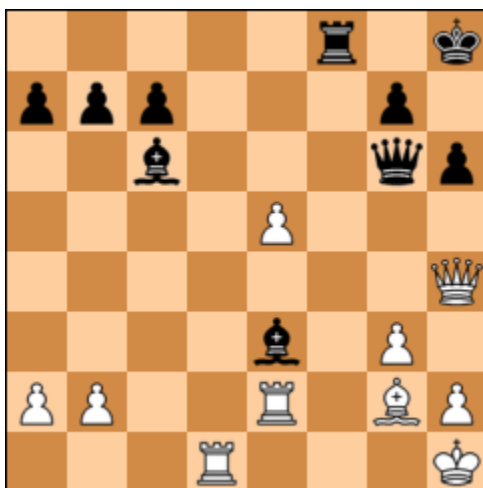
In a new regular feature here at Chess Horizons, 3-time U.S. Champion GM Larry Christiansen of Cambridge offers some remarkable positions encountered while playing the fastest of time controls. Can you find the winning plays? Solutions on p. 46.

1.



White to play and win.

2.



Black to play and win.

3.



Black to play and win.

4.



White to play and win.

5.



White to play and win.



6.



White to play and win.

9.



White to play. Win quickly!

7.



Black to play and win.

10.



Black to play and win.

8.



Black to play and win.



You too can play against GM and three-time U.S. Champion Christiansen on the second Tuesday of every month at South Station. Events run from 5:00 P.M. until 7:00, with new games starting until 6:30. Players of all rank are welcome, but be warned, any brilliancies the GM finds against you may show up here!



Vigorito on Chess

IM David Vigorito

I had not played in a “real” tournament since April of last year. Ok, there are a lot of little local events where I can play King Ivanov over and over, and there’s the Amateur Team tournament in NJ, but I had not played in a normal large Swiss in quite a while. In June I hit the road and played in two events in three weeks – the National Open in my home away from home, Las Vegas, and the D.C. International in Alexandria, VA. Both tournaments were a lot of fun and now it is time for some reflection...

IM David Vigorito (2508)

Richard Beale (2282)

National Open Las Vegas (2)

06.13.2014



Some kind of Semi-Slav had turned into a Catalan of sorts, and I had managed to prevent my opponent from getting in the necessary break with ...c5. My radar was working well and I could sense there should already be a win in the position.

17.Be3

This is fine, but there were two good alternatives.

a) 17.b4 I saw this move, which looks like a blunder at first. 17...Bxf2+ 18.Kf1 Bb6 (the point is that 18...0-0 19.e3± wins the bishop) 19.Bxc6+ Kf8 20.Rd7 Rc8 I saw this far and thought it was not working, but I had to find one more move- 21.Qf3! with a quick mate.

b) 17.Bxc6+! also wins and is even nicer. After 17...Bxc6 18.Be3 White wins back the pawn and Black will not be able to castle. The position is completely winning.

17...Bxe3 18.fxe3?!

This was my idea, but 18.Bxc6+ Kf8 (I saw 18...Bxc6 19.Qxc6+ Kf8 20.fxe3 Qxe3+ 21.Kf1±) but here I missed 19.Rd7 Bxf2+ 20.Kf1 Rb8 and now 21.Qf3! again. My intuition was good but I was not calculating with enough precision. Note that my move was dubious because there was a tactical win. The ugly looking e-pawns are not really a problem because Black is all bottled up.

18...0-0 19.Rd7

White is still clearly better but it's not over

19...Rfd8

This is probably not the best defensive try. 19...Rad8 looked a lot more natural. I intended 20.Rad1 Qb8 21.Rxd8 Rxd8 22.Rd4ΔQc5±

20.Rad1 Qb6 21.Qd4?!

I miscalculated something here. Maintaining the bind with 21.b4± was better.

21...Rxd7 22.Qxd7

Instead 22.Qxb6 Rxd1+ 23.Kf2 Rd7 is not clear. Black is tied up but what can White do.

22...Qxe3+ 23.Kf1

I thought this was just winning with the Bb7 hanging and back rank problems.

23...Qb6



I missed this simple move. Fortunately I still have good compensation. I spent time on 23...f6 24.Qxb7 Rf8 25.Qxc6 fxe5+ 26.Bf3 e4 27.Qxe6+ Kh8 28.Qf7.

24.Qe7 Rf8

Forced.

25.Rd7 Ba8

At first this really annoyed me, but it is probably a mistake. Instead 25...Bc8 26.Rc7 Qd4 27.Bxc6 Qxb2 (27...Qxe5 looks ok for Black though) 28.Qxf8+ was my dream line.

26.b4

White should never lose but I was not completely sure that I could win.

26...a5 27.a3 axb4 28.axb4 h6 29.Bf3

White has some ideas like Bh5.

29...g6

Black had 8 minutes



30.Qc5

I had 21 minutes left and thought myself down to 9. I would prefer to keep some tension but I could not find a good way to make progress. Maybe 30.h4!?

30...Qxc5 31.bxc5 Rb8 32.Ke1 Kg7

Perhaps Black should hold this somehow. 32...b4 33.Kd2 b3 34.Kc1 b2+ 35.Kb1 and then maybe Ra7-a2

33.Kd2 b4 34.Ra7

I was wary of 34.Kc2 Rb5 35.Ra7 Rxc5+ 36.Kb3 Rxe5 37.Rxa8 c5 over the board I was not even sure Black was worse. Also I have the wrong rook pawn, which I was well aware of.

34...g5 35.Be4

I did not want to allow ...Kg6 and ...f6/f5

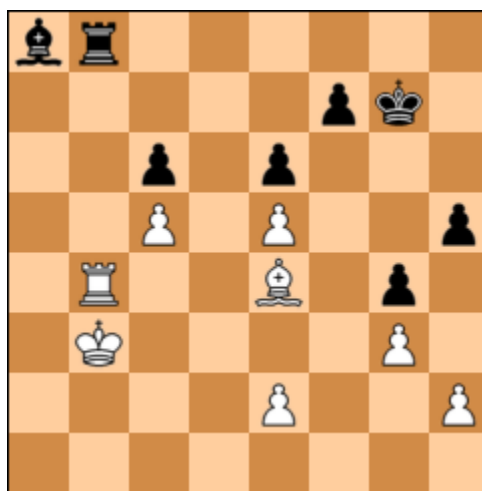
35...Bb7 36.Kc2 g4

This cannot be right – putting another pawn on a light square.

37.Kb3 h5 38.Ra4 Ba8

38...Rd8 with the idea 39.Rxb4 Ba6 looks like a better try

39.Rxb4



39..Rxb4+??

I was shocked by this. A master should never make this move. 39...Rd8 and it's not over.

40.Kxb4 f5 41.Bg2 Kf7 42.Ka5 Bb7

43.Kb6 Bc8 44.e3

The most accurate way to win.

1-0



IM David Vigorito (2508)
Hayk Manvelyan (2342)
National Open Las Vegas (4)
06.14.2014



In this game my opponent played very well for a long time, leaving me just trying to maintain the status quo, waiting for an opportunity.

28.a3 Rac8

I was kind of hoping for this, which I think he did too quickly. Instead 28...Na6 is very comfortable for Black. My opponent gives me a chance to do something I was itching to do – change the nature of the position.

29.axb4 axb4 30.Ne2

I also considered 30.Na4 Rc2 but I had not noticed 31.Bxd4 Rxd2 32.Rxd2 exd4 33.Nb6!

30...Rc2 31.Nxd4! Rxd2 32.Rxd2 exd4 33.Bxd4

It was hard to decide between 33.Bxd4 and 33.Nxg6 computer says take on g6 first...

So what has happened? Did I blunder away my queen? No. In fact, I was very happy here. After being a bit on the defensive for a long time I now though I had good chances of seizing the initiative. This is a typical method in a worse position. Shake things up.

Now he is up material but my position is not passive anymore. He did not adjust well.

33...Re8

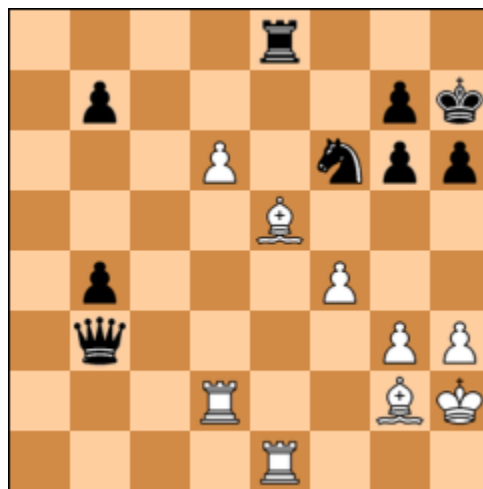
Maybe he should have kept the bishop. 33...Bh7!? 34.e5 (34.f4 Qd8 ♖...Nd7) 34...dxe5 35.Bxe5. With time pressure looming for both of us my greater experience allowed me to deal with the new circumstances better.

34.Nxg6 fxg6 35.e5 dxe5 36.Bxe5 Qf5 37.f4 Kh7 38.d6 Qe6 39.Kh2!

This avoids checks and overprotects the h3-pawn.

39...Qxb3?

A blunder. He had 8 minutes and spent only 2 on this. I was looking at things like 39...Nd7 40.Bd5 Qf5 41.g4 Qf8 42.Bxb7. It seems he should play 39...Rd8 over even 39...h5 which was what I kind of expected.



40.d7!

I had 4 minutes and thought myself down to a few seconds but I picked the right move. I saw 40.Bxf6 Rxe1 41.d7 which looks nice, but I noticed the counter attack 41...Qe3! which completely turns the tables.

40...Nh5

The only chance, but now we were at time control and I had time to work it out

**41.f5!**

This is probably the only move to win, but I had seen it when making my 40th move. Instead

41.dxe8 = Q? Qxg3+ 42.Kg1 Qxe1+ 43.Bf1 Qxd2 gives Black serious counterplay with the b-pawn.

41...Rxe5 42.fxc6+

This drags out the black king so there are not too many complications.

42...Kxg6 43.Rxe5 Qxg3+ 44.Kg1 Qxe5 45.d8Q Qe1+ 46.Bf1 Nf4

If 46...Qg3+ 47.Rg2.

47.Qd6+ Kg5**48.Qc5+**

I find a clean way. One must always remain alert even when the position is completely winning. I even saw that there was still a way to lose: 48.Qxb4 Ne2+! 49.Kg2 (49.Rxe2 Qxb4) 49...Qg3+ 50.Kh1 Qg1#

48...Kg6

If 48...Kh4 49.Qf2+ trades queens.

49.Rd6+

1-0

GM Lazaro Bruzon Batista (2744)

IM David Vigorito (2508)

National Open Las Vegas (5)

06.15.2014

This game was played on my birthday. I believe Bruzon was the highest rated player I had ever faced (2744 USCF and 2694 FIDE). I do not recall ever losing on my birthday, but Black against a near-2700 FIDE was a little too much for me this year.



For the most part, I had been holding my own this game. I also sensed that he was not playing so accurately, as he missed some chances to increase his slight edge. After the game I confirmed these assessments. Here Black has a better bishop and a reasonable position, but it is hard to find a plan.

20...0-0?!

I think I should have waited on this. I kept thinking about pushing my h-pawn but thought it would just be weak, and then my king would have nowhere safe to go and my rooks would be hard to connect. Maybe some waiting move like 20...Rb8!? or 20...Rg8 with the idea ...Kf8 and tuck the king away that way. Now my opponent's head cocked sideways from the queenside to the kingside.

21.g4

Of course.

21...fxg4 22.hxg4

Already I have to be careful to work out a defense. Probably it is just losing.

22...Be7 23.Kg2

I was (correctly) more worried about 23.Kf2 when White's rooks may be able to use h- and g-files.

23...f5 24.Rh1 Nb4!



I played this to disconnect his rooks and protect the d5–pawn.

25.Qb1 a5 26.Rh6

I was more worried about 26.Rh5 over the board while even 26.Kf2! now is good. Already here I noticed the possibility of defence I used on my 29th move.

26...Rf7 27.gxf5

He used 9 of his remaining 12 minutes here

27...exf5 28.Nb5 Qd8 29.Kh1

Stronger was the immediate 29.Nd6!

29...Ra6! 30.Nd6?!

