

Summer 2016

Chess Horizons



76th New England Open

**3-5 September 2016
Burlington, MA**

4 Sections:

Championship (open to 1800 & above); FIDE rated

U2000 (open to 1999 & under); FIDE rated

U1800 (open to 1799 & under)

U1600 (open to 1599 & under); Adult unrated not allowed in section

Grand Prix Points: 30 (enhanced)

6SS (6 round Swiss)

Time control: 40/90, SD/30 + 30 sec increment

Entry Fee: \$70 (postmarked by 26 August)

\$80 at site; \$30 discount to players U1600 section rated under 1000 or unrated; Free to GMs and IMs; Membership Required: Mass. residents: MACA (\$12 adult, \$6 junior U18, add \$8 for optional Chess Horizons subscription), WMCA O.K. N.H. residents: NHCA (\$8 adult, \$6 junior U19, \$10 with N.H. Chess Journal subscription). OSA

\$\$\$4,000 GTD

Championship: 1st \$600, 2nd \$300, 3rd \$250, U2400 \$250, U2200 \$250

Revolving Trophy to all New England residents tied for first

U2000: 1st \$400, 2nd \$200, 3rd \$150

U1800: 1st \$400, 2nd \$200, 3rd \$150

U1600: 1st \$300, 2nd \$150, 3rd \$100, U1400 \$150, U1200 \$150

Registration: 8:30-9:30 AM on Saturday

Rounds: 10am-4pm on Saturday, Sunday and Monday

Byes available in rounds 1-5, limit 2; must be requested before round 2

Hilton Garden Inn Boston/Burlington

781-272-8800; 5 Wheeler Rd, Burlington, MA 01803; \$119 by 19 August

Complimentary shuttle within 5-mile radius of hotel; 6am-11pm daily; includes Anderson RTC

Please bring boards, sets & clocks, none provided

Contact: Alex Relyea, relyea@operamail.com; <http://www.relyeachess.com>



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Chess Horizons

Spring 2016
 Volume 48, #2

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ISSN 0147-2569. Published by the
 Massachusetts Chess Association (MACA),
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 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,
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Cover photo: NM Chris Williams,
85th Mass Open Co-Champion
Photo Courtesy Tony Cortizas



Note from the Editor

Nathan Smolensky

Dear Readers,

Around two months ago (at the time of this writing), the previous *Chess Horizons* was making its debut rounds at the 85th Mass Open. Now I offer the next issue, thanks in so small part to that exciting event and its conquerors. Though our pace is currently a bit lacking, I want to emphasize that it is a goal of mine to have four issues per volume, as the subscribers are rightfully owed.

Contributions are encouraged, and all feedback is welcome! If you think you have an idea for a future *Chess Horizons* issue, email editor@masschess.org or write to me at the P.O. Box address listed in the sidebar!

- Nathan Smolensky, Editor

Annotation / Player Title Key

! – Strong move !! – Brilliant move

? – Weak move ?? – Blunder

!?! – Interesting move ?! – Dubious move

± (±) – White (Black) is slightly better

± (±) – White (Black) is significantly better

+ - (-) – White (Black) is winning

∞ - Unclear ☉ - Zugzwang

NM – National Master, any player over 2200 USCF

LM – Life Master, permanently 2200+ USCF
(may be due either to number of games played as master of 2400+ peak rating).

FM – FIDE Master. 2300+ FIDE.

SM – Senior Master. 2400+ USCF.

IM – International Master. Norm-based FIDE title.

GM – Grandmaster. Norm-based FIDE title.

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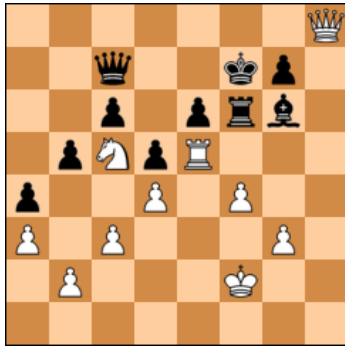


The Challenge Page

FM Chris Chase and Nathan Smolensky

Find the best move, now with difficulty ratings! Solutions on p. 22.

1.



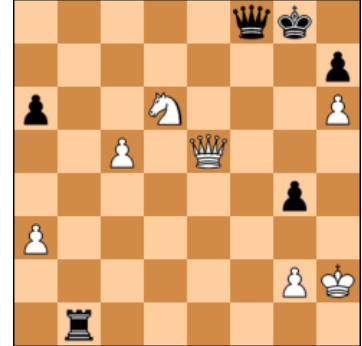
White to move **

2.



Black to move **

3.



White to move ***

4.



White to move ***

5.



Black to move ****

6.



White to move *****

Chess Trivia: Chess in the Movies!

Given the stars and year of release, name the films which prominently feature chess! Answers on p. 22.

1. Tobey Maguire, Peter Sarsgaard, Liev Schreiber (2015)
2. John Turturro, Emily Watson, Geraldine Jones (2000)
3. Sandrine Bonnaire, Kevin Kline, Valerie Lagrange (2009)
4. Max von Sydow, Bengt Ekerot, Gunnar Björnstrand (1957)
5. Joe Mantegna, Laurence Fishburne, Ben Kingsley (1993)
6. Lee Yi Min, Jack Long, Mark Long (1979)



Interview

FM Mika Brattain

2016 Lexington High School graduate and FIDE Master Mika Brattain has accomplished quite a bit in his scholastic career. He has had at least a share of first in a whopping eight Spiegel Cup finals, earning titles in the 8 and Under (2006-2007), 11 and Under (2009), 14 and Under (2012) and HS (every year from 2013-2016) categories. He has graced the cover of Chess Horizons twice as of this issue's writing, first following his championship finish in 8th-grade Nationals, and second following his spectacular clear first at the Mass Open in 2014. He would add another state title to his name this year, shared with IM David Vigorito and NM Chris Williams. As he heads off to college, I decided I would catch up with the young master.

Nathan Smolensky: When did you first learn to play chess? Who taught you?

Mika Brattain: My dad and I learned to play chess together, from a book we checked out at the library when I was six.

NS: What was your first tournament? Do you remember how you did?

MB: My first tournament was a local "Burger King" tournament. I scored 3.5/4 and got second on tiebreaks. For some reason the tournament was never rated.

NS: What do you like most about chess?

MB: To me, chess is a pure form of competition. It is simply a battle between two minds programmed to defeat one another, and the player that has the stronger mind wins. All other factors such as age, stature, or class are out the window; chess is completely fair and success hinges only on the merit you bring to the board.

NS: Do you have a favorite game that you've played?

MB: My favorite game has to be my victory against Alexander Ivanov at the 2014 Massachusetts Open (score below). Not only did winning this game feel like a breakthrough itself, but it also set the stage for me to win the MA Open for the first time, which was definitely a breakthrough tournament.

NS: Have you ever taught anyone the game of chess?

MB: I teach chess to a few kids around Lexington. Even though their parents make them do it, I think they still have fun.

NS: You're graduating high school. What's next?

MB: Next is college; I will be begin studying Engineering at The Ohio State University this fall.

NS: Do you plan to continue playing chess? If so, do you have any particular goals in mind?

MB: I will definitely continue to play chess. The chess scene in Ohio is pretty active, and I have just recently played in a very strong tournament (2016 Columbus Open) that actually took place on the Ohio State campus. I also hope to win Denker this year, and eventually I will probably try to finish earning the IM title.