He thought himself down to seconds, but with the 30 second increment this is possible. I had 6 minutes but soon I was living on the increment as well. The computer says he should just play 30.Rh2 Rg6 31.Bxb4 axb4 32.Qxb4±

30...Bxd6 31.cxd6 Qf8 32.Rh2



32...Qxd6?!

Originally I planned 32...Rxd6 33.Bxb4 axb4 34.Qxb4 and maybe this was better (computer says equal).

33.Ng5 Rg7 34.Qxf5 Qf6

Probably best. I had planned 34...h6 35.Nf3 but this is not very good for Black.

35.Qh3

I was realizing that I had to watch for Qc8+ in some cases

35...Qe7 36.Rc1!

I had missed this.

36...Rc6? 37.Rxc6 Nxc6

Maybe 37...bxc6 but I was afraid of 38.Bxb4 (38.Ne6+– here too) 38...axb4 (38...Qxb4 39.Qe6+) 39.a5 (39.Ne6+–)

38.Ne6+–

Missed this.

38...Rf7 39.Qg2+ Kh8 40.Ng5

I was hoping for 40.Qxd5 Nf6 with some small chances.

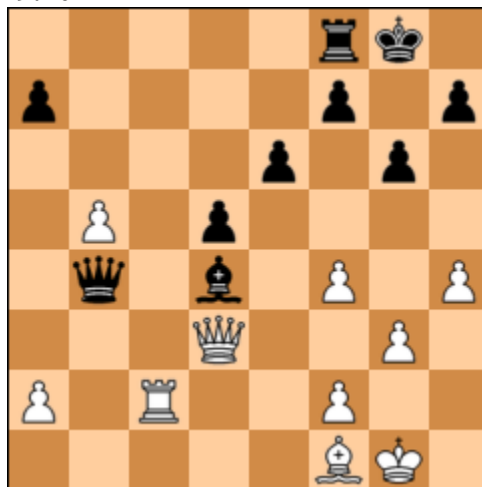
40...Rg7 41.Qxd5 Nf6 42.Qf5 Nb4 43.e4

1–0

After some thought I had to resign. I really did not mind losing this game so much. It was nice to play such a strong player and I realized that I could hang with him a bit. He is tremendously strong, but human after all.

A couple of weeks later, I played him again!

D. Vigorito – L. Bruzon Batista
DC International, Alexandria, VA (8)
06.29.2014





I felt I had done well not to get blown away after something went wrong in the opening. I had managed to escape to a slight worse opposite-colored bishop position. I have always liked these positions, as I feel like when I am better I will win and when I am worse I will draw!

29.Qd2!

I took ten minutes. I was just trying to work out the details and considering what my opponent could do. Black has a slight initiative as his bishop has more scope and his central control is more important than my immobile queenside majority.

29...Qa4 30.Rc6 Bb6 31.Qc2 Qd4 32.a4

So I achieved useful a4 move.

32...Re8

I expected this. Now I bring my bishop to a better post.

33.Bg2 e5 34.fxe5 Rxe5 35.Bf3

I had 11 minutes; he had 10.

35...Re1+

He used 6 here.

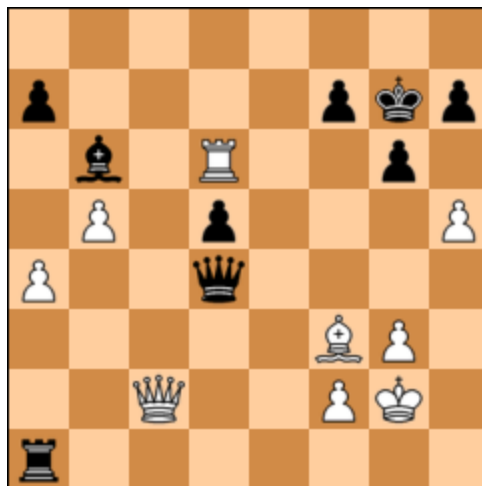
36.Kg2 Ra1

I had seen all this but thought it was harmless.

37.h5

I used 8 of my remaining minutes here. I got very concerned when I saw that my intended 37.Rd6 ran into 37...Qc4 but this isn't even a big deal according to computer because of 38.Qxc4 dxc4 39.Rc6 Ra2 40.Bd5 Rxf2+ 41.Kh3=. It's easy to see that at home. However, even better was 37.Qe2!, which I did not even consider. White even gets the initiative after 37...Rxa4 38.Rd6.

37...Kg7 38.Rd6



38...Qxa4?!

I was worried about 38...Qc4! and now:

a) 39.Qd2 was my intent. I saw 39...Qf1+ 40.Kh2 Bxf2 41.h6+ but I could not calculate it all with no time. It turns out that after 41...Kf8 42.Rd8+ Ke7 43.Qg5+ f6 44.Rd7+! draws.

b) 39.h6+ Kxh6 40.Qd2+ Kg7 41.Rxb6! also draws 41...Qf1+ (41...axb6?? 42.Qb2+) 42.Kh2 axb6 43.Qc3+ and perpetual.

39.Qb2+

I had about 20 seconds and saw this clever way of gaining a tempo. I wanted to avoid 39.Qxa4 Rxa4 40.Rxd5 (I didn't see 40.Bxd5= covering a2) 40...Ra2+.

However, 39.Qe2! (computer) with the idea Qe5+ is very annoying for Black. Then he would have to find the forced 39...Qd4 with 11 seconds on his clock, and even then 40.Rxd5 leaves White with the initiative and a fresh clock.

39...Qd4

I saw 39...Bd4?? 40.Qd2!+- when White's attack is winning. If 40...Ra2 41.h6+.

40.Qxd4+ Bxd4 41.Rxd5

Now there is nothing left for either side to play for.

½-½



Club Spotlight

Wunderkind Yip Sweeps Wachusett Championship

George Mirajanian

Carissa Yip, the 10-year-old female phenom from Andover, formerly of Chelmsford, set two club records in the first half of 2014. Not only she did become the first female to win the club championship in its 55-year-history but she was also the youngest ever to do so (She turns 11 on September 10). Playing in an 8-player round-robin championship from May 7 to June 18, Carissa posted a perfect score of 7-0. Capturing second place with a score of 5-2 was two-time club champion Bruce Felton of Fitchburg. Taking third place with a tally of 4.5-2.5 was 1967 club champion Paul Godin of Bedford. As a result of her performance, Carissa raised her rating to 2174 and was the second player ever to post a perfect score in the club championship, the first being Trevor Bierig of Boston in 2012, although he scored 6-0 and had one game unplayed. Carissa also set a winning-streak record of 21 games in club play.

The Wachusett CC "B" Division Championship, also known as the Consolation Finals, held concurrently with the club championship, drew 27 players. Roger Cappallo of Groton won the event, scoring 6-0 without having to play his final-round game. Kenneth Gurge of Leominster finished in second place with a 5.5-1.5 result and won the top U1800 prize. Winning the top U1600 prize with a 3-4 tally was Laurence O'Rourke of Acton. Also scoring 3-4 and capturing the top U1400 prize was Wayne Steadman of Lunenburg.

Prior to winning the club championship, Carissa Yip posted a perfect score of 5-0 to win the Evert Siiskonen Memorial, held

April 2 to April 30. Tying for 2nd-3rd place in a field of 38 players were Michael Manisy of Otter River and Joseph Bennett of Hubbardston. Both tallied 4-1. The tournament honored the memory of two-time (1963 and 1966) club champion Evert Siiskonen of Fitchburg, who passed away in Finland in March 1993 at age 78.

George Mirajanian 1960

Carissa Yip 2158

WCC Club Championship (4)

Sicilian, Alapin [B22]

1. e4 c5 2. c3 d5 3. exd5 Qxd5 4. d4 cxd4 5. cxd4 Nc6 6. Nf3 Bg4 7. Be2 e6 8. Nc3 Qd8 9. Be3 Nf6 10. h3 Bh5 11. O-O Be7 12. Qb3 Qc7 13. Rac1 O-O 14. Rfd1 Rfd8 15. Rd2 Rac8 16. d5 Na5 17. Qd1 Bxf3 18. gxf3 e5 19. Rdc2 Qb8 20. Nb5 Rxc2 21. Qxc2 Nxd5 22. Bxa7 Qa8 23. Bd3 g6 24. Be4 Nb4 25. Qc7 Nac6



26. a3 Na6 27. Qb6 Bc5 28. Rxc5 Nxc5 29. Qxc5 Rd1+ 30. Kg2 Qd8 31. Qe3 Nxa7 32. Nxa7 Ra1 33. Bc2 Qc7 34. Bb3 Qa5 35. Nc8 Qa6 36. Qxe5 Qf1+ 37. Kg3 Qg1+ 38. Kh4 Qxf2+ 39. Kg5 Rg1+ 40. Kf6 Qh4+

0-1

The Wachusett Chess Club meets Wednesdays in Fitchburg. For more details, see page 47.



Chess Strength and the Power of the First Move

NM Mike Hart

Though long-retired, I often wonder about two questions and their implications:

1. Do Club Players actually win more often when they have White? How does their win rate compare to results for GMs?

2. How often do Club players draw as compared to GMs?

When my wife was doing her Master's in Business at Harvard a few years back, we decided to look into these questions with some formal statistical methods. We analyzed the results from ChessBase 10 for 250 random, representative games by competitors that I termed as "Club Players" (ratings 1605-1625) as well as 507 games by "GMs" (ratings 2595 - 2605).

Table 1: Game Outcome by Rating Category

Result	Club Players	GMs
WIN	94	128
DRAW	71	302
LOSS	85	77
Total	250	507

On Question 1: Table 1 shows that "Club Players" had 179 decisive games (94 wins and 85 losses as White) out of the 250 games played, or 52.5% of the games that were decisive. The 95% confidence interval of the win rate for these 179 games is 45.2% to 59.8%. By comparison, flipping a coin 180 times results in a 95% confidence interval of 77 to 103 "heads". For Club

Players, winning with White is similar to flipping a coin, statistically speaking.

The analysis of the "GM Class" yields a different result; the percentage of wins based on the 507 outcomes shows a win rate of 62.4% in the decisive games with a corresponding 95% confidence of the true rate between 56% and 69%.

On Question 2: Regarding the number of draws in each class, the Club Players had 28.4% (= 71/250) while the GMs had 59.6% (= 302/507). This difference is quite large and the 31.2% gap is statistically significant.

Based on these results, White is significantly advantageous for GMs but not so for Club Players. What does this mean in practical terms for improvement of the club player? My conjecture is that due to positional awareness, GMs can make the advantage of the first move (about +0.17 pawns per Houdini 4.0) tell in their favor. Tactics generally flow from good positions due to space or other positional advantages. It might be preferable for club players to focus their energy on the development of positional skills rather than the fine details of specific openings, for even if club players have a significant advantage in the opening (perhaps as high as a quarter of a pawn)...the game outcome is still fairly random. One can study openings forever to get a small advantage, without the positional sense to go with it, it makes little difference.

Additional details and the complete study can be found in the online version of Chess Horizons.



Club Spotlight

Miles Memorial Major Success

Steven Stepak with annotations by IM David Vigorito

This event was held April 5th at the Boylston Chess Club. For more on the Boylston, check out page 47.



It was an electrifying time. The first instance which I saw the TD close registration because there was no room in the tournament hall to accommodate the number of prospective players. With byes and the insertion of another table, the total enrollment was 55. A record for the Somerville venue.

GM Tony Miles was a character of the professional chess circuit. From playing one tournament game on a stretcher (with a back injury) to responding to Karpov's 1.e4 with the puckish 1... a6!? Tony Miles was his own man. And local GM Larry Christiansen



was a good friend of Tony's. So it was fitting that Larry and Natasha

Christiansen not only guaranteed the \$1,000 prize fund, also gave the introductory pre-tournament remarks. The crowd, players, their parents, friends and siblings were given a treat as Larry told a number of funny

stories about his memories of Tony Miles in action.

The event attracted some top local players: IM David Vigorito, IM Marc Esserman, NM Mika Brattain, NM Almir Dzhumaev (visiting scholar at MIT/Harvard from Moscow) Expert Yang Dai from MIT, NM Lawyer Times, NM Professor Timothy Sage of the Northeastern University Physics Department, FM Steven Winer, NM Farzad Abdi, FM Bill Kelleher, and NM Chris Williams. Not a bad collection of players for a BCC Saturday event, to be sure.



The winner of the event was poised: IM David Vigorito showed the depths of his skills, with black and with white, winning all four of

his games in the Open Section of 24 players, the final deciding game being against his talented student, Mika Brattain.

Mika scored 3 points to share 3-5th place with NM Almir Dzhumaev and Yang Dai. Another critical game of the event occurred in Round 4: FM Steven Winer vs IM Marc Esserman. Things looked pretty even and then an explosion of moves, rapid-fire, produced a win for Esserman when the dust settled, and secured 2nd place in the event for the IM.





In the U1950 Section, with 25 players, Jarrod Tavares and Jeremy Bader each scored 3.5 points to share 1-2nd place.



Above, Jarrod is playing black vs Eric Feng, while Jeremy has the black pieces against Seth Lieberman in Round 3. Paul Mishkin and Eric Feng shared 3-4th place with 3 points.

Also notable in the U1950 Section was seven-year-old Derek Jin, who scored 2 points to attain a rating of 1471.

In the U1650 Section there were 6 players. Jeffrey Weinstein won the day with 3.5 points. Bernie Xu and Boshen Li scored 2.5 points for a share of 2-3rd place. Alex Brown was 2 for 4 and a rating hike of +59 to 867.

The prize money distribution was as follows: IM Vigorito: 1st place \$300. IM Esserman: \$180 2nd place. U2100 Class prize: Carissa Yip, Conway Xu, Luis-Baez-Rosario and Aditya Prasetyo, \$25 each. U1950 Tavares and Bader, 1-2nd place: \$160 each. U1650 Section, Weinstein: \$100 1st place. [Let it be duly noted that Natasha and Larry Christiansen also generously paid the appearance fees for any GM or IM who showed up and played all 4 rounds.]

The event was run smoothly by Bernardo Iglesias.

J. Timothy Sage 2174
IM David Vigorito 2504
Tony Miles mem BCC (3)
04.05.2014

This was the only game were I was in any kind of trouble.



White has built up an impressive position and now he is ready for a breakthrough.

17.g4 fxg4

Black cannot play the thematic counter 17...e4? because after 18.gxh5 exd3 19.h6 White wins a piece.

18.fxg4 Nf4 19.Bxf4 exf4 20.Qxf4?!

White believes he is cashing in with a well-deserved pawn, but now Black has a shot. Better was 20.g5! Nh5 21.Bxh7!± (I was less worried about 21.g6 Qf6 22.gxh7 Rae8 with some counterplay)



20...Nxd5! 21.Qxf7 Rxf7 22.cxd5



The best try. If 22.Nxd5 Rxf2 and b2 is under fire.

22...Rxf2 23.Re7 Bb5

Black has good play now but White is not worse.

24.Bf5 Rxb2

25.Rge1!

An excellent move! I was worried about this, but I was hoping my opponent would not be able to resist the pawn. If 25.Rxc7 Re8 and Black can be happy. Now, however now it is not so easy to find a move for Black. I used 15 of my remaining 23 minutes. Tim had 17 minutes left.

25...Bf6

I figured out the right idea, which was difficult enough, but I did not execute it in the right way. Better was 25...Rf8 26.Rxc7 h5 with the idea 27.Ree7? hxg4! 28.Rxg7 Rxf5—+ and Black's attack is much stronger.

26.Rxc7 Rf8 27.Rxb7 h5?

Now this just does not work. 27...Bc4 was a better try.



28.a4?

My opponent was looking desperately for a forcing line but this is very bad, as it allows my bishops to show their power. I was worried about 28.Nxb5 axb5 (28...Bxb2+ 29.Kb1 axb5 30.Rh7+ Kg8 31.Ree7 (with the idea) Be6 31...Rxf5 (forced) 32.gxf5 Be5 33.Rb7+—) 29.Rxb5 when Black clearly has no winning chances. The computer says that Black can draw with 29...Bh4! but Black has

to figure it all out over the board with a ticking clock... It turns out White can just play 28.gxh5! after all, as after 28...Bg5+ (28...Bxc3 29.Rh7+ Kg8 30.Rg1+) 29.Kb1 Rxf5 30.Nxb5 wins, as Black cannot recapture because of the mate on e8.

28...Bc4 29.Ne4?

Now facing problems, Tim used 6 of his remaining 7 minutes here.

29...Be5?

This a mistake because of a little tactical detail. Instead 29...Bg7 is good for Black.

30.b3?

Collapse. Instead 30.Rh7+ Kg8 31.Rxh5 Rxh5 32.Be6+! and White survives

30...Bxd5

Now White's position falls apart.

31.Rh7+ Kg8 32.Rg1 Rxf5 33.gxf5+ Kxh7

34.Ng5+ Kh6 35.b4 Bf4+ 36.Kd1 Bb3+

37.Ke1 Bd2+

0-1

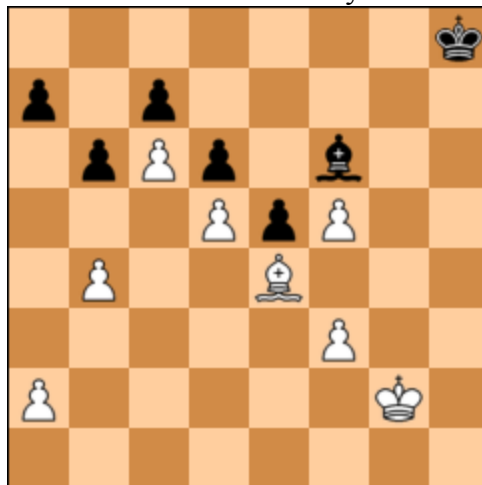
IM David Vigorito 2504

Mika Brattain 2412

Tony Miles mem. BCC (4) 05.04.2014

Vigorito,D

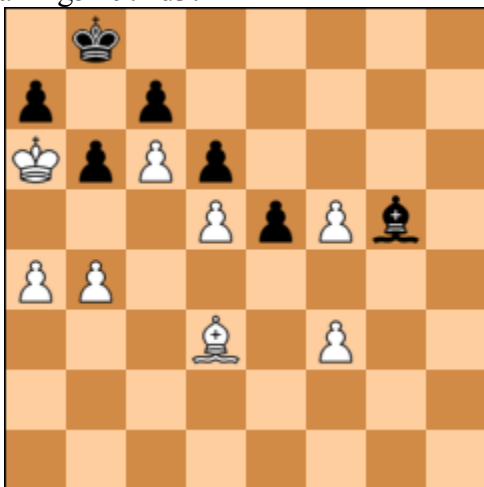
Mika and I were each at 3-0, but Esserman and Times were right behind us with 2.5. I felt I really had to push for a win because a draw could result in a four way tie for first.



This ending may look like a dead drawn, but it is not so easy for Black.

**42.Bd3**

Another idea is to rush the king to the queenside: 42.Kf2 Kg7 43.Ke2 Kf8 44.Kd3 Ke7 45.Kc4 Kd8 (45...a6! 46.a4 Bg5 47.Kb3 b5 probably holds) 46.Kb5 Kc8 47.Ka6 Kb8 48.a4 Bg5 49.Bd3!



White has a winning plan here: Bf1–h3–g4–h5–f7–e6 locking in the black king followed by running the king from a6 to g6! The Black bishop cannot do much as it needs to guard against the advance of the f5–pawn.

42...a5?

this probably loses. Better was 42...Kg7.

43.bxa5 bxa5 44.Kf2

It turns out that the immediate 44.a4! is necessary.

44...Kg7

44...a4!= Black needs the a5–square for the bishop

45.Ke2 Bg5

45...a4!

46.a4!

Finally!

46...Bc1

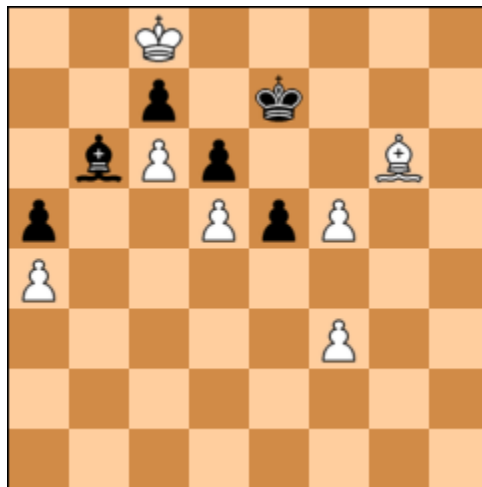
At first I saw this ...Bc1–a3–c5–b6 and thought it was just a draw, but it's not...

47.Be4

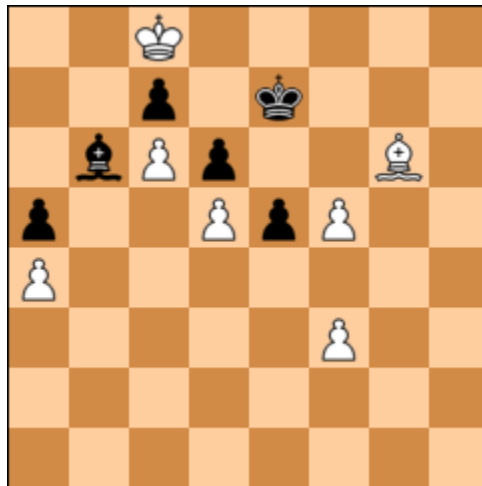
47.Ba6± is the only move the computer likes, claiming everything else is equal

47...Ba3 48.Kd3 Bc5 49.Kc4 Kf6 50.Kb5 Bb6 51.Ka6 Ke7 52.Kb7 Kf6 53.Kc8 Ke7 54.Bd3 Ke8 55.Bf1 Ke7 56.Bh3 Kf6

56...Ke8 57.Bg4 Ke7 58.Bh5 Kf6 59.Bg6 Ke7



This looks like a fortress but White wins with the triangulation 60.Kb8 (or 60.Kb7 Kd8 61.Kb8 Ke7 62.Kc8) 60...Kd8 61.Kb7 Ke7 62.Kc8



Black is in a zugzwang similar to the game. Note that if his a-pawn was on a3 (or if both a-pawns were gone) Black could simply play his bishop back and forth from b6 to a5. Here he has to give way.

57.Kd8 Kf7 58.Bg4 Kf6 59.Kd7 Kf7 60.Bh5+ Kf6 61.Bg6 e4 62.fxe4 Kg5 63.Ke7 Bd4 64.Ke6 Kf4 65.e5 Bxe5 66.Kd7

1–0



Most Interesting Games at the 83rd Mass Open

IM James Rizzitano

The selection of a most interesting game prize is by definition a subjective activity. An interesting game in the eyes of one player could appear to another to be a case of an opening blunder or an exercise in simple technique. It was important to me to evaluate games in the context of their rating section, and in the lower sections I sought to identify games in which the winner exceeded my expectations for a player of that level. In each of the winning selections, a player rose far above his or her rating and played as well as he or she could, often showcasing great talent in the process. The criteria for the Championship section were slightly different – there I was looking for the best-played game featuring at least one outstanding or difficult-to-find idea.

I did not know the names or ratings of the players, only the section in which the games were played. Also, I did not look at the tournament crosstable until after I sent my selections to the editor. I played through every game submitted at least three times to narrow the field for that section, then I spent some time analyzing candidate games to make a selection.

I was not particularly concerned with the opening play in the Under 1500 section, and the winning game in this section was highlighted by strong middlegame play and nice attacking skill. For a stretch starting at the ninth move, White plays far above his rating to generate a crushing kingside attack.

Andrew The 1476
David Tianyi Zhou 1392
83rd Mass Open (4)
05.25.2014
Queen's Pawn Game [D00]

1. d4 d5 2. e3

White plays a conservative second move which could lead to a Stonewall Attack or a Colle System.

2... Nc6 3. Bd3

White should play 3. f4 if he is intent upon playing the Stonewall Attack.

3... Nf6

Black can exploit White's inaccuracy by playing 3... e5! with easy development and an equal position.

4. f4 Bg4 5. Nf3 e6

A sound alternative is to chase White's light-squared bishop with 5... Nb4!? 6. Be2 Bf5! (forcing the white knight offside to protect the c-pawn) 7. Na3 e6 8. c3 Nc6 9. Nb1 Bd6 10. O-O O-O with comfortable equality for Black.