GM Alexander Ivanov 2586

Mika Brattain 2415

83rd Mass Open (4)

05.25.2014

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. Nxe4 Bxe4 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



Chess News

Four Share First at Mass Open



The story of the 85th Massachusetts Open begins with GM Alexander Ivanov. The many-time champion was coming off a clear title in 2015 and at least a share of first in six of the last seven iterations of the event. He was seeded first by comfortably over a hundred points.

This was not to be his weekend. The veteran Grandmaster had an uncharacteristically poor showing, enduring losses on all three days of the tournament, with two games ending in a fallen flag for Ivanov, albeit in lost positions.



Ivanov's stumble opened a door of opportunity, and in rushed the Commonwealth's chess elite. The field's other titled player, IM David Vigorito (above, left) established a lead on the rest with the championship section's sole 3-0 start. After a draw with FM Aravind Kumar in the fourth round, however, Vigorito would face the tournament's two other unbeaten, and though two more draws would not be enough to

relinquish his lead, it meant he would have to share the glory.



In the fifth round, Vigorito encountered longtime star pupil FM Mika Brattain (above, right), the tournament's second seed. Brattain had already accumulated two draws by that point, but he capped off his tournament with a win over NM Grant Xu, a crucial result to catch up to the two players a half point ahead of him.



One of those players, of course, was IM Vigorito. But the other was NM Chris Williams, whose journey to the top was fraught with *five* higher-rated opponents: FM Kumar, FM David Brodsky, FM Chris Chase, FM Brattain, and finally IM Vigorito. But Williams delivered, with victories over Chase and Brodsky and hard fought draws against Brattain and Kumar. Finally, he hunkered down against Vigorito with the black pieces for a final half point to complete an impressive journey to a first Massachusetts state chess champion title.

With their formidable performances, Vigorito, Brattain, and Williams each earned a



place on the Mass Open trophy, and a share of the 2016 state championship.



There was one more first place winner, however – an interloper from out of state. Young FM David Brodsky of New York overcame an early loss to NM Williams to amass three and a half points out of his first five rounds. His last round opponent was the same as Brodsky's final round opponent from both 2014 and 2015 – GM Alexander Ivanov. But this time, the youngster bested his veteran opponent, adding to Ivanov's nightmare tournament with a triumphant outing, and tying his score with the three champions'.



5th-6th in the championship section would be shared by FM Chris Chase and NM Grant Xu (above, left), whose road to the heat of contention included the following thrilling game against NM Siddharth Arun:

NM Grant Xu (2341)
Siddharth Arun (2184)
85th Massachusetts Open (3)
05.29.2016
Caro-Kann [B19]

1. e4 c6 2. d4 d5 3. Nd2 dxe4 4. Nxe4 Bf5
5. Ng3 Bg6 6. h4 h6 7. Nf3 Nd7 8. h5 Bh7
9. Bd3 Bxd3 10. Qxd3 e6 11. Bf4 Qa5+

12. Bd2 Bb4 13. c3 Be7 14. c4 Qc7 15. O-O-O
Ngf6 16. Kb1 O-O 17. Qe2 b5 18. c5 Rfd8
19. Rhe1 Nf8 20. Be3 Rd5 21. Rc1 N8d7
22. Nh4 Nh7 23. Rh1 Bf6 24. Qg4 Ng5 25. Ne2
Nf8 26. f4 Ngh7 27. Nf3 b4 28. Ne5 Rad8
29. Qf3 Nd7 30. Nd3 a5 31. g4 Be7 32. Qg2 f6
33. Qe4 Ndf8 34. Rhg1 Qb7 35. Ng3 Qd7
36. Ne2 Qb7 37. Rg2 Qd7 38. Rg3 Re8
39. Rg2 Bd8 40. Rcg1 Bc7 41. g5 f5 42. Qf3
hxxg5 43. fxg5 e5 44. g6 Nf6 45. Nxe5 Bxe5
46. dxe5 Rxe5 47. Bg5 Ng4 48. Nc1 Ne6
49. Bf4 Re4 50. Rxxg4 Rdd4 51. Rh4 Rxf4
52. Rxf4 Rxf4 53. Qe2 Qd5 54. Qa6 Nd8
55. Qc8 Rd4 56. Re1 Re4 57. Rf1 Re5 58. h6
Re6 59. Rg1 Qe4+ 60. Ka1 Qd4 61. Qc7 Re8
62. Rf1 a4 63. Rd1 Qf6 64. Rd6 Ne6 65. Rxe6

1-0



While all this drama unfolded in the top section, Morris Lainer (above, left) quietly took care of the U2100, putting up a spectacular 5.5/6 score for almost a hundred points of rating gained – he was rated only 1936 at the start of the event. U1800 honors were shared by Christopher Estremera and Bill Stein. In the U1500, young T.J. Fini of New York put up the only 6/6 of the tournament, rocketing his post-tournament rating over 1600.

The 85th Massachusetts Open was held at Marlboro's Best Western Royal Plaza hotel from May 28th through the 30th, 2016. An impressive total of 253 players participated in the adult and scholastic tournaments offered on the weekend.

For more on the champions' impressive performances, be sure to check out IM David Vigorito's analysis on page 14.

All photos courtesy Tony Cortizas



Everyday Gems

FM Jacob Chudnovsky

Growing up in Russia, I studied chess seriously and played in many tournaments. Even after immigrating as a child to the United States, I continued my fervent pursuit of chess success to the extent that I could. But then college came along, and then grad school and working life. I had to dial my chess involvement way down. Nowadays, I typically don't have time to play in tournaments that last all weekend or even longer, or require travel.

Fortunately, the one-day tournaments at the Boylston Chess Club provide a really good outlet for me to play chess in a competitive setting given my limited free time. And despite the fast time control, these tournaments sometimes offer opportunities to play interesting and creative games.

I would like to share my analysis of one such game, which I hope you will find both entertaining and informative. One thing I would like to make clear is that I did not use a computer to aid in my analysis, with one exception I have noted, after my own attempts to make progress in a complicated line had failed.

FM Jacob Chudnovsky (2396)

NM Farzad Abdi (2241)

BCF Legends of Chess (3)

01.30.2016

Ruy Lopez, Berlin Defence [C67]

1. e4 e5 2. Nf3 Nc6 3. Bb5 Nf6 4. 0-0 Nxe4 5. Re1 Nd6 6. Nxe5 Be7 7. Bd3

A relatively rare anti-Berlin line. At the top level, White usually plays 7. Bf1, leading to a quiet game, in which White has a low risk of losing or winning. The line played here aims for immediate confrontation, preparing to attack Black's castled king. White's dark-squared bishop will be developed via fianchetto to b2 or a3. The obvious downsides of this variation are that White does not bring his d and c pawns into the center, and that he may experience difficulties with queenside development.



7... 0-0 8. Nc3

Here I wasted a lot of time calculating an attempt to punish Black for his move order – typically 7...Nxe5 is played first – by 8. Qh5 g6 9. Nxe5 hxg6 10. Bxg6 fxg6 11. Qxg6+, but couldn't find more than a perpetual check for White in the ensuing lines; thus I transposed into the regular line.