6. O-O Bd6 7. Nbd2 Qe7 8. c3 O-O
9. Qc2!

I like the way White plays the middlegame over the next few moves - he unpins his knight and occupies the outpost on e5.

9... Kh8?

Black should seize the opportunity to exchange White's potentially dangerous light-squared bishop by playing 9... Bf5! 10. Bxf5 exf5 11. Ne5 (11. Qxf5? Qxe3+ 12. Rf2 Qxf4 and Black has won a pawn) 11... Qe6 with an equal game.

10. Ne5! Bh5 11. Ndf3 Bg6 12. Nxg6+ hxg6 13. Ne5

White's play makes a powerful impression - he has exchanged Black's light-squared bishop and built up kingside pressure.



13... Bxe5 14. fxe5 Nd7



15. e4!

Excellent - White frees his dark-squared bishop and opens up the position for his pair.

15... dxe4 16. Bxe4 Nb6 17. Qd3 Rfd8

Relatively best is 17... Kg8 18. Qg3, still with a crushing advantage for White.



18. Qh3+

Not bad, but White misses the opportunity to initiate a mating attack with 18. Rxf7!! Qxf7 (18... Nxe5 19. Qh3+ wins) 19. Bxg6 Qd7 (19... Nxe5 20. Qh3+ Kg8 21. Qh7+ Kf8

22. Bxf7 Nxf7 23. b3 and White wins)
20. Qh3+ Kg8 21. Qh7+ Kf8 22. Qh8+ Ke7
23. Bg5#

18... Kg8 19. Qg4

Also strong is the rook lift 19. Rf4! intending to play Rh4 with a mating attack.

19... Rd7 20. Bg5 Qf8

Black is also busted after 20... Qe8 21. Rf3.

21. Bxg6! Nxe5

Black sacrifices a piece as there is no adequate defense to the threat of Qh5.

22. dxe5 Qc5+ 23. Kh1 Qxe5 24. Bc2

Another way is 24. Rxf7! Rxf7 25. Qh5 with a mating attack.

24... Nd5 25. Qh4 g6 26. Rae1 Qg7 27. Bb3 Ne7 28. Bf6 Qh7 29. Qg5 Nf5 30. Bc2 Qh5 31. Qxh5 gxh5 32. Bxf5 exf5 33. Rxf5 Rd6 34. Bd4 Re6 35. Ref1 Rf8 36. Rxb5 Re2 37. Rh8#

1-0

The winning game in the Under 1800 section featured steady play by the winner – he obtained an opening edge and he was able to increase his advantage and bring the point home:

Michael Mi 1696

Yuanzhe Wang 1521

83rd Mass Open (1)

05.24.2014

Sicilian, Dragon Variation [B70]

1. e4 c5 2. Nf3 d6 3. d4 cxd4 4. Nxd4 Nf6 5. Nc3 g6 6. Bd3

White's most challenging line to combat the Sicilian Dragon is the Yugoslav Attack beginning with 6. Be3 Bg7 7. f3.

6... Nc6 7. Nb3 Bg7 8. Be3?!



White should safeguard his king with 8. O-O - now his dark-squared bishop is a target.

8... Ng4

Better is the thematic central break 8... d5! 9. O-O (9. exd5 Nxd5 10. Nxd5 Qxd5 11. O-O Bxb2 12. Rb1 Bg7 and Black has won a pawn.) 9... dxe4 10. Nxe4 Nd5! 11. Bc1 Ndb4 with slight edge for Black.

9. Qd2?!

Relatively best is 9. Bc1 to preserve the dark-squared bishop.

9... Nxe3 10. Qxe3 O-O 11. f3?

This is an unnecessary pawn move which leaves White extremely vulnerable along the g1-a7 diagonal. 11. O-O is safest.

11... Be6

Another idea is 11... a5!? to soften White up on the queenside.

12. Nd2 Bd4!

Excellent - Black utilizes his bishop pair to seize the critical g1-a7 diagonal and prevent White from castling kingside.

13. Qe2 Qa5 14. Ndb1



14... d5

Not a bad move, but Black misses the opportunity to end the contest immediately with the direct 14... Qb4! Leaving no adequate defense to the threat of ...Qxb2)

15. Qd2 dxe4 16. fxe4 Qb6

Another reasonable idea is 16... f5!? to open lines on the kingside.

17. b3 h5 18. Na4 Qa5

Black can retain queens with 18... Qc7 but the game continuation is fine as White's pieces are awkwardly placed.

19. Qxa5 Nxa5 20. c3 Bg7 21. O-O b6

Another idea is 21... Rfd8 22. Nc5 Bc8 23. Be2 b6 24. Nd3 Bb7 and White is being pushed around.

22. Na3 Rfd8 23. Bc2 Bd7! 24. Nb1 Rac8 25. Rf3 b5! 26. Nb2 Bg4 27. Rf1 Bxc3 28. Nxc3 Rxc3 29. Bd3 a6

Objectively stronger here or on the next move is 29... Rdx3 30. Nxd3 Rxd3 with a clear edge for Black as the two minor pieces are superior to the rook, but the game continuation is safer.

30. Rac1 Rdc8 31. Rxc3 Rxc3 32. e5 Nc6 33. Re1 Nb4 34. Bb1 e6

Black can also win with the unusual combination 34... Nxa2!? 35. Bxa2 Rc2



36. Rb1 Bf5 and despite his extra piece White is helpless against the threat of ...Rd2.

35. h3 Bf5 36. a3 Bxb1 37. Rxb1 Rxb3!? 38. axb4 Rxb4 39. Ra1 Rxb2 40. Rxa6 b4 41. Rb6 b3 42. Kf1 Rb1+ 43. Ke2 b2 44. Kd2

No better is 44. Kd3 h4 45. Kc3 Rc1+ 46. Kxb2 Rg1 and Black picks up the g2-pawn as in the game.

44... Rg1 45. Rxb2 Rxb2+ 46. Kc3 Rxb2 47. Kxb2 Kg7 48. Kc3 g5 49. Kd4 Kg6 50. Ke4 f5+ 51. exf6 Kxf6 52. Kf3 Kf5

0-1

The winning game in the Under 2100 section could easily have been played in the Championship section. The winner demonstrated a nice feel for the initiative by attacking on the queenside and, despite an inaccuracy in the middlegame, he finished off his opponent by shifting to the kingside for a nice attack.

**Michael Isakov 1844
Coby O' Young 1810
83rd Mass Open (3)
05.25.2014
QGD, Ragozin [D38]**

1. d4 d5 2. c4 e6 3. Nc3 Bb4!? 4. Nf3

Another line is 4. cxd5 exd5 5. Bf4 c5 6. e3 c4!? 7. Be2 Nc6 8. Nf3 Nge7 9. O-O O-O with a balanced game in Heberla-Wojtaszek, Polish Team Ch., Warsaw 2014.

4... Nf6

The game has transposed into a Queen's Gambit Declined Ragozin Variation.

5. Bg5 O-O 6. e3 h6 7. Bh4

White can also play for rapid piece development with 7. Bxf6 Qxf6 8. Rc1 dxc4 9. Bxc4 c5 10. O-O cd 11. Ne4 Qf5 12. Ng3

Qa5 13. exd4 Nc6 with a balanced game, Gareev-Kacheishvili, Las Vegas 2013.

7... Re8?!

A mysterious rook move - the most popular response is 7... Nbd7.

8. cxd5

I prefer the immediate 8. Bd3, as opening the e-file only justifies Black's 7th move.

8... exd5 9. Bd3 Bg4 10. O-O c6?

Now Black runs into some tactical problems because of his unprotected dark-squared bishop - relatively best is 10... Bxc3 11. bc Nbd7 12. Rb1 with a slight edge for White thanks to his healthy bishop pair.

11. Qb3!

The queen move exploits Black's vulnerability on the queenside. White's play in the early middlegame is very incisive beginning with this move. Now 11... Bxc3 runs into the intermezzo 12. Qxb7 Nbd7 13. bxc3 with a healthy extra pawn for White.

11... Qa5 12. Bxf6!

Correctly judging that the opening of the g-file will favor White's superior development.

12... Bxf3 13. gxf3 gxf6 14. a3! Bxc3 15. Qxb7 Bxb2



16. Kh1?



White has been playing strong master-level chess so far, but here he overlooks the most direct path to victory with 16. Rab1! Nd7 (16... Na6 17. Rxb2 Nc7 18. Kh1 gives White a strong attack, e.g., 18... Qxa3 19. Qxc7 Qxb2 20. Rg1+ Kf8 21. Qd6+ Re7 22. Bh7 followed by a quick checkmate.) 17. Qxd7 Qc3 18. Qf5 and White has a decisive advantage in view of Black's hopelessly exposed king.

16... Qb6 17. Qxa8 Bxa1?

Black should protect his rook and try to trap the white queen by playing } 17... Rf8!, although White can counter with 18. Rac1! Bxc1 19. Rxc1 Qb2 20. Rf1 Qxa3 21. Bf5 with a clear edge for White.

18. Rxa1 Qc7

The aggressive 18... Qb2 backfires after 19. Rg1+ Kf8 20. Bh7! with a mating attack.

19. Rb1 a5 20. Rb7 Qd8



21. Qa7

The immediate 21. Bg6 Nd7 (21... fxg6 22. Qa7) 22. Qa7 also finishes off the game in style.

21... Rf8 22. Bg6! Qe8

The bishop is immune from capture on account of 22... fxg6 23. Rg7+ Kh8 24. Rh7+ Kg8 25. Qg7#.

23. Re7 Qxe7

Mate quickly follows 23... Qd8 24. Rxf7.

24. Bh7+ Kxh7 25. Qxe7

The white queen is too much for the rook and knight. Well played!

1-0

This leaves the Championship section, the most difficult to judge - there were at least a half-dozen very interesting games. I ultimately selected one in which the winner offered a courageous and startling rook sacrifice to rip open his opponent's king position. The sacrifice was declined, but the winner followed up with a nice mating attack nonetheless. The winning idea would have been very difficult to calculate to the end with any degree of certainty, and this is what tipped the scales in favor of this exciting and well-played game.

David Brodsky 2206

Agustin Garcia 1976

83rd Mass Open (1)

05.24.2014

Sicilian, Scheveningen, Classical [B85]

1. e4 c5 2. Nf3 e6 3. d4 cxd4 4. Nxd4 Nf6 5. Nc3 d6 6. Be2 a6 7. O-O Be7 8. f4 Qc7 9. Be3 O-O 10. g4

This is a typical move in this line - White initiates a kingside attack by driving the black knight away from that theater.

11... Nc6 11. g5 Nd7 12. a4 Re8 13. Kh1 Rb8 14. Bf3 Nxd4 15. Bxd4 b6 16. Bg2 Bb7 17. Qh5 g6 18. Qh3

And we are still in a known theoretical position.

18... e5?

This pawn move is the decisive mistake because Black's kingside is too loose. Black must play 18... Bf8 with a difficult position,



e.g. 19. f4 Ne5 20. Rf4! Qd8 21. Rh4! Qxg5 22. Bxe5 dxe5 23. fxg6 fxg6 24. Rxh7 Bg7 25. Rh4 looks good for White because he can quickly double rooks along the g-file.

19. fxe5 dxe5



No better is 19... Nxe5 20. Bxe5 dxe5 21. Rxf7!! and White wins.

20. Rxf7!! Nf8

The black king will quickly perish in the center after 20... Kxf7 21. Qxh7+ Ke6 22. Bh3+ Kd6 23. Qxg6+ Bf6 (23... Nf6 24. gxf6 Rg8 25. Qf5 exd4 26. Nd5! wins) 24. Be3 Red8 25. Rd1+ Kc6 26. Qf7 Nc5 27. Qxf6+ Rd6 28. Nd5! a5 (28... Rxf6 29. Nb4#) 29. Qxe5 and White wins.

21. Qg3 Kxf7

Refusing the rook is also hopeless after 21... Nd7 22. Raf1 with an iron grip on the kingside.

22. Bxe5 Qc5 23. Rf1+ Kg8 24. Qf4

Black is up a rook, however, he is unable to defend the f7-square.

24... Qc4

24... Bf6 25. Bxb8 and White wins.