8... Nxe5 9. Rxe5 Bf6

Black has other ways to play here too. In a game I played against Jorge Sammour-Hasbun a few years ago, he chose 9...c6 10. b3 Ne8 11. Bb2 d5, and here I should have played 12. Qh5, the point being that 12...g6 is met by 13. Nxd5!! +- (13...cxd5 14. Qxh7+! Kxh7 15. Rh5+ Kg8 16. Rh8#; 13...gxh5 14. Nxe7+ Kg7(h8) 15. Rxe7+ f6 16. Rxe7#; 13...Qxd5 14. Qh6! Q(any) 15. Qxh7+! Kxh7 16. Rh5+ Kg8 17. Rh8#). After 12...Nf6 13. Qh4, White is threatening 14. Rxe7 and 14. Nxd5 and has an active position with many attacking possibilities. To be clear, I did not see this on my own; Jorge showed it to me after the game.

10. Re3 g6

Black needs to complete his development, defend against White's threat of 11. Bxh7+ Kxh7 12. Qh5+ Kg8 13. Rh3, and find a way to deal with White's idea of 11. Nd5 attempting to gain the bishop pair. Another game I played went 10...Bd4 11. Rh3 (11. Bxh7+ Kxh7 12. Qh5+ Kg8 13. Rh3 f5 14. d3 does not seem to give enough compensation for the piece) g6 12. Qg4 Qf6 13. Rf3 Qe5 14. Ne2 Bxb2 15. Bxb2 Qxb2 16. Raf1. At the cost of a mere pawn, White has "developed" his Black-squared bishop by getting rid of it and now has a huge lead in



development and a direct attack against the Black king. I managed not to win this game, but that's a statement on my skill level rather than the opening line. 10...Re8 is also possible, but 11. Nd5 is not fully comfortable for Black. 10...g6 should be sufficient for equality.

11. b3

And not 11. Nd5 Bg7 12. Ne7+ Kh8 13. Nxc8 Rxc8, where White would have the bishop pair but be behind in development and still need multiple moves to develop the queen-side.

11... Re8?!

This gets Black in a bit of trouble. It would have been better to complete development and achieve equality by 11...b6 12. Ba3 c5!, as in Shamkovich-Martz, Lone Pine 1975.

12. Ba3!

Here I think my opponent realized that the planned destruction of White's pawn structure via 12...Rxe3 13. fxe3 Bxc3 14. dxc3 actually lands Black in a nearly lost position. White has the two bishops, a lead in development, and plenty of targets to attack around Black's king, while White's pawn weaknesses don't matter. White will continue (not necessarily in this order) Qd2 or Qf3 as appropriate, Rf1, and, depending on Black's setup, Bxd6 and Bc4, c4 (and maybe c5) and Bb2, and/or e4 and e5. Black needs to abandon this plan and deal with White's threat of 13. Bxd6 as well as White's simple plan of developing the queen (e. g. to f3) and the a1 rook and attacking in the center and on the kingside.

12...Bd4!

A counterstrike that White cannot meet in such a way as to retain all the advantages of his position.

13. Rxe8+

For teaching and learning purposes, I wish this move were worse than it is. It's against the spirit of the position. White removes the target on d6, helps Black develop the queenside, and makes the bishop on a3 less useful. However, if followed up properly, this move does allow White to keep pressuring Black's position, and there is not a clearly better alternative. For example, 13. Rf3 or 13. Re2, which would be more thematic, is answered well by 13...Re6! (If 13... Be5 or 13...c5, 14. Nd5! offering an exchange sacrifice is strong.) Two interesting potential lines, which form a twin set, are: (a)

13. Rf3 Re6 14. Bxd6 Rxd6! (not 14...Bxc3? 15. Bxc7! Qxc7 16. dxc3) 15. Nb5 Bxa1 16. Nxd6 Bf6! = (b) 13. Re2 Re6 14. Bxd6 Bxc3! (not 14...Rxd6? 15. Nb5 Bxa1 16. Nxd6) 15. Bxc7 (15. dxc3 Rxd6 16. Qe1 Re6) Qxc7 16. dxc3 Qxc3 and soon ...d5 =. White also has a positional exchange sacrifice, 13. Bxd6!? Bxe3 14. dxe3 cxd6 15. Nd5, where he gets enough compensation, but not more than that; Black will complete development and bother the White knight by 15...b6 and 16...Bb7.

13...Nxe8 14. Nd5?

Unlike the previous move, this is an unquestionable error. This pseudo-active move accomplishes multiple things... for Black. It allows Black to comfortably finish development and shut out the a3 bishop, and throws away White's advantage. Correct was 14. Qf3. Now 14... d6 and 15... Be6 loses the b7 pawn, 14... d5 15. Re1 simply loses (15... Be6 16. Rxe6 or 15... c6 16. Re7), and 14... Qf6 15. Re1 Ng7 is also highly unlikely to hold. Black hangs on by 14... d6 15. Re1 Nf6, planning ... c6 and ... Be5, followed by developing the c8 bishop. However, White will pile on the pressure, e. g. by Bc4, Nd5 or Ne4, etc.

14... d6 15. c3 Bg7 16. Qe2 Be6 17. Nf4 Bd7 18. Re1 Nf6 19. Bc4 Bc6

After this series of moves, some forced and some simply logical, the position is objectively equal. Here I tried to come up with a way to make something out of nothing, or at least prevent massive liquidation and a dead draw. In fact, White has to be careful not to end up worse. For example, after 20. d4 d5 21. Bb5 Qd7! 22. Bxc6 Qxc6, Black is pressuring the weak c3 pawn, planning 23... Re8, and considering kicking the f4 knight by ... g5 and invading with his own knight to e4. I also considered 20. Qe7 but didn't see anything for White in the endgame after 20... d5 21. Qxd8+ Rxd8. And it's a good thing too, as I would have actually lost after 20. Qe7? Qxe7! 21. Rxe7 d5 22. Bf1 Bf8 – this line entirely escaped my field of vision during the game. I looked at 20. Bxf7+ Kxf7 21. Qe6+ (21. Qc4+ d5) Kf8 22. Qc4, but after 22... Bd7 there is no follow-up. I finally settled on a line that exchanges more pieces but leaves a queen and bishop endgame where White can use his slight space advantage to try



to reduce Black to passivity or damage Black's pawn structure.

20. Qd3 Qd7

After 20... d5, an attempt to win a pawn by 21. Be7 ends up losing a piece, albeit for some compensation, after 21... Qe8! 22. Nxd5 (22. Bxd5 Nxd5! 23. Nxd5 Rd8!) Bxd5! 23. Bxd5 Bf8! However, White can play 21. Bb5 with a much better version of the 20. d4 d5 21. Bb5 variation discussed above.

21. Nd5 Nxd5 22. Bxd5 Re8 23. Rxe8+ Qxe8 24. Kf1 h5 25. Qf3

Although not forced, this was roughly the position I was going for. The idea was that 25... Bxd5 26. Qxd5 would force 26... Qc8 and the Black queen is tied to defense of the queenside pawns, although even then it's not clear how White can make progress. Otherwise, Black has to allow 26. Bxc6, creating multiple weak pawns. However, once again, something important fell outside my field of vision...

25... Bh6! 26. Bxc6 bxc6 27. Qe2

27. d4 leads to 27... Bd2 and 28... Qe1+ 27... Qc8!

And suddenly I realized that White has weaknesses subject to attack too, and that Black is not only not worse but may even try for a win here. White obviously can't allow the Black queen to come to a6, but it's also ready to jump to f5, from where it will eye d3, c2, or b1, depending on circumstances. The White queen, meanwhile, is tied to defending the d2 pawn. (28... Bxd2 is threatened, for example) And the a3 bishop really needs to find a job. Or at least a hobby.

28. d4 Qf5 29. g3

Making an escape square for the king in preparation for ... Qb1+; 29... Qh3+ 30. Kg1 doesn't accomplish anything for Black.

29... h4 30. g4

The combination of ... h3 and ... Qb1+ cannot be allowed. For example, if 30. Qe8+? Kg7 31. Qxc6, either 31... h3 or 31... Qb1+ 32. Kg2 Qxa2 33. Qa4 h3+ lands White in major trouble.

30... Qd5

A solid move. 30... Qb1+ 31. Kg2 h3+!? (otherwise Black has simply trapped his own queen on a1-b1) 32. Kxh3 Qg1 gives Black enough compensation for the pawn, but not more. 33. Qf3 Qb1 34. Qe2 Qg1 is one way the game could end.

31. f3 h3

With his last move, Black has saddled White with a permanent weak pawn on h2. Black's piece activity and White's newly created weakness more than compensate for Black's pawn weaknesses on the queenside, and Black is slightly better. However, White has defended against all immediate threats, and with proper play, it's difficult for either side to make progress. A draw would be the most appropriate result in this position.

32. Bb2

White dreams of bringing the bishop to life by playing c4 and d5. However, after something like 32... Bf4 33. c4 Qe6! the bishop endgame is most likely lost for White (for example, 34. Qxe6 fxe6 35. Kg1 Be3+ 36. Kf1 d5! (now White has two permanent weak pawns) 37. Bc3 Kf7 38. Ba5 Bf4 39. Kg1 Kf6 and Black will break through in the center) and there is no comfortable way to avoid the queen trade. Thus, White would be better off sticking to solid defense, e. g. by 33. Kg1. However, at this point instead of continuing his successful strategy of playing in the center and on the kingside, Black undertakes a misguided foray to the queenside...

32... Qa5?! 33. a4 Qb6?

It wasn't too late to repent and play 33... Qd5.

34. b4 a5?!



With his own hands and a total lack of respect for royalty, Black has trapped his queen behind a fence of Black and White pawns. By playing one bad move (33... Qb6?), my opponent took his position from a little better to clearly worse. 34... a5 is the logical conclusion to Black's move sequence, but is also the losing move. As



we will shortly see, White breaks through in the center and on the kingside, while Black's aggression on the queenside is too slow. Black needed to make a prophylactic move like 34... d5, restraining White's bishop. Despite being the decisive error, however, 34... a5 does not deserve a full question mark. If Black hadn't planned to play 34... a5, he wouldn't have played 32... Qa5 and 33... Qb6 either. It was the plan of removing the queen from the center in order to undermine the queenside that was the real culprit.

35. Qe8+ Bf8?!

Much more resilient defense would have been offered by 35... Kg7! It feels scary to put the king on the same diagonal as the opponent's bishop, but it is not at all simple for White to take advantage of this.

During the game, while considering my thirty-fifth move, my first analysis of 35. Qe8+ Kg7 consisted of "I should be able to somehow open the long diagonal and win here." After scolding myself for being lazy, I forced myself to calculate as far as 36. d5! cxd5 37. c4+ d4 (37... f6?? 38. Qe7+) 38. Qb5! "and after the exchange of queens, the a-pawn will decide." However, it's not that easy. Some interesting variations arise. Let's take a look:

(a) 38... Qxb5 39. cxb5 axb4 40. a5! +-.

The a-pawn is unstoppable or 39... Bd2 40. Bxd4+ Kf8 41. bxa5 Bxa5 42. Bf2! And, with 43. Be1 +-, White will force a winning pawn endgame.

(b) 38... axb4 39. a5 Qa7 (39... Qxb5 40. cxb5 transposes to (a) above) 40. g5! +-..

(c) 38... Be3! The most stubborn defense. 39. bxa5 Qa7! follows, and I must confess that here I could not find a win on my own. It looked to me as though, after 40. a6 Kh6, White has nothing better than a draw: 41. Qb7 Qc5 42. Qb5 (not 42. a7?? Qxc4+ 43. Ke1 Qc2 -+) Qa7. However, the computer finds the way for White to make progress. The question to ask is, which of White's pieces is not actively participating? The answer is both obvious and, at first glance, bonkers. Indeed, it is White's king that must join the battle! 40. a6 Kh6 (40... Kf8 41. Ke1!! d3 [else 42. Qb7 Qc5 43. a7 +-] 42. Bf6! and by combining threats of mate and promotion with attacking Black's bishop and looking for a favorable endgame transformation, White will

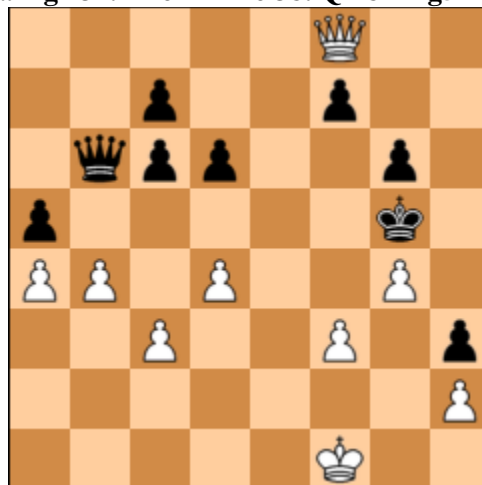
pull apart Black's defenses, e. g. 42... Bg1 43. c5! Qa8 [43... Bxc5 44. Qb7 Qxb7 45. axb7 Ba7 46. Kd2 and White wins this bishop endgame – I leave it as an exercise to work this out] 44. cxd6 cxd6 45. Qxd3 Bxh2 46. Kf2 +-, or 42... Qa8 43. Qb7 Qe8 44. Qe4 Qxe4 45. fxe4 and 46. Bg5 with another winning bishop endgame) 41. Ke2!! planning 42. Kd3 and 43. Qb7 (the king defends himself, freeing the queen to help promote the pawn). Now, if 41... Bg1 42. Kd3! Qa8 (42... Bxh2 43. Bxd4 Qa8 44. Qb7 +-) 43. Qb7 Qe8 44. Bxd4, and in the queen endgame White's king will run forward to get away from checks and join and queen and a-pawn, with excellent winning chances. Or 41... Qa8 42. g5+!? Bxg5 (42... Kh5/g7 43. Qb7 Qe8 44. Qe4 +-; 42... Kh7 43. Qd5 Qe8 44. Kd3 +-) 43. Bxd4, and White will combine king protection with pushing the a-pawn forward, although there is clearly still a lot of play left.

In short, with optimal play, White still ends up on top after 35... Kg7, but this is what Black should have played. 35... Bf8 loses in a more straightforward manner.

36. Bc1!

After being confined to a3 and b2 for most of the game, the bishop roars into action. Or "trumpets," if you prefer – this piece was originally known as the elephant. White threatens 37. Bh6, and Black has only one defense. But... after that defense, are things really that bad for Black?

36... Kg7 37. Bh6+ Kxh6 38. Qxf8+ Kg5



OK – now what?