25. b3



More accurate would have been 25. Bxb8! Nd7 26. Nd5 Bxd5 27. exd5 Qxf4 28. Bxf4 and White has decisive material advantage.

25... Qe6?

The only chance is

25... Bxg5 26. Qxg5 Qc5 27. Nd5! Bxd5 28. exd5 Rb7 29. Qf6 Rxe5 (the only defense against Qh8 mate) 30. Qxe5 Rf7 31. Rxf7 Kxf7 32. Be4 still with an extra pawn and a clear edge for White.

26. Bh3!

Black must give up his queen to prevent checkmate. A very impressive attack!

1-0

Editor's note: Perhaps due in part to IM Rizzitano's criteria of playing above rating level, this year's group of winners had one thing in common – they were all juniors! Congratulations to Spiegel stalwarts Andrew The and Michael Isakov, teenager Yuanzhe Wang, and the 11-year wunderkind David Brodsky, whom you can read more about in the tournament recap.

Many thanks to Walter Champion for again generously donating the fund for these prizes, which continue to add a level of excitement to the state's flagship tournament.



Grant X. Marks the Spot

Mass Open Bonanza Redux!

NM Grant Xu

Welcome to NM Grant Xu's roundup of local games and the critical decisions and plans which define them. Once again, Grant will be focusing on a slew of exciting games from MACA's flagship tournament, the 83rd Massachusetts Open.

Thomas Keegan 1870
James Todhunter 1841
83rd Mass Open (3)
Caro-Kann - Exchange [B13]

1. e4 c6 2. d4 d5 3. ed cd 4. Bd3 Qc7?!

This seems a little premature. Black should either play Nf6 or Nc6 before putting his queen here.

5. Nf3 Bg4 6. h3 Bxf3 7. Qxf3 e6 8. Nc3 Nf6 9. Bf4

White is ahead a lot in development and continues to gain time by attacking the misplaced queen combined with various threats related to Nb5. 9. Nb5 immediately is a possibility as well, probably even stronger than Bf4. 9... Qa5+ 10. Bd2 Qb6 11. Bf4 Na6 12. c3 Be7 13. O-O O-O 14. a4 is highly uncomfortable for Black.

9... Qa5 10. O-O Be7?

10... Nc6 11. Qe3 (11. Nb5 Rc8 12. Nd6+ Bxd6 13. Bxd6 Nxd4 14. Qg3 Rg8 15. Rfe1 Ne4 16. Bxe4 dxe4 17. Ba3 Nxc2 18. Rac1 Rd8) 11... a6 12. Ne2 Be7 13. c3±

11. Nb5! Na6 12. Nd6+ Bxd6 13. Bxd6 Nb4 14. Qg3 Rg8 15. Bc7

White misses the very difficult-to-see tactic 15. Bxh7! Nxh7 16. Qb3

15... Qa4 16. b3 Qd7 17. Be5 Nxd3



18. Bxf6!?

18. cxd3! and the rook invasion to c7 is inevitable.

18... Nb4 19. c3 Nc6 20. c4 Ne7 21. Bxe7 Kxe7

21... Qxe7 22. cxd5+-

22. cxd5 Qxd5 23. Rac1 Rad8

23... Rac8 24. Rc7+ Rxc7 25. Qxc7+ Kf6 26. Rc1 g5 27. Qe5+ Qxe5 28. dxe5+ Kxe5 29. Rc7±

24. Rc7+ Rd7 25. Rfc1 f6?? 26. Rxd7+ Kxd7 27. Qc7+ Ke8 28. Qc8+ Kf7 29. Rc7+

1-0

Chris Williams 2274
Parker Montgomery 1983
83rd Mass Open (1)
Ruy Lopez, Worrall Attack [C86]

1. e4 e5 2. Nf3 Nc6 3. Bb5 a6 4. Ba4 Nf6 5. Qe2 Be7 6. O-O b5 7. Bb3 O-O 8. a4 Rb8 9. axb5 axb5 10. Nc3 b4 11. Nd5 Nxd5 12. exd5 Nd4 13. Nxd4 exd4 14. d3

A rare line, and it seems that White has an easier game to play. He has two open files and targets on d4 and b4. Black must defend



these points and make sure White's light-squared bishop is not unleashed.

14... c5?!

14... Bc5 15. Re1 d6 seems relatively best.

15. Re1!?

15. dxc6 dxc6 16. Bf4 Bd6 17. Bxd6 Qxd6 18. Rfe1±

15... Bf6 16. d6!

Now life for Black is very difficult. The strong d6 pawn helps constrict the Black pieces and also supports some tactical ideas.

16... Bb7 17. Bf4 Qb6 18. Qg4 Bc6 19. Re7! Rbc8 20. Rae1 Qb8 21. h4 Qa8 22. R1e5



It's quite aesthetically appealing for White to proceed like this, leaving both rooks hanging and making a mockery of Black's f6 bishop. However, Be5 would have been stronger - 22. Be5 Bxe5 23. R1xe5 and after Rg5 the various threats on g7, g6, and f7 become unstoppable. What was played in the game was, of course, still winning.

22... Ba4 23. Rg5 Bxb3 24. Rxg7+ Kh8 25. Be5 Bxe5 26. Rxe5 f5 27. Qg5

27. Ree7 is another option, after which follows 27... Rf7 28. Qg3 Re8 29. Qe5 Rxe7 30. dxe7 Rxg7 31. e8=Q+ Qxe8 32. Qxe8+ Bg8 33. Qf8+-

27... Rf7 28. Rxf7 Bxf7 29. Qf6+ Kg8 30. Rxf5 Rf8 31. Rxc5 Qa1+ 32. Kh2 Qxb2 33. Qg5+ Kh8 34. Qe7 Kg8 35. Rg5+ Bg6 36. h5

1-0

Gavin Randolph 1328

Alon Trogan 1423

83rd Mass Open (3)

Pirc, Classical [B08]

1. d4 d6 2. e4 Nf6 3. Nc3 g6 4. Nf3 Bg7 5. Bc4 O-O

5... Nxe4 6. Bxf7+ Kxf7 7. Nxe4 Rf8 8. O-O Kg8 9. d5±

6. d5 c6 7. Bg5?!

This move allows Black queenside expansion and the demolition of White's center. In addition, White doesn't follow up his idea logically with Qd2 and 0-0-0. 7. a4 is the most natural move, preventing b5.

7... Qa5!?

b5 is thematic after c6 in this type of system, so this move is inaccurate. 7... b5! 8. Bd3 b4 9. Ne2 (9. Na4 cxd5 10. exd5 Qa5 11. c4 bxc3 12. Nxc3 Nxd5) 9... cxd5 10. exd5 Bb7 11. c4 bxc3 12. Nxc3 Nbd7 13. O-O (13. Bc4 Rc8 14. Bb3 Ba6) 13... Nxd5 and Black is up a pawn.

8. O-O Bg4

Black had the opportunity to play b5 again, but did not.

9. h3 Bd7 10. Re1 h6 11. Bxf6 Bxf6 12. e5!

Breaking open the center in an attempt to exploit Black's lagging development.



12... Bg7 13. Qd2 b5 14. Bb3 c5 15. e6 Bc8 16. exf7+ Rxf7 17. a3

Timid. Why not push the pawn two squares?
17. a4 b4 18. Nd1 Nd7 19. Qd3 g5 20. Ne3±
17... Nd7

17... c4 locking the bishop in is also a possibility. 18. Ba2 Bxh3 19. gxh3 Rxf3 20. Rxe7 Na6 21. Qe2 Rf5 22. Qe6+ Kh8 23. Ne4±

18. Nh4 Ne5 19. f4 Bf6 20. Rf1!?

20. fxe5 Bxh4 21. Qxh6 Bf2+ 22. Kh1 Bf5
23. Re2 Bd4 24. exd6 exd6 25. g4 looks
better for White, although Black still has
some tricks with the rook and bishop pair
(e.g. Rh7)

20... Bxh4

20... Nc4! 21. Bxc4 bxc4 22. Qe1 (22. Nxb6 Bf5, 22. Nf3 Rb8) 22... Rb8 23. Rb1 Rxb2 24. Rxb2 Bxc3?)

21. fxe5 Bg5 22. Qe2 Rxf1+ 23. Qxf1?

This recapture doesn't make much sense to me. Rxfl is much more natural and brings another piece into the game.

23... Qb6 24. Qf2 Bf5?!

Better is 24... Bd7. The bishop is forced here anyway, so this saves time.

25. g4 Bd7 26. Ba2?

A purposeless move, when developing the rook again was necessary. Now Black crashes through. Notice how the White king's only defender ends up being the White queen, who can't do much anyway.

26... Rf8 27. Qe2 c4+ 28. Kh1 Rf2 29. Qe4 Bf4 30. Kg1 Rh2+ 31. Kf1 Qf2#

0-1

IM Igor Foygel 2524
Christopher Chase 2390
83rd Mass Open (6)
Robatsch [B06]

1. e4 g6 2. d4 Bg7 3. Nc3 d6 4. Be3 a6
5. Qd2 Nd7 6. f4 b5 7. Nf3 Bb7 8. Bd3 Rc8
9. a3 c5

So far typical cagey play by Chase. Despite White's lead in development, this intuitive move expands on the queenside and undermines White's center, resulting in good piece activity for Black.

10. dxc5

10. d5 Ngf6 11. O-O Ng4

**10... Nxc5 11. O-O Nf6 12. Bd4 Ne6
13. Bf2 Ng4**

A strong move that forces the exchange of White's dark-squared bishop (because of Qb6+) and increases pressure on the h8-a1 diagonal.

14. f5

Considering the rest of the game, this looks like it just opens up lines for Black's pieces, and in particular the two bishops. However, other attempts are not great either, e.g. 14. Kh1 Nxf2+ 15. Rxf2 Bxc3 16. bxc3 Nc5+, where Black's position is pleasant as c3 and e4 are targets and Black's pieces are more active.

14... gxf5 15. exf5 Bh6 16. Qe1 Nf4



With the threat of Bxf3 and Nh3+

17. Ne4 Nxd3?!

Black's knight was much stronger than White's bishop, and it seems dubious to trade off an attacking piece. 17... Rg8 18. Bd4 Ne3! 19. g3 (19. Qxe3 Nh3+; 19. Bxe3 Nxe2) Bxe4 20. Bxe4 Nh3+ 21. Kh1 Rg4 22. Bd3 Nxc2 23. Bxc2 Rxc2 is complicated but good for Black.

18. cxd3 d5?

This move isn't needed. 18... Rg8 seems most natural.

19. Nc5 Rxc5!?

The best attempt, or else the knight becomes very annoying.

20. Bxc5 d4!

Opening up the b7 bishop.

21. Bxd4 Rg8 22. Bc5?

22. Qb4 Be3+ 23. Bxe3 Nxe3 24. Rf2 Bxf3 25. Rxf3 Nc2 26. Qc3 Nxa1 27. b4=; 22. Qc3 Bf4=

22... Qc7!-+



The simultaneous attack on the bishop and h2 cannot be defended, and White's kingside collapses.

23. b4 Bxf3 24. g3?

24. Qg3 is the best chance

24... Bd5

Satisfactory, and enough to justify a resignation by White, but Bb7 or Ba8 gives Black more possibilities.

0-1

Alex Yu 1753

Suraj Ramanathan 1743

83rd Mass Open (4)

King's Indian Defence, Orthodox [E99]

1. d4 Nf6 2. c4 g6 3. Nc3 Bg7 4. e4 d6 5. Nf3 O-O 6. Be2 e5 7. O-O Nc6 8. d5 Ne7 9. Ne1 Nd7 10. Be3 f5 11. f3 f4 12. Bf2 a5 13. a3 g5 14. g4 !?

A direct attempt to slow Black's advance on the kingside.

14... h5

14... fxg3 15. hxg3 Nf6 might give Black more opportunities and lines to attack.

15. h3 Rf6 16. b4 hxg4

It would benefit Black to delay the capture and wait to release the pawn tension. Black controls the tension in this case as White cannot capture.

17. hxg4 Rh6 18. Kg2 Qe8 19. Rh1 Rxe1 20. Kxe1 Qg6 21. c5

Black's kingside attack has stalled and White seeks to overwhelm and infiltrate the Black queenside.

21... Nf6 22. cxd6 cxd6 23. Nb5?