39. Qxf7 axb4 40. Kf2!!



At this point, my opponent first gave me a look that suggested concern for my physical and/or mental health. Then he fell into a deep think. As it turns out, Black's king is trapped in a mating net, and Black's queen, whose tragic mistreatment was discussed earlier, is too slow to help on defense. White's king is going to walk up the board to accept the opposing king's surrender in person. On a more didactic note, the main thing to take away from this is the concept rather than specific moves. Once you recognize the pattern – a king driven out in front of his pawns, blocked off from behind by the opposing queen and pressured from the front by the opposing king and pawn phalanx – the actual calculations, in this case as in others like it, are not very difficult. For a much more spectacular example of this theme, I refer you to Khismatullin-Eljanov from the 2015 European Championship, which features one of the most beautiful chess moves in recent memory

40... Kh6

Other possibilities were 40... bxc3 41. Kg3 Qxd4 42. f4+ Kh6 43. g5+ Kh5 44. Qh7#, or 40... Qa6 41. Kg3 Kh6 42. f4 Qd3+ (42... g5 43. fxg5+ Kxg5 44. Qg7#) 43. Kh4 +-.

41. f4 g5

Or 41... Qa6 42. Kg3 transposing to the analysis above, or 41... Qb8 42. Kg3 Qh8 43. g5+ Kh5 44. Qe6 +-.

42. f5

And here Black resigned, as there is no defense against 43. Qg6#.

1-0

FM Jacob Chudnovsky has been studying and playing chess since the age of nine. He was one of the top scholastic players in the U.S. in the 90s, with notable results including a tie for first in the 1993 National Junior High School Championships, a tie for 7th-14th in the 1994 World U-14 Championship, winning the 1993 National 9th Grade Championship, and winning the 1996 U.S. Junior Open U-17 Championship. Jacob was ranked second in the U.S. in his age group throughout most of his scholastic playing career. Later he played first board for his college and grad school teams in intercollegiate and open team tournaments. After being mostly on hiatus from serious chess for a number of years, he has resumed chess competition, writing, and teaching over the past year.



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85th Mass Open: Journeys to the Championship

IM David Vigorito

The title of 85th Mass Open Champion was shared by three prolific local masters. The most decorated of the winners, covers crucial games from all three.

This year's state championship was an unusual one. GM Alexander Ivanov had won the tournament countless times, and entered as the clear favorite. Not only was Ivanov upended by another Alex (Cherniack), but we went on to lose two more games. It can happen to anyone, I suppose, even the greats.

After two rounds there were only three perfect scores: myself, Cherniack, and Chris Chase. So I faced Chase while Cherniack was paired with second seed and 2014 champion, Mika Brattain.

IM David Vigorito (2433)

FM Christopher Chase (2397)

85th Massachusetts Open (3)

05.29.2016

King's Indian Defence, Fianchetto [E63]

1. Nf3 g6 2. d4 Bg7 3. c4 d6

I'd played Chris a million times. Today, I decided to do something different.

4. g3 Nf6 5. Bg2 O-O 6. Nc3 Nc6 7. O-O a6



Now we are in a main line King's Indian. I covered this line in my 2011 book, *Attacking*

Chess: The King's Indian, Volume II, but there I advocated for Black! This was the first time I had the position with White.

8. Bf4!?

A trendy line that was in its infancy when I wrote my book. I had seen a bit of it while writing my King's Indian column for chesspublishing.com, so I thought I'd give it a try.

8... Bd7!?

More common is 8... Rb8 9. Rc1 Bd7, while 8... h6 is also possible. Black played in a similar fashion in the game Carlsen - Nakamura, St. Louis 2014.

9. Rc1 Re8



I spent a lot of time here, anticipating my opponent's reply.

10. Qd2 e5

10... Rb8 11. d5 Na5 12. b3 c5 13. e4 b5 14. e5 dxe5 15. Nxe5± was very good for White because of the dominating center, seen in Hammer-Sigfusson, Reykjavik 2015.

11. dxe5 dxe5 12. Bh6

This was my idea, but it is not even best. Better was 12. Bg5 Be6 13. Rfd1!±

12... Bh8?!

I had spent all my time on the nonsensical line 12... e4 13. Bxg7 (13. Ne1 Bxh6 14. Qxh6 Ng4!) 13... Kxg7 14. Ng5 e3? (14... Bf5) 15. fxe3±, where the pressure against f7 makes it impossible for Black to regain his pawn, and White retains the initiative.

Perhaps Black's best was 12... Bxh6 13. Qxh6 Ng4, for which I intended 14. Qg5, but 14... e4



(14... f6 15. Qd2±) 15. Qxd8 Raxd8 followed by ... f5 is equal.

13. Rfd1 Be6 14. Bg5!



I finally put the bishop where it belongs. White does not have too much, but Black has to make difficult decisions on every move, and that took its toll on the clock.

14... Qc8

The tactical point is 14... Bxc4?? 15. Qxd8 Raxd8 16. Rxd8 Rxd8 (16... Nxd8 17. Bxf6 Bxf6 18. Ne4+-) 17. Bxf6 Bxf6 18. Ne4±) 14... Qxd2 15. Nxd2±, contemplating Bxc6, gives White an edge as well.

15. Bxf6!?

White has a small edge everywhere, but it's not easy to find a concrete plan. Black's moves are harder, though.

Something like 15. b3 Rd8 16. Qe1± was possible as well.

15... Bxf6 16. Ng5

This was the idea. Again, it's hard for Black to decide which slightly worse position to go into.

16... Nd4 17. Nxe6

I took a while on this. My idea was to go into a position with my knight against Black's dark-squared bishop. I thought I could push a little with no risk.

17... Nxe6 18. Qd7

The computer suggests 18. c5!±

18... c6

I expected this, but it was more accurate to play

18... Bg5! 19. e3 c6=. The difference is that Bh3 can be met with ... f5!

19. Qxc8 Raxc8 20. Bh3

Now I can take the knight. It's not much, but it's risk-free for White.

If 20. Ne4, 20... Be7 21. Bh3 f5=.

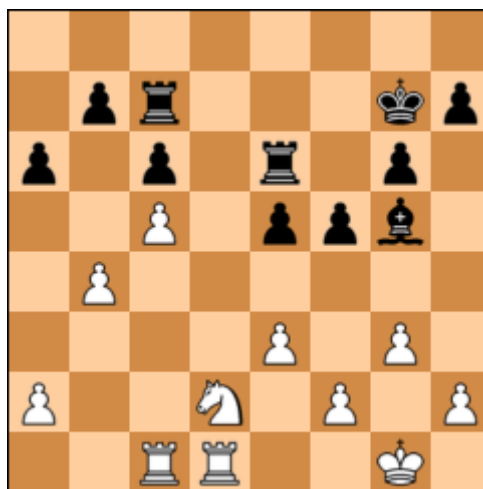
20... Rc7 21. Ne4 Kg7 22. Bxe6 Rxe6 23. c5!±

I briefly thought about 23. Nxf6 Rxf6 24. Rd8 with the idea of Rcd1. White dominates the d-file and is 'better', but there is no way to increase the pressure, so it should just be a draw.

23... Be7 24. b4 f5 25. Nd2 Bg5

It was probably better to just play 25... e4 as the bishop is best placed on e7 where it covers d6.

26. e3



White is marginally better as he has the d-file and the knight is more useful than the bishop. The slow pressure now pays off, as Black is low on time and tired of defending passively.

26... f4?

This 'active' move is strategic suicide. Better is 26... e4 27. Nc4±

27. Ne4.

Now the knight rules.

27... Be7 28. Kg2 g5 29. g4 h6?!

Black sets out on a plan to fight for the d-file, but it goes awry. In principle, Black should not put any more pawns on dark squares.

30. Rd3 Bf8 31. Rcd1 Ree7 32. Nd6

The e4-square was great, but f5 is even better.

32... Kf6 33. Nf5 Rf7??

A slip in time pressure.

It was necessary to play 33... Re8 or 33... Rh7.

34. Rd6+

34... Bxd6 35. Rxd6#.

1-0



FM Mika Brattain (2453)
NM Alex Cherniack (2314)
85th Massachusetts Open (3)

05.29.2016

King's Indian Attack [A07]

Commentary in italics by FM Brattain

This was a crucial game because I was a half point behind the tournament leaders and needed a win to get back in contention. My opponent had just beaten Ivanov, the tournament's perennial favorite.

1. Nf3 d5 2. g3 g6

This is a common move at 2700+ level.

3. c4 d4!?

There is also 3... dxc4 4. Qa4+ Nc6 5. Bg2 Bg7 6. Nc3 e5 7. Qxc4 Nge7 8. O-O O-O 9. d3 h6, as played in Carlsen-Anand, Chennai m/3 2013.

4. b4!?



4... f6?!

This is very strange. There is a line 1. Nf3 d5 2. c4 d4 3. b4 f6!, but this is not the same thing. 4... Bg7 is the normal move.

5. Bg2 e5 6. O-O Be6 7. d3 Nd7

The position is vaguely normal, but ... g6 looks completely out of place.

8. a3

8. e3 dxe3 9. Bxe3 Nh6

8. Nbd2!? Bxb4 (8... a5) 9. Rb1 Bxd2 (9... a5 10. a3) 10. Nxd2!±)

8... a5 9. bxa5!?

9. b5 Nc5

9... Nc5

Although it seems like there is no hurry to take back the pawn, the game shows that perhaps Black should just play 9... Rxa5.

10. Bd2!?

10. Nfd2! may be stronger, offering White good play on the queenside: 10... Rxa5 11. Nb3 Nxb3 12. Qxb3 b6 (12... b5!? 13. Nd2) 13. Bd2 Ra7 14. a4.

10... Ne7 11. Bb4

I like the look of this idea.

11... Nc6 12. Nfd2 Nxa5 13. Bxc5 Bxc5

14. Nb3



14... Qd6?!

Black has to get developed.

14... Nxb3 15. Qxb3 O-O! 16. Qxb7 Rb8 and Black is active and has the bishop pair.

15. N1d2!

Threatening Ne4.

15... f5 16. Nxc5 Qxc5 17. Qa4+!?

17. Nb3 Nxb3 18. Qxb3 also looks good.

17... Kf7 18. Qb4! Qa7?

18... Qe7! is a better defensive try.

19. Nf3

Now Black is in trouble.

19... c5 20. Qd2! Qb8

If 20... Nb3, 21. Nxe5+ Kf6 22. Qf4! Nxa1 23. Ng4+ Ke7 24. Qc7+ +- wins.

The sad 20... Kg7, just dropping the e-pawn, looks like the best chance: 21. Nxe5 (21. Qg5!±) 21... Qb8 (21... Nb3? 22. Qg5) 22. Qf4±.

21. Ng5+

Material is even, but White's powerful bishop and Black's exposed king decide the game



in short order.

21... Kf6 22. Nxe6 Kxe6 23. Rfb1

23. Rab1 looks more accurate, as the king rook may be strong on the e-file!

23... Qc7

23... Ra6 24. Bd5+ Kf6 25. Rb5 b6 26. Qh6 Qf8 27. Qxf8+! Rxf8 28. Rab1 Rb8 29. Rxc5+-

24. Qg5 Rhf8?!

24... Ra6 is better.

25. Bd5+ Kd7 26. Rb5 Ra6 27. Qh6



Here we can really see how the ...g6 move hurt Black, as he never played ...Bg7.

27... Ke8 28. Rab1 b6 29. h4!?

29. e3! would quickly open the position. Mika's method is also methodical and effective.

29... Rf6 30. h5 Qe7 31. hxc6 hxc6 32. Kg2!

Qf8 33. Qg5 Kd7 34. Rh1

White's rook quickly jumps from the b-file to the h-file. Such is the advantage of space.

34... Nc6 35. Rh7+ Ne7 36. Rb1!

Now Rbh1 is a threat.

36... Kd6 37. Bb7!

A cute move which wins a whole rook.

1-0

NM David Brodsky (2345)

NM Chris Williams (2297)

85th Massachusetts Open (3)

05.29.2016

Sicilian, Kan [B41]

1. e4 c5 2. Nf3 e6 3. d4 cxd4 4. Nxd4 a6 5. c4 Qc7

5... Nf6 6. Nc3 Bb4 7. Qd3, Carlsen-Anand, Sochi (m/6) 2014

6. Nc3 Nf6 7. a3 Nc6

7... b6, setting up a Hedgehog, is the most common

8. Be3 Ne5 9. Be2 h5!? 10. h3 Ng6 11. Qd2

11. O-O is also viable.

11... b6 12. f4 Bb7 13. Bd3 Bc5 14. Nde2?!

Again, White could simply castle.

14. e5!? Nh4 15. O-O-O!

14... Nh4 15. O-O



15... g5?

I remember seeing this move and thinking it must be brilliant, because I didn't see the point. It does not work, but this is easy for me to say at home. 15... d5! is good.

16. b4!?

Very practical and strong. Objectively, however, it seems White should just take, when I can only guess that after 16. fxc5 Black intended Rg8 (16... Nh7 17. b4) 17. Rxf6 (17. Bxc5 Qxc5+ 18. Kh2 is also good) 17... Rxc5, so that 18. Rf2 allows 18... Rxc2+ 19. Rxc2 Nf3+, and even here White may be better, though it is simpler to play 18. Kh1! Rxc2 19. Bf4+-.

16... Bxe3+ 17. Qxe3 g4



18. Qg3

Better was 18. Qf2! Ng6 (18... Nf5 19. exf5 gxf3 20. Qh4!) 19. f5 Ne5 20. fxe6+-.

18... Ng6 19. h4

White is still clearly better.

19... O-O 20. e5 Ne8 21. Rad1 Ng7 22. Ne4 Bxe4 23. Bxe4 Qxc4?!

Trying to change the course of the battle. 23... Rac8 is the natural move.

24. Qd3?

White has the upper hand after 24. Bxa8! Nf5 25. Qd3.

(24... Qxe2 25. Rfe1 Qb5 26. Be4)

(24... Rxa8 25. Qd3)

24... Qxd3 25. Rxd3 Ra7

Now Black is quite alright, as the backwards d-pawn is an extra pawn.

26. g3 f5 27. Bg2 Rc8 28. Rfd1 Nf8 29. Nc3 b5 30. Ne2 Rc4 31. Nd4 Ne8



32. Nb3

White probably deemed it too risky to play 32. Nxf5!? exf5 33. Bd5+ Kg7 34. Bxc4 bxc4 35. Rc3.