Although almost the furthest from the kingside, the knight on c3 played a vital defensive role by defending the pawn on e4. Now Black can sacrifice and create dangerous threats. 23. bxa5 Rxa5 24. Qb3 is a better way to proceed.

23... axb4 24. axb4 Rxa1 25. Qxa1 Bxg4?!



Not the most forcing. 25... Nxg4 and 25... Nxe4, both attacking f2, force Black to capture.

26. Qa8+ Kh7 27. fxg4?

White takes the bait, but he didn't need to recapture. 27. Nxd6 Nfxd5 28. exd5 Qxd6 29. Bc5 Qd7 30. Bxe7 Qxe7 31. fxg4 e4±

27... Nxe4 28. Kg2 Nxd5 29. Nd3?

29. Bd3! and Black is stopped dead in his tracks! 29... Nxb4 30. Bb1 d5 31. Qxb7

29... Nxf2 30. Nxf2 e4 31. Qxb7 f3+ 32. Bxf3 exf3+ 33. Kxf3 Qf6+ 34. Ke4 Qxf2 35. Nxd6 Qd4+?

(35... Nc3+ \$1 36. Kd3 Qe2#)

36. Kf3 Qf4+ 37. Ke2 Qxd6 38. b5 Nc3+ 39. Ke3 Qe5+ 40. Kf3 Qe2+ 41. Kg3 Ne4+ 42. Kh3 Qf3+ 43. Kh2 Qg3+ 44. Kh1 Nf2#

0-1

BONUS! Unpublished 2013 Game!

GM Alexander Ivanov 2641
IM James Rizzitano 2426
82nd Mass Open (4)
French Defence [C00]

1. e4 c5 2. Nf3 e6 3. d3 d5 4. Qe2 Nf6 5. g3 Be7 6. Bg2 Nc6 7. e5 Nd7 8. c4 Nb6 9. O-O O-O 10. Bf4 Bd7 11. h4 Rc8 12. Nbd2 f5 13. exf6 gxf6?!

Trying to build a pawn mass in the center, but weakens the kingside. Taking with the bishop keeps e5 as a plan and is stronger as a result: 13... Bxf6 14. Ne5 (14. Nb3 Qe7 15. Rfe1 Rfe8 16. Bg5 Bxg5 17. hxg5 dxc4 18. dxc4 e5=) 14... Nxe5 15. Bxe5 Bxe5 16. Qxe5 Rf5 17. Qc3 Qf6=)

14. Bh6 Rf7 15. cxd5 exd5 16. Nb3 Bd6 17. Rac1 Ne7 18. d4 Na4?

A positional error that allows a White knight to camp on d4. With 18... c4 19. Nc5 Bxc5 20. dxc5 Rxc5 21. Nd4=, White still gets his knight to d4, but at the cost of a pawn.

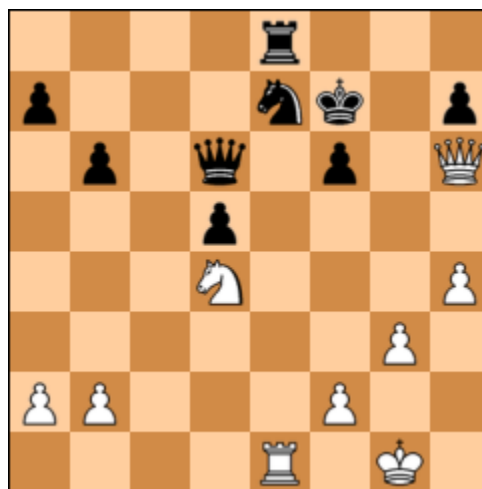
19. dxc5 Nxc5 20. Nxc5 Rxc5 21. Qd2 b6 22. Bf4 Qb8 23. Bxd6 Qxd6 24. Nd4 Rf8 25. Nb3 Rxc1 26. Nxc1 Rc8 27. Ne2 Rd8 28. Re1 Be6 29. Nd4

Nf3-d4-b3-c1-e2-d4!

29... Bf7?

Allows the white bishop to come in with devastating effect. Better is 29... Bd7±

30. Bh3!+- Re8 31. Be6 Kg7 32. Bxf7 Kxf7 33. Qh6



1-0



An Interview with Mika Brattain



Mika Brattain is having a moment. Though seeded only sixth, the fifteen-year-old worked his way to sole first at the 83rd Mass Open, beating the reigning co-champions, Robert Perez

and GM Alexander Ivanov, in consecutive rounds. It was the first state championship in six years that GM Ivanov did not share first in, and it just might be the start of something. I spoke to the rising star about his big win and his future plans.

Nathan Smolensky: So, you've just won the state chess championship. How do you feel?

Mika Brattain: I was ecstatic to win the MA championship. There are many strong players in our state who have not won it in recent years, so I am especially pleased that this was my year.

NS: What did you feel were your keys to success in the tournament?

MB: There were several factors. I think I made excellent opening choices in the critical games of the event, giving myself positions well suited to my style. But most of all, I simply made good moves at a relatively fast pace. Against both of the reigning champions, I found myself able to outplay them while keeping a time advantage of close to an hour, which proved to be enough to win both games.

NS: Was it important to you to win by going through the reigning champions? Did that add meaning to the result?

MB: Beating the reigning champions was very important for me. In 2013, I lost to both of them. I feel like avenging both losses adds more meaning and closure to my tournament victory; last year they both beat

me on their ways to winning the tournament, but this year it was the other way around.

NS: Did you do anything to celebrate your victory?

MB: Burgers and fries on the way home.

NS: Where do you go from here? What are your major goals in chess at the moment?

MB: From here, I hope to break 2500 soon, earn IM norms, and win Cadet this year. Next year, I hope to protect my Spiegel and Mass Open titles and qualify for the US Junior Closed.

NS: When did you first learn the game of chess? At what point did it become a serious interest for you?

“In 2013, I lost to both [Perez and GM Ivanov]. I feel like avenging both losses adds more meaning and closure to my tournament victory.”

MB: I learned right before I turned 6 in 2004, and months later it became one of my serious interests.

NS: Alright, final question: we all know that great chess success, especially at a young age, doesn't come without some support. On the heels of your victory, are there any shout-outs you'd like to give?

MB: I would like to give a shout-out to my dad for all the help and support he has shown throughout my chess career. None of this would have happened if it weren't for him. And also to the Metrowest and Boylston chess clubs. They were a huge help in my ascent from where I was when I first started out, to where I am now. For a while, I played almost exclusively at these clubs, so I'd like to thank them for providing me the opportunity to play and study chess over the past several years. □

Photo credit: Tony Cortizas



Kingshakers

Ulf Andersson:

Embrace the Nothing

Nathan Smolensky

Kingshakers is a new series here at Chess Horizons where local players highlight past titans of the game, their influence, and just what made them so special. We begin with my own tribute to Ulf Andersson (1951-) and the power of his quiet play.

When I cite Ulf Andersson as my favorite chess player, people think I'm joking. The Swedish Grandmaster is remembered primarily for his high draw rate, cagey and unambitious openings, and incredibly long and frequently dull games. His lack of notoriety is infamous.

But beneath that exterior of a dull positional player is the fittingly quiet genius of Ulf Andersson. Decades before computers began tearing at the soul of the tactical Romantics and Classical theory wonks, he offered a far bleaker view of the game's nature: a mostly barren field where one must claw for every scrap of positional advantage available in the pursuit of victory.

Andersson's best games were often his longest, those in which that talent of finding the slight positional edge and sharpening it into a lethal blade shone brightest. Victories over William Hartsson in 1974 and Nikola Padevsky the next year went over 120 moves each. But the length of these struggles may have exacerbated his drawing problem, leaving him little energy for his other games. Running marathons was not a sustainable winning strategy.

And so it was that GM Andersson

became a poster boy for every spectator's least favorite result. Against the great Tigran Petrosian, it would take nineteen games before a single decisive outcome was achieved – which, it should be noted, came in Andersson's favor. Ignominious Grandmaster draws and quiet positions fizzling into silence comprised the bulk of more than 70% of the Swede's games against top competition. But even among this largest and most unremarkable segment of his scores, there are triumphs:

Garry Kasparov

Ulf Andersson

Moscow

??..??..1981

Nimzo-Indian Defence, Huebner [E42]

1981 was a breakout year for Garry Kasparov. Only a year removed from winning the World Junior Championship, the Soviet, who turned 18 that April, had quickly begun his ascent to the very top of the chess world.

He and Andersson would have their first encounter earlier in the year. Kasparov, with the white pieces, won a splendid attacking game, prompting Ulf to famously declare "I will never play Kasparov again!" But it was not to be. A few months later, Andersson was again faced with the prospect of defending against the rising star, who would surely be trying for a win.

1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e6 3.Nc3 Bb4 4.e3 c5 5.Ne2 cxd4 6.exd4

It is worth observing in the opening that Andersson will not have to defend against an oppressive central pawn mass later in the game. This expands defensive options.

6... O-O 7.a3 Be7 8.d5 exd5 9.cxd5 Re8



10.Be3 d6 11.h3 Nbd7 12.Ng3 Bf8
13.Be2



Faced with a spatial disadvantage and some clunky bishops, it seems our friend will have no choice but to sit back and suffer while the future World Champion conjures some beautiful attack...

13... Rxe3!!

... or not. After Petrosian, few have mastered the art of the positional exchange sacrifice like Ulf Andersson has. Here, he disrupts the nature of the Soviet's advance, and prepares to hold on to his own bishops for dear life and use them to blockade whatever may come. Kasparov will have no more than two connected pawns anywhere on the board, so mobility and positional flexibility will be limited.

14.fxe3 g6 15.O-O Qe7 16.Qd4 Bg7

The dark-squared bishop, of which Kasparov has no equivalent, is placed on the long diagonal, readied to hold it down.

17.Qf4 Ne8 18.Rac1 Be5 19.Qf2 Ndf6 20.Bd3 h5!?

This is a scary advance to play when attempting to maintain such a defensive position, but it opens up the h7 square for the knight to maneuver and creates pressure on the White kingside which Kasparov will need to address as he deploys his pieces.

21.Nge2 Nh7 22.Nf4 Nf8

A bizarrely effective spot. Added support for the e6 and g6 squares is pivotal in regard to some of the more clever attacking ideas surely racing through Kasparov's mind.

23.Nb5 a6 24.Nd4 Bd7 25.Rc2 Bg7 26.Qg3 Rb8 27.Re2 Nf6 28.Nf3 Be8 29.e4 N6d7 30.Rc2 Ne5 31.Nxe5 Bxe5 32.Qf2 Nd7 33.b4 Qd8 34.Be2 Bg7 35.Nd3 Ne5 36.Nxe5 Bxe5

White's final knight falls. The linear mobility of his remaining army plays in to the power of the blockade.

37.Rfc1 Kg7 38.Rc7

White now has a rook on the seventh, but the intricate arrangement of Black's pieces will prevent him from having two. Ulf's defensive manner in this game exemplifies a "bend, don't break" style, and illustrates just how far it can be taken.

38... Qg5 39.R1c2 h4

Crucial. This advance permanently shuts down White's kingside pawns, and in turn the White king himself.

40.Bg4 Kh6 41.Kh1 b6 42.Ra7 Bg3

43.Qd2 Bf4 44.Qd4 Be5 45.Qg1 a5

White is having trouble holding down the dark squares, particularly the sensitive h2 spot which no rook can support. Prospects of an attack here in certain lines limit the mobility of White's pieces and expand Black's options for stabilizing his position and getting his pawns to safety from the advancing rooks. Here, an attempt to win the pawn with 46.bxa5 bxa5 47.Rxa5 Qf4 (48.Qc1?? Rb1!-+) results in White being forced to try to defend h2, e4, and the potential advances of the Black rook all at once. He can, of course, but to try to win the game while doing all that is futile.