32... Kf7 33. Nc5 Ke7 34. Nb7 Rc2

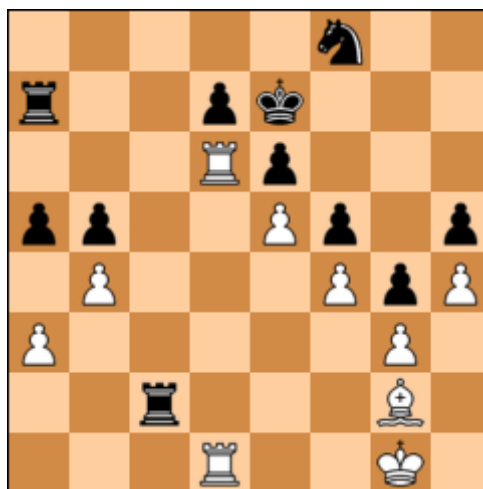
White has enough for the pawn, but no more.

35. Nd6?

Probably frustration. Nxd6 36. Rxd6?!

36. exd6+ Kf6 37. a4!?

36... a5!?



Williams senses the tide turning. He wants to get both rooks to the seventh rank. 36... Ra2+ is also strong.

37. Rb6?

37. R6d2 was necessary. Brodsky probably did not want to give up pressure against the d7-pawn, but it was already high time to think about holding on.

37... axb4 38. axb4 Raa2

38... Ra3 39. Kh2 Rcc3 40. Rxb5 Rxg+-

39. Bf1 Rc3 40. Bd3 Rb2 41. Kf1 Rxb4

Now Black is up two pawns, and he still hold the initiative. The rest is not too difficult.

42. Rd6?! Rb2 43. Kg1 b4 44. Bb5? Rxg3+

45. Kf1 Rf3+ 46. Kg1 Rg3+ 47. Kh1 Rh3+

48. Kg1 Rbh2 49. Rxd7+ Nxd7 50. Rxd7+ Kf8

51. Rd8+ Kg7 52. Rd7+ Kg6 53. Re7 Rh1+

54. Kg2 R3h2+ 55. Kg3 Rd2 56. Be2 Rh3+

The hope was 56... Rxe2?? 57. Rg7+!, but Chris does not fall for such things.

57. Kf2 Rb2

0-1



Chess is Hard

Nathan Smolensky

The hall was quiet.

A Saturday tournament wound down at the local club. Most of the players sat with slight smiles on their faces, doing their best to extract as much entertainment as they could from their entry fee. But on the top board, the tone was more serious. Money was on the line.

On one side was a strong expert, one of the tournament's top seeds. But here, after a series of tactical complications, he found himself down a piece for two pawns against his opponent, a grade-schooler freshly over 1900. I was directing the event, so I made a note to keep an eye on how it finished.

And then, after watching a game in the lower section finish up, I heard some noise from the top board. It sounded like sniffing. The state of the game had changed – the piece that constituted the younger player's advantage was no more, blundered away while my head was turned. And the sniffles belonged to the child – he was in tears.

This story should be nothing new for most tournament players. I'd been there myself, tossing aside chances at breakthrough victories and tournament contention in momentary lapses of reason. Sometimes the very fear of blundering in high-pressure situations was enough to throw me off course, leading me to waste valuable times, shy from tactical opportunities, or just get lost in overthought. As Garry Kasparov liked to say, the threat can be more powerful than the execution.

And while competitive environments are unforgiving by their nature, but there is something uniquely brutal about tournament chess and the way it punishes error.

The advent of computer analysis shines an interesting light on this problem. Under the eye of a sufficiently advanced engine, no move played by a human in the game of chess can ever improve the evaluation of a position for the player making it. *Accuracies* are often difficult to find, and they should rightly be commended, but they seem so rarely to decide games.

The issue is compounded by the length of tournament games, the sheer volume of invested time and energy and willpower needed to find oneself with an opportunity that is just so fleeting. Worse yet, time pressure brings out the worst of our errors, and there is nothing like the agony of throwing an advantage away with minutes left in a multi-hour game.

I write this all not to condemn chess or discourage anyone from playing it – I spend much of my time as a promoter of the game, and I think it is great fun for all ages, a tremendous opportunity to challenge and expand the mind, and to make great friends doing so.

I merely offer my sympathy. To anyone who has been burned by the fickle nature of tournament chess, to anyone for whom the agony was too much to justify the ecstasy, I understand. I've been there. And tournament chess is not for everyone, nor is it any sign of weakness or cowardice to shy from it.

There is much to be learned from tribulations at the chess board, demons to be conquered and character to be gained. But we should not shy from the reality of the matter. Chess is fun, of course, and incredibly deep and wondrous. But chess, at a competitive level, is merciless and unforgiving, it is cruel and sometimes brutal to those who love it most. Chess is hard.



Interview

NM Siddharth Arun

Our interview series continues with Siddharth Arun, one of the most recognizable young faces on the Massachusetts chess scene. Sid, as friends know him, has played in nearly 400 USCF-rated tournaments since his 2005 debut, mostly in Massachusetts, and achieved the USCF Master title in late Summer 2013. As he graduates high school and prepares to fly South for the autumn, I decided it was time for the definitive Chess Horizons interview with Mr. Arun.

Nathan Smolensky: When did you first learn to play chess? Who taught you?

Siddharth Arun: I started learning chess when I was around five years old, with my brother teaching me basic moves and strategy. I played in my first tournament when I was around 6 years old, and was completely pummeled. I don't think I even won a game. I took a hiatus shortly after and then returned yet again under my brother's tutelage. However, my motivation to play chess back in the day was to defeat my brother in a classic sibling rivalry.

NS: What do you like most about chess?

SA: I love every bit of chess, especially the strategy and the complexity that comes with the plethora of variations every move. Perhaps my favorite aspect of chess lies in its global unification. Chess is a universal language, a game that can be played by people of any age, any race, any economic background. Chess is a unifier of many different peoples. During a recent trip to India, I visited a rural village in hopes of teaching chess to the children at the school. The language barrier was an obvious obstacle, as I could not speak the local language. To my surprise, they had already learned the game, and thus we managed to communicate through the language of the chess pieces. Chess is a game that challenges borders, and brings people together, despite how different we may all be. Because at the chess board, we are equals, challenging each other to a battle of wits.

NS: Do you often teach chess?

SA: In my town, I have been teaching chess at the library for the past four years. Every Monday, I teach around 20-30 children basic strategies of chess, and then direct a tournament in which the children can practice their skills. Some of these students have participated in scholastic regional tournaments around the area and have emerged as first place winners. This club is the first of its kind in my town, which had no previous chess scene, and hopefully it will continue once I head off to college. Apart from my town, I also teach chess every Sunday at the Westwood Chinese School, and teach my peers at the high school chess club, which tied for first at the Hurvitz Cup in April 2015.

NS: You're graduating high school. What's next?

SA: I will be attending Johns Hopkins University in the Fall and will be majoring in Biomedical Engineering. As far as summer plans, I will most likely be spending time with my friends before we head off on our separate ways, and I will also be interning at a psychiatry laboratory in Boston for a month.

NS: Do you plan to continue playing chess? If so, do you have any particular goals in mind?