46.Qc1 Bf4 47.Qa1 Be5 48.Qg1 axb4

49.axb4 Bf4 50.Qa1 Be5 51.Qa3 Kg7

52.Rf2 Bf6 53.Qd3 Qe5 54.Be6 Kg8

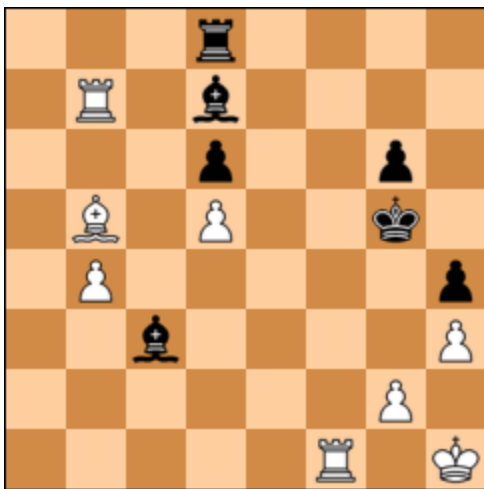
55.Qf3 Kg7 56.Qf4 Qd4 57.Rf1 b5 58.Bg4



Rd8 59.Rc7 Qb2 60.Rc2 Qd4 61.Rd2 Qe5 62.Qxe5

After a long run-around, White finally accepts a trade of queens in what appears to be the most favorable way to do so. The final phase of play, in which the fortitude of Ulf's defense will decide, commences.

62... Bxe5 63.Rc2 Bd7 64.Be2 f5 65.Rc7 Kh6 66.Bd3 fxe4 67.Bxe4 Kg5 68.Bd3 Bd4 69.Rb7 Bc3 70.Bxb5



Andersson makes one final unavoidable concession, ceding the doomed b-pawn. The remaining moves will feature Kasparov scrambling to find a way to work past his immobile king and convert the exchange and pawn into a win.

The game begins to evoke another Swedish work of art, Ingmar Bergman's *The Seventh Seal*. Unrelentingly bleak, there is still a glimmer of hope that drives. If Ulf can continue to hold through his tenacious defending, he may live forever.

70... Bf5 71.Be2 Ra8 72.b5 Ra2 73.Bf3 Rb2 74.Rb8 Bd4 75.Rd1 Bc5 76.Kh2 Be3 77.Re1Bf2 78.Rf1 Bc5 79.Re8 Bd4 80.Rd1 Bf2 81.Be2 Bd7 82.Re4 Bf5 83.Re8 Bd7

The options and players have been exhausted. Garry accepts that he cannot break through.

1/2-1/2

There is a tremendous island of stability in chess, and the future of the sport's highest levels lies largely in mapping it. What advantage can one cede and still avoid a decisive tilt, and how much? On the flipside, what edge must one seek out to have hope of victory? What edge can be found?

Ulf Andersson 2590

Walter Browne 2540

Wijk aan Zee

??.??.1983

English, Symmetrical [A30]

1.Nf3 c5 2.c4 Nf6 3.Nc3 e6 4.g3 b6 5.Bg2 Bb7 6.O-O Be7 7.b3

Hypermodern structures in which the center is influenced in the early goings of play by c-pawns, knights, and fianchettoed bishops are the bread and butter of Ulf Andersson's chess diet, a schedule of meager rations consisting mostly of bread and butter. This is his quiet system, which caused some stir among hedgehog theoreticians – it should be noted that Andersson was a prominent hedgehog player himself – in the early 80's.

7... O-O 8.Bb2 a6 9.e3 d6 10.d4 Nbd7 11.d5



Given the opportunity, Ulf pushes his pawn into enemy territory. For the entire



remainder of the game, his plan will revolve around control of that pivotal central square.

11... exd5 12.Nh4!

Elegant, and the reason why 11.d5 works in the first place. But it is what Andersson does with this knight later that truly illustrates the extent of his positional mastery.

13... g6 13.Nxd5 Nxd5 14.Bxd5 Bxd5 15.Qxd5

The queen takes its turn holding the pivotal square.

15... b5 16.Ng2 Nb6 17.Qd3 bxc4 18.bxc4 Rb8 19.Rab1 Qd7 20.e4

The song remains the same.

20... f5 21.Ne3

This is the knight that began the game when it moved to f3. Now, it prepares to complete its journey to the Promised Land.

21... fxe4 22.Qxe4 Rbe8 23.Qd3 Rf3 24.Bc3 Bd8 25.Ba5 Qc6 26.Bxb6

Black's last means of challenging d5 are eliminated. There is nothing more to do but to get back and defend.

26... Bxb6 27.Rfd1 Bc7 28.Rb3 Ba5 29.Qc2 Bd8 30.Nd5



Andersson's purpose has been singular, and now his success is absolute. The knight wields power over critical squares, neutralizes Black's central pawns, and threatens to become a potent attacker if Black is not careful on the kingside.

30... Rff8 31.Qb2 Qa4 32.Rc1 Re6 33.Rb8 Qe8 34.Kf1 Qf7 35.Rb7

The game is simplified in a quick sequence. When the dust settles, White's edge becomes crystal clear.

35... Bf6 36.Rxf7 Bxb2 37.Rxf8+ Kxf8 38.Re1 Rxe1+ 39.Kxe1 Kf7 40.Ke2 Bd4 41.f4 h5 42.Kf3 Ke6 43.h3 Bb2 44.Ke4 Bc1 45.g4 hxg4 46.hxg4 Bb2 47.a4 Ba1 48.Nb6 Bb2 49.f5+ gxf5 50.gxf5+ Kf6

There is no saving the pawn on d6, nor the game.

51.Nc8 d5 52.Kxd5 Kxf5 53.Nd6+ Kf6 54.Ne4+ Ke7 55.Nxc5 a5 56.Kc6 Bc3 57.Nb7

1-0

Relatively unambitious opening play and the relentless pursuit of positional edge are stylistic staples of another Scandinavian player, current World Chess Champion Magnus Carlsen. With greater tactical skill and better endurance than Andersson, as well as the power of modern computing, Magnus has shattered records and shown just how far this recipe for success can go.

Even for amateurs like myself, Ulf's play, for all its perceived dullness, can inspire a dream: to make something out of the nothing. Because we can always have *nothing* in chess – while those who seek dynamism find themselves stifled or in positions beyond the scope of human understanding, one can seize minute positional prospects against even the stingiest opposition.

It is a daunting task, which demands enormous patience and concentration. But if we take that road that Ulf has paved for us, if we embrace the game for what it is and seek success through innate understanding, there is no limit to how far we can go.



Promoting Chess in Pictures: Highlights in Photography

Steven Stepak

The essence of a good chess photograph is simply *capturing an emotion in time and space*; like a mime, the players dance through many thoughts and feelings in the course of a chess game. My goal is to be ready to see a possibility and to be lucky enough to snap the shutter in time to get what I imagined—what I put together in my brain, on my mental canvas. So a good chess photograph is planning, spacing and being lucky. We are dealing with composition and relations among things, like heads, hands, pens, pieces, clocks; and colors. Now colors can enhance a photo or burn it out visually. When things get too bright and too crazy, I mellow things down with black and white or an antique tint. My goal in chess photography is twofold: firstly I want to make the subject, i.e. the player, look good. Secondly, I want to portray a chess game or a chess activity as worthy of note and inviting to the viewer to be inclined to want to participate in the chess world, either by playing chess or coming over to watch an event. My bottom line is: I am promoting the sport of chess through my efforts as a chess photographer.

I won the Chess Journalists of America award for “Best New Magazine” for 1996: *Chess Pioneers*, which included my photos, chess stories and game analysis of scholastic player in Massachusetts. I have taken many photos in my career as a chess photographer and journalist. I am proud of my *Chess Horizons* covers: Susan Polgar Simul (Jan.

1986); Ilya Gurevich plays Pat Wolff (Sept. 1986); Pat Wolff (Sept. 1987); Mikhail Tal (June 1988); Victor Frias, Dzindzhasvili, Pat Wolf, (Aug. 1988); Boris Gulko, (June 1989); Gary Kasparov (Dec. 1989) Anatoly Karpov (1990); Leonid Yudasin, (Dec. 1990); Sofia and Judith Polgar (Dec. 1993); Carissa Yip (Summer, 2013). My photos have also been published in *Chess Life*, *Inside Chess* (Seattle, WA), *New in Chess* (Holland), *Schachwache* (Switzerland) and the *British Chess Magazine*.



The basic ingredients of a photo: TIME and SPACE: these are the two components which interact and weave a relation among objects caught in the click of the shutter, to portray a particular visual statement. A good photo speaks to you, without words. What translates the image caught in time, is the way the human brain works to analyze and decode a visual image and makes sense of it: human sense. Like a chess game, there are the “rules” of optics and esthetics. Covering a chess tournament includes many challenges. For example, my photo of GM Elshan Moradiabdi vs GM Alexander Ivanov, Round 4, Boston Chess Congress, 2014, with the young lad Michael Isakov looking on. The subjects are silent, motionless. The drama is frozen, yet intense. I had the good luck to be able to actually sit down next to Ivanov (the game Yedidia-Hungasky, Board 2, had just concluded in a draw when I arrived, leaving the space vacant to my good fortune). So I seized the



opportunity. The viewer can see that Elshan had 31 minutes on his clock, and Ivanov, always a time-pressure addict, had 1 minute and 50 seconds (with 10 second delay); I had seen Michael walking around, showing interest in this Board 1 grandmaster game so I had the presence of mind to call him over and point to stand right between the two players. Of course all has to be done silently as humanly possible, so as not to distract the players. Luckily my efforts to “build” a good photo and Michael’s quiet walk to the center of action went on without a problem. For this photo, I just waited for the right moment and: “click”. Yes there’s a slight noise of the shutter. But in less than a second, it is over. No perceived distraction. It goes without saying that I do not use flash taking chess photos. Not only would that ruin the eyes of my subjects (squinting) but I would be thrown out on my ear, if not by the players, then by the TD. No, flash is definitely out.

One parenthetical note. There are many “big money” or GM tournaments which rope off the top boards, so the spectators don’t get too close. Had this been the case at the Boston Chess Congress, I would have had to use a different camera strategy to get a good shot, using my telephoto lens. Luckily, I was able to sit right next to the action, watch the game, appreciate the chess as well as photograph the moment. This makes for a great synthesis of my emotional energy and enthusiasm for what I am photographing, stimulating me to use my mental concentration to produce a worthwhile photograph. In this way, I am sharing my enthusiasm for the sport of chess, as I wish to “turn on” the general public to chess and enough so, get them to venture out to watch chess events, and to even have the courage

to play chess! A side note: the game between Moradiabdi and Ivanov was eventually drawn. Elshan had 12 minutes left on his clock, Ivanov 33 seconds. White had a win at some point in the rook and pawn endgame but did not find it during the intense silence of play. This is part of chess too: what is not found in time, under extreme mental stress!



Let me talk about my two best action chess photos, one from the “*first* MACA Game 60 Championship” Watertown, MA, at Armenian Cultural Center 1990. Remember this place, you veterans of chess? The players: On the left, playing the black pieces, was Girome Bono, (USCF 2430) and playing white, Alex Sherzer (2620) on the right. The setting: Round 4. Bono was in time pressure. There was an issue concerning “the writing down of moves/ or not” between the players which heightened the already high-tension situation. George Mirijanian, the event Chief TD was called over to resolve the dispute and keep “things” from exploding. The viewer of this photo can see that after all the commotion by the players, the spectators became super-charged with excitement and tension. The players were smoking hot, but you see that both these players are veteran chess masters who have many tournaments under their



belts, so they did not betray their emotions to each other or to the public—poker faces! But the faces of the crowd reflected the tension!

Bono, a Harvard Graduate, was the older of the two players. Sherzer was an undergraduate at Rhode Island College on a full chess scholarship. Bono was a bit rusty, not having played tournament chess for a while; Sherzer was playing on a weekly basis up to the point of this event. And, chess-wise, Sherzer had the advantage of the white pieces. Things got stormy and pulsating as the flag of Bono's clock started to rise: tension—you could cut it with a knife. Sherzer had at the end of things around 5 minutes on his clock. These are analogue clocks, no delays, no digital read-outs. You have to guess how much time you have as your flag goes up (and hopefully not down before you finish your game)! Sherzer by the end had a forced win. Bono valiantly marched on, trying to keep his game together. Yet, the damage was too great. Sherzer was about to checkmate as Bono's flag fell. This was the most tense chess game I have ever witnessed, and had the good luck to be ready to take a photo of the tension. You see it in all the people, including the players: hands on lips! This is a common gesture when a person is absorbing tension for whatever reason. And again, I was lucky enough to catch the moment, to tell the story, visually. A short while after this event, Alex Sherzer was awarded the grandmaster title!