SA: I will definitely be continuing, as there are quite a few chess players at Hopkins. Hopefully, we will be able to participate at USATE and compete for top college team. Additionally, as I have recently dipped below 2200 due to unfortunate circumstances, my primary goal is to return above 2200 and work hard to reach 2300.

NS: Do you have a favorite game that you've played so far?

SA: I have a few, but I would say the most beautiful, and thus my favorite, game would have to be the one I played against NM Farzad Abdi at the Boylston Chess Club. It was a King's Gambit, an opening I normally play in blitz, but I thought I would have fun with it in a G/60. Based on what happened, and the sheer excitement and turmoil of the game, I decided never to play the King's Gambit in a classical rated game ever again – though I broke that promise this past May at the Mass Open. However, the unorthodox style displayed in this



game provides a beauty and complexity that I could not even comprehend:

NM Siddharth Arun (2202)

NM Farzad Abdi (2260)

BCF \$15 Open (3)

02.20.2016

King's Gambit, Accepted [C34]

This annotation was previously published on chess.com

1. e4 e5 2. f4

I had been studying the King's Gambit for a while, playing it primarily in blitz and shorter time controls. This tournament, a G/60, was the perfect setting to play some sharp, crazy chess.

2... exf4 3. Nf3 Nf6

An interesting variation, one I was not too familiar with. More common is 3... g5 4. Nc3 Nc6 (4... g4 5. Ne5 Qh4+ 6. g3 fxg3 7. Qxg4 g2+ 8. Qxh4 gxh1=Q 9. Qh5 is a cute little combination in which White is now completely winning, due to several mate threats) 5. d4 d6 6. g3 g4 7. Nh4 f3 8. Be3 Bg7 9. Qd2 A transposition to the Quaade Variation, providing opportunities for both sides.

4. Nc3 d5 5. e5 Nh5 6. Be2 Bg4 7. d4

This move is played to prevent my opponent from playing d4 himself.

7... Nc6 8. a3 Bxf3 9. Bxf3 Qh4+ 10. Ke2?

10. g3! is a much stronger reply: 10... fxg3 11. hxg3 Qxg3+ 12. Kf1 g6 13. Nb5 Kd8 14. Bxd5 results in some unclear play, with chances for both sides. Although White does appear completely lost, it's not too easy for Black to find a continuation.

10... O-O-O 11. Nxd5 f6 12. e6 Rd6?



Allowing White to equalize. Better was Rxd5: 12... Rxd5 13. Bxd5 f3+ (13... Nxd4+ 14. Kd3 is Similar to the other variation) 14. Bxf3 Nxd4+ 15. Kd3 Be7. This is tougher for White to play as his King is in the center.

13. Kd3!!

When I played this over the board, I assessed that White should be winning. Black has no clear path to break open in the center and expose the King. Now plans for White include playing c4 and then c5, pressuring the f4 pawn, and playing Re1 and pushing e7.

13... g6 14. Re1

14. Qe1 is a better move as it takes the queen off the file of attack.

14... Ng7 15. e7 Bxe7 16. Nxe7+ Nxe7 17. Rxe7 Nf5

17... Ne6 18. c3 f5 19. Bxb7+! Kb8 20. Bf3 and now black is on the ropes.

17... Rxd4+ succumbs to 18. Kxd4 Rd8+ 19. Bd5 Nf5+ 20. Kc3 Nxe7 21. Be6+ Kb8 22. Qxd8+ Nc8 23. Qxc8#.

18. Qe1!

The only way to save the position

18... Rxd4+ 19. Kc3 Qxh2 20. Re8+

20. Re4 Rxe4 21. Qxe4 Nd6 22. Qe6+ Kb8 23. Qxf6 and White should be winning.

20... Rd8 21. Qe6+ Kb8 22. Rxh8 Rxh8 23.

Qxf6 Re8 24. Bd2 a6 25. Qg5 Nh4 26. Qd5

Nxf3 27. Qxf3 g5 28. Re1 Rd8 29. Re6 Qg1 30.

Re2 Qb6 31. Qe4 h5 32. b3

Here I had less than five minutes. I ended up winning this game as I was able to maneuver my bishop to c3 and attack his pawns on the kingside with my queen and rook. Overall this was an extremely unique and enjoyable game - not every day the king is in the center of attack - but also one that taught me that I should save the King's Gambit for blitz ☺.

1-0



Solutions (problems on p. 5)

1. 1. Rxe6! Rxe6 2. Qxg7+ Kxg7
3. Nxe6+ Kf6 4. Nxc7+-
2. 1... Qxb3! 2. axb3 a2 3. Qd1 Bxc3 +-
3. 1. Qg5+ Kh8 2. Nf7+ Qxf7 3. Qd8+ Qg8
4. Qf6+ (or 4. Qd4) Qg7 5. Qxg7#
4. 1. Qa5! Nc7 2. Qf5 g6 3. Qxf6+-
5. 1... Ng3+ 2. Kh2 Nf1+ 3. Kh1 Qg3 4. N6g4
(or N2g4) Qh2+5. Nxh2 Ng3#
6. 1. Bxh7+!! Kxh7 2. h4!! Re8+ 3. Kf1 Bf6
(3...Bxh4 4. Rxh4+ Qxh4 5.Qd3+-; 3... Kg8 4. hxc5 Bxf3 5. Qxf3 Qxg5 6. Rh6
Qf6 7. Qxf6 gxf6 8. Nd5 +-; 3... Bh6
4. Ng5+ Qxg5 5. hxc5 Bxd1 6. Rxd1 Nd7
7. gxh6 gxh6 8. Nd5±; 3... Bd2 4. Qxd2
Bxf3 5. Qd3+! Kg8 6. Qxf3±) 4. Ng5+
Bxg5 5. hxc5+ Kg8 6. Qxg4+-

Answers to Chess Trivia

1. *Pawn Sacrifice*

The former Spiderman starred as Bobby Fischer in the Ed Zwick-helmed film.

2. *The Luzhin Defence*

Based on Vladimir Nabokov's *Invitation to a Beheading*

3. *Queen to Play*

A French film, originally *Joueuse* (feminine for *Player*) in its native language.

4. *The Seventh Seal*

Ingmar Bergman's timeless romp through bleakness and mortality featured some truly elaborate decorative sets in its high-stakes chess.

5. *Searching for Bobby Fischer*

The true story of chess prodigy Joshua Waitzkin, now an IM, author, and Tai Chi coach.

6. *Mystery of Chessboxing*

Okay, it's not Western chess. But the tale of young Ah Pao (Lee) studying at the hands of a wise old Xiangqi master to defeat the nefarious Ghost-Faced Killer (Mark Long) is an inspiration to us all.

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Places to Play

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

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

(Rt. 135) Natick, MA

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

www.MetroWestChess.org

(781) 790 - 1033

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

Regular Events:

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

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

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

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

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

www.WalthamChessClub.org

(781) 790 - 1033

Wachusett Chess Club – C159, McKay Campus School,

Fitchburg State Univ., Fitchburg, MA

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

www.WachusettChess.org

(978) 345 – 5011

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., Billerica, MA

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

For further information, contact arthur978@comcast.net**Chess Master Connections** – 201 Wayland Sq., Providence, RI

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

www.ChessMasterConnections.org

(401) 497 - 8366

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

Casual Events Fridays, 7:00 P.M.

For further information, contact andoverchessclub@gmail.com

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