My only 21st Century time-pressure crowd shot, so far, was a situation occurring at the Boylston Chess Club, during October, 2013, in the third round of a Grand Prix event. To my delight, I was taking a photo of two of the most talented women chess players in Massachusetts. I have always been a strong advocate of recruiting girls and women to play chess and especially chess tournaments! And here I was witnessing great chess being performed in mutual time-pressure by two young women, one a 19 year old MIT undergraduate, the other a 10 year old, the youngest USCF girl expert in history! You can't get better than that! So at the time I snapped my photo, Yang Dai (left) had 33 seconds left on her clock (5 second delay) and Carissa Yip was about to lose the game on time-forfeit. The crowd, as the viewer can see, loved every minute of this epic battle. Not an eye strayed from the chess board! [Just a note of information: the TD for this event, Bernardo Iglesias, was watching the activities of this time-pressure saga. He is standing 3rd from the left—you see a bit of his black hair.] The appraisal of the chess position at the time of the forfeit: dynamic equality, in a locked up center!



Another “crowd” shot was my photo of a postmortem and analysis by NM Eric Godin, who was critiquing a game he had just played against Ryan Sowa at a Boylston tournament, with white in a line of the French defense. Also seated at the chessboard, opposite Ryan, is Conway Xu, who Eric beat in the same line of the French the previous Saturday. The people in this photo listening to Eric’s lecture on the French were some of the players in the tournament and the parents of the younger players. The trick in doing a large group photo like this is to get everyone on the same page so to speak: not walking out of or into the photo, or turning heads away from the action, or picking their nose. Everything has to be presentable and in sync. And the more people you have in the frame, the more chance there is for something to go wrong visually. So this photo embodies a lot of good luck, to say the least!

Let me take the opportunity to tell the *Chess Horizon* readers that my photos are found on a weekly basis on the Boylston Chess Club Weblog (google up: “Boylston Blog”) I am looking forward to summer, as I am sure all of you are, a time when the weather is warm and the Au Bon Pain Café plaza is full of chess players with off-hand games, and clock blitz games going on and lots of interesting people roaming around to

chat with, from all over the world. It is in this venue that I have taken some of my best outdoor photographs, including Yuanling Yuan (pictured below, playing against a Harvard Square regular), born in Shanghai, living in Toronto, schooling at Yale. She visited Harvard Square in 2012. I photographed her at that time and also when she came as Board 2 of the Yale 4 board chess team—GM Robert Hess was on Board 1!—to play Harvard (the match was drawn). Yuanling is the highest rated woman chess player in Canada (around USCF 2400+ level). Anya Corke, a former chess champion of Hong Kong, also visited Harvard Square with her dad. Anya played a few tournaments at the Boylston Chess Club and won one. She is a recent graduate of Wellesley College.



I was hoping that Magnus Carlsen would make a surprise visit to Harvard Square this summer. He was last in Cambridge, MA at Loeb House last October, where he played a 10 board simul to international lawyers in town for a conference on trade and patents. Carlsen won all ten games - not bad for a blind-fold exhibition against strong chess amateurs. And though I still await the world chess champion’s next visit to Cambridge, the summer did not disappoint.



On June 10, 2014, at the Au Bon Pain Chess Café, Harvard Square, Cambridge, MA, the super-kids of chess convened. Two action shots illustrate the family nature of youth chess: first, Corey Tolbert, an A-Player and Bullet Chess Master challenging Connecticut's Max Lu, top 8 year old in the USA from CT, while the crowd (left-to-right) Percy Yip, daughter Carissa (No. 1 10 yr old in MA) Lina Xu holding five-year-old son Evan, Jiong Wei, holding eight-year-old son Eddie, Professor Jerry Williams, chess patron and tournament player, and Paul Godin, local chess denizen, standing around the tables. Below, Carissa Yip (pink) plays black vs Corey Tolbert (blue) while a rather large crowd of chess enthusiasts observe the spectacle of a five-minute game.



And finally, the June 23, 2014 photo session featuring Elia Samuel Harmatz, MIT neuroscientist who will see his first scientific paper on face recognition published by the end of the summer. My best photo ever of a casual encounter of a chess game, it features the Philadelphia, PA native playing a boy from Kuala Lumpur, while the challenger's friend from Hong Kong observes. In the background, left to right: Paul from Cambridge, the visiting player's mom and dad, and the mother of the boy from Hong Kong, at the Au Bon Pain Café, Harvard Square, Cambridge, MA.

In general, my chess photography highlights the fact that not only is chess international and universal, but also a family affair, linking parents and children, brothers and sisters, and of course, the indispensable grandparent, who bring the kids to the chess tournament and stay the entire day while the parents are out working. And even Bobby Fischer himself was promoted by his mother to launch a career at the very pinnacle of the game. □



Solutions to Bullet Points (p. 11)

1. 1.Ng5+! Kh8 2.Bg7+ Bxg7 (2... Kxg7 3.Qf7+ Kh6 Qxg7#) 3.Nf7+ Kg8 4.Nh6+ Kh8 5.Qg8+ Rxd8 6.Nf7#
2. 1... Qd3! 2.Ree1 (2.Rxd3 Rf1#) Qc2
3. 1... Rg5+ 2.Qxg5 (2.Nxg5 Ne2+) Qxg5+ 3.Nxg5 Ne2+ 4. Kh2 Be5#
4. 1.Qxh7+! Nxh7 2.Rxh7+ Kxh7 3.Rh1#
5. 1.Qg5+! Bf6 (1... Rf6 2.Re8+) 2.Qxf6+ Rxf6 3.Re8+ Kd7 Rde1
6. 1.Rxh5+! gxh5 (1... Kg7 2.Qxe3) 2.Qxe3+ dxe3 3.Bxg7#
7. 1... Nfg4! 2.fxg4 Nf3+ 3.Bxf3 Be4
8. 1... Ne2+! 2.Kh1 gxf2 3.h3 Ng3+ (3.Nxa7 Ng3+ 4.hxg3 hxg3#) (3.g3 Qe3)
9. 1.Bh6+! Kxh6 2.Qxf6+ Ng6 3.Re4 (2... Kh5 3.Re4)
10. 1... Nf5+! 2.Kf3 (2.Kh3 Qh6+) 2... Re3+ 3.fxe3 Qxe3#

Kids' Fall Chess Classes!

Classes Taught by Chess Masters
Lou Mercuri and Vadim Martirosov

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

Fall and Spring 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



Places to Play

This is a partial overview of active clubs in and around Massachusetts. Time controls are listed to give some idea of relative pace and time commitment. Most include some sort of delay, and events G/30 or slower (and some faster) require USCF membership unless otherwise specified. Start times refer to round starts, and registration may end as early as fifteen minutes prior. 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

Metro West Chess Club – 117 E. Central St. (Rt. 135), Natick, MA
Regular Events Tuesdays, 7:00 P.M. – 11:00 P.M., 40/90 SD/30 (1 rd / wk)
www.MetroWestChess.org

Boylston Chess Club – 240B Elm St., Somerville, MA
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.BoylstonChessClub.org (617) 629 - 3933

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

Sven Brask 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.Svenbraskcc.org (508) 339 – 6850

Billerica Chess Club – 25 Concord Rd., MA
Regular Events Fridays, 7:30 P.M. – 11:00 P.M., G/90 (1 rd / wk)
For further inquiries contact arthur978@comcast.net

Chess Master Connections – 201 Wayland Sq., Providence, RI
Regular Events:
Thursdays, 7:00 P.M. – 10:30 P.M., G/70 inc. 20 (1 rd / wk)
Fridays, 7:30 P.M. – 10:00 P.M., G/8
Saturdays, 1:00 P.M. – 6:00 P.M., G/30
www.ChessMasterConnections.org (401) 497 - 8366

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

Address Service Requested

Nonprofit Organization

U.S. Postage Paid

Billerica, MA

Permit No. 66

Chess Horizons

Summer 2014

Time-Dated Material

Please Expedite!



Chess Skills and Game Outcomes

Dr. Elona Kolpakova Hart

This study, modified from its original version published May 12th, 2009, is cited in Mike Hart's Chess Strength and the Power of the First Move on p. 20.

Introduction

One project from my Harvard Master's of Business graduate study program may of interest to your readership. The purpose of the project was to demonstrate the use of statistical tools and methods to address practical problems. My husband, Michael Hart (a former USCF Master (2242) from Massachusetts) posed three chess-related questions:

1. Does the player with White win more often than they lose for both Grandmasters (GMs) and Club Players?
2. Are Club players as likely to win or draw when playing White as compared to GMs?
3. Are the results (percentage wins, losses and draws) for the person with White associated with the skill level of the players, provided the players are evenly matched?

I used data from ChessBase 10 and analyzed the results from 250 random, representative games by competitors with player ratings from 1605-1625 as well as 507 additional games by players with ratings from 2595 - 2605. I have labeled these groups "Club Players" and "GMs" respectively for simplicity.

The outcomes as White are summarized in the Table below:

Game Outcome	RATING CATEGORY	
	1605-1625	2595-2605
Win	94	128
Draw	71	302
Loss	85	77
Total	250	507

Per the request of the CH editor, the details of the statistical analysis methods used have been removed (available upon request); instead the focus of my summary herein is on the conclusions.

On Question 1: We see from Table 1 that "Club Players" had 179 decisive games (94 wins and 85 losses as White) out of the 250 games played. From a statistical perspective, it proves difficult to reject the hypothesis that White holds any consequential advantage for this class of players. The win rate of the decisive games was only 52.5% (= 94/179). Detailed statistical analysis using the One-Proportion Z-test on the data in Table 1 shows that the 95% confidence interval of the win rate is 45.2% to 59.8%. To determine, with confidence that White holds an advantage that meets suitable statistical criteria requires an analysis of a much larger number of games, perhaps an analysis of 2500 games or more. (By comparison, note that flipping a coin 180 times results in a 95% confidence interval of 77 "heads" to 103 "heads". In our case, we got 94 wins out of 179 trials, very much akin to flipping a coin)



The analysis of the "GM Class" yields a different result. The data strongly indicates that the percentage of wins for "GMs" is NOT 50%. Based on the 507 outcomes analyzed, the win rate of the decisive games was 62.4% ($= 128/(128 + 77)$) which implies the true win rate of the decisive games for GMs is between 56% and 69% (the 95% confidence interval using Chi-squared methods). To refine the true win rate confidence interval further requires an analysis of a much larger data set.

On Question 2: Table 1 shows the "Club Player" decisive game win rate was 52.5% while for the GMs the decisive game win rate was 62.4% or a difference of 9.9%. Detailed analysis using the Two-Proportion z-test indicates that the 95% confidence interval for this difference is 0.1% to 19.8% which again can be narrowed down by considerably expanding the number of games analyzed. Regarding the number of draws in each class, the Club Players had 28.4% ($= 71/250$) while the GMs had 59.6% ($= 302/507$). This difference is 31.2% with the 95% confidence interval of the true underlying differential drawing rates of GMs relative to Club Players to be 24.1% to 38.2%.

On Question 3: The distribution of outcomes for each class of players with the White are statistically quite different based on a Chi-squared analysis of the results shown in Table 1, primarily due to the increased drawing probability of the GM class when GMs have White, followed by the lower losing probability when GMs have White. Although the rate of losing with the White pieces for GMs is reduced from that seen from the losing rate of the Club Player class with the White pieces, this is of lesser

statistical significance in reaching this conclusion.

1.1 DISCUSSION

Based on these results, I conclude that the distribution of outcomes of a chess game (percentage wins, draws and losses) is clearly associated with the class level of the players involved (provided the ratings of the opponents are comparable). Whereas White seems to be advantageous for GMs (they win far more often than they lose), such an association is not evident for Club players (who are nearly as likely to win as to lose even when they can make the first move). This study also shows that based on the 507 GMs played and 250 Club Player games played, statistically speaking, one can say with a high degree of confidence that GMs are far more likely to draw than the Club players, with the 95% confidence that the true difference in drawing rates between these two groups ranges from 24% to 38% supporting that statement. The increased drawing rate for the GMs is probably a sign that when GMs sit down at the chessboard, it is more difficult for them to actually win the chess game against another GM than it is for the club player to do so against another club player